

The Real Meal Deal

How family restaurants and attractions are damaging our children's health





Contents



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3	Foreword	1
5	Executive summary: the state of children's food at restaurants and tourist attractions	
11	Introduction	
15	Restaurants: headline findings	
21	Resturant meals to avoid and meals to enjoy	
23	What parents said	
23	The right to know	
25	Nothing homemade	
29	Tourist attractions: Junk Food Villains versus Good Food Heroes	
33	A call to action	
33	Ten steps to a healthier and happier restaurant meal	
34	Eight steps to a healthier and happier day out	
37	Appendix 1: Methodology and school meal standards	
41	Appendix 2: Children's menus analysed	
41	Appendix 3: Assessment criteria for tourist attractions	
47	References	
Figures and tables: Restaurants		
6	Figure 1	Restaurant ranking on nutrition, food sourcing, food policy and information provision
16	Table 1	Children's menus assessed against school food-based standards
17	Figure 2	Children's menus assessed against school nutrition-based standards
18	Figure 3	Average non-milk extrinsic sugar content of children's menus compared to school meal nutrition standards
18	Figure 4	Average saturated fat content of children's menus compared to school meal nutrition standards
21	Figure 5	The three least healthy children's meals based on fat, sugar and salt levels
23	Figure 6	Parents' views on the surveyed restaurants
40	Table 3	Restaurant ranking: factors other than nutrition
Figures and tables: Tourist attractions		
30	Table 2	Junk Food Villains versus Good Food Heroes: the rankings



Foreword

Our survey of 10 popular restaurant chains found that not one came close to meeting the new minimum school meal standards for children's meals.

Opposite page: Fast food made good. Healthy takeaway snacks, such as these real chicken nuggets, are a practical alternative to processed, pre-made meals (recipe page 26).

There is much to celebrate in the changes happening across the country to improve the quality of children's school meals. Sadly, our survey of children's food in restaurants and at visitor attractions reveals that this progress is being undermined by the continuing prevalence of junk being served up and excused as 'treat food' for children. Every one of the major restaurant chains we surveyed failed to come close to meeting the minimum standards that have been set for school meals.

Eating out is no longer an occasional treat. It's becoming a weekly fixture for many families, a growing number of whom don't have a dinner table at home any more. The companies that are benefiting from this huge and growing market need to start taking their fair share of responsibility for promoting healthy eating to a generation of children who risk dying before their parents, thanks to an epidemic of obesity and diet-related diseases. Parents who want something better for their children urgently need restaurants and tourist attractions on their side.

Leading restaurants and destinations like Center Parcs, the National Trust and healthy fast food chain Leon show that food for children can be tempting, nutritious and affordable. Crucially, their policy of serving fresh, seasonal produce and quality extensively reared or organic meat delivers a double dividend for nutrition and the environment. Tackling the impacts of our current food system on human health and the climate is a huge cultural challenge. Much of this needs to start at home. But if unhealthy, poor quality, processed food continues to be the norm in restaurants and on family outings, parents will have a hard time convincing their children that healthy food can be a treat too.

The Soil Association's work is based on the principle, put forward by our founder Lady Eve Balfour, of the crucial link between human health and food production methods. This report builds on earlier work by the Soil Association and Organix, including their ground-breaking 2003 *Food for Life* report on the state of school meals, and by Organix through its *Carrots or Chemistry?* series of reports on children's diets and health (see back cover for more details). Both our organisations continue to campaign vigorously for urgently needed improvements to the quality of food being fed to our nation's children, and to reconnect children to where food comes from, how it is grown, and how it is cooked.



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4



Executive summary:

The state of children's food at restaurants and tourist attractions

By 2020, over 25% of children will be obese and children will have a shorter life expectancy than their parents.

British Medical Association (2005), *Preventing childhood obesity*, BMA, London

This report takes a timely look at what's on the menu for children at 10 popular family restaurant chains and 14 major visitor attractions.

The first section of the report puts the spotlight on family restaurants, and assesses how their children's menus compare with the new nutrition standards for school meals. We rank the restaurant chains from 1 to 10, with some surprising results. We also expose the degree to which this 'treat' food is pre-processed, and call for more attention to sourcing better quality, local or organic ingredients.

The second section looks at the food on offer at the 14 most visited tourist attractions in the UK, from Blackpool Beach to the Eden Project. We separate out the Good Food Heroes from the Junk Food Villains, according to how easy or possible it is for a concerned mum to find healthy treats with children in tow.

Finally, we issue a call to action. Restaurants and tourist attractions need to raise their game and give parents the healthy and tasty options they want for their children. We set out 10 steps to a healthier and happier restaurant meal, and eight steps to a healthier and happier day out.

The case for change

The British Medical Association predicts that by 2020 over one quarter of children will be obese and that children will have a shorter life expectancy than their parents.¹

Radical changes are desperately overdue. Thanks to the media spotlight shone on the school meals scandal by Jamie Oliver, building on years of work by the Soil Association, Organix and many others, **school food is finally on the road to reform. But, to date, almost all other major providers of children's meals are simply continuing with their unhealthy business as usual.** A quarter of families now eat out at least once a week, with much of the market captured by a handful of popular restaurant chains. In the school holidays, millions of parents grab lunch for their children at the UK's iconic tourist attractions. 'Treat' food needs to get healthier, now that such treats are a frequent part of children's diets, with the power to influence every child's notion of what is good to eat. Parents urgently need restaurant chains and tourist attractions on their side.

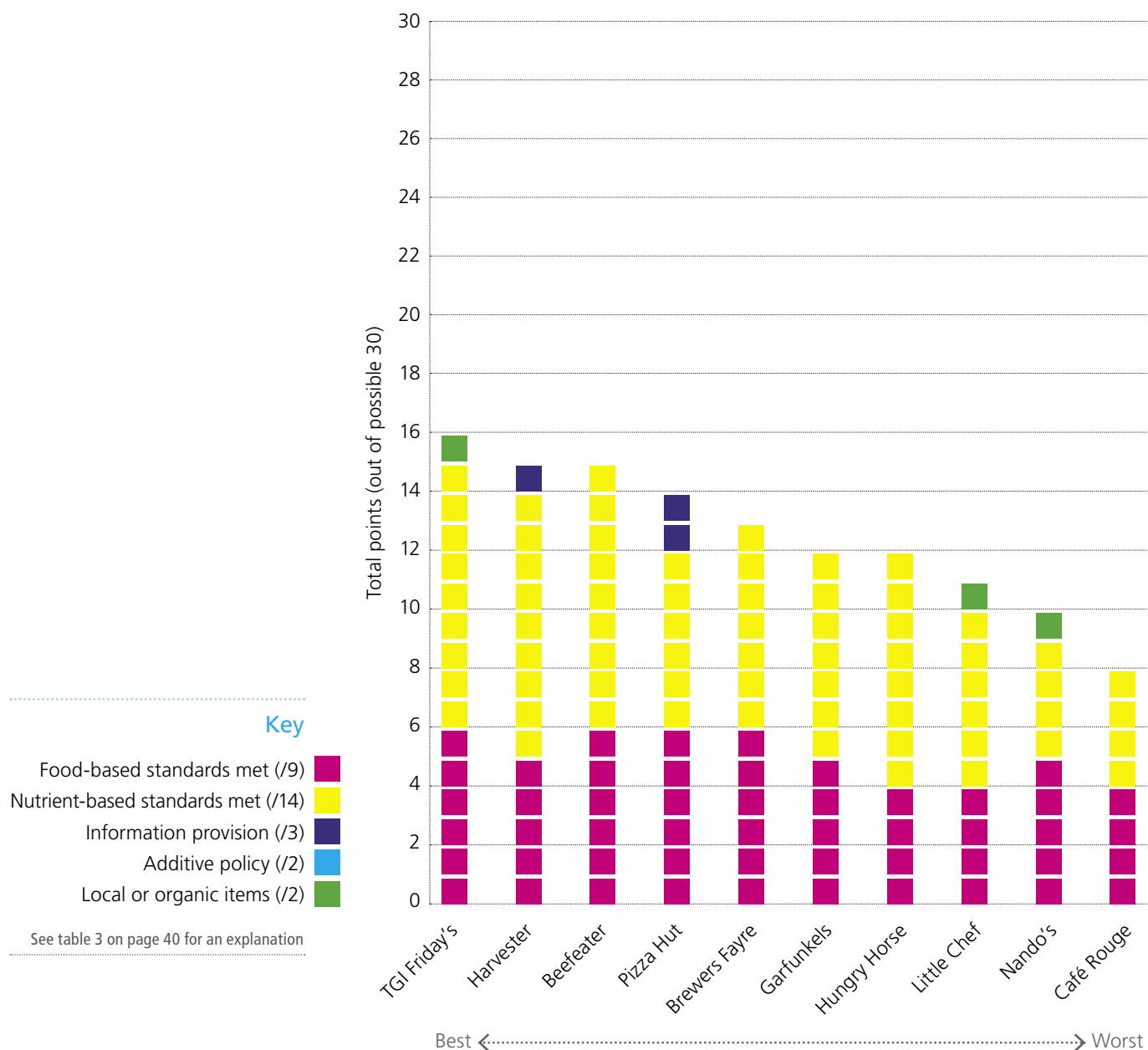
The research: what we did

- We asked an expert nutritionist to analyse children's menus from 10 popular restaurant chains between April and June 2006, and a researcher to survey the food choices on offer at 14 major visitor attractions in England and Wales.

- We ranked the restaurant chains from 1 to 10, based on how their food compared to the government's new minimum standards for school meals, by carrying out a nutritional assessment and by looking at how food was sourced and prepared.
- We also asked parents to rate the restaurants from their own experience.
- We ranked the tourist attractions according to the availability of healthy food and drink and the prevailing food culture.

