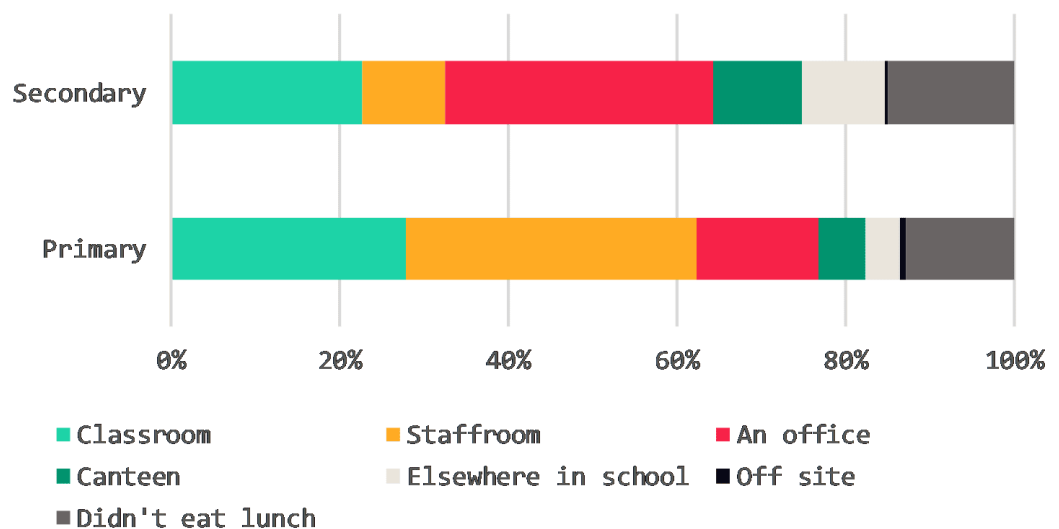


Lunch: How do teachers eat theirs?

It may seem glib to ask questions about lunch but one of our slight obsessions is the minutiae of the teaching day -- and for good reason. Well-validated employment questionnaires like the Gallup12 show that silly things like "having a best friend at work" are enormously important to staff retention. Chatting with people over lunch is one of the ways people develop such friendships. Hence, small things can be important to bigger policy issues, like retention. We've also heard reports that schools increasingly require staff to eat in canteens – but, really, how common is that?

Where did you eat lunch today?



Looking at what we found, only a small proportion of teachers eat in canteens: around 10%, (though more so in secondary schools). Around 13% of teachers don't eat lunch at all, which is a little worrying given the physical demands of the day. And around a quarter eat in their classrooms; possibly while sitting with pupils, while running a club, or doing some marking. Primary teachers were much more likely to eat their lunch in a staffroom than secondary teachers. The sprawling nature of secondary schools can mean staffrooms are far away and renders a lunchtime trip more difficult. But this raises questions about the ease with which secondary teachers are able to socialise with their colleagues. Are offices a place where people can chat and become friends? If not, this could be affecting retention. So what? We need to find out more about the ways lunch affects other aspects of work. For now, however, it may be worth asking if your schools' set up is helping people build adequate relationships? (And make sure you get meals sent to the classrooms of that hungry 13% who aren't eating at all!) Enjoyed this post and want to join our Teacher Tapp panel? Sign up via the [iPhone App Store](#) or the [Android App Store](#). You can also check out more at www.teachertapp.com