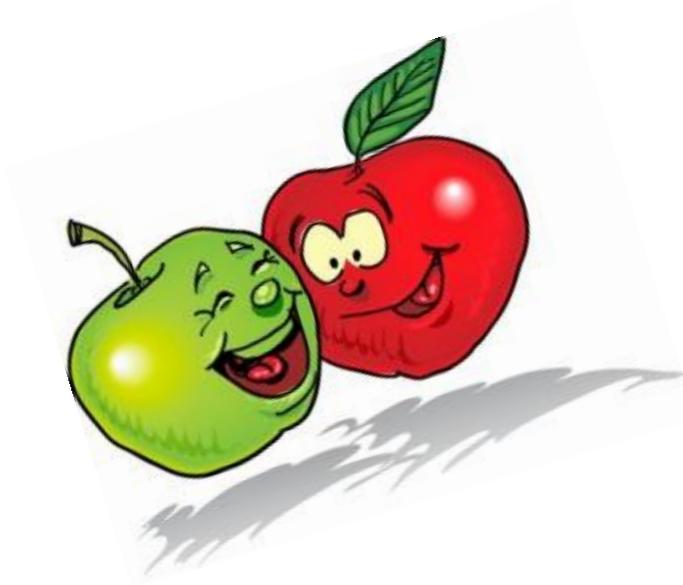


# **REPORT on HEALTHY EATING SURVEY**



## **January 2017**

In preparation for the introduction of a Healthy Eating Policy in Mary Queen of Peace PS, a survey of parents' views took place in December 2016. There are 154 families in the school and 119 families responded. This represents a response rate of 77%, which is a very high figure for a parent survey.

There were two proposals; one for healthy eating at breaktime, while the other proposal was for healthy lunchboxes at lunchtime.

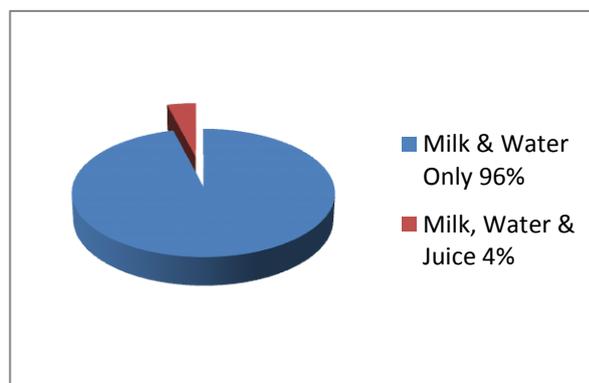
## Breaktime Survey - Drinks

### Children should drink either milk or water at breaktime:

This proposal received overwhelming support from parents. There were 5 comments asking if children could drink juice. When introducing a policy it is important that there is parental support and 96% is a significant majority in favour of the policy. It is important too that there is consistency and that the children can see that the rules are being applied fairly to everyone.



*Our Breaktime Policy on Drinks will be milk and water only.*



## Lunchtime Survey - Drinks

### No fizzy drinks in lunchboxes:

<b>No Fizzy Drinks</b>	<b>99%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>1%</b>

It is very clear that there is full support for a no fizzy drink policy. One response asked for juice not to be drunk in school at lunchtime but we feel that if juice isn't allowed at breaktime then it should be available to those who want it a lunch.

We would, of course, always encourage the water option.



*Our Lunchtime Policy on Drinks will be water and juice only.*

## Breaktime Survey - Snacks

### Children should eat either fruit or bread at breaktime:

Again, the vast majority of parents agreed with healthy eating at breaktime. At total of 107 out of the 119 families (90%) supported healthy eating breaks.

A number of parents commented that they would like to see the following included in the break option:



Food	No. of Responses
Yoghurt	5
Cheese	4
Cereal Bars	2
Carrot sticks, other veg	2
Rice, Pasta	1



Other parents commented in support of the healthy eating policy:

*'Great initiative!';*

*'School is one of the best places to encourage healthy eating';*

*'I can't get my child to eat fruit but if her teacher was to encourage her she might. ';*

*'I have a child who is very bad at eating fruit and since MQP is a healthy break school she knows she has to eat fruit at break which she wouldn't do unless this was the school rule. So I agree with the policy.'*

There were a few requests for the school to provide toast as an option at breaktime. This is a good idea, especially during the winter months. However, we do not have our own canteen or canteen staff in Mary Queen of Peace PS, as our lunches are brought in from Cloughmills PS. Therefore we wouldn't be able to provide this option.



***Our Breaktime Policy on Snacks will be fruit / vegetable / rice / pasta or bread based products only.***

## Lunchtime Survey - Snacks

### Children should have one treat in their lunchbox:

Again, there was overwhelming support for healthy lunchboxes in Mary Queen of Peace PS. **90%** of parents agreed with the healthy eating proposal, while another **5%** of parents wanted no treats or a treat one day per week only.

A total of 16 parents commented on the proposal, with some parents asking for flexibility in the treat policy, while others wanted a stronger healthy eating policy.

Parent Comments on Healthy Lunchboxes	
<i>'Nothing wrong with a treat if balanced out with healthy options'</i>	<i>'..they should have a treat in their lunchbox now and again i.e. a Friday but not everyday'</i>
<i>'No crisps but a small bar.'</i>	<i>'Daily treats are unnecessary'</i>
<i>'One treat in the lunchbox.'</i>	<i>'A treat once a week'</i>
<i>'Treat doesn't have to be an unhealthy option like bar/crisps.'</i>	<i>'Treats ... not to be encouraged everyday, maybe on certain days only?'</i>
<i>'A treat should be a yoghurt, strawberries etc..'</i>	<i>'Ideally not a treat everyday in the lunchbox – maybe only on a Friday.'</i>
	<i>'There should be a blanket rule against juice and sweets. It's hard trying to explain to my child that they can't have these in their lunchboxes when other children are bringing them into school.'</i>
	<i>'Small biscuit/cereal bar Mon-Thur, then a bar/crisps for Friday could be a compromise.'</i>
	<i>'A yoghurt with lunch. Maybe once a week a treat such as crisps or bar; but not all the time.'</i>
	<i>'A treat maybe once a week in lunchbox. Treats OK for home'.</i>
	<i>'One treat should be allowed on a Friday.'</i>
	<i>'Children should be allowed a treat once a week. Say on a Friday.'</i>



***Our Lunchtime Policy on Snacks will be one treat only. This should be a yoghurt or a bar. Crisps should not be included in lunchboxes.***

Having supervised lunchtimes for many years I can also add that an additional problem is that children will not eat their sandwiches if there are too many treats in the lunchboxes.

We will now consult with the staff and children themselves before finalising the policy. Later this month we will issue the school's Healthy Eating Policy and explain to the children the healthy eating policy at assembly and in class lessons.

We will, as with all policies, keep our practice open to review.

During the survey some parents commented on healthy eating in the Breakfast Club and we will, as a result, review the breakfast cereals we use. There were comments too about school dinners but this is a matter that is controlled directly by the Education Authority.

Thank-you for taking the time to respond to the survey. Your views matter. A healthy eating policy will be distributed later this month and we require your support to bring about changes in children's healthy eating lifestyles.

---

M Conlon

Principal