

FAO- To whom it may concern.

Please see the below email from our Chorley St Mary's Eco Council.

Thank you and kindest regards.

Jessica Nicklin
Deputy Headteacher

To the company of SFVS,

We are writing to firstly thank you for the fruit and vegetables that you kindly deliver to our school but to also suggest some opportunities for your business to develop further.

We would like to ask about the amount of plastic you are using for our supply of fruit and vegetables and would like to reduce the amount if we could. Based on the amount of plastic being put into the ocean, we would like to make some changes.

Our school would like to be non single use plastic free by 2021 so if you could we would like our supply of fruit and vegetables to be made or put in just cardboard boxes. This would help us to save the environment and animals by not putting as much plastic into landfill but also not polluting the air as much. We are also starting try and reduce non single use plastic in our school by doing a non single use plastic day or maybe even a week.

We are looking forward to hearing your thoughts on this matter. Thank you for taking your time to read this.

From Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Eco Councillors.

Reply from SFVS

Dear St Mary's,

Thank you for taking the time to write to us with regards to the very important issue of plastic.

The fruit we provide is bagged by the suppliers (not our distributors) as this is viewed as the optimum delivery of produce to the classroom to ensure the product maintains its freshness. As the produce is packed in units of 10 it makes it easier to distribute the produce among the qualifying classes in each school e.g. a class of 30 need 3 (there is no picking up of 30 individual pieces of fruit).

We are currently in discussion with our suppliers about other ways that our fruit could

be packaged in order for it to produce less waste, and therefore be more environmentally friendly, but we do also have to take other factors into consideration, for example, supply chain optimization as mentioned above, allergies in schools and the possibility of cross contamination if fruit is not in sufficient packaging. Also, potential damage to the produce from over handling.

As we are procuring on behalf of a public body, we are bound by European Procurement laws which ensure equal treatment and non-discrimination of all parties involved. During our tendering process back in 2016 we had stipulated how the produce should be packaged, and changes to our specification could be seen as a fundamental change to our contract and against the regulations of treating everyone fairly. We are however working with all our suppliers to explore the best long-term sustainable packaging solution.

If an alternative is found it is something that we would look to adopt in the scheme if feasible to do so, we hope this puts you at some ease knowing that we are also concerned about the plastic waste situation. We are always open to explore different options, so if your school has an idea of a suitable method of delivering the produce to the classroom from the store area, without the use of bags, then please do share this with us.

If we can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

With kind regards

The SFVS Helpdesk Team