

# Parents' Attitudes to School Food

## Summary Report

August 2006

Prepared for:



**BMRB Omnibus - 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2006**  
**Part of BMRB Limited (British Market Research Bureau)**

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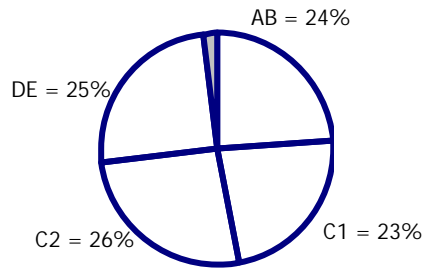
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# 1. Sample Profile

2024 adults aged 16+ in GB were surveyed (see appendix for sample details). The **weighted** sample breaks down in the following way:

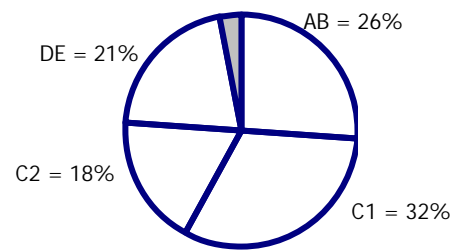
**Chart 1: Social grade (grey slice = unclassified):**

**Those with children in primary school (2005-2006)**



*N = 269 (weighted to 317)*

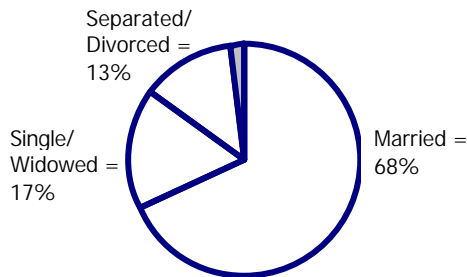
**Those with children in secondary school (2005-2006)**



*N = 230 (weighted to 248)*

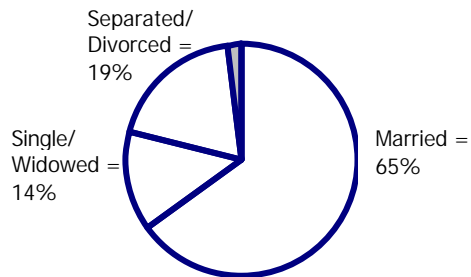
**Chart 2: Marital status (grey slice = unclassified):**

**Those with children in primary school (2005-2006)**



*N = 269 (weighted to 317)*

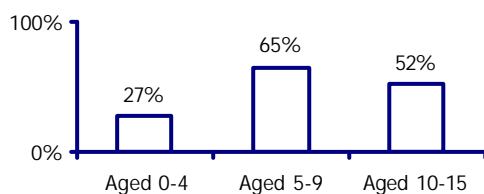
**Those with children in secondary school (2005-2006)**



*N = 230 (weighted to 248)*

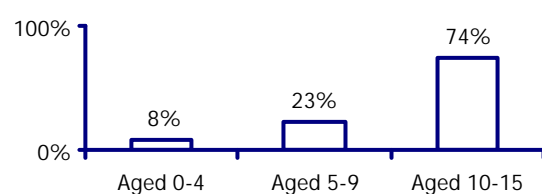
**Chart 3: Presence of children:**

**Those with children in primary school (2005-2006)**



*N = 269 (weighted to 317)*

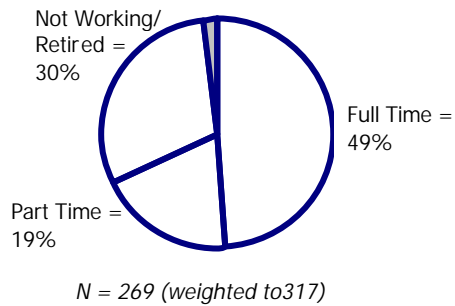
**Those with children in secondary school (2005-2006)**



