

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 12 September 2012	Meeting Name: Education, Children's Services and Leisure Scrutiny Sub-committee
Report title:		Free Healthy School Meals – Schools survey feedback	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Assistant Director Strategy and Support, Children's Services	

RECOMMENDATION

1. To note the feedback on free health school meals from the survey of parents of primary school children carried out during the summer term 2012.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The following are views taken from discussions either one to one or by groups of parents.

Summary of parents' views

3. The children like the food and are eating better at home. Children meet teachers from other classes and learn social skills when they experience eating together.
4. The application process had been good and handled well through the school which supported them with completing forms etc.
5. The school menu is presented on a colourful, attractive notice board in the playground for children, staff and parents to see. Menus are also sent to parents.
6. Children are rewarded with a sticker when they have eaten well which parent sees.
7. It has been important in helping to save money as one parent spoken to is on one wage supporting three children.
8. The menu is good, children enjoy the food and if there is a specific issue the school is informed. One parent couldn't comment as they had not tasted the menu. One of the schools the parents said that they invite parents of children starting in reception to have a school lunch, however this is not offered to parents of children in other year groups.
9. Children at another school are learning to grow food and understand where it comes from, year 2 grow fruit and vegetables, messages around healthy living are given throughout the whole school- walking to school and sports are encouraged.
10. It is good for children to have a hot meal especially during the winter term.
11. Meals focused the children and helped their learning.

12. Brilliant idea to have cultural food such as jerk chicken, parents said that children tried different foods that were from other cultures and this helps children to have respect for others.
13. 2 parents feel that the children's dietary requirements are met including those with religious requirements. 1 parent said sometimes the meals look slightly mismatched to what they would usually eat at home e.g. chicken curry with salad
14. One parent said their child had started to be less fussy about food at home particularly vegetables.
15. Another parent with two children, (one in reception and one in year 1) noticed how their older child was eating better at home, previously they wanted a packed lunch like their friends, however this is no longer an issue as they all have a school dinner.
16. All the parents at one school who were spoken to, said their child enjoyed the school lunches. One parent no longer needs to cook separate dinners at home as children were less fussy about food.
17. The view from all parents at one school who were spoken to, was that their children do eat well at home, but they agreed that their children had had the opportunity to try different foods by having school meals.
18. When asked about the children's view of the school meals and whether it had changed their children's eating habits at home, the parents said the children liked the meals at school, one had asked their parent for more salad.
19. When asked about any suggestions for improving the process, the only comment was whether it could be rolled out to years 5 & 6 sooner.

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Kerry Crichlow, Assistant Director Strategy and Support, Children's Services	
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Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Director of Legal Services	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
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