This analysis represents a snapshot, based on the information supplied by restaurant staff about the menus at the time of the survey in June 2006. Of course, menu improvements could have been made since we carried out the research and **much depends on the choices made by parents and their children**. However, our objective was to assess what the restaurants and attractions were doing to make it possible, easy and attractive for families to make those healthier choices

Figure 1 Restaurant ranking on nutrition, food sourcing, food policy and information provision (out of a possible 30 points)



Junk food is king in the restaurant

Not one restaurant chain came close to meeting the new minimum school meal standards for meals. Although TGI Friday's came top of the rankings overall, this only showed up the woeful nature of the competition. The average children's meal at TGI Friday's, after all, has double the school meal maximum saturated fat content. Not one chain passed the fat and sugar tests, spelling trouble for parents worried about obesity or hyperactivity. Processed meat products and 'have-as-much-as-you-like' ice cream and fizzy drink promotions are still the norm. The average meal at Nando's contains eight teaspoons of added sugar, taking a primary school child very close to the recommended maximum for a whole day.

Café Rouge came bottom of the rankings, thanks to a near complete absence of fruit and vegetables on their children's menu. Their average children's meal provided only 9% of the vitamin A and 14% of the fibre needed by a primary school child each day. Half the restaurants failed to provide a minimum of fruit and vegetables.

Our rankings are very similar to the judgements made by parents. They rightly gave Harvester their biggest thumbs up on nutrition, perhaps thanks to the absence of chips and fizzy drinks on the menu, and the free access to the salad bar. Little Chef fared worst in parents' eyes, with good justification. Some, positive steps are being taken in a handful of the chains, in terms of salad provision, chip substitutes and increased fruit and fruit juice provision. But often these are still upstaged by Mega Grills and Candy Mania puddings, designed with children's health very far from mind.

The rankings were not only based on nutrition but also on nutritional information at point of sale, additive policies and food sourcing.

The redundant chef: nothing is homemade

The only activity behind the scenes in the kitchens at these restaurants is the opening of packets and the reheating of frozen ready meals. Nothing is homemade, except the odd bit of roast beef and grilled chicken. Pasta comes pre-cooked and frozen. Mashed potato, for the most part, is frozen and re-heated. Parents might well wonder why they didn't just stay at home with a ready meal.

Equally, in restaurant chains nothing is locally sourced, menus do not reflect the seasons, and you only get organic if you're still on baby food. The opportunity to promote the double dividend for health and sustainability that comes from fresh, well sourced food is not being taken.

Parents' right to know?

Parents have a right to know what they are feeding their children. But parents trying to make well informed food choices for their child when eating out face an uphill battle. None of the restaurants analysed have a policy on additives. In fact, no nutritional information at all could be found in the restaurants, from menus or staff, apart from passing references to '5 a day' at TGI Friday's and Brewers Fayre. Since we carried out this research Hungry Horse has introduced some nutritional advice on its menus. Only three of the restaurants supplied website advice. McDonalds – although not included in our survey – does set a good example on transparency for these restaurants to follow, with detailed nutritional information available in their restaurants.

Hungry Horse promoted their chicken and vegetable nuggets as 'added vitamins' but staff at restaurants and head office were unable to tell us what these vitamins were. No information was available on where the food actually came from. Openness is far from being the policy at any of these

Nothing is homemade, except the odd bit of grilled chicken. Pasta comes pre-cooked and frozen.

restaurants. After repeated evasion, our researchers had to go under cover as mystery mums or nutrition students to get any useful information.

Children's food can be tasty and healthy

Leading examples such as new restaurant chain Leon, and visitor attractions Center Parcs and the National Trust, show that it is possible to make fresh, well sourced, healthy food available for families in double-quick time and at an affordable price. The myth that healthy food cannot be a treat for children is turned on its head. It is time that the restaurant chains and tourist attractions in this survey raised their game in line with these and other leading players, and took their fair share of responsibility for children's health and well-being.

We are not arguing for the ban on unhealthy junk food to be extended outside schools. Rather, we want to see healthy choices, and clear information on which to base those choices made universally available to parents. 'Treat' food for children really can be tempting, affordable and nutritious all at the same time, and get children into the good habits they'll need for a happy, healthy life.

Tourist attraction food: taking our children for a ride

The food in our popular tourist attractions is no better. Little has moved on from the situation reported by the Which? *Day Chipper* survey in 2004.² Hot dogs, burgers and chips still dominate the choice on offer, and it is challenging to find a portion of vegetables if you don't care for mushy peas. A parent on the look-out for a piece of fresh fruit at Flamingo Land, New MetroLand, Great Yarmouth Pleasure Beach or Camelot Theme Park needn't bother: there's none to be found. And in eight other attractions it took our researcher at least an hour's dedicated searching to find any.

Fizzy drinks are heavily promoted via meal deals and bottomless refills, whereas healthy drink options like pure fruit juice and milk are hard work to find at most of the attractions visited and seemingly unavailable at Camelot Theme Park. What are on offer are new branded 'juice' drink products like Fruit Shoots and Ribena Light. The marketing behind these drinks even extends to branded rides, such as Blackpool's 'Fruit Shoot' and Chessington's 'Ribena Berry Bouncers'.

Dedicated children's food is as bad as the rest, with no healthy drinks, fruit or portions of vegetables to be found in any of the kid's menus, deals and lunch boxes at Thorpe Park, New MetroLand, Oakwood or Camelot Theme Park.

The Eden Project and the Tower of London are the leading exceptions to this grim rule. These hugely popular destinations prove that millions of parents do buy quality healthy food for their children when it is made available to them.

Ten steps to a healthier and happier restaurant meal

Stop 'eat as much as
you like' promotions
on puddings and
sugary drinks

1

Provide a wide range
of tasty healthy
choices, promoted to
children on the menu

2

Enable and
encourage children
to have half-portions
of adult meals

3

Increase the
availability and
desirability of fresh
fruit and vegetables

4

Incorporate
vegetables in the
main dish, rather
than as a side order

5

Connect menus with
the seasons

6

Always provide free
water

7

Introduce local and
organic food, and
cut out additives

8

Raise ingredient
quality, especially
meat.³

9

Use more non-meat
protein, like oily fish
(sustainably sourced),
beans and pulses

10

A call to action
from



Organix.

Eight steps to a healthier and happier day out

10

**Provide free water at
all outlets**

1

**Make healthy snacks
and pure fruit juice
cartons available in
all vending machines**

2

**Stop fizzy drink
promotions via
meal deals and
bottomless refills**

3

**Include fresh fruit,
salad and juice
cartons in children's
menus and lunch
boxes**

4

**Ensure healthy
choices like salads
or fresh savoury
foods are readily
available at
attractions**

5

**Improve ingredient
quality and cooking
method of popular
food eg sausages
and burgers**

6

**Introduce organic
and local food items
into menus and
lunch boxes**

7

**Keep portion sizes
healthy: cut out king
-size and unhealthy
eat-as-much-as-you-
can deals**

8

A call to action
from



Organix.

Introduction

“The hardest part is when we are out. Food in children’s play areas is awful – I would not feed it to a dog.”

Donna Air, Air Miles, *Living Earth* (2006)

Parents everywhere are waking up to the fact that the food choices we make for our children can affect their chances of future health and happiness. The number of clinically obese children has almost doubled in the last decade and the trend is accelerating. The British Medical Association predicts that by 2020 over one quarter of children will be obese and that children will have a shorter life expectancy than their parents.⁴ Already, obesity is estimated to affect almost one in five of two to 15 year-olds.⁵

It’s not just children, of course. People of all ages are overeating and under-exercising. High calorie, fatty, sugary junk food is cheap and it’s become the norm.

But our children are at particular risk. UK children have got fatter faster than anywhere else in Western Europe. Critically, obese teenagers are 15 times more likely to be obese as adults,⁶ storing up for themselves what the Chief Medical Officer, Professor Sir Liam Donaldson, has called a ‘time-bomb’ of chronic health problems in adult life, like heart disease, diabetes, cancer and arthritis. For the first time ever we are seeing furring of the arteries in teenagers, a risk factor for heart disease. Already, the number of children developing Type 2 diabetes – which normally affects overweight people in middle age – has risen ten-fold in the past five years.⁷ A high intake of sugary soft drinks is now being implicated with increased obesity risk.^{8, 9, 10}

Diet-related diseases are already costing the NHS an estimated £4 billion a year.¹¹

School meals and the *Food for Life* campaign

The dismal role that school meals were playing in this debacle was highlighted in 2003, with the launch of the *Food for Life* report by the Soil Association and Organix and the subsequent campaign by the Soil Association. Its headlines reached an audience 14–million strong. In 2005, their work with schools inspired Jamie Oliver’s hugely influential TV series, *Jamie’s Dinners*. Alongside the *Food for Life* campaign, the Scottish government’s *Hungry for Success* initiative and work by many others, Jamie finally catalysed new funding and nutritional standards from government, the establishment of a School Food Trust to drive reform, and parallel action in Wales.

The Soil Association’s work with schools has exposed as a myth the claim that children will simply refuse to eat healthy meals. *Food for Life* schools have, *without exception*, seen uptake rates for school meals improve, often by 100% or more, an effect that is amplified if parents and children are actively involved in the process of setting new menus. These schools have broken free of the old processed junk food model,

One in four families in the UK don't have a dining table to eat around.

Blythman, J. (2006) *Bad Food Britain*

and proved that it is possible to prepare nutritious and affordable meals using fresh ingredients, and to work, either independently or through major catering firms, to source from local and organic suppliers. The *Food for Life* targets – 75% unprocessed, 50% local and 30% organic – have given schools a framework for menu change, and encouraged them to foster a more sustainable school food culture through cooking lessons and vegetable growing projects. Schools such as Columbia Primary in Tower Hamlets show what is possible. There, lesson time is given to healthy eating and farm visits, and fruit and salads are now organic, with the result that some 60% of children now choose salad by preference.¹² Menus designed around fresh food not only sell, they can also deliver a double dividend for health and environmental benefits. Shifting from processed, meat-intensive diets to a more balanced use of healthier extensively reared or organic meat, sustainably sourced oily fish and seasonal fresh produce has benefits for dietary health, biodiversity *and* the climate.¹³

Spotlight on restaurant food and tourist attractions

But school meals are not the end of the story. Popular restaurants and tourist attractions now need to take their fair share of responsibility for children's health. Eating out as a family used to be an occasional treat. Now, for many households, it is more a way of life. **The eating out market was worth an estimated £35.8 billion in 2005, and now accounts for 31% of total food and drink expenditure.**¹⁴ A survey carried out by Beefeater in 2006 found that nearly a quarter of us eat out once a week, and three quarters of families have a pub or restaurant meal at least once a month.¹⁵

Whitbread, owner of Beefeater, Brewer's Fayre and TGI Friday's, serves up more than three million meals a week, a significant proportion of which are to children.¹⁶ If, on a conservative estimate, one in four of these is a children's meal, that is 750,000 meals a week, or 39 million children's meals a year. Schools in England serve approximately 570 million meals each year. Based on these figures, for every 14.5 meals served in a school, one children's meal is served by Whitbread. Put another way, Whitbread's children's meals operation is around twice the size of Birmingham City Council's, who serve 380,000 school meals a week. For Whitbread, to continue to assert, as they do, that parents aren't interested in healthy choices because Whitbread meals are a one-off treat, is plain wrong. It also perpetuates the flawed assumption that healthier options can't be made enticing to children. Either parents should stop eating Whitbread's food nearly so often, or Whitbread should pledge to give parents a choice of meals for their children that at least matches the minimum standards for school meals.

The poor quality of children's meals in restaurants was first highlighted by the Food Commission's Parents Jury in 2003 when they held their Children's Menu Awards.¹⁷ Then, in 2004, a report from Metropolitan University surveyed 141 children's meals in popular restaurants, and found that every single one failed against the Caroline Walker Trust standards for school meals,¹⁸ which have since been updated and adopted by the government and the School Food Trust.¹⁹ The view that children's food is simply not good enough is also shared by parents. A survey of 3,000 parents in 2006 by the Baby Friendly Britain Campaign revealed that 96% of parents think food aimed at children in pubs, restaurants and cafés is unhealthy and unimaginative.²⁰ This is a view which seems to be shared by many more parents, including the actor and TV presenter, Donna Air:

"The hardest part is when we are out. Food in children's play areas is awful – I would not feed it to a dog."

Similarly, a survey by *Which?* in 2004, *Day Chipper*, reported that processed junk from fast food outlets was the mainstay at most theme parks.²¹ Trips to big attractions are a school holiday treat, but that's no reason why it should be a headache for parents to find their children a snack that's both tempting and healthy. Tourist attractions feed a lot of mouths: over 470 million people passed through their doors in 2004. Many have values that should be better reflected in the food they serve.

In this report, we set out to update both surveys to see whether the radical reform of school meals now underway has had a knock-on effect on the food being served up in family restaurants and tourist attractions in 2006.

Don't put it in your mouth: you don't know where it's been

At the very least, restaurants and tourist attractions should be taking responsibility for knowing where their food has come from, how it has been produced and prepared and its nutritional content, and making such information easily available to concerned parents. We are about to enter a new era of transparency, spearheaded by the Food Standards Agency's drive for nutrition labelling. Responsible catering outlets should be leading the way, not dragging their heels. Above all, they need to be far more open about food origins and quality. Parents should be able to enjoy eating out as a family, without having to worry that the food on offer undermines their best efforts to encourage their children into healthy and sustainable eating habits.

Many restaurants and attractions are already raising their game. A former Little Chef, just off the A1, has been transformed into a food and farming visitor centre known as 'The Friendly Farmer'.²² Its restaurant and shop showcase local and organic food and serve half portions of quality adult meals to children. The Youth Hostel Association is also developing its menus to use more local and organic food.²³ And Europe's biggest family restaurant, the Rainforest Café in London, serves over 3,000 children's meals a week, many of which are organic and made from fresh ingredients.

What we did

Restaurants surveyed:

Beefeater

Brewers Fayre

Café Rouge

Garfunkels

Harvester

Hungry Horse

Little Chef

Nando's

Pizza Hut

TGI Friday's

We asked an expert nutritionist to analyse children's menus from 10 popular restaurant chains between April and June 2006. We also assessed the food choices on offer at 14 major visitor attractions across England and Wales.

Restaurants

The restaurant chains surveyed all have dedicated children's menus, available at outlets nationwide, and are popular family destinations. We also asked 1,851 parents to rate the same restaurants from poor to excellent, based on their children's menus, for comparison with our findings.

We ranked the 10 restaurants according to how well their menus compared with the new minimum standards for school meals aimed at children aged 5–11, as set out by the School Food Trust (see appendix 1). From September 2006, schools must comply with nine 'food-based standards', which define the types of food that children should be offered in a school lunch and their frequency. With the help of the independent nutritionist, we adapted these standards to apply to availability on restaurant menus, and gave a score out of nine according to how many of the standards were met. Schools will also have to meet 14 nutrition-based standards from 2008 (primaries) or 2009 (secondaries), which set out the proportion of key nutrients that children should receive from school lunches over a week. Adopting the same method used to assess school menus, we assessed

restaurant menus against these standards. Our nutritionist included all possible menu choices, method of cooking and portion size in the analysis in order to calculate nutrition values for the average meal. We then gave the restaurants scores out of 14 according to how many of the standards the average meal met. We also identified the healthiest and least healthy meals on offer.

Finally, we allocated a further seven points according to how much information was available to parents, and how likely their meals were to be freshly prepared, additive-free and using some local or organic ingredients. The overall scores and rankings can be seen on page 30.

Getting hold of this information was no easy matter. Initially, researchers were open with restaurant managers and chefs about the reasons for their enquiries. Repeated brush-offs forced them to take the mystery customer route, posing as a concerned mother or student. We asked every restaurant the same detailed questions about portion sizes, cooking methods and salt content, as well as about the origins of the food and how much was homemade, local or organic. The mystery mothers then called other outlets to verify the information given. Finally, we wrote to the company HQs asking for any missing information, but – with the exception of Harvester – they chose not to respond. **The difficulty that any concerned parent would face in obtaining information was one of the most strikingly depressing lessons from our research.**

Tourist attractions visited:

Alton Towers

Blackpool Pleasure Beach

Camelot Theme Park

Chessington World of
Adventures

Eden Project

Flamingo Land
Theme Park and Zoo

Great Yarmouth Pleasure
Beach

Legoland

London Zoo

Madame Tussauds

New MetroLand

Oakwood Theme Park

Thorpe Park

Tower of London

Tourist attractions

For each of the tourist attractions, we sent a researcher to investigate how easy it is to track down fresh, healthy food and drink for children and their families.

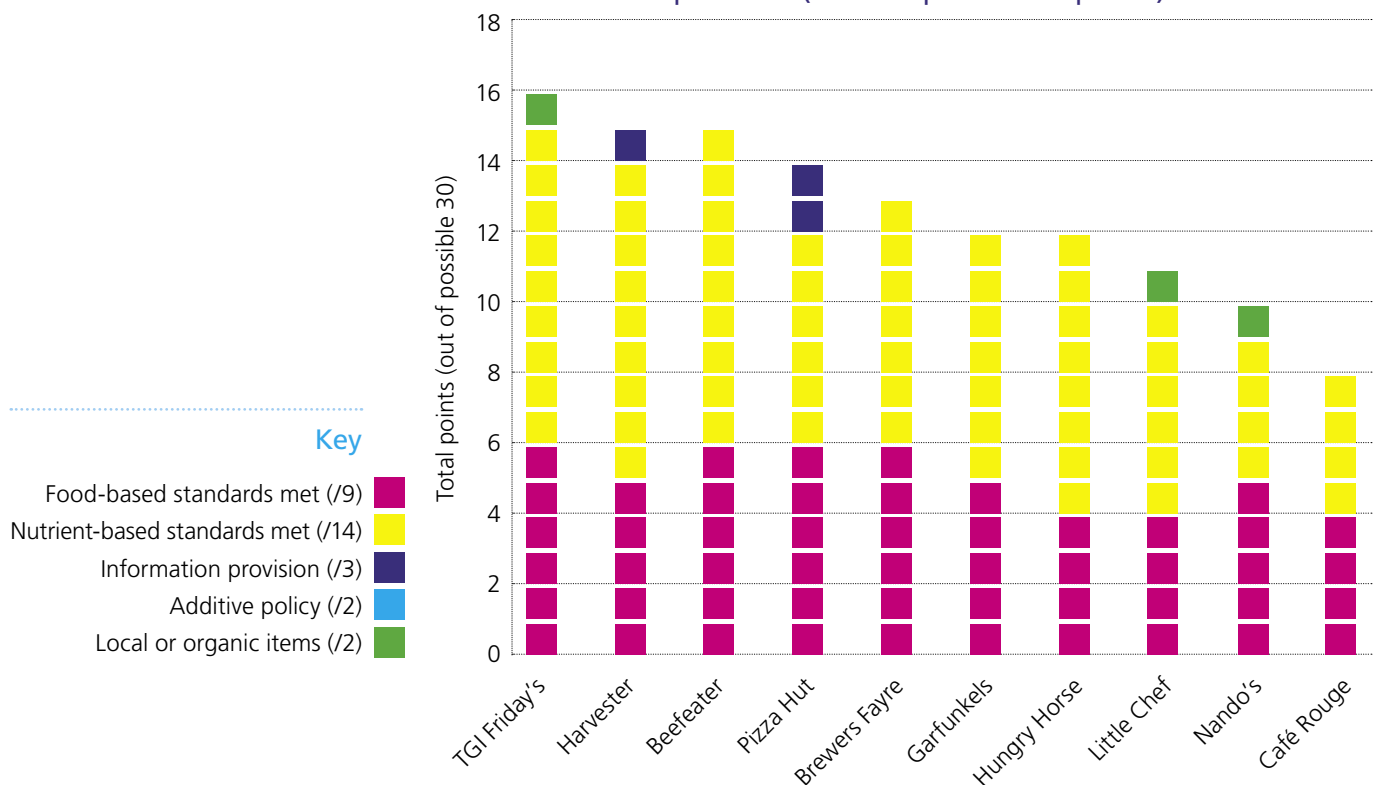
We ranked the attractions from 1 to 14, based on their scores out of a total possible of 25 points. Twelve points were allocated to healthy drink provision. Our mystery mum gave points for free drinking water, and for the availability of healthy drinks like pure juice, milk and water in vending machines and kiosks. Eight points were allocated to healthy food provision, with points for availability of fresh fruit, and for including healthy fruit and veg in children's menus and lunch boxes. Finally, we assigned points out of five according to how positive the culture of food promotion was at the attraction, with poor scores for those using meal deals to promote junk food at the expense of healthier options.

Our mystery mum also made a careful note of how long it took her to find fresh fruit at each destination, if it was there to find at all. Included in our target list were the two attractions ranked bottom by the 2004 *Which?* survey: Camelot Theme Park and Flamingo Land. On page 29 we give our verdict on whether things have moved on.

Restaurants: headline findings

It is clear that family restaurants are lagging far behind the good work now beginning to happen in schools. All 10 of the major restaurant chains surveyed serve food to children that does not reach the minimum required of school meals. This will of course depend on what gets ordered, with some meals far worse than others, as we show on page 18. But astonishingly, even the healthiest meals on offer fail to meet all the school meal standards. TGI Friday's emerges as the best of a bad bunch, and – perhaps surprisingly – Café Rouge takes the bottom slot.

Figure 1: Restaurant ranking on nutrition, food sourcing, food policy and information provision (out of a possible 30 points)



However, it's worth a closer look at the apparent leader of the pack before we lend them any glory. TGI Friday's scores well on vitamins and minerals, and makes salad freely available with all its meals. But if we were looking at obesity risk alone they would have gone from top to bottom of the rankings. Their average meal is higher in saturated fat than any other restaurant in the survey, at double the school meal maximum (almost two thirds of the maximum recommended daily amount for a primary school child), and on added sugar content they are right up there with the worst offenders.

Virtually none of the food in the restaurants we visited is freshly prepared on-site.

Nando’s takes the biscuit when it comes to added sugar: its average meal has a non-milk extrinsic sugar content of 42.4g, over twice the school meal maximum of 16.3g.²⁴ That’s a shocking eight teaspoons of sugar, almost a primary school child’s maximum recommended intake for a whole day. At least six teaspoons of added sugar also go into the average meal at TGI Friday’s, Pizza Hut, Little Chef, Brewers Fayre and Hungry Horse.

Worryingly, all menus failed the average fat and energy test, except Pizza Hut, which was the only restaurant to offer no more than one deep fried item on the menu. Most of the average fat content is likely to come from chips, processed potato products, processed meat, and fatty puddings which are prevalent on most menus. Every meal at TGI Friday’s, for instance, comes free with that old and discredited school meal staple ‘smiley faces’ – fried processed potato – or fries, alongside the choice of baked beans or vegetables.

What will surprise and shock many parents is that virtually none of the food on offer in these restaurants is freshly prepared on-site. With the exception of the odd salad and grilled chicken, all the food is cooked and processed off-site and the kitchen staff simply reheat it from frozen, in some cases via the deep fat fryer. Families might often be better off at home eating a cheap processed ready meal.

It may also come as a surprise that Café Rouge, a relatively upmarket destination for adult diners, comes out bottom of the pile. Its pitiful score is largely due to an almost complete absence of fruit and vegetables on the children’s menu, meaning that it cannot meet more than a handful of the food and nutrient-based standards being set as a minimum for schools.

Restaurant food

The food-based standards, as we have applied them to restaurants, are designed to ensure that all the components of a balanced diet are available on the menu in the right proportions. As such, there is little merit in meeting around half the standards as these restaurants have done. It is hardly surprising that all the chains were able to meet, and exceed, the standards referring to minimum availability of meat protein, starchy foods like potatoes, and dairy items on the menu. But half the restaurants failed on minimum fruit and vegetable provision, having fewer than two portions on the menu. Café Rouge and Nando’s offered no fruit except fruit juice. Only Beefeater had made oily fish available, to supply children with health-giving omega-3 fatty acids.

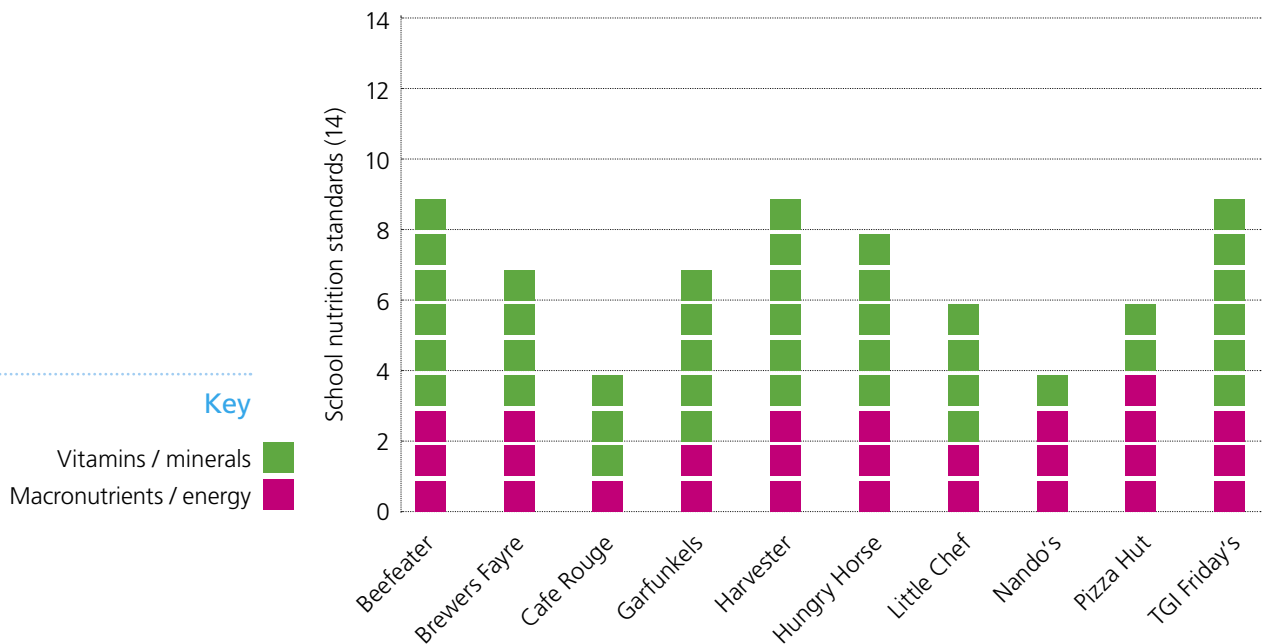
Table 1: Children’s menus assessed against school food-based standards

Restaurant	Number of school food-based standards met (out of 9)
Beefeater, Brewers Fayre, Pizza Hut and TGI Friday’s	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Garfunkels, Harvester and Nando’s	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Café Rouge, Hungry Horse and Little Chef	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

Unsurprisingly, the standards most consistently failed were those designed to set maximum limits on the availability of deep-fried foods and manufactured meat products. Pizza Hut was the only restaurant to meet these

standards. (Further details on these standards are in appendix 1.) Harvester has taken steps to improve their children's menus following earlier criticism. However, their replacement of chips by potato wedges was not as healthy as was first thought, as staff informed our researcher that these are also deep-fried!

Figure 2: Children's menus assessed against school nutrition-based standards



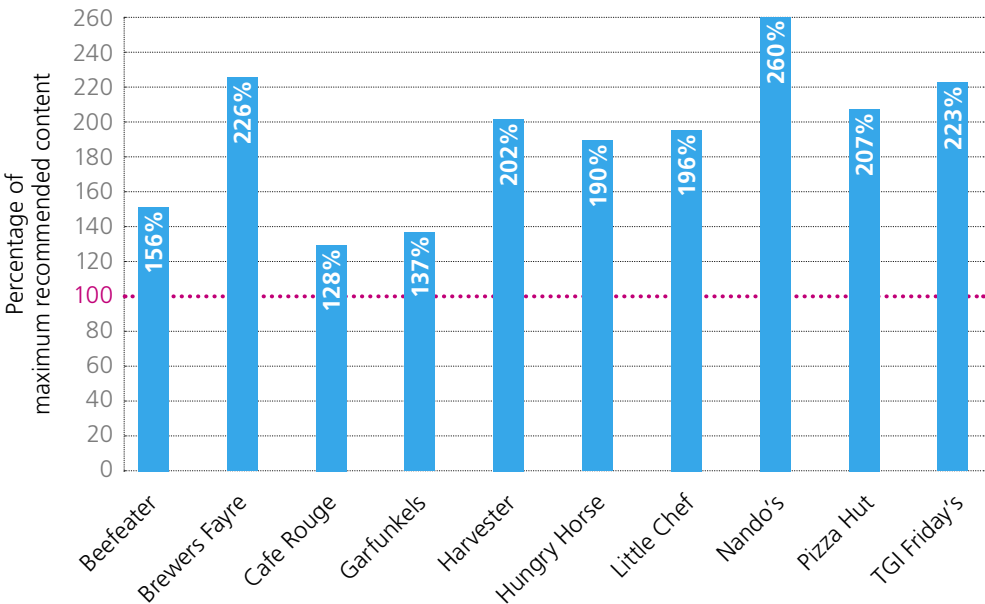
As would be expected, given the poor balance of foods on the menu, some glaring problems emerge from detailed nutrition analysis of the average meal. The findings will horrify parents concerned about the future health of their children.

Every single restaurant chain except Pizza Hut had too much energy and fat in their average meal. Saturated fat levels were twice the school meal maximum at Harvester and TGI Friday's, thanks to the prevalence of processed meat products such as beefburgers and sausages, cheese-based products and fatty puddings, and too high at all other chains save Nando's.

Small praise for Nando's, though, when its average meal contained nearly 80% of a primary school child's maximum recommended sugar intake for the whole day, closely rivalled by Brewer's Fayre and TGI Friday's whose meals contained two thirds of the daily recommended maximum. Much of this sugar will be in the sugary soft drinks that accompany the meals. Despite the current spotlight on salt reduction, half the restaurants had more than the recommended 600mg of salt in their meals, with Harvester averaging 684mg and Nando's 670mg.

Good nutrition is not just about cutting back on fat, sugar and salt, of course. Café Rouge, Nando's and Pizza Hut came bottom of the league on nutrition because they met so few of the minimum standards for essential vitamins and minerals. All three failed to supply minimum levels of vitamin A and folate. Nando's can be singled out for particular criticism: its average meal is deficient in calcium, iron, zinc and folate, and has a meagre 9% of a seven year-old's minimum recommended daily intake for vitamin A. Pizza Hut and Café Rouge were the worst offenders on iron and zinc deficiency, although this was a problem nearly right across the board. Fibre was another key missing ingredient. More than half the children's menus failed the fibre test, and Café Rouge again occupied the inglorious bottom slot, with only 14% of a primary school child's recommended minimum fibre intake for the day.

Figure 3: Average non-milk extrinsic (NME)* sugar content of children's menus compared to school meal nutrition standards

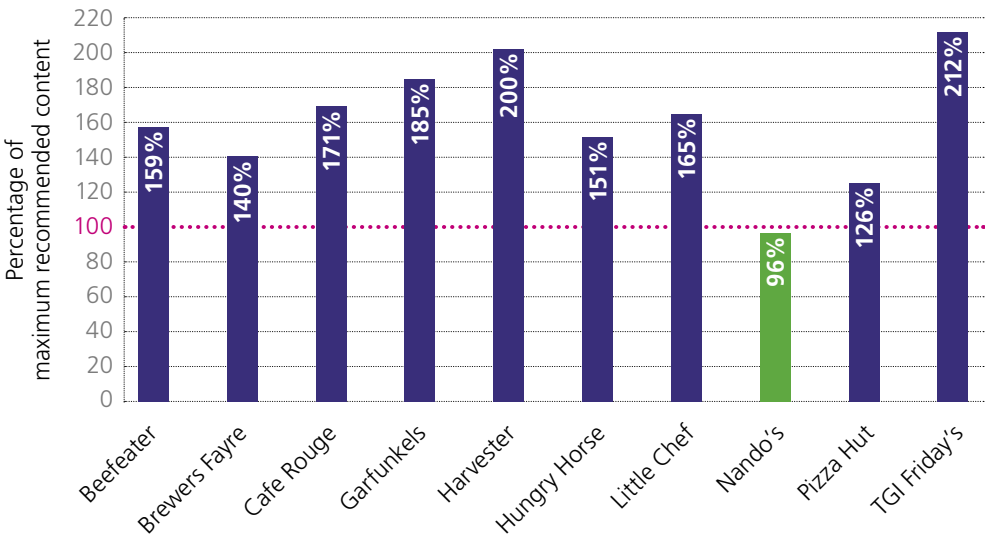


* NME sugars are those sugars which have been extracted from the stem, root or fruit of a plant and are no longer incorporated into the cellular structure of food. They include table sugar, sugar in cakes, biscuits and recipe dishes, confectionery, soft drinks and fruit juices.

The very high protein levels in all average meals (ranging from 204% of the minimum standard at Café Rouge to 495% at Nando's) reflect the dominance of meat on the menus and the large portions served. Such high protein intakes offer no nutritional benefit, and it has been suggested that it is prudent to avoid protein intakes greater than twice the minimum intake standard due to links to potential kidney problems.²⁵ *The vegetarian meals on the menus tend to be rather unimaginative* – pasta and tomato sauce, vegeburgers, vegetable nuggets or cheese sandwiches – and make little use of nutrient-rich non-meat proteins like pulses.

Overall, a better nutritional balance would be achieved by reducing portions of food that are high in protein, fat and sugar content, like quarter-pounder burgers and candymania-style puddings, and giving fruit and vegetables a more central role in all meals.

Figure 4: Average saturated fat content of children's menus compared to school meal nutrition standards





Getting it right Leon



Case study one

Leon is a new fast food chain with four outlets across London, serving 3,000 meals a day. They have set themselves four food principles:

- 1 All dishes are boldly flavoured and great tasting
- 2 Ingredients are seasonal and well sourced
- 3 Use ingredients that do you good
- 4 Treat yourself.

All food is prepared from fresh ingredients, either on site or at their own central 'production kitchen'. Emphasis is placed on seasonality, reflected in daily changes to soups and stews, and seasonal menus, which also help keep their menus affordable. They also credit seasonality with cutting down food miles and supplying food with maximum flavour and nutrition. They have shunned additives and excess salt in favour of fresh herbs and spices.

They don't have a separate children's menu as they believe that 'kids should eat the same as grown ups'.²⁶ Little portions of adult options like hummus, meatballs and rice, and grilled chicken nuggets are recommended. All the meat served is extensively reared, and milk and ice cream are organic. Refined white sugars are avoided in favour of good carbs and whole foods, even in their indulgent 'treat' foods. Their chocolate brownies, for instance, use fruit sugars that, as the menu says, "won't make you fall asleep and wake up fat", and ground almonds instead of white flour.

Our expert nutritionist rated Leon very highly, especially for the clever way in which they integrate healthy 'superfoods' like toasted seeds into rice and salads, and for the absence of cola and other usual suspects on the soft drinks menu in favour of juices

and smoothies. Their use of wholemeal breads, brown rice and tasty salad and fruit-based dishes is also to be highly commended.

Another big plus point is the way that useful nutrition information is supplied on the menu. Parents choosing from the 'little round pots' for their children can read off symbols that signal good carbs only, no or low animal fat, and wheat or dairy free.





Restaurant meals to avoid, and **meals to enjoy**

The unhealthiest

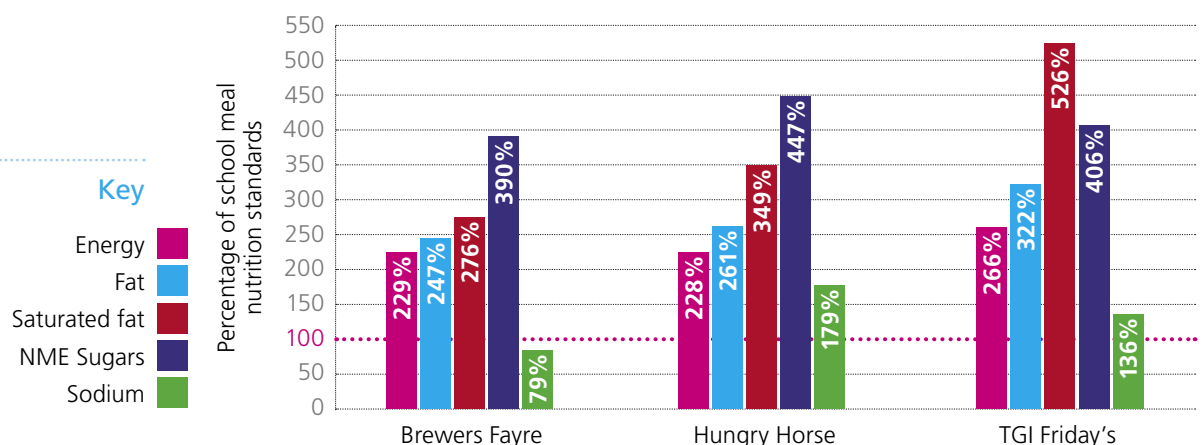
The booby prize for least healthy meal on offer goes to Café Rouge.

Its croque monsieur (toasted cheese sandwich) with deep-fried French fries, washed down with cola, and followed by ice cream, failed a record 10 out of the 14 nutrition standards. A total lack of fruit and vegetables means this meal is woefully lacking in vitamins and minerals, as well as fibre, a fact that is not helped by the use of white bread. Saturated fat levels, meanwhile, are more than double the recommended level.

The prize for highest calorie content, fat and saturated fat content goes to TGI Friday's.

Their burger in a bun, with deep-fried French fries, baked beans, accompanied by cola and followed by Maltesers Munch Madness – "chocolate brownie pieces with vanilla flavour ice cream, caramel sauce and Maltesers and whipped cream" – manages to contain one and a half times a primary school child's recommended saturated fat intake for the whole day.

Figure 5: The three least healthy children's meals based on fat, sugar and salt levels



Hungry Horse scoops the prize for highest added sugar and salt.

A child choosing garlic bread followed by chicken nuggets with deep fried chips and beans, washed down with cola, and followed by Candy Mania pudding would have, at a conservative estimate, put away 179% of their recommended salt intake for a meal, or more than half their maximum recommended salt intake for the day, and a record one and a third times their maximum recommended sugar intake for the whole day or 15 teaspoons

We are not arguing to extend the school junk food ban to restaurants but there needs to be more meals on the menu that are tasty and nutritionally beneficial.

of sugar. This assumes that the child had shared the Candymania experience – chocolate and vanilla ice cream, chocolate sauce, one bag of white chocolate Maltesers, milk chocolate Maltesers, Milky Way Magic Stars, one Wagon Wheel, one Milkyway Crispy Roll and cream – with three others, as one outlet said was intended. Another outlet however, disagreed, raising the possibility that a child could in reality be consuming four times those sugar levels in a single sitting.

The healthiest

At the other, more positive end of the scale, the healthiest meal option can be found on the children's menu at Brewer's Fayre.

Cottage pie with potato skin and cheese topping, served with seasonal vegetables and a glass of milk, followed by fruit with chocolate dipping sauce, would fail only one of the 14 nutrition standards, narrowly exceeding the recommended energy intake by 16 calories.

Beefeater had the next healthiest meal on offer:

A starter of vegetable sticks and a dip, a main course of roast beef, new or roast potatoes, Yorkshire pudding and vegetables, and fruit pieces with chocolate dipping sauce for pudding, all washed down with drinking water.

While this meal would be slightly down on carbohydrates and calcium, it scores well by having the lowest available saturated fat content at 2.5g compared to the maximum standard of 6.8g, and the highest iron level at 4.34mg compared to the minimum standard of 3.5mg. Unfortunately this meal is only an option on Sundays.

What the doctor ordered?

Of course, to some extent it all depends on what gets ordered. The worst offenders do have some healthier options. Café Rouge for instance, may serve up the least healthy meal we found, but also gives children the relatively healthy balanced option of egg and cheese salad, followed by ice cream and accompanied by apple juice. TGI Friday's gives the option of upping the fruit and cutting the fat with its healthiest option, spaghetti bolognese with cheese and garlic bread and a fruit smoothie followed by fruit sundae, while Hungry Horse offers an alternative to sugar overload with a chicken burger with baked potato and salad, washed down with a glass of water, and followed by fresh melon medley.