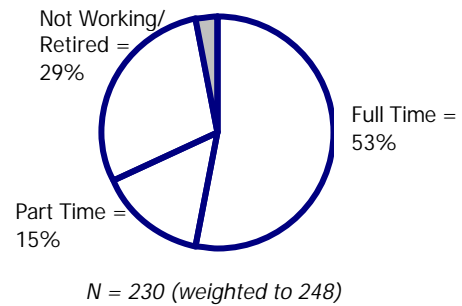
*N = 230 (weighted to 248)*

**Chart 4: Working status (grey slice = unclassified):**

**Those with children in primary school (2005-2006)**

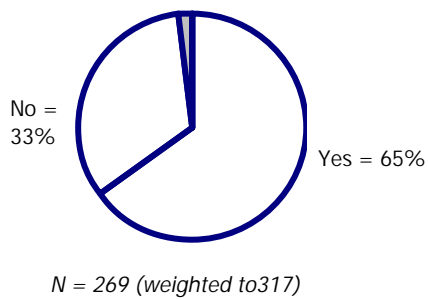


**Those with children in secondary school (2005-2006)**

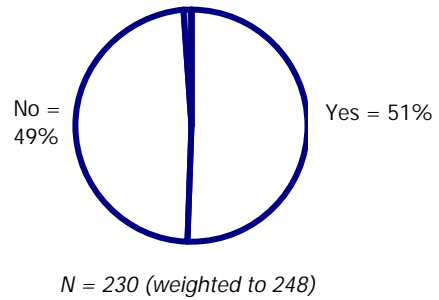


**Chart 5: Whether one or more of respondent's children takes a packed lunch (grey slice = don't know):**

**Those with children in primary school (2005-2006)**



**Those with children in secondary school (2005-2006)**



## 2. Sample Profile

Table 1: Number of respondents surveyed

Group	Respondents	Weighted to	% of Total Sample
Total Sample	2024	2024	100%
Those with children attending state primary/secondary school	412	464	23%
Those with children attending state primary school	269	317	16%
Those with children attending state secondary school	230	248	12%

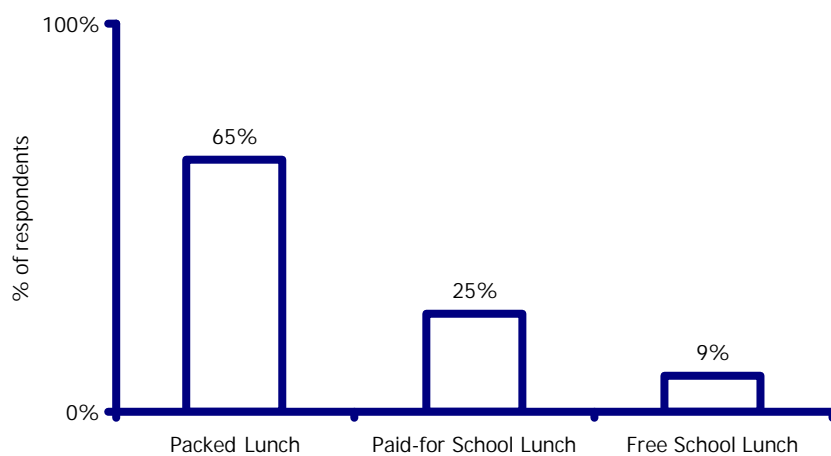
### 3. Key Findings

The following section outlines the survey's key findings. Responses from those who have children who attended state primary school over the 2005-2006 school year are examined first, followed by responses from respondents who have children who attended state secondary school over the same period.

#### 3.1 Respondents with Children at State Primary School

16% of GB Adults aged 16+ have at least one child who attended state primary school over the 2005-2006 school year. Of these, 65% have at least one child who usually took a packed lunch to school. 25% have at least one child at primary school who had a lunch from school that the respondent paid for. 9% have one or more children who had lunch provided by the school for free.

