

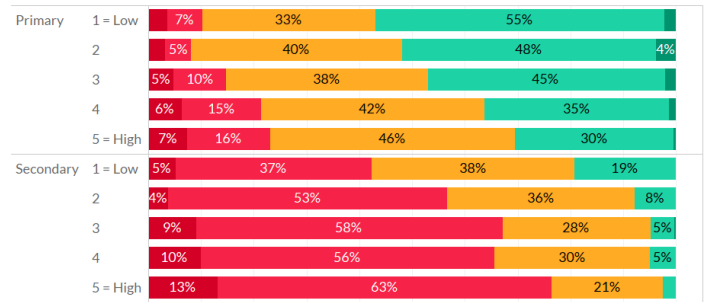
Lowering Lunch Breaks: Who is eating their sarnies in speed time?

Children are spending less time outside, less time talking to friends, and, now we are told, [less time having a lunch break](#). Last October we ran a first round of results on teachers' lunchtimes and we decided to update this again in view of our work with More or Less on the amount of time children spend outside. Yet again we found that a small percentage (8%) of schools have

However, lunch is much more likely to be short in secondary schools. The majority (63%) of secondary schools have a lunch break shorter than 45 minutes. While a bigger majority of primary schools (75%) have at least 45 minutes. Why the difference? On a practical level, it takes longer for younger children to eat their lunch! Secondary schools are also more likely to have split lunches, allowing different groups of pupils to eat at different times, to help with timetabling and space restrictions. However it can be disruptive as the noise tends to bleed into lessons, hence schools will want to keep these times as short as possible, depending on the shape of their site. Behaviour is also sometimes mentioned as an issue for the shortening of lunchtimes. Given that behaviour tends to be worse in more challenging schools we looked to see if there is a difference between lunch breaks in schools with lower Ofsted grades or with more deprived intakes. Lunch break length does seem to change depending on intake

a lunch break of under 30 minutes, and a further 37% have a break shorter than 45 minutes.

How long is your lunch break? (If you run a split lunch, then just count one session.)



% of Total Unique respondent for each FSM Quintile broken down by Simple Phase. Color shows details about Answer Text. The marks are labeled by % of Total Unique respondent. The data is filtered on Question Text, which keeps How long is your lunch break? (If you run a split lunch, then just count one session.). The view is filtered on Answer Text, FSM Quintile and Simple Phase. The Answer Text filter excludes 16 members. The FSM Quintile filter excludes Null. The Simple Phase filter excludes Not Applicable.

Answer Text
 ■ 1 hour 15 minutes or longer
 ■ 1 hour-1 hour 14 minutes
 ■ 45 minutes-59 minutes
 ■ 30-44 minutes
 ■ Less than 30 minutes

On the one hand, it makes sense to reduce the time available for misbehaviour. On the other, teachers in these schools have an intense job and are often loaded up with more paperwork and responsibilities than in others. Few performers are expected to be 'on stage' for up to six hours with only a short lunch break.

How else might schools deal with poor behaviour during lunchtime?

One solution we highlighted last year is [providing pupils with footballs](#) to reduce fights over who-can-play-with-who. This could particularly help secondary schools who mostly haven't cottoned on to its advantages yet! Does your school allow children to bring their own footballs to use during break and lunchtimes?



Any other suggestions? Please let us know!

and school grading. Free school meal intake: