

**Food and Drink purchased 'Through the School Gate'**

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# Transcript

## School 3 Focus Group Year 9

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**Duration: 0:51:07**

Interviewer: Tell your parents if you have had a burger that you were not supposed to have. All right? That's totally, or your teachers, that is not our interest or our aim, it's not to get you into trouble.

So yesterday, we walked around and saw the different eating areas in your school and it looks great, like you have lots of options and you have different spaces to eat, you have an outside pod, you have the canteen, looks like there's options, like meat-free Monday. So, we took account of that, but we want to know what you think. That's the most important thing.

So, we won't talk about the map because we're here, we know where we are, so we'll just move on.

Okay, so why don't we start off with the question about who purchases food in school? Okay, so about half of you. Who doesn't ever purchase school in food? So, you all do at some point? Okay, so let's then think about how often. Who purchases food every day? Okay. So, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight. So quite a few of you, the majority of you.

Would everybody buy food at least once a week, do you think? No, not everybody, but most people, most people. Okay, all right.

Let's talk about what you buy, how often you buy it, and what you like. So, tell me about what you might choose. Let's start with the canteen and the pod, obviously these are the two main options that you have here. What would you buy for lunch? Or during your break times? Yeah?

Respondent1: Usually I have something to eat, just a small snack at break, and then at lunch if the meal deal is quite nice I may have that or I will literally just have some pasta and then a cake.

Interviewer: Okay, all right. What about other people?

Respondent2: I would probably buy like, I don't buy a lot at break because then I usually don't get hungry at break because I've just had my breakfast before. So usually I get something at lunch and I have like a cheese baguette and maybe a biscuit or something, so not much, but I probably would eat something.

Respondent: Okay.

Respondent3: I don't usually eat anything, well, I don't eat anything at break because obviously you have breakfast in the morning but I usually have something at lunch and then I try to have a cake maybe once or twice or week so it's not too much.

Interviewer: Okay. And is that to do with amount, like is that to do with a choice about diet or is that a choice about price or cost?

Respondent3: It's like health. If you're having cake every single day as well as something at break and then something at lunch as well, then that's a lot.

Interviewer: Okay, thanks.

Respondent4: I don't always get like the same thing. I get a cheese baguette or [inaudible 00:03:12].

Interviewer: Okay, all right. What about other people? So, you mentioned a meal deal, how many people here might have the hot meals? Okay, so only boys. None of the girls have the hot meals? No, okay. Do you want to say a little bit, what do you think about the hot meals? What would you have?

Respondent5: I think they're sometimes quite nice, so like maybe twice a week I might have a hot meal from the canteen and the other three days I buy from the pod or a cheese baguette or something.

Interviewer: Okay. What would you have?

Respondent6: I would probably have the hot meal and I think the portions could be bigger, I'm normally still hungry afterwards.

Interviewer: Okay, all right. And hunger is an issue at school, isn't it, too, you know, in that sometimes it can be a long time until break. Why don't, I'm curious why the girls don't go for the hot meals?

Respondent2: Well me necessarily, like I just feel like it takes a long time because usually there's quite a long queue, it just takes a long amount of

time, and what I want to do is I want to get in and eat my lunch and then I want to leave. I don't know, it just takes, it's too time consuming and the queue sometimes is quite long.

Respondent3: I mean I know lots of girls who do have hot meals but I just think it's easier to eat a lunch and then go, because your lunch, that's going to be, what, 55, 15 minutes that you've got to not be working to talk to your friend and you want to use that time wisely.

Respondent4: It just really puts me off, the thought of people making my food, it's just really off-putting.

Interviewer: So, can you say a little bit more about that? So, you're put off by the people making your food?

Respondent4: Yeah, because like I used to in year seven but it's just kind of you've been grossed out, it's really unsettling.

Interviewer: Oh, okay, all right. Okay, all right.

Interviewer2: So, do you bring a packed lunch instead because you know that you've made it or parents have made it? Or do you prefer to buy food that comes packaged already?

Respondent4: Yeah. I prefer packaged.

Interviewer2: Okay, thank you.

Interviewer: Can we maybe, yeah, talk a bit more about packed lunches. So presumably some of you buy food every day, some of you buy food at least once a week, but clearly, you've got to eat on the days when you don't buy food so I would suggest that you probably bring a packed lunch. Who does that? Yeah? So about four or five, okay. What sorts of food, why do you do that? Why do you bring a packed lunch? What are the reasons behind it?

Respondent7: Because... I don't know, I just like the food at home better than school food.

Interviewer: Right.

Interviewer2: And what type of food do you bring for your packed lunch then? Is that like leftovers or is that a sandwich or does it vary?