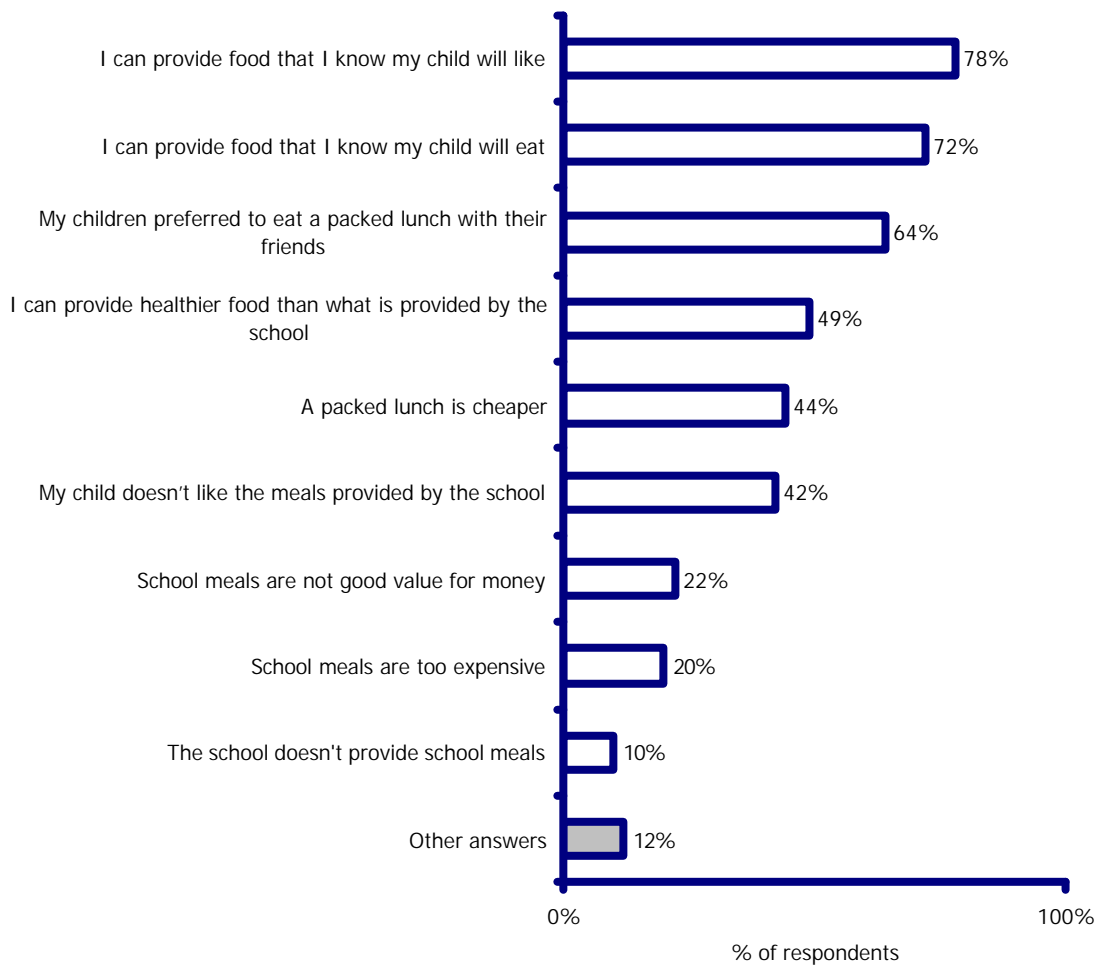
**Chart 6: Lunch type**



Base: Respondents with at least one child who attended state primary school in the 2005-2006 year. N=269

206 respondents have at least one child who usually took a packed lunch to primary school. The most popular reason given for this is that respondents can provide food that they know their child will like, with over three-quarters (78%) of respondents giving this answer. Other popular answers are that respondents can provide food that they know their child will eat (72%) and that their child preferred to eat a packed lunch with their friends (64%). See chart 7 for details.

