

## Free School Meals Questionnaire (January 2024)

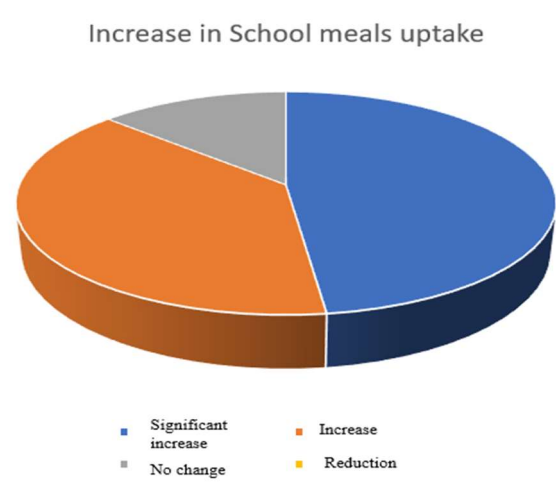
Questionnaires were shared with all headteachers of the County's primary and special schools to analyse the benefits that have come with the free school meal provision scheme for all pupils of Gwynedd Primary schools since September 2023.

66 % of primary headteachers responded to the questionnaire.

### **1. Has the number of pupils eating school lunches increased since the free school meals for all scheme started in September 2023?**

**48%** responses reported significantly higher school meals uptake, with **38%** reporting higher numbers and **13%** reporting similar numbers. The **13%** who reported small increase were schools with fewer than 55 children where a high percentage ate school dinners ahead of the scheme.

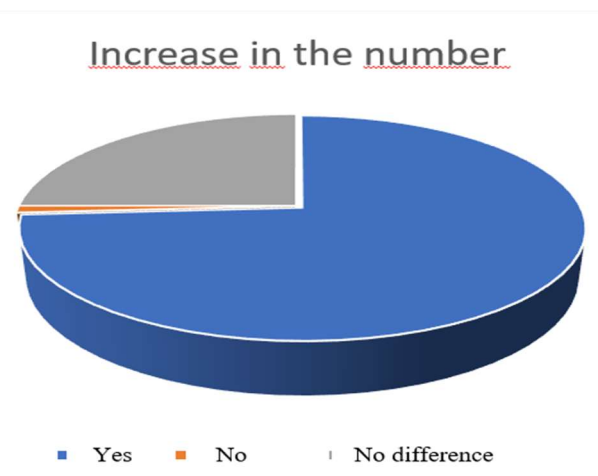
Significantly higher	48%
Higher	38%
Didn't change much	13%
Reduced	0%



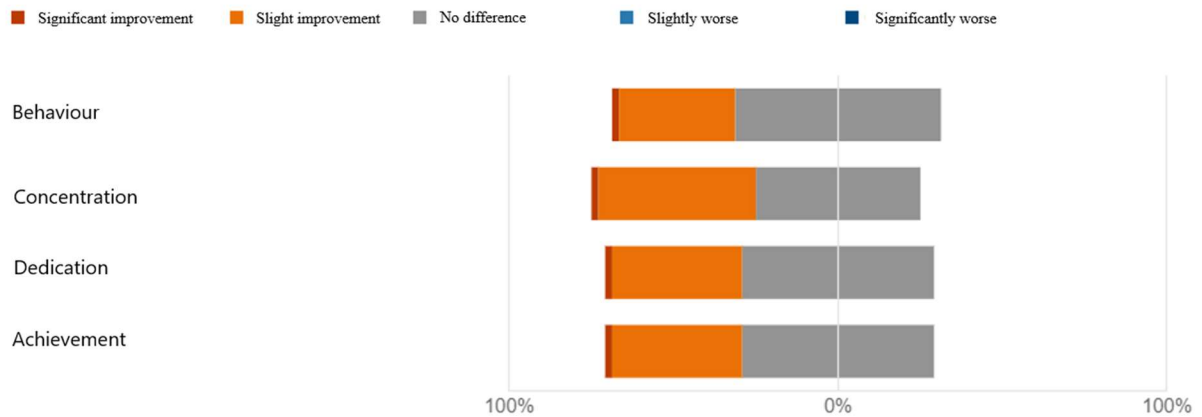
### **2. Do you think more pupils are eating more healthily after the free lunch scheme started?**

75 % thought pupils ate more healthily after the free school meals scheme started, with **23%** of the opinion that there was no difference.