Respondent7: I usually bring a couple of cheese crackers, maybe some grapes or an orange, can't really think of anything else.

Interviewer: Who else? Yeah?

Respondent8: Well I bring a packed lunch because usually the stuff in the canteen is quite expensive, so yeah.

Interviewer2: Okay. What type of food do you bring in?

Respondent8: A sandwich and a piece of fruit and something.

Interviewer2: And do you make the sandwich or does your mum or dad?

Respondent8: Mum makes it.

Interviewer2: Do you choose what sandwiches you want or...?

Respondent8: No.

Interviewer2: Do you get different sandwiches every day, the same sandwich?

Respondent8: Usually different.

Interviewer2: Okay, do you like that?

Respondent8: Yeah.

Interviewer2: That's good.

Interviewer: Okay, and you said that you brought a packed lunch as well?

Respondent9: Yeah. That's because the canteen is really, really expensive.

Interviewer: Really expensive? So, I'm hearing this sense of, I mean, you know, is this concern about expense coming from you or also coming from your parents or coming from your parents, is price, like what is the role of price in making choices about what you buy in school?

Respondent8: My mum says it's a lot more expensive.

Interviewer: Right.

Respondent11: In the canteen, in the morning, or like a Monday my mum will give me £20 on my money account thing and then by the end of the week it can all be gone.

Interviewer: All be gone.

Respondent11: Yeah.

Interviewer: And what does she say about that?

Respondent11: That's why I started having packed lunches.



Interviewer: Ah right, okay.

Respondent10: I usually don't get anything at break, there's lots of like, because just like a cheese burger for £2.30, it's just so much, and then pasta like at lunch. There's too much.

Interviewer: So, price is coming up as a concern here, yeah?

Respondent3: I've got friends, because I'm lucky enough to be the only child who comes to high school at the moment, when my little brother comes up that will be twice as much money. But I've got friends who sometimes miss their lunch because they don't have enough money on their account and I have to buy them something because they can't afford to buy something every single day.

Interviewer: Okay, that's really interesting. Let's talk more about that.

Respondent2: Also, I kind of have like the same issue, kind of, when my sister was in school. Me and my older sister, we both kind of got the same, similar things, and then if you add them up in a week it does come to like quite expensive. My mum puts like £15 on a week and by the end of the week I would have nothing, like Friday I have nothing. It just comes up really expensive.

Interviewer: In terms of, I mean I want to also talk about, we talked about in the questionnaire free school meals and that scheme, but I think it's

really interesting what you've said that there are people who just don't have the money to be able to have something to eat at school, that don't have the food that they've brought from home. Are others of you aware of that situation, that there are people that you might have to help buy lunch for or that don't have the money? Yes, I'm getting some nods. Do people want to say something, yes?

Respondent4: I've had to do it for some people.

Interviewer: You've had to do it for some people, okay. And are they often in that position, do you think?

Respondent4: Not really.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent3: My mum says I can't buy other people food anymore because I was doing it so often that I was running out of money on my own account.

Interviewer: Right, so it was quite frequent that it was happening?

Respondent7: There is someone who I, in year seven, I had to buy them lunch quite often. And then they didn't even have money to like pay me back.

Interviewer: Right, okay. And how did that make you feel?

Respondent7: I didn't mind as much because they were getting food.

Interviewer: Yes, that's right, absolutely. So, you're trying to help, but what can you do over the long term. We'll talk more about that in a minute.

Respondent2: Again, when my sister was at school I sometimes used to buy things for my friends, maybe like once or twice a week, and especially as I said, it came to quite expensive just me and my sister also spending more money on a friend who doesn't have enough money at that time to get something, it just, it does come up a bit high.

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent1: I have to buy some, like my friend lunch three times a week.

Interviewer: Three times a week, every week?

Respondent1: Yeah, like because he never has money on his account. And like I actually quite enjoy buying him meals because sometimes he doesn't get hot meals at home or anything, so it's quite nice.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewer3: It's a really nice thing.

Interviewer: It's a lovely thing for you to do.

Interviewer3: What do your parents say about that, though? Do they know?  
Because obviously they're the ones loading up your account.

Respondent1: Yeah, but they kind of like feel for the boy, so like...

Interviewer2: But you're honest with them, you tell them?

Respondent1: Yeah, I tell them I bought him something.

Interviewer2: That's really good of you.

Respondent5: I think it's like often the problem, it's not that they don't have enough money at home, it's just like their parents give them a limit and then they've already used it before the end of the week.

Interviewer: There's different reasons why people don't have money. Some people don't have money because they've spent it all when they have it, and other people don't have money because they are living in a situation where they don't have a lot of money and also, they

might not be getting those meals at home. So that makes it more complex, doesn't it? Yeah.

Respondent3: I think it can be hard because you're trying to be kind to everybody and sometimes there have been occasions where three friends haven't got something at lunch and I've had to skip lunch to buy them something, but then it's hard to be kind to everybody and also be kind to yourself.

Interviewer: That's right, it is very difficult because you also need to be nourished. So, what can you tell me about the free school meal scheme here?

Interviewer2: Does everyone know what that is?

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewer2: So, the free school meals is a government-run scheme and it's for families from low incomes and it means that children from those families are able to get free school meals when they're at school. So, their cards would get loaded up with £2.30, which is enough to buy the main meal in the school. That's what the scheme is, it's in order to avoid children like your friends going without a meal during the day.

Because if you're not eating during school you probably can't concentrate, maybe like you mentioned, one of you mentioned a friend who doesn't have a hot meal at home. So, it's really important

that they can have a hot meal and that is provided during the school day.

What we wanted to know was what do you think about that? Do you think it's a good thing, it's a bad thing? Do you think it should be for everyone, for some people?

Respondent2: I think it's quite fair as like kind of what you said, because children have to, if they can't focus in school it's probably because they're hungry or something, and maybe they just have to pick out who they think needs it because sometimes you can't tell if they need to from, just from their money, because it could be like a situation where parents aren't giving them money for a reason or they just forget all the time that maybe they just need to pick it out a bit more.

Interviewer: Yeah. What do other people think?

Respondent7: I think that it is quite good, but for people that might have like allergies, that money might not be any help to them because I know there isn't much food on offer for people that have really bad allergies, so that money might be good like to help them have a packed lunch or something like that. They don't really have much on offer for people who have allergies. That's part of the reason why I have to have a packed lunch.

Interviewer: Right.

Interviewer2: So just to make sure that I'm understanding that, you think that rather than just having your card topped up at school to buy the

food in school you should be able to have the option of having that money to bring in your own food?

Respondent7: Yeah.

Interviewer2: Okay, thank you.

Interviewer: That's a good point. That's a very good point. What do other people think about the scheme? Who had never heard of it before yesterday? Who had heard of it?

Interviewer2: Half of you.

Interviewer: About half of you. So, half and half. Okay. What did other people, sorry, you had your hand up, did you?

Respondent9: I just didn't really know about it.

Interviewer: No, and that's fair enough. I think it's important to talk about it. I think it's interesting when you come into a school and you see all the options and the choices and all the food that's being stocked here, you think 'Wow, everyone is taken care of' but when you start to hear your stories you realise that there are more situations that are more complex than just a case of the food that's on the shelves here.

Respondent3: I think it's very fair, and you can already tell people who have got support with finances because they have it on their school review, so it says, they get things like school trips, their money is taken off or paid for by the school funding. So, you can already see who needs it. And it raises performance level so they've got even chances with everybody else.

Interviewer: Okay, all right.

Respondent11: I don't think it's enough money because I know someone who is supported by it and they still ask me if I can just buy them a bit of food.

Interviewer: And this is an interesting question too, this question of hunger. Does hunger influence the things that you buy? And like you were saying you're worried about the portion sizes, that's all right, I understand. But, you know, it's interesting to think about is hunger something that does affect you at school and then how important is it do you think about those food, what's on offer here at the school? I guess the question I'm trying to ask, very poorly, is does hunger affect you? Do you feel hungrier at school? Yeah?

Respondent5: I think like in lessons if you're, like sometimes in period four just before lunch, I get quite hungry and then I find it a bit hard to concentrate and start, just in your mind.

Interviewer: Absolutely.



Respondent2: Probably just me personally, but when I get hungry I start to shut down and get really tired and so after I've eaten something I kind of get my energy back up again. It's like kind of, yeah, period four time which is like an hour before lunch you're going to be thinking about food more than your lesson and your work so it kind of does affect me as well.

Respondent3: Maybe it's sort of what food you are eating, so the nutritional value and energy inside what you're eating, maybe for breakfast or earlier on in the day to kind of keep you going. I know some kids get up early, I get up early, quite often have to skip breakfast because I'm trying to leave the house and get everything done on time, that means you can be quite drowsy in first period and you're hungry by the time it gets to lunchtime and that affects how much you're spending.

Interviewer: Might hand over to someone else and stop talking.

Interviewer3: I don't know how many [overspeaking 00:18:25]. Food in school, we did that. How often, we did that. What do you usually purchase to eat in school, I think we can go for this one.

Interviewer2: To expand on it, so a few people have mentioned hot meals, but not many.

Interviewer3: Yeah, so yeah, of the food you purchase to eat in school, how many of you buy the sandwiches or the wraps? About half, okay. How

many of you buy the hot meals? That was mainly you over here, wasn't it? Okay.

Interviewer2: Which is half the boys.

Interviewer3: Yeah. Okay, so do you want to tell us more about what you purchase and when you purchase it? So, are you buying food at break, and if so, what? Or are you buying food at lunch, if so, what? And are you buying food at both or one or the other? Okay?

Respondent8: I usually buy food at lunch on Thursday and Friday because I don't have a packed lunch on that day, [inaudible 00:19:43].

Interviewer3: Okay, so you do like packed lunch three days a week, buy lunch two days a week? What lunches do you buy, the hot meals mainly or the sandwiches?

Respondent8: No, I buy like a wrap or sushi and a drink.

Interviewer3: Yeah, okay. Yeah. What do you like?

Respondent2: Sometimes I just buy a drink at break because, like I probably said, I don't eat much at break but then at lunch I'd probably buy like a cheese baguette and maybe like, I don't know, fruit, cake, it depends.

Interviewer3: Yeah?

Respondent2: Yeah.

Interviewer3: Okay.

Respondent6: I normally buy things at lunch because at break I'm doing homework.

Interviewer3: Fair enough, a nice honest answer. Okay so we've got almost half and half with hot meals and then sandwiches and stuff. What do you think of the food choices you have here at school? What do you like and what do you not like? So yeah, this is in terms of hot meals but also in terms of the sandwiches as well. Yeah, so what do you like, what do you not like?

Respondent2: I like quite a lot of their hot sandwiches and stuff.

Interviewer3: Okay.

Respondent2: Yeah.

Interviewer3: What kind of hot sandwiches do they do?

Respondent2: Oh, they do ham and cheese toasties and I think they're really nice.  
I haven't seen many schools that have things like that.

Interviewer3: Okay. So, do you have friends at other schools then that you can  
kind of swap stories on what food you get?

Respondent2: Yeah [overspeaking 00:21:10] after-school things, see my other  
friends, they say 'Oh, we don't have things like that'.

Interviewer3: Yeah, okay.

Respondent11: I like that we have a lot of variety.

Interviewer3: A lot of variety?

Respondent11: Yeah.

Interviewer3: Okay, what variety do you appreciate, what do you like to see?

Respondent11: Well especially in primary schools they don't have a lot of variety,  
it's like one option, but I like that we have all different vegetarian  
options, different types of sandwiches.

Interviewer3: Yeah. Okay, okay. What don't you like then? Anything you don't like? Let's hear from the people who more often buy the hot meals; what hot meals do you like and what don't you like?

Respondent10: I kind of don't like the fish and chips because...

Interviewer3: Sorry, you do or don't?

Respondent10: I don't, because the chips just aren't like salty, they're just a bit plain. They have no taste to them.

Interviewer3: Okay, okay.

Respondent10: That's my opinion.

Interviewer3: So, the chips aren't great, they're too plain? Yeah? Do they have sachets of salt that you can use?

Respondent10: No.

Interviewer3: No? Do you know why that might be?

Respondent10: Because people go mental and buy like ten of them.

Interviewer3: Yeah, they're probably restricted on your salt intake for health reasons. Yeah?

Respondent7: When I used to buy the hot meals, I didn't really like to buy the chips they had on offer because they were quite hard and they weren't very tasty. And then that was like the only thing I could eat on that day because there wasn't anything else in the canteen that I could eat.

Interviewer3: Oh, because of allergies?

Respondent7: Yeah.

Interviewer3: Yeah, yeah. Okay. So, the chips are not good here. [Overspeaking 00:23:11].

Respondent5: I agree with the chips not being very good, but then normally there's fish and chips or burger and chips on a Friday and other things with the chips is really nice, so then I don't really know whether to get it or not.

Interviewer3: Dilemma.

Interviewer: That is a dilemma.

Interviewer2: So, are you allowed to pick and choose, so could you get just the fish and get a bit of salad instead of chips?

Respondent5: [Overspeaking 00:23:35]. You can't get just fish, you can't get just the...

Respondent6: You can.

Respondent1: You can if you want.

Respondent5: But you can't get just chips until after all the main meal has gone.

Interviewer3: Yeah. But would you want that?

Respondent5: No. Well, some people do, some people still get them.

Interviewer3: Ah, okay. Yeah?

Respondent11: I don't like the first sitting and second sitting thing, because I've even started having packed lunches on those days because there's no food left in the canteen.

Interviewer3: Oh, so you don't think there's enough options left when you're in the second sitting?

Respondent11: Yeah.

Interviewer3: Okay, yeah.

Respondent3: Sometimes different days you're going to need different foods, so like if it's second sitting and you've had PE before, when you sweat you lose salt so you might want something that's got salt in it and then there's only salad left or something like that.

Interviewer3: That's a really good point.

Interviewer2: You all right there? [Overspeaking 00:24:37].

Interviewer3: Haven't renewed my first aid training. So, yes, sorry, go ahead.

Respondent5: Like when year sevens and eights, [inaudible 00:24:51] three times a week and the older ones get, they have second sittings twice a week. The time that we get into the canteen, even if like we're first in the queue, all of the stuff is gone and you know it's all been touched before by [overspeaking 00:25:10] especially with the desserts, all the case, you know 700 people touched that.

Interviewer3: So that puts you off buying? Okay, that's a good point to make. Okay, in terms of the hot meals or sandwiches, is there any specific preferences you have in terms of the food, other than the chips, I've



heard a lot about the chips but are there any meals or sandwiches that you particularly do like or don't? Yeah?

Respondent4: The baguettes, they have like a pesto one, and I don't like pesto.

Interviewer3: Pesto, it's good?

Respondent4: No.

Interviewer3: No? Oh, how disappointing.

Interviewer: It's all right, I'll have your share.

Respondent6: At break there's normally like breakfast sandwiches, like toasted. They're nice.

Interviewer3: You like those?

Respondent6: Yeah.

Respondent11: With second sitting you can get leftovers from the hot meals from maybe yesterday or from today, and they say garlic bread but it's just chopped up bread and it's only a tiny portion.

Interviewer3: Oh, okay, okay.

Respondent5: Yeah, when they say cheese baguette, the tiniest bit of cheese on.

Interviewer3: Not enough cheese on the cheese baguette?

Respondent5: There's no cheese.

Interviewer3: Okay. We've done that one, done that one. So maybe aside from packed lunches, does anybody bring food with them as extra snacks, you know?

Respondent12: Yeah, I take quite a lot for break. I used to bring a pack of Skittles or something. But that's like once a week or something. I bring like crisps.

Interviewer3: Do you get that stuff from home, or are you getting it from a shop on the way in?

Respondent12: I get it from home.

Interviewer3: From home?

Respondent12: Yeah.

Respondent11: I have to bring a snack in at break because otherwise I'm starving hungry and I can't concentrate.

Interviewer3: Okay, what do you bring in as a snack?

Respondent11: Just a little cake or something I got from Tesco.

Interviewer3: Cake. And do you buy that on your way into school or is it from home?

Respondent11: No, I get it from home.

Interviewer3: You get I from home, okay. [Inaudible 00:27:40].

Interviewer: Can I ask that question? I'm just interested in the Skittles; do you bring those from home or do you buy them on the way to school?

Respondent12: Well on Sunday I go and buy them and just...

Interviewer: You do your Skittle shopping on a Sunday?

Respondent12: Yeah.

Interviewer: Does anybody really buy food, because you can't go out, so do you buy food before school or after school? Who does?

Respondent12: I sometimes do it.

Interviewer3: When you say sometimes, is that a couple of times a week or once a week, less than that?

Respondent12: Like once every three weeks or something I do it. If I have time to do it, I'll do it, because, yeah, and then if I don't...

Interviewer3: Yeah, so once every three weeks maybe?

Respondent12: Yeah.

Interviewer3: Okay.

Respondent12: I buy sweets when I go to my grandma's.

Interviewer3: Okay, how often is that?

Respondent12: Every Tuesday.

Interviewer3: So once a week, yeah. Is that on the way to your grandma's after school?

Respondent12: Yeah.

Respondent10: Like with everyone walking to school, I don't think many people actually walk past like shops, so they don't see that option. Whereas like if we were say in London we might walk past more shops and then we might go in there quickly and grab something.

Interviewer3: Okay, okay, yeah.

Respondent2: Since I live quite far away, I live like 20 minutes from school, so I usually get the bus to school and where I live there is literally no shops, there's nothing, so I don't really have like a choice if I could buy things before school or after school. So [inaudible 00:29:22].

Interviewer3: You had your hand up as well I think, did you? No? Okay.

Respondent7: I have a friend that probably buys a pot of Pringles or maybe a packet of Doritos maybe once a week and I always see her before school going into Tesco Express, she lives down the road from me, when I see her come out she has always got something massive in her hand.

Interviewer3: So, she buys it before school and then brings it to school?

Respondent7: Yes.

Interviewer3: Okay, yeah.

Respondent11: I drive into school from quite far away with my mum because she works here and when I have a packed lunch I usually stop at Tesco Express and go and get a meal deal or something. I get like the same thing every day.

Interviewer3: Okay, okay, yeah.