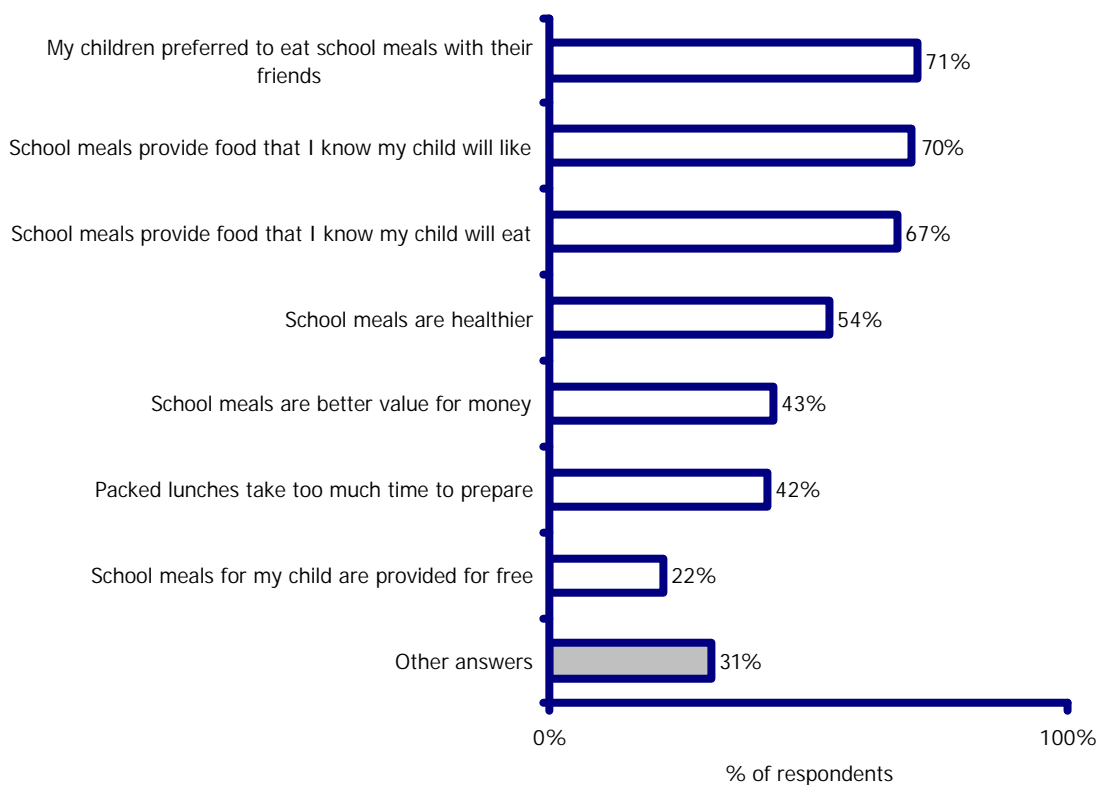
**Chart 7: Reasons for respondents' choice to provide packed lunch rather than a school meal**



Base: Respondents with at least one child who attended state primary school in the 2005-2006 year who gave their child a packed lunch. *N*=174  
 Responses under 10% in "other answers"

108 respondents have at least one child who took a school meal rather than a packed lunch. The most popular reasons given for this are that the respondents' child preferred to eat school meals with their friends (71%), that school meals provide food that the respondent knows their child will like (70%) and that school meals provide food that respondents know their child will eat (67%).

**Chart 8: Reasons for respondents' choice to provide a school meal rather than a packed lunch**

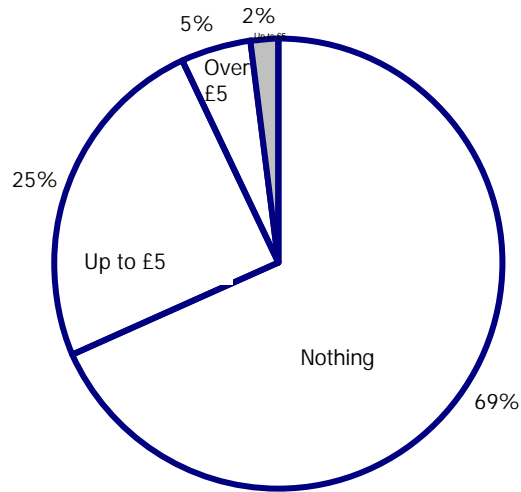


BASE SIZES TOO LOW TO MAKE STATISTICAL INFERENCES ABOUT THE POPULATION  
Responses under 10% in "other answers"

Base: Respondents with at least one child who attended state primary school in the 2005-2006 year who provided their child with a school meal. N=97

Just over two-thirds (69%) of respondents did not give primary school children money to spend on snacks and drinks on their way to and from school. A quarter (25%) gave them up to £5 per week, and 5% gave more than £5 a week.

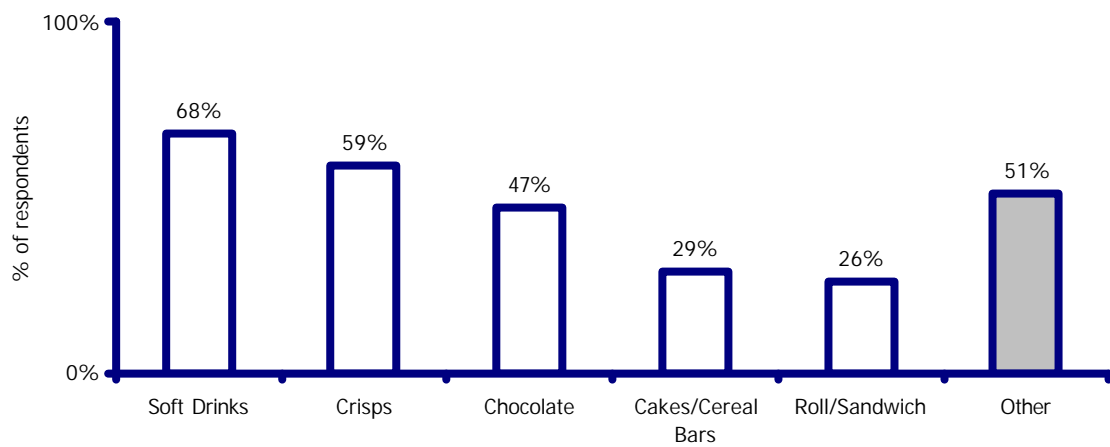
**Chart 9: How much money parents gave to children in an average week to spend on snacks and drinks (grey slice = don't know)**



Base: Respondents with at least one child who attended state primary school in the 2005-2006. N=269

Of the 91 respondents who said that they gave their children money towards drinks and snacks on their way to or from school, over two-thirds (68%) said the money went towards soft drinks, with the next most popular answer being crisps (59%) followed by other types of food and drink (51%).

**Chart 10: Snacks bought with money given**

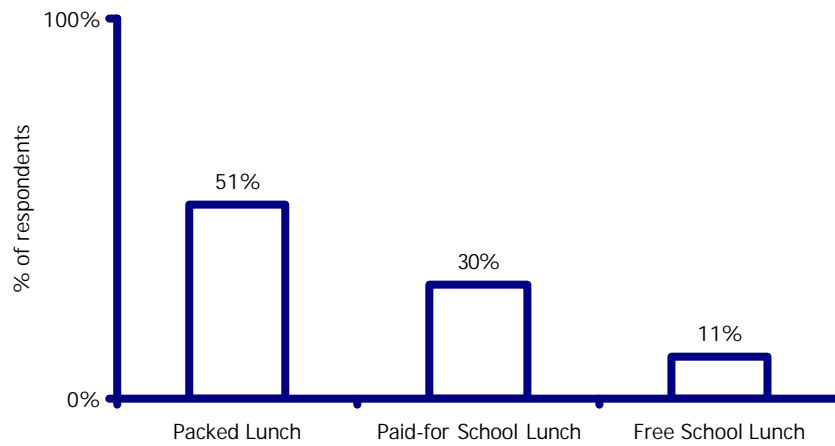


BASE SIZES TOO LOW TO MAKE STATISTICAL INFERENCES ABOUT THE POPULATION  
Base: Respondents with at least one child who attended state primary school in the 2005-2006 year who gave their child money for snacks and drinks. N=79

### 3.2 Respondents with Children at State Secondary School

12% of GB Adults aged 16+ have at least one child who attended state secondary school over the 2005-2006 school year. Of these, just over half - 51% - have at least one child who usually took a packed lunch to school. 30% have at least one child at secondary school who had a lunch from school that the respondent paid for. 11% have one or more children who had lunch provided by the school for free.