At the other end of the spectrum, a child eating at Brewer's Fayre might quite conceivably decide against our top-rated cottage pie option in favour of fat and sugar overload via a beefburger in a bun and chips and baked beans, followed by a doughnut with chocolate flavour dipping sauce, and accompanied by Orange Tango.

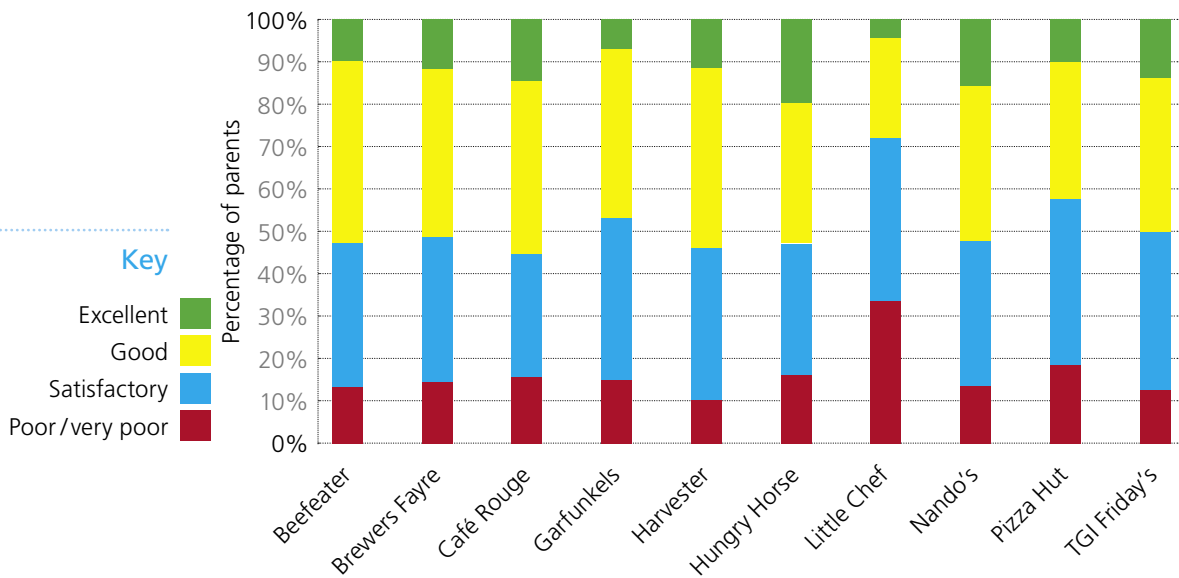
And it wouldn't be hard for a child to avoid vegetable batons and fruit at Beefeaters and instead opt for the hugely energy-and fat-intensive Mega Mixed Grill: grilled chicken, sausages, and bacon rashers with chips and peas, followed by a Mini Chocolate Challenge: marshmallow, chocolate sauce, Maltesers, whipped cream with a wafer, and all washed down with a Cola.

As our headline findings showed, none of these children's menus actively promote healthy choices, and most do not even make such choices readily available. This reinforces the need for parents to be given the information they need so they can avoid the worst offenders if they want to.

What parents said

It is interesting to compare our findings with parents' perceptions. Parents were asked to rate all 10 restaurants from poor to excellent, based on nutritional quality. Bearing in mind that these restaurants purport to offer a special experience or treat, it is perhaps surprising that around half of our sample group of 1,851 parents, from the Organix parents database, felt the meals were poor or very poor, or were merely satisfied with the children's meals on offer, with roughly half finding them 'good' or 'excellent'.

Figure 6: Parents' views on the restaurants surveyed



Little Chef has clearly made the worst impression to date, with 35% of parents reporting them to be either 'poor' or 'very poor'. They are not far wrong, either, with the chain ranked second from the bottom in our assessment. Interestingly, Café Rouge, our bottom ranker, split parents, prompting both the greatest praise (55% saying good or excellent) and the third highest level of criticism. Café Rouge's strong reputation for quality adult meals may be supporting unduly good perceptions of its children's menu.

Harvester, second in our rankings, came out best from the survey. This positive impression is likely to have been reinforced by the fact that, for instance, they offer a choice of baked potato or wedges with each meal, rather than fries, and include free trips to the salad bar.

Clearly it is not always easy for parents to make accurate judgements of the nutritional quality of the food on offer to children. They need restaurants to be more open about what's on the menu in nutritional terms, and to give them more confidence that they are designing their menus with children's health in mind.

The right to know

Parents have a right to know what they are feeding their children, and where the food comes from. For parents, getting information about the food on offer is easier said than done. Not one of the chains provides any advice about nutrition or food origins for parents in the restaurant itself, to help them make informed decisions for their children. Even a dedicated web search yields no relevant nutritional information, with the honourable exception of www.pizzahut.co.uk, which provides a nutritional calculator, and to a lesser extent Harvester.

Getting it right

The National Trust



24

Case study two

With 145 restaurants nationwide, the National Trust provides lunches to the millions of children who visit their properties on family days out each year. Chips have never been included on their children's menu. Their policy is to treat children like mini adults, with half portions available of any dish off the adult menu.



All meals are home-made, and freshly prepared on-site, rather than with bought-in, processed ingredients. This guarantees that their food is free of troublesome additives. Long before Jamie Oliver turned the spotlight on chicken nuggets, the Trust had taken reconstituted chicken meat off the menu, and now, wherever possible, serves meat certified Freedom Food by the RSPCA. All beef is from the UK.

In line with their overall food sourcing policy, the fresh fruit and vegetables on offer are varied through the year to reflect the seasons. All properties will source as locally as possible to maximise freshness, help the local economy and reflect the distinctive character of the region as part of the visitor experience.

The Trust also stocks a range of organic drinks and snacks for children's 'grazing boxes'.

Our expert nutritionist rated the Trust's menus highly for offering small portions from the adult menu; preparing food freshly on-site with lower salt levels than processed food; being free of chips, low quality meat and additives; and being rich in fruit and vegetables, beneficial dairy products, vitamin A-rich eggs and filling starchy carbohydrates. To further improve these menus our nutritionist recommended supplying juice instead of squash, and breadsticks or vegetable sticks as a healthier alternative to crisps. Every opportunity should also be taken to include fruit with ice cream puddings, as this is a great way to get children appreciating fresh fruit.



"Nothing is made on the premises, we are a fast food restaurant."

Restaurant staff member, Garfunkels, Edinburgh

"All our food is processed, it's the safest way to produce it."

Restaurant staff member, Brewer's Fayre, Southampton

Not one restaurant could tell us their policy on the use of artificial sweeteners and preservatives, either; despite the advice of nutritionists about the adverse impact such additives can have on child behaviour. Most, however, did tell us that their food was GM-free. Taking a step in the right direction, Hungry Horse's Pony Club menu for children now includes a colour-coded 'flower power' system for the 'key to a healthy meal'. Unfortunately, the multi-coloured petals dotted about the menu turn what should be a simple guide into a challenging game of mix and match.

Nothing homemade

A big part of the problem is that these restaurants are not preparing their own food, so staff are generally unable to supply information about origins and ingredients. Many members of staff were not aware that their restaurant was in the process of reducing salt content in their food. The vast majority of meals in all the restaurants are supplied pre-prepared and frozen by the global food distributor 3663. **It is the school meals story all over again.** The kitchens are used for reheating or rehydrating, not chopping and cooking.

The mince for the cottage pie at Brewer's Fayre is supplied pre-cooked and frozen, as are the potato skins to go on top. The potato mash is frozen and re-heated. Spaghetti bolognese at Little Chef is delivered pre-cooked in packets ready for reheating on demand. Omelettes and pasta dishes at Hungry Horse are cooked elsewhere, frozen and reheated.

"Nothing is made on the premises, we are a fast food restaurant."

Restaurant staff member, Garfunkels, Edinburgh

Café Rouge is unusual in that it mashes its own potato, rather than rehydrating a packet mix, and it boils its own eggs. Otherwise, all its children's menu dishes are pre-cooked or processed too. Chicken goujons come in frozen and are deep fried. The only suggestion staff could make for a non-processed meal was salad, or a cheese sandwich.

"All our food is processed, it's the safest way to produce our food"

Restaurant staff member, Brewer's Fayre, Southampton

In fact, right across the board, the only freshly prepared items are salad, grilled chicken and roast meat. The grilled chicken at Nando's is not frozen but marinated while fresh. At Brewer's Fayre, the beef is roasted on-site, but the roast potatoes are bought in frozen and then deep-fried to the right temperature.

The restaurants do not generally know where the food has come from. None of the restaurants has a policy of sourcing anything locally, and menus are standardised and bear no relation to the seasons. Aside from organic baby food, on offer in TGI Friday's and Little Chef, the only organic item on any of these children's menus is the frozen yoghurt in Nando's.

This centralised, standardised model of catering makes for an unhealthy, homogenous, unadventurous approach to food. It may be an efficient way of managing some immediate food safety risks and allergies, but it fails to address the long-term risks of diet and food habits. The resulting menus are unimaginative, as the parents who took part in the Baby Friendly Britain survey testified.²⁷

Not only is children's health not at the heart of these menus, but also the opportunity is being missed to promote a double dividend for health and environmental benefits, by procuring fresh, seasonal, local and organic food. The best school meal services, with the highest levels of uptake, are taking this double dividend route, showing that it yields benefits for taste and sales too.

Fast Food made good

26

Quick bites can be good for you. And healthy food doesn't have to be 'brown rice and carrots'.

The following two recipes are from Jeanette Orrey's recipe books, *The Dinner Lady* and *Second Helpings*. Both recipes currently feature on school menus and show how fast food doesn't have to be full of fat, sugar and salt to be attractive to children and adults alike. If a school kitchen can do it why can't our high street restaurant chains?

Real Chicken Nuggets

The Dinner Lady

SERVES 4

225g bread

1/2 tsp garlic powder

1/2 tsp paprika

1 egg

125ml milk

900g chicken, extensively reared
or organic, diced

- 1 Slice the bread and toast until light brown. Break into pieces and crumble in a food processor. Add the garlic powder and paprika, and whiz again.
- 2 Place the breadcrumbs in a large freezer bag or on a deep tray.
- 3 Beat the egg in a large bowl with the milk. Add the chicken pieces.
- 4 Transfer the chicken pieces to the bag or tray of breadcrumbs and toss to coat evenly.
- 5 Arrange the crumbed chicken on a lightly greased baking sheet, and bake in the preheated oven for 10 minutes until browned and crisp, and cooked through.