Yes	75%
No	1%
No difference	23%



**4. In your opinion, do you think the following improved in the afternoon as more pupils ate school dinners?**



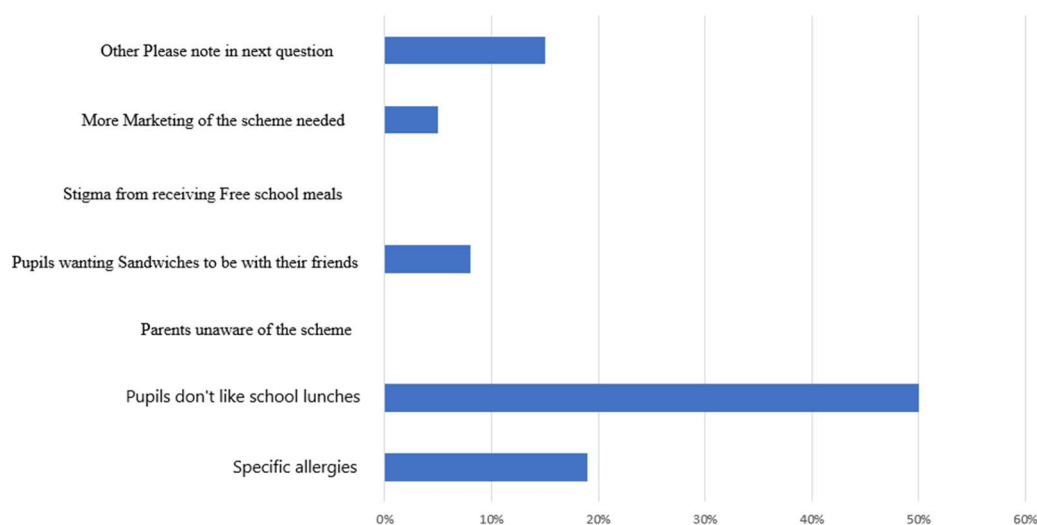
**Behaviour** – 36 % thought the behaviour of pupils receiving School meals had improved with 2.1% reporting a significant improvement. The rest did not report a difference in pupils' behaviour in the afternoons.

**Concentration** – 49% reported an increase in pupils' concentration level in the afternoons with 2.1% reporting a significant improvement. No one reported that the concentration level had worsened.

**Dedication** - 40.4% reported an improvement in pupils' level of dedication in the afternoons. No one reported that dedication level had worsened.

**Achievement** – 40.4% reported an improvement in pupils' achievement in the afternoons. No one reported that pupils' achievement had worsened.

**5. A low % of Gwynedd pupils choose to continue to have a lunchbox. What do you think is the reason for this?**



Headteachers reported that the main reason some pupils did not bring a lunchbox was that they did not like School lunches (50%), with 19% reporting that pupils with allergies chose to bring a lunchbox rather than take school lunches. 5 % indicated the offer needed further marketing and 8% indicated pupils brought a lunchbox to eat with friends. 15% cited other reasons (summary of other reasons below)

*"Limited home eating habits"*

*"don't like fish/pasta/potatoes".*

*"Cohort of fussy kids"*

*"Some foods don't appeal on the menu e.g lobsgóws. They prefer to bring sweet things from home"*

*"Don't like the choice that's on the menu"*

*"Children insisting on having a way of their own – insisting on a lunchbox because they are not happy to try new foods. Parenting problem."*

**6. In your opinion, what extra do you think the Council could do to increase the number of pupils who take advantage of the offer of free lunch?**

30 responses to the question came here – Summary below:

*Informing and highlighting the financial saving for parents*

*Giving pupils input to the menu*

*Offer a taster session for parents during parents' evenings.*

*Holding "special" days i.e. Chinese new year, Santes Dwywnwen, St David's Day*

*That there is an alternative for children who really don't like something specific i.e.. curry*

*Give two options on a daily basis - enabling pupils who don't like certain foods to receive a free lunch*

*Attractive posters for schools to share with parents / social media are an easy idea for everyone.*

*Tasting sessions have gone down well in the past*

*Offer for nursery children to have lunch at School.*

*More choice*

**7. Do you have any further comments that would be useful for the Council to consider relating to the free lunch scheme?**

*The free lunch scheme has been extremely popular with parents and children at this school, and only 2 children remain on a lunchbox. It would be a very good thing if the scheme was extended to the Secondary as well.*

*Ensure lunch is bulky enough for some of the learners. A few primary children are taller than their teachers, grow and play a lot in a day. Two fish fingers and a scoop of mashed potatoes aren't enough to sustain them.*

*The free lunch scheme has been very popular within the school. However, a few days on the menu are more/less popular than others with the pupils.*

*Very grateful for the scheme*

*A very valuable scheme, but only two pupils who have moved from a school in Powys are getting sandwiches as they are very fussy.*