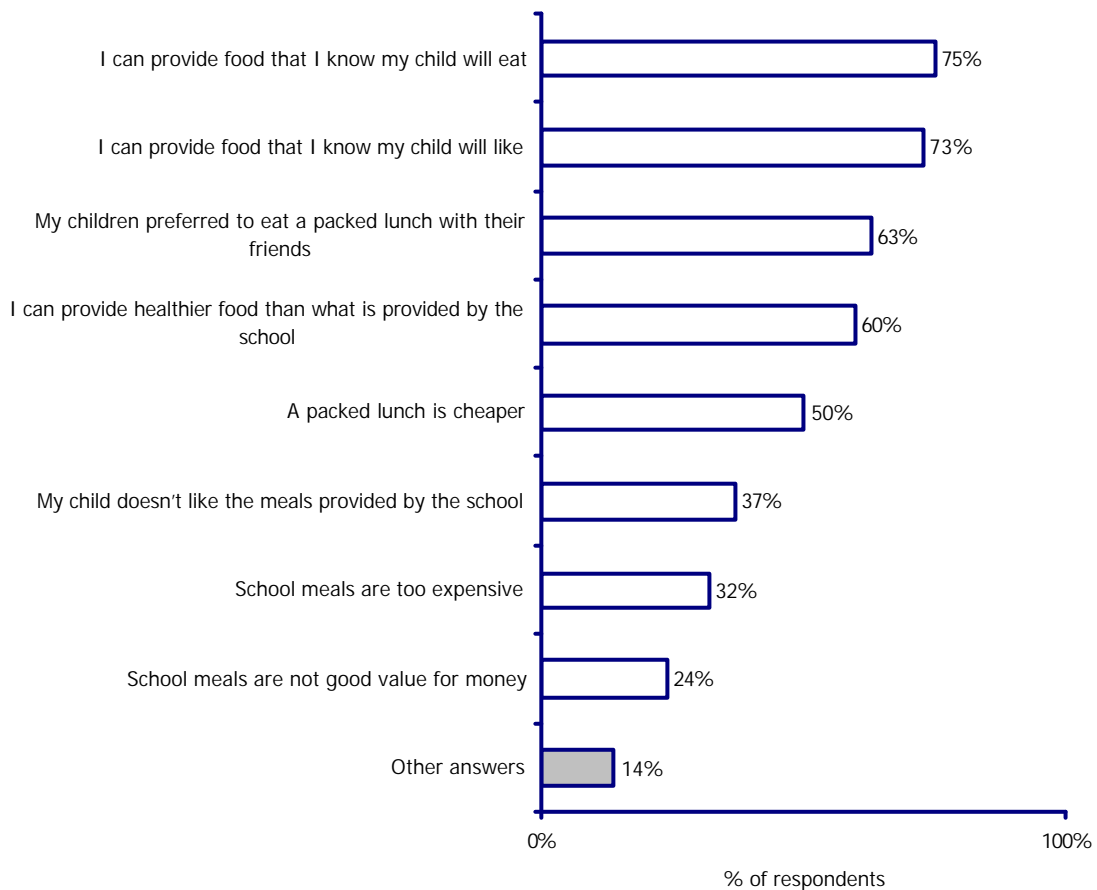
**Chart 11: Lunch type**



Base: Respondents with at least one child who attended state secondary school in the 2005-2006 year. *N*=230

126 respondents have at least one child who usually took a packed lunch to primary school. The most popular reason given for this is that respondents can provide food that they know their child will eat, with three-quarters (75%) of respondents giving this answer. Other popular answers are that respondents can provide food that they know their child will like (73%), that their child preferred to eat a packed with their friends (63%), and that the respondent can provide healthier food than what is provided by the school (60%).