Serve with homemade tomato sauce or relish.



Ratatouille Pasta

Second Helpings

SERVES 4

225g macaroni, penne or twists

3 tbs olive oil

1 garlic clove, peeled and crushed

350g red/white onions, peeled, roughly diced

1 each red and green pepper, deseeded, roughly diced

225g courgettes, trimmed and roughly diced

1 aubergine, trimmed and roughly diced

800g good Italian tomatoes (canned)

1 tbs tomato purée

1 tsp mixed dried herbs / herbes de Provence

150ml water

- 1 Heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil in a saucepan and gently fry the garlic and onion for about 5 minute. Add the other 2 tablespoons of oil, along with the peppers, courgette and aubergine, and continue to cook over moderate heat for 5 minutes.
- 2 Add the canned tomatoes, tomato purée and herbs. Pour in the water, reduce the heat and simmer, stirring, for another 30 minutes.
- 3 Meanwhile, in a large saucepan of boiling water, cook the pasta for 10 minutes or until tender. Drain, then mix with the vegetables. Warm through and serve.

Serve with a sprinkle of freshly grated Parmesan cheese..

You can use any combination of vegetables for this dish. Look at what is in season: seasonal vegetables will be cheaper and taste really good.



Getting it right

Lunch boxes



Case study three

What do IKEA, London Zoo and the Natural History Museum have in common? A children's organic lunch or snack box.

A shopping trip to one of IKEA's UK stores has become a popular family day out in the UK, and IKEA restaurants serve 13 million meals a year. The company now provides a kid's snackbox, and has set about incorporating organic products to maximise parental peace of mind. Already the snackbox contains an organic mini raisin box, fruit bar and puff snacks, and a pot of organic yoghurt, as well as a free piece of fruit. At the Natural History Museum children can tuck into an organic lunch box containing

a freshly made sandwich, healthy snack bar and a piece of fresh fruit – along with a toy dinosaur! The Museum also sells a range of pure organic juices. London Zoo has a similar lunch box – albeit with no fresh fruit – and offers a range of other organic and fair trade options.



28

Getting it right

Center Parcs



Case study four

Center Parcs operates four short-break holiday village resorts in the UK. Each village has 11 restaurants, which all make half portions of main meals available to children.

Their dedicated children's menu operates a reduced salt and sugar policy.

Vegetables are included in all main meals except the fish pie. All meals are served with garden peas. Meat is British and they offer a selection of organic children's meals – meat-based, fish-based and vegetarian. A meal deal option, including a drink and dessert, is available with these organic meals. Three out of the five desserts on offer are based around fruit.

Bottled water, milk and smoothies are available on the drinks menu, alongside organic high juice squashes and flavoured milks.

To further improve these menus, our nutritionist recommended a greater use of fresh and seasonal produce – junior meals could be served with a diverse range of fresh seasonal vegetables, and coleslaw could replace salad leaves in winter.



Tourist attractions: Junk Food Villains versus Good Food Heroes

*Families are
bombarded
by Coca-Cola,
Pepsi or Walls
promotions
at all the
attractions we
visited except
Eden Project.*

For the most part, eating out at the tourist attractions we surveyed is a case of stopping to refuel at vending machines and kiosks. Two years on from the damning *Which?* report *Day Chipper*,²⁸ hot dogs, burgers, chips and fizzy drinks are still the staple fare. Camelot Theme Park shares the bottom place in our ranking with New MetroLand (see page 30) and the pleasure beaches at Blackpool and Great Yarmouth trail not far behind with just one extra point.

Camelot Theme Park came bottom of the *Which?* rankings in 2004. It remains a health-conscious parent's nightmare. Far from following the advice of the 2004 survey Camelot seems to have doubled the number of hot-dog stands.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, the Eden Project is the clear leader in terms of healthy and local food provision, although it could still top up the fruit content of its children's lunch boxes and introduce more organic produce. The Tower of London's children's lunch boxes help it reach second place.

In general, though, the picture is still poor, and the majority of outlets have a long way to go. **Branding and promotions by the big processed food giants are a key feature of most venues.** Families are bombarded by Coca-Cola, Pepsi or Walls promotions at all the attractions we visited except the Eden Project, where vending machines are unbranded. Elsewhere, sandwich boards promote novelty fizzy drink containers, like the 'Pepsi super tube' or the 'Coca-Cola capsule', which encourage children to consume large quantities of sugary drinks very cheaply. "Refill for free all day long" they promise, and meal deals further subsidise the consumption of fizzy drinks.

The ranking is based on a snap-shot survey conducted over one day at each venue during early summer in 2006. Things may have changed since the day we visited. However, the ranking does provide an overall feel for the healthy food and drink choices on offer and the type of food promoted at each attraction.

Since making this information publicly available, three of the attractions (Great Yarmouth Pleasure Beach, Oakwood Theme Park and New MetroLand) have moved to increase the fresh juices at their attractions. New MetroLand and Great Yarmouth Pleasure Beach have also introduced some fresh fruit.

Table 2: Tourist attraction rankings

Rank	Venue	Free fresh drinking water (/3)	Healthy drinks in vending machines (/4)	Healthy cold drinks ex. water (/5)	Fresh fruit on site (/4)	Children's meals (/4)	Food promotion (/5)	Time taken to find fruit	Total score (/25)
1	Eden Project	1	0	5	4	2	5	2mins	17
2	Tower of London	1	No vending machines	3	4	3	3	1hr	14/21
3	Legoland	3	0	2	2	2	3	35mins	12
3	London Zoo	1	0	3	2	3	3	1hr 15mins	12
4	Thorpe Park	3	1	1	1	1	0	1hr 20mins	7
5	Chessington World of Adventures	1	1	2	1	1	0	1hr	6
6	Alton Towers	0	1	2	1	1	0	1hr 5mins	5
6	Madame Tussaud's	0	2	2	1	0	0	1hr 5mins	5
7	Flamingo Land	0	1	1	0	1	0	None	3
7	Oakwood Theme Park	0	1	1	1	0	0	1hr 10mins	3
8	Blackpool Pleasure Beach	0	0	1	0	1	0	3hrs 45mins	2
8	Great Yarmouth Pleasure Beach	0	0	1	0	1	0	None	2
9	Camelot Theme Park	0	1	0	0	0	0	None	1
9	New MetroLand	0	0	1	0	0	0	None	1

* No vending machines seen at Tower of London. The points available have been reduced accordingly.

Headline findings

Drinks: Eight of the 14 attractions we visited had no access to free drinking water, and bottled water is often unavailable in vending machines which are dominated by fizzy drinks. Water fountains were only available in Thorpe Park and Legoland. Meal deals and bottomless refills promote fizzy drinks over healthy alternatives. At London Zoo, meal deals at one kiosk offered for free “any drink *excluding* mineral water”.

Dedication is needed to find healthier drinks, like pure fruit juice or milk, unless you're at the Eden Project. Camelot Theme Park seemed to offer no healthy alternatives except bottled water. Fruit drinks are now big business for child-focused marketing, as evidenced by branded rides like Chessington's 'Ribena Berry Bouncers'. Many fruit drinks are marketed as 'healthy', on the basis of added vitamins or sugar-free status. Sugar-free options by Ribena, 5-Alive and Capri-Sun include artificial sweeteners like aspartame, which have no nutritional benefit and may well habituate a child's sweet tooth.²⁹ The increasingly popular Minute Maid 'Froot Refresh' drinks are a slightly better bet, with 50% fruit juice content.

Fresh fruit: Fresh fruit was simply unavailable at Great Yarmouth Pleasure Beach, Flamingo Land, New MetroLand and Camelot Theme Park on the days we visited. **At Blackpool Pleasure Beach the only fruit our 'mystery mum' could find – after a three-hour search – was some melon, served with champagne and prawns, in a bar.** Not the first choice of a healthy snack for a young child! Not one attraction promoted fresh fruit as a healthy snacking alternative to the normal doughnuts, candyfloss and chocolate bars.

Report: New MetroLand

Time taken to find fruit: None found

“Europe's largest indoor funfair” is situated within Gateshead's MetroCentre. Fast food outlets in the foodcourts surrounding MetroLand call on children to “eat as much as you can” or consume “all you can fizzibly drink”.

Inside MetroLand, our mystery mum had a depressing time trying to locate alternatives to fizzy drinks or artificially sweetened Fruit Shoots. Promising signs for orange juice at two separate outlets both turn out to refer to concentrated orange squash.

Friendliness is not the missing ingredient at MetroLand. A request for fruit at Barnaby's Deli Diner wins our mum a sympathetic ally. There is no fruit at MetroLand, the manager confides, and directs her to a supermarket. Later in the day, however, the friendly manager greets her armed with two satsumas borrowed from his dad's shopping bag.

The main component of all kid's meals at New MetroLand is a reconstituted meat or fish product, routinely served with chips and a fizzy drink or 'day-glo' slush. Overeating is promoted on posters that advertise outsized 'big foot' sausages: “Big enough for two but too good to share”. It is only when we finally find fruit juice late in the day that New MetroLand scores its single point in our survey.

Stop press: As a result of this work New MetroLand has now introduced fresh fruit to each outlet and water into vending machines.³⁰

Ranked:
joint bottom

9



Children's menus and lunch boxes: Oakwood Theme Park, New Metro-Land and Camelot Theme Park fail to offer a single portion of fruit or vegetables in their children's meals. Meal deals at these attractions are confined to processed meat or fish, chips and fizzy drinks. Legoland is beginning to show the way, by suggesting milk and water as alternatives to fizzy drinks and offering carrot sticks instead of fries. The majority of Legoland meals, however, remain highly processed.

The Tower of London is an exception to this dismal picture, thanks to their lunch boxes, which contain optional portions of fresh fruit and vegetables, along with pure juice. However, their children's hot meal could still be improved.

