Belrose P&C
Canteen Survey 2015

Presented by Sonia Powell – June 9th, 2015
Contents

- Background
- Objective
- Methodology
- Summary Findings
- Results
- Next steps/ Ideas
Background

- For the past few years the P&C has been subsidising the canteen to ensure the prices remain low. The canteen last covered its running costs when the school had just over 400 students. We now have just over 300 students.

- The P&C wanted to gain a better understanding of the following key issues
  
  - How many families use the canteen & how often
  - Why families choose to use or not use the canteen
  - How families would like to see the canteen funded
  - If families are interested in introducing an online ordering system
  - Which canteen days were preferred
  - Why the current healthy foods items are not popular
  - How many families volunteer in the canteen & if they do not currently why not
Objective

To enable the P&C to develop a canteen plan that reviews its day to day operation, funding & menu.
Methodology

- A survey was developed and distributed via Survey Monkey to all school parents via
  - Initial awareness in school newsletter
  - Direct email to all parents 25/5/2015
  - Reminder & link to survey in school newsletter 28/5/2015 & advising that paper copies were available in the school office
  - Reminder email to all parents on day of closing

- Surveys were closed on the 3rd June

- Analysis was prepared for review at the P&C meeting on the 9th June, 2015

- The survey was designed as multiple choice with options to add comments where either “other” was chosen or at the end where parents were invited to add their opinions

- N=158 replies were reviewed (Belrose has approximately 204 families so this represents 77% of the school family population)
  - 151 Online
  - 7 paper (punched in manually)
Summary Findings

- Just over half of all parents are infrequent or rarely use the canteen but 10% of parents use the canteen more than 10 times a month.

- The majority of parents use the canteen as a treat for their children. For regular users it is still a treat but the convenience and variety offered are also key contributors of use.

- For the 10% of parents that rarely or never use the canteen the majority prefer to make their own lunches & treats.

- Two thirds of all parents think the canteen should either breakeven or make a profit.

- The majority of parents (56%) are happy for funds to go towards an online ordering system.

- The existing days of Monday, Wednesday & Friday are preferred by the majority of parents.

- Just under a third of parents volunteer at the canteen once a term or more often. Just over half of those who do not volunteer are unable to do so due to work/ other commitments and a quarter do other school volunteer work instead.

- In keeping with the fact that most parents are using the canteen as a treat the healthier options are not being chosen as often as the parents make healthier items themselves.
Respondent Data – Example

Number of children at school

- The majority of respondents had one or two children at the school
Respondent Data

Frequency of use of canteen per month

- 54% of the parents are light/rare users of the canteen with 10% saying they rarely use it.
- For 10% of parents the canteen is used more than 10 times a month.
Respondent Data
Why do your family choose to use the canteen?

- The majority of parents use the canteen as a treat for their children

Other (please specify)
Respondent Data

Why do your family choose to use the canteen?

- For regular users it is still a treat but the convenience and variety are also key contributors of use
Why do your family choose to use the canteen? Other responses

I use it as a reward for my child but not to EAT TREATS as it will be a healthy lunch order that she has.

For my child it is a treat and occasional lunch order. For me, I see it as an opportunity for my child to have control over her own spending habits and managing pocket money. She is learning how to deal with money in a "safe" and supportive environment.

It is used as a treat but with no reason for treating (e.g. good behaviour) it is actually used as a treat due to peer pressure. I'm not a fan of the menu (some improvements this year which is nice) but there is far too many junk items that the kids come home asking due to others getting them.

Used for snacks only

Used both as a treat and when I have run out of time or food

Lunch orders because we run out of lunch food at home. Morning tea (cheese melts) for variety

I normally use canteen each Friday as a treat

N=10
Respondent Data

Why are you not/ rarely using the canteen?

- For the 10% of parents that rarely or never use the canteen the majority prefer to make their own lunches & treats. Only 6% who never use the canteen said it did not offer enough healthy choices.

N=16
Why are you not/rarely using the canteen?
Other responses

- Nothing on the menu that takes my child's fancy! The small sushi with avocado would be great and also more variety

- My child won't eat anything from the canteen as they are a fussy eater

- I can never remember when the canteen is open, and it is too difficult to fill out paper orders

- The canteen is super cheap but I see lunch orders as a special treat for my child or an emergency fall back if I am unable to prepare their lunch for some reason.
Respondent Data

How should the canteen be funded?