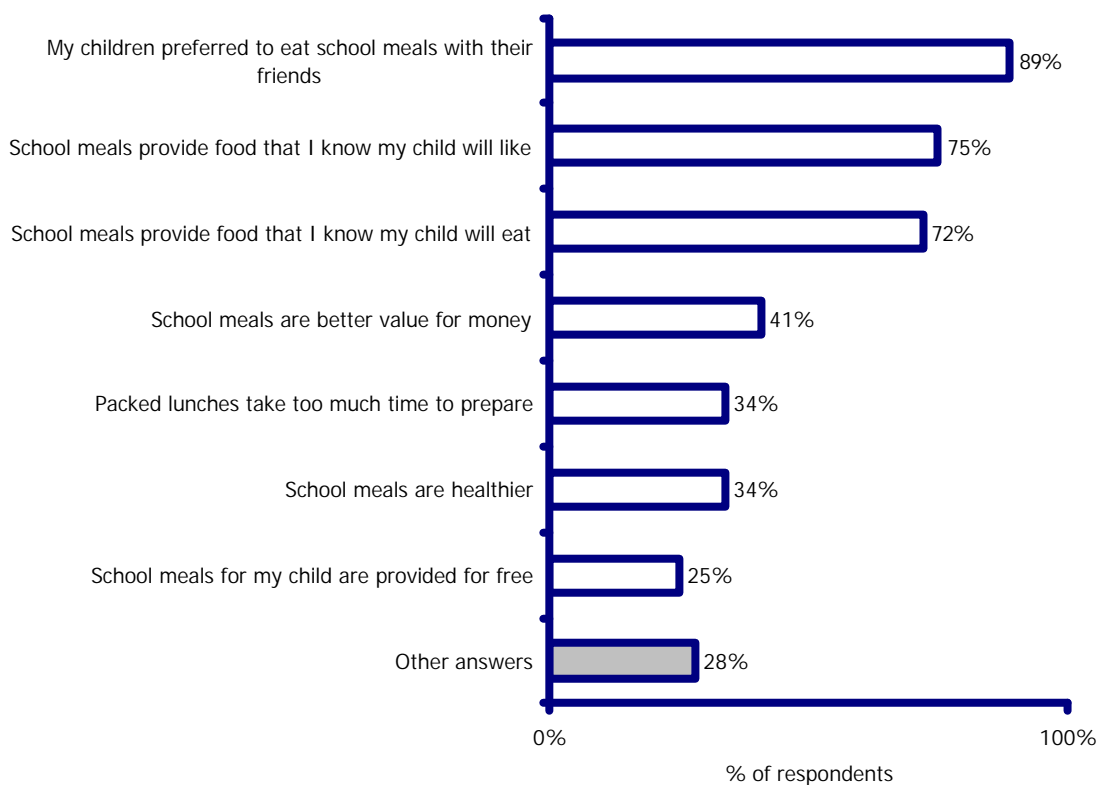
**Chart 12: Reasons for respondents' choice to provide packed lunch rather than a school meal**



Responses under 10% in "other answers"  
 Base: Respondents with at least one child who attended state secondary school in the 2005-2006 year who gave their child a packed lunch. N=117

103 respondents have at least one child who took a school meal rather than a packed lunch. The most popular reasons given for this are that the respondents' child preferred to eat school meals with their friends (89%), that school meals provide food that the respondent knows their child will like (75%) and that school meals provide food that respondents know their child will eat (72%).

**Chart 13: Reasons for respondents' choice to provide a school meal rather than a packed lunch**

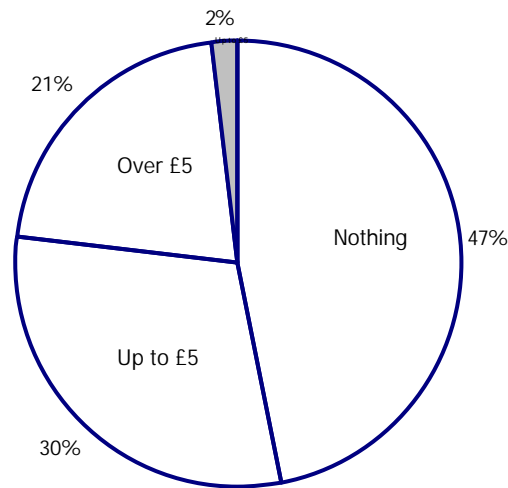


BASE SIZES TOO LOW TO MAKE STATISTICAL INFERENCES ABOUT THE POPULATION  
Responses under 10% in "other answers"

Base: Respondents with at least one child who attended state secondary school in the 2005-2006 year who provided their child with a school meal. N=97

Just over half (51%) of respondents gave secondary school children money to spend on snacks and drinks on their way to and from school. Just under a third (30%) gave them up to £5 per week and 21% of children received more than £5 per week.

