INTRODUCTION

Wales’ younger generation currently does not meet the Governmental recommendations of fruit and vegetable consumption, with only 52% of children consuming vegetables on a daily basis (Welsh Government, 2016). During adolescence, individuals experience increased autonomy and freedom of choice (Neumark-Sztainer, et al., 2010). Upon starting secondary school, many find the vast options available in the canteen novel and attractive (Brannen and Storey, 1998). However, individuals are vulnerable to making choices based on those in “cool” social groups that they aspire to belong to (O’Donnell and Wardlow, 2000). Consequently, individuals may conform to pervasive social norms concerning their food choice and intake (Higgs, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

- Informal Interview about the Catering Manager’s experiences.
- Observed pupils at break time and lunch time. No interaction with pupils.
- 20-30 minute Focus Groups. 3-8 participants per group.

RESEARCH IMPACT

- Design and develop a vegetable-based food product, packaging and marketing in collaboration with Puffin Produce.
- Novel findings and an understanding of how to improve the eating habits of Welsh adolescents.
- The potential to improve the health of Wales’ younger generation and future generations, in line with the Future Generations Act.

THEMATICAL ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Extrapersonal Factors that drive Food Choice
- Peers, Parents, Education, Social Media

Intrapersonal Factors that drive Food Choice
- Appearance, Convenience, Taste Preferences, Price Consciousness, Neophobia, Health Consciousness

Perceived Quality of School Foods
- Fresh and Homemade, Choice, Popular Options, Stealth Vegetables

- “It’s all freshly done and made from scratch”
- “Cauliflower is good in gravy, if you blend up cauliflower in gravy, it’s lovely”
- “Everything is fresh”
- “I think they are spoilt at this school!”
- “They have options as well, the cheapest they are going to go for…”
- “They didn’t want the dinner no more because they had to sit there with a plate”
- “They don’t like their veggies”
- “They like to be seen to be eating the same as everyone else”
- “I just think it’s down to discipline and education”
- “It’s up the parent”

REFERENCES