Respondent3: One of my friends lives next door to me, she goes between houses because her mum and dad don't live together, but when she does live next door to me, sometimes when we walk to school she goes in and gets like gum or water or some juice or something for break. We don't usually get anything big because we've already had breakfast.

Interviewer3: Okay, that's good to know. So, there's less options for you guys it seems in terms of, you're walking past less or no shops at all even when you're coming into school. So, if you wanted to buy something before school, it would be quite an inconvenience to you. Do you think, if there were a newsagents that you were going to walk past on the way in, do you think you would be more likely to go in and

get something? Would it affect...? People are nodding over here.  
Yeah?

Respondent5: I think it would because you just think 'I'll just quickly go in there, I have time to do that' and you know, just something to eat at break.

Interviewer3: Yeah, okay.

Respondent2: I think yes, because a lot of people, if it was like basically next door to them, 30 seconds, 15 seconds down the road from them, it would just be so easy rather than like I said I live like 20 minutes away, so it would be easier for me if there was like a shop just near where I get on the bus and I could quickly go there when I get the bus rather than like maybe sometimes going to school hungry. Not necessarily I do, but if like other people who get on my bus maybe, if they were hungry before they get on the bus they could easily go to the shop or something.

Interviewer3: Yeah, okay. Do you want to take over the next few minutes?

Interviewer2: Okay, so you've spoken about what food you bring into school and what you eat while you're at school, what do you think about the eating areas in your school? Yeah?

Respondent5: I think the canteen is quite cramped because there's loads of people that go in there at lunch and there's lots of chairs but they take up quite a lot of space, so you end up with lots of people

standing around, waiting for friends or something, ends up being really cramped.

Interviewer2: Okay, so ideally you would like a larger canteen area. Yeah?

Respondent11: I think by the end of lunch the canteen is really messy, there's litter everywhere, people don't really throw things in the bin.

Interviewer2: Okay.

Respondent3: I think the pod was a nice idea in theory, but we live in England, it's always raining, it's literally raining now and you don't want to stand in the cold and eat some cold pasta in the rain, it's just...

Interviewer2: Okay, so you like the idea of there being a separate area for you to buy food, but maybe undercover of some shelter? Yeah?

Respondent2: Yeah, because like it's basically I would say 80% of the time in England it's either raining or it's freezing cold or it's snowing sometimes, and I don't think, I feel like if we had another inside eating area which wasn't the canteen, it's super cramped and everything, I feel like it would just be so much easier rather than being outside freezing and raining.

Interviewer2: Yeah.



Respondent4: I think they could extend the canteen and make it bigger so it wouldn't be as cramped.

Interviewer2: Yeah.

Respondent6: The pod [inaudible 00:34:14] the summer when it's hot, you can just quickly go and get something and then go back and play.

Interviewer2: So, it's quite convenient in the summer?

Respondent5: I think the pod, it was nice at the start but then as like it's gone on they haven't replaced the benches or anything so like food gets spilled on them and they start to look a bit dirty and you don't want to sit down there, so you're just like standing up eating your food and not many people sit down at the tables and benches.

Interviewer2: Any other answers? So, you've also mentioned that you, the seating area in the canteen area is quite cramped, but what about, I'm aware that you're not allowed to eat packed lunches in the canteen area. How do you feel about that?

Respondent2: It's just, it's not that I eat a packed lunch, but I can see it must be so irritating for people who maybe want to sit with their friends, so maybe their friendship group, half of them want to go to the canteen but the other half are packed lunch, they all want to sit together, they can't because they're completely separated. But then I can kind of understand because the canteen is extremely cramped

already and if there was like, for example I don't know, 100 people who eat a packed lunch a day, then like more people being added to it would just make the whole situation worse.

Respondent3: School isn't just about learning facts and figures and different things, it's about learning different social skills as well, and if you're not allowed to sit with your friends at lunch then you're not learning social skills, you're just learning rules and discipline.

Interviewer2: Yeah, definitely.

Respondent7: It can get quite annoying, like you said because it's already crowded in the canteen, but there is a room already for the people that have packed lunches, but if you wanted to go outside there isn't anywhere to sit. I'm pretty sure that you can't eat a packed lunch in the pod. If you can, people who are already getting like pasta would have already taken up the benches. It's really annoying because there's nowhere to sit and eat your lunch.

Interviewer2: Okay, thank you. Yeah?

Respondent11: I don't think it's as much of a problem because we've got J'S, but I think we should be able to take our food out of areas so that people can eat together.

Interviewer2: You mentioned you've got J'S, what is that?

Respondent11: It's like an indoor place where you can go and eat packed lunch.

Interviewer2: Oh, okay. Yeah?