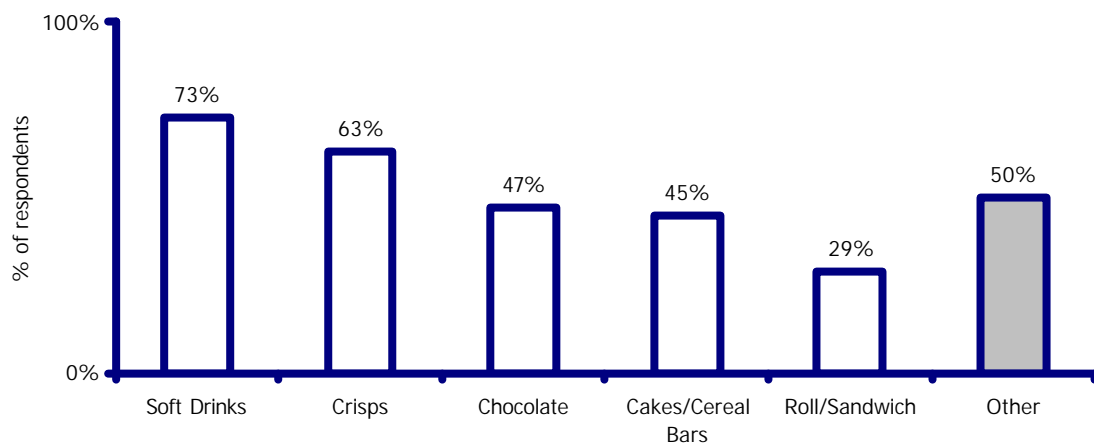
**Chart 14: How much money parents gave to children in an average week to spend on snacks and drinks (grey slice = don't know)**



Base: Respondents with at least one child who attended state secondary school in the 2005-2006. N=230

Of the 129 respondents who said that they gave their children money towards drinks and snacks on their way to or from school, nearly three-quarters (73%) said the money went towards soft drinks, with the next most popular answer being crisps (63%) followed by other types of food and drink (50%).

**Chart 15: Snacks bought with money given**



Base: Respondents with at least one child who attended state secondary school in the 2005-2006 year who gave their child money for snacks and drinks. *N*=117

## 4. Appendix - Sample Design & Fieldwork

BMRB Omnibus interviews a nationally representative sample of 2,000 adults across Great Britain each weekend. The master sample of telephone numbers used for BMRB Ltd's telephone omnibus service is derived from a large database of residential numbers from across Great Britain. New numbers are generated from this basic list by adding and subtracting up to 40 from each original number.

This listing of new numbers is then de-duplicated, and excess numbers removed, to give a master sample representative of Great Britain in its Standard Region profile. Finally, samples for each omnibus survey are selected from this master sample using a random start and constant sampling interval.

This means that samples are generated using a random digit procedure which will represent telephone numbers not available in directories or other sources, in their correct proportion. Some business and non-existent numbers are also generated, of course, and these are removed from the sample when detected during fieldwork.

Each telephone number selected is called, and any adult aged 16+ living in the household is eligible for interview. Each household is recalled if an appointment is requested by the respondent or if 'no reply' is obtained at first dialling. Up to ten calls may be made to each household. Quotas are used to control selection from the eligible adults.

These controls are based on simple demographic criteria which are therefore easy to ask at the beginning of an interview. The specific criteria are those which are known to relate to an individual's likelihood of being at home, namely age amongst men, presence of children and working status amongst housewives. This ensures that the final sample does not over-represent those groups who spend more of their time at home.

Interviews are spread, broadly speaking, equally across five periods – Friday evening and Saturday and Sunday mornings and afternoons. All interviews are conducted from Kantar Operations' central location telephone unit, where interviewers work under constant supervision. A computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI)

system is used for all data collection and sample management. Kantar Operations' telephone field-force has a separate field management group which is a member of the Market Research Society FREEPHONE system and has won IQCS approval in its own right.