- Two thirds of all parents think the canteen should either break even or make a profit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Break even</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a profit</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to fund losses</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- I think the canteen should break even and that P&C fundraising money should not be used to support the service.
- I think the canteen should make a profit and help contribute to the P&C school fundraising funds and I would be happy to pay higher prices to achieve this.
- I think that the P&C fundraising monies should continue to be used to fund this community service.
Respondent Data

How should the canteen be funded?

Many more of the regular canteen users are willing to continue funding the losses but still the majority (57%) would prefer it to break even or make a profit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Regular Users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Break even</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a profit</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to fund losses</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I think the canteen should break even and that P&C fundraising money should not be used to support the service.

I think the canteen should make a profit and help contribute to the P&C school fundraising funds and I would be happy to pay higher prices to achieve this.

I think that the P&C fundraising monies should continue to be used to fund this community service.
Respondent Data

Should Belrose canteen invest in an online system?

- The majority of parents are happy for funds to go towards an online system.

- Yes = 56%
- No = 43%
- 30% Yes with higher prices
- 30% No, existing is fine
- 13% No, do not think the P&C should put more money into the canteen than they already do
Respondent Data

Which days should the canteen operate?

- The existing days of Monday, Wednesday & Friday are preferred by the majority of parents (64% of regular users).

- 49% would keep the days as is.
- 14% think only Fridays are needed.
- 24% would prefer it just twice a week.
- 14% have other suggestions.
Respondent Data

How often do you volunteer in the canteen?

- Just under a third of parents volunteer at the canteen once a term or more often (31%)

Bar chart showing:
- 3% A few times a month
- 7% A few times a term
- 21% Once a term
- 11% A few times a year
- 58% Never
Respondent Data

Why do you not volunteer in the canteen?

- Just over half of those who do not volunteer are unable to do so due to work/other commitments. A quarter do other school volunteer work instead.
Why do you not volunteer at the canteen? 
Other responses

My child does not use the canteen.

I help out regularly at reading groups as I really feel strongly about reading for children. I do not feel that I would be of great help in the canteen, it just doesn't interest me. I'm sorry!

Other young children to care for and work part time.

I have a toddler to care for.

Food sensitivities make the food handling required a risk to my health. For this reason I prefer to volunteer for other school activities.
Respondent Data

Why are the healthy options less popular?

- In keeping with the fact that most parents are using the canteen as a treat the healthier options are not being chosen as the parents make those themselves.
Why are the healthy options less popular? Other responses

Sushi is the choice my child makes over everything else

I didn't know there were healthy options.

When offered a choice between lollies/junk food, and healthy food, it's not that surprising that kids choose the junk. I think the junk should be cut out, personally, or at least pared back.

Wish my kids would eat them but prefer 'plainer' food so just have to order what I know they will eat as they don't seem to eat much at school, judging by what comes back home in lunchboxes each day.

Sadly the unhealthy options out way the healthy ones. If there was little to no junk available maybe the kids would order the healthier options. My kids are vegetarian and dairy free. There's not a lot of animal free items on the menu :(  

N=17
Why are the healthy options less popular?
Other responses

I believe that the canteen certainly needs to provide items such as a few pre-made sandwiches and a bowl of fruit on display so that they are visually entice able to the kids. It need only be a few cheese or vegemite or ham cheese and tomato sandwiches initially, so that in the event that they don't sell there's not much profit loss. Definitely should have a bowl of mixed, in season, reasonably priced fruit on offer rather than having to place it on a lunch order. The kids need to SEE the healthy options.
Next Steps/ Ideas

- Investigate current practices to plan how to break even / make a profit
  - Increase prices on popular items?
  - Manage stock wastage through reduction in range e.g. do we need multiple flavours of multiple chips? Provide slushies only in summer? How much out of date food is thrown?
  - Reduce quantities of non ordered, just in case, cooked food that is often wasted

- Investigate options for an online ordering system

- Look at making the menu more enticing by showing pictures of the food? Possibly having a detailed menu available on the website including photos & ingredients? (Do working parents know what a chicken tender is?)

- Provide more healthy options on Fridays?

- Make the healthy offers more appealing - offer vegie sticks with dip? Fruit salad with yoghurt? Sushi available each day?

- Other ideas?
Next Steps

- Which task?
- Who will take ownership?
- By when?