Respondent4: I think they should make like a year seven and eight canteen and then a nine, ten and 11 canteen, then we wouldn't have first and second sitting.

Interviewer2: Okay, that's a good idea?

Respondent5: Also, we could like, so we could just make it so we can eat on the field because we can have like so much more space. Some people won't want to be like in the canteen because it's quite warm in there, want to be outside.

Interviewer2: Okay, so you think you should be able to take your canteen food outside?

Respondent5: Yeah.

Interviewer3: We can do that a bit more.

Interviewer2: Okay, previously you mentioned that some of you occasionally buy food or drink before or after school. If you were to buy food or drink,

where would you buy it from? So, we mentioned Tesco Express?  
Yeah?

Respondent5: Costcutter.

Interviewer2: Costcutter? [Overspeaking 00:38:19].

Respondent4: Waitrose.

Respondent7: Nisa.

Interviewer2: Anywhere else?

Respondent6: Subway, sometimes.

Interviewer2: Okay.

Interviewer: Are there places that you go to buy hot foot? No? There's not those options? No?

Interviewer2: You mentioned socialising with your friends, is there anywhere near your school that you can socialise with your friends afterschool before you head home or...?

Respondent3: Tend not to because you've usually got to have homework or, you know, you've got extracurricular after school or something, but you can text.

Interviewer: I have a question just particularly on some of the things that came up earlier, I think it was this group, sorry, we've had two groups and I'm forgetting who said what, about price. And I mean it seems that what's coming up is that people aren't buying the food every day because price is an issue. I'm just wondering if maybe you could say a little bit more about whether or not that concern is coming from you in terms of the budget that you have or whether your parents feel that the food here is expensive and that price is an issue in the choices they make for the food you have at school.

Respondent2: Well, personally I think £15 is quite a lot for like one week, and knowing me, I usually do spend all of it in one week. I just feel like it shouldn't all be spent, it sounds like, £15 is quite a lot if you think about it, it should last you more, like maybe one and a half weeks or two, and I just feel like some of the things, it just depends what you get on that day. If you're not hungry that day then you don't get a lot, but then most of the time I do get quite hungry so I just think it's the prices are sometimes a bit overpriced.

Interviewer3: Do you think particular items are overpriced?

Respondent2: Yes.

Interviewer3: Which items do you think are too expensive?

Respondent2: Like the cheese and ham toasties, they're like £1.50, and that's, maybe if it was like £1 or 75p I wouldn't mind, but £1.50, even though it's 50p more than like £1, it's just a bit... it's quite small as well.

Interviewer3: Yeah, okay.

Respondent3: I think it's slightly problematic that it's more expensive to buy a salad than it is to buy a sandwich or a wrap or something, because that's encouraging unhealthy food choices for those who can't afford to buy something expensive every day, and it shouldn't be more expensive.

Respondent12: I think the cheese burgers are so much, because they're like £2.30 and if you want to get, if that's your break time like meal or something, then you've got to have lunch, then you kind of feel, I feel quite bad and I need to buy a cheap lunch and then I feel like I've spent too much.

Interviewer3: Because the meal deal, the hot meal deal, that's £2.30, right? So, a cheese burger compared to the hot meal and then you get a dessert as well. That's really good value, right? Or do you think that's too expensive? [Overspeaking 00:41:56]. Yeah, yeah.

Respondent11: The water fountain now is out of order and I think that the water that we buy from the canteen is 80p for a bottle but we can go and get water from the water fountain, I think the water is overpriced.

Interviewer3: Okay. Yeah?

Respondent3: Also, you're constantly told about the dangers of not using plastic properly and recycling, but they're offering you a bottle of water every single day. So, if you're spending 80p for a bottle of water that you're then throwing away that's then using plastic that's not necessary. You could just use a reusable water bottle.

Interviewer3: That's a good point.

Respondent4: In the canteen they don't have recycle bins, so if you want to throw away your water bottle, you can't, you've got to [overspeaking 00:42:47].

Interviewer3: There's no recycling at all in the canteen? No? So, does everything just go straight in the bin?

Respondent2: Yeah.

Interviewer3: Wow, okay. Yeah?

Respondent7: I was told by someone that they had no money on their account and they didn't have any water in their bag, so they went to the canteen because they thought that they could have some water just for free seeing as they didn't have anything, but they wouldn't even let them

have that. And the canteen people even knew that that person was being given money by the government and they said no water.

Interviewer3: Okay. Yeah?

Respondent4: There was an old system, if you didn't have enough money on your account you'd be put into minus and you have to pay them back, so you just put money back in your account, how much they took off which you didn't have so you pay them back, basically. They've stopped doing that, but then no one has any money.

Some people I hang out with I have to buy stuff for them because they [inaudible 00:43:58].

Interviewer3: So, they don't allow you to go into minus anymore? No? Okay.

Respondent6: You can still get cups of water, you just get plastic cups for free and you can fill them up.

Interviewer3: At the water fountain? Is there more than one water fountain? Because you said it's out of order at the minute.

Respondent6: There's one in the canteen that pretty much always works, and I think there's one in E corridor and there's one down at the bottom.

Interviewer3: Oh, okay. One more, hand up?



Respondent3: Again, with the plastic cups, you could use glass ones and put them in the washing up thing at the end of canteen, because otherwise that's more plastic that's not being recycled.

Interviewer3: Plastic has really made the news, hasn't it, the last couple of weeks especially in terms of how much we need to cut down on that. It's quite topical that you raise that.

Respondent8: If there were glasses, there would probably be a lot of breakages.

Interviewer3: Yeah, okay.

Respondent12: I don't know how I feel like, I probably, because there will be so much glass water bottles I don't think at the end of the day, they'll be like tired and then they'll be washing up. I'm not saying it's bad or anything, but they probably wouldn't get washed up fully. I just don't know how I feel about that.

Interviewer3: I think there would be a dishwasher in the canteen. I don't think [overspeaking 00:45:39]. Yeah, I'd say there would be, for that many students, I'd say there are dishwashers in there.

Respondent11: They have cutlery in the canteen but they have cutlery that you can wash up, but they also have plastic cutlery which is easier to get to which I think is an issue because [inaudible 00:46:02] probably more use the plastic.

Interviewer3: Okay, so the plastic cutlery is easier for you to access? Okay.  
Okay, right, thank you. That's some really interesting points you've made, I think about...

Interviewer2: Coming up towards the end.

Interviewer: What time does...?

Interviewer3: Quarter to, so we've got five minutes. [Overspeaking 00:46:27].  
Yeah, so...

Interviewer2: Just to end, so you're not allowed to leave school during the day but sixth formers are, and we just wanted to get some ideas about how you feel about that and whether you would prefer to leave or not, do you understand why. Let's start this way.

Respondent2: Well kind of like what we said earlier, there sometimes isn't enough options for people with allergies, like nuts and stuff, there isn't a lot in the canteen for that. So, it probably would be easier if some people could go out maybe to like, I don't know, Tesco Express and find something that suits their allergies, their whatever, like vegetarian or vegan.

And, because I can understand how it can be really hard for people who do have allergies who need to like, want to choose what they like but they can't.

Interviewer: Good point.

Respondent7: I understand why we can't actually like leave the grounds, because the lower school, like seven or eight, I don't think they could really be trusted with going to the shops and then maybe not coming back for the second half of the day. I do really understand that bit.

I think it's a little bit more fair for the sixth formers because they've gone through five years with not being able to choose a lot and then they can go out and choose what they want.

Respondent11: People are definitely against it because in charities week this year some people even were hiring, because we had You're Hired where you could just hire people, and people were hiring sixth formers to go and get them like Domino's, they're a bit desperate.

Interviewer: So, it's okay for a good cause? And at the back? Start with you.

Respondent4: My sister, she doesn't go out often, she's in sixth form, she doesn't really go out to get like food and things because [inaudible 00:48:43].

Interviewer2: Oh, okay. Sixth formers don't always go out, even though they can? Okay.

Respondent1: I understand why most students aren't allowed to leave school, because most of [inaudible 00:49:01] then again other people go to the library and do homework [inaudible 00:49:14].

Respondent2: I think obviously age can be a big thing, but puberty can make people really odd until like a really old age so it doesn't really matter what year you're in, like I know kids in this year who I know would go and get lunch and come back five minutes later and be really fast with it, and I know kids who would go and then they just wouldn't be back in school. So maybe if you had some sort of supervision with an adult.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent6: I think if people were allowed to leave the school, most people would just go and buy sweets instead of proper food.

Interviewer: If you were allowed to leave school, do you think you would want to buy sweets? [Overspeaking 00:49:58].

Respondent5: They should like make a punishment if you don't return.

Interviewer2: So, we're coming towards the end of our discussion now, is there anything you want to bring up that we haven't asked you or anything that's come to your mind that you think would be interesting for us to know to do with food that you buy and...? No, okay.

Interviewer: Thank you so much, that has been a wonderful discussion, we're really, really grateful to all of you for participating because you

make our jobs a lot easier and also more interesting and we've got an insight into some really important insights about the way that you eat, the things that you choose, and also what it's like being part of the community and what kind of options are there for you in terms of food. So, thank you very much.

Interviewer2: Thank you guys. [Overspeaking 00:52:04].

END OF AUDIO