Food culture: The Madame Tussauds group of attractions, which also include Alton Towers, Thorpe Park, and Chessington World of Adventures, **is dominated by the branding of its official food partners: Coca-Cola, Nestle, Bird's Eye Walls, Ribena, United Biscuits and Cadbury Trebor Bassett**. The outlets and their menus, meal deals and promotions are all standardised. This adds little value to the local economy. By contrast, Oakwood Theme Park in Wales, while not a strong performer on healthy food, is sufficiently independent to be able to source ice cream from a local Pembrokeshire dairy farm. The Eden Project is a clear leader on local food provision, stocking Cornish spring water, milk and apple juice, Cheddar cheese, ham, chutney, cream and ice cream.

Organic items were largely confined to the top scoring attractions, with the surprising exceptions of organic semi-skimmed milk at Alton Towers and Chessington World of Adventures, and organic baby food at Blackpool Pleasure Beach. London Zoo also does well with its Marine Stewardship Council certified hoki – a more sustainable version of cod and chips.

Report: The Eden Project

Ranked:
Top

1

The Eden Project is celebrating its fifth birthday this year, and is certainly the most modern and progressive of the attractions in terms of its approach to food culture. The marketing promises: "You are what you eat, as someone once famously said, and at Eden you have a huge amount of tasty, organic, local, healthy food and drink to choose from." On the whole the Eden Project lives up to its word.

A positive food culture is central to the ethos of Eden. At two new restaurants, the Med Kitchen and The Pasty, visitors can see the food being freshly prepared by the chefs on-site. Cafés serve a wide range of 'Eden Made Sandwiches', wraps and salad boxes, several of which include oily fish like mackerel and non-meat protein like red kidney beans. It only took a record two minutes of searching for our researcher to find a piece of fresh fruit at Eden. It was in a bowl on the counter of the Apple Café. Similar fresh fruit bowls were then found in most cafés and restaurants on site.

All Eden's baby food is organic. Children's lunch boxes include raisins and a carton of Mr Juicy orange or apple juice, crisps, a giant cookie and a packet of cress seeds to sow and grow. Including some fresh fruit and salad or vegetable sticks to balance the meal will be an important next step, as would using more organic produce in children's meals.



A call to action

Examples like the National Trust and Leon show that it is possible to serve healthy, responsibly sourced food that is both affordable and appealing.

Restaurants and pub chains

Given the frequency with which families now eat out, popular restaurants need to start taking responsibility for what they are feeding the nation's children, and stop peddling junk that risks undermining the good work now being done on school meals. Hiding behind the excuse that unhealthy food is okay as a one-off treat is no longer acceptable, because we are eating out so frequently, and reinforces in children's minds that fatty, sugary processed food is a treat and that naturally sweet fruit and vegetables are to be resisted.

We now know, from the experience of school meal reform, that children's tastes can be changed in favour of fruit and veg by imaginative menu planning. The restaurants we have assessed for this report are all significant players, feeding millions of children every year. They have the potential to play a hugely positive role in promoting healthier eating, and developing children's social skills, especially now that one in four families does not even have a dining table to eat around.³¹ It is crucial to our children's prospects of a healthy diet and a happy future that these companies do not undermine the positive changes in school meals, and the efforts of the Food Standards Agency, the Departments of Health and Education, and the School Food Trust to protect children's health.

Leading examples like the National Trust and Leon have shown that it is possible to serve healthy, responsibly sourced food that is both affordable and appealing to children and parents alike.

Ten steps to a healthier and happier restaurant meal

1. Stop 'eat as much as you like' promotions on fizzy drinks and ice cream that encourage children to consume excess calories.
2. Provide a wide and imaginative range of healthy options, with reduced levels of fat, sugar and salt. These should be clearly marked on the menus, and designed to be affordable and appealing to children and parents. Make child portion sizes of fatty foods like chips and burgers more moderate to reduce calorie, fat and saturated fat intake, and compensate with more fresh vegetables and starchy carbohydrates.
3. Always enable and encourage children to have a half-portion of an adult meal.
4. Make meals from fresh ingredients. Cut back on processed food. In line with the Soil Association's *Food for Life* targets, widely adopted by schools, restaurants should aim for 75% unprocessed food. Within this, increasing the availability and desirability of freshly prepared fruit and vegetables on the menu should be a priority. When families eat out they expect to eat homemade food prepared on-site, with all the nutritional and taste benefits that fresh produce brings.

With the exception of a handful of leading destinations, the UK's major tourist attractions appear to be in no hurry to improve the food and drink they promote to children.

5. Develop more dishes where vegetables are incorporated into the main dish, rather than being a side order. Brewer's Fayre, for instance, has incorporated some hidden vegetables into their mashed potato. Other outlets have introduced vegetable batons with dips.
6. Consider following the example of Leon and the National Trust in connecting the menus with the seasons, or offering 'seasonal vegetables' or 'seasonal fruit salad' on a standard menu. Seasonality maximises freshness, cuts out air miles and can yield some good cost savings.
7. Always provide free water, so that parents are not obliged to buy their children cheap sugary drinks to quench their thirst.
8. Introduce local and organic food into the children's menu, to promote freshness and quality, and cut out additives. Start by serving one local and one organic item on the menu, and work towards the *Food for Life* targets of 50% local and 30% organic. Major distributors like 3663 and Compass are proving able and willing to accommodate such specifications in school catering contracts.
9. Improve ingredient quality in general. Reconstituted meat in chicken nuggets high in preservatives should be replaced with additive-free chicken breast. Better quality extensively reared or organic chicken and grass-fed beef should be chosen to reduce saturated fat and maximise beneficial omega-3 fatty acids and cancer-beating conjugated linoleic acid.³²
10. Provide more non-meat sources of protein. Oily fish, certified sustainable by the Marine Stewardship Council, can be incorporated into child-friendly dishes such as fish pies and fishcakes. More tasty and imaginative vegetarian dishes should be developed using non-meat protein.

Tourist attractions

With the exception of a handful of leading destinations like the Eden Project, London Zoo and the Tower of London, the UK's major tourist attractions appear to be in no hurry to improve the food and drink they promote to children. Camelot Theme Park, New MetroLand and the Pleasure Beaches of Blackpool and Great Yarmouth represent the worst headache for parents trying to find decent food for their families.

Exemplars like IKEA and Center Parcs show that organic food can be introduced into children's menus and lunch boxes in a way that is affordable and appealing to parents and children alike, giving the reassurance that food is chemical and additive-free.

For the most part, however, it is about getting the basics right. Parents trailing small children are not in a position to be able to search high and low for healthy treats, as our researcher was forced to do. Their choice should not be constrained to fizzy drinks and hot dogs, because water and fruit are kept hidden for the persistent few.

Eight steps to a healthier and happier day out:

1. Provide free water at all outlets.
2. Make healthy snacks and pure fruit juice available in all vending machines.
3. Stop fizzy drink promotions via meal deals and bottomless refills.
4. Include fresh fruit, salad and juice cartons in children's menus.
5. Ensure healthy options like salads or fresh savoury foods are readily available at all attractions.
6. Improve ingredient quality and cooking method of popular food such as burgers and sausages.
7. Introduce organic and locally sourced food into restaurant menus and lunch boxes.
8. Keep portion sizes healthy: cutting out king-size portions of fizzy drinks and chocolate bars and unhealthy eat-as-much-as-you-can food deals in restaurants.

The restaurant at Garden Organic Ryton won the title of Best Restaurant in the 2005 Coventry and Warwickshire Food and Drink Awards.

The use of organic ingredients means that parents can rest assured that food will be free of pesticide residues and meat will be lower in saturated fat and, in the case of beef, higher in healthy omega-3 fatty acids. Many fruit and vegetables are grown on-site at Ryton, meaning that there is a really short time between picking and eating so food will have higher levels of vitamin C, Vitamin A and folate compared to produce that is imported.

Our nutritionist was impressed by the fact that oily fish features twice on the menu, and that five of the eight puddings on the children's menu are fruit-based. Salad and coleslaw are served with baguettes, and are optional with children's items like breaded chicken and jacket potato.





Appendix 1:

Methodology and school meal standards

The nutritional assessment used to assess restaurant menus followed the same methodology used to analyse school menus. It is summarised below along with the English school meal standards. For a more detailed methodology and the results see www.organix.com/childrens_menus

37

The nutrition analysis consisted of:

- Identification of sample children's menus
- Data collection from restaurants included in the study
- Data analysis using Dietplan6 nutrition analysis software
- Assessment of each restaurant's children's menu against the government's new school meal *nutrition*-based standards for primary school children
- Assessment of each restaurant's children's menu against the government's new school meal *food*-based standards for primary school children
- Identification of the healthiest and least healthy children's meal on each menu, based on the number of nutrition-based standards met.

School food-based standards

The government's new interim food-based standards apply from September 2006.³³ Not all the food-based standards are directly applicable to restaurants. For example, table salt is no longer available in schools. It would be unreasonable to suggest it should be restricted in restaurants so we did not apply it here. The table below describes how the research has adapted the relevant food-based standards.

Food Group	Application to school menu	Application to restaurant children's menus
Fruit and vegetables – these include fruit and vegetables in all forms (whether fresh, frozen, canned, dried or in the form of juice)	Not less than two portions per day per child, at least one of which should be salad or vegetables and at least one should be fresh fruit, fruit tinned in juice or fruit salad (fresh or tinned in juice)	Not less than two portions of fruit and vegetables, at least one of which should be salad or vegetables and at least one should be fresh fruit, fruit tinned in juice or fruit salad (fresh or tinned in juice)

Food Group	Application to school menu	Application to restaurant children's menus
Meat, fish and other non-dairy sources of protein – these include meat (including ham and bacon) and fish (whether fresh, frozen, canned or dried); eggs; nuts; pulses; and beans (other than green beans)	<p>A food from this group should be available on a daily basis</p> <p>Red meat shall be available twice per week in primary schools, and three times per week in secondary schools</p> <p>Fish shall be available once per week in primary schools and twice per week in secondary schools. Of that fish, oily fish shall be available at least once every three weeks</p>	<p>A food from this group should be available on the menu, including red meat and fish</p>
Manufactured meat products	<p>Manufactured meat products may be served occasionally as part of school lunches</p>	<p>No more than one manufactured meat product on the menu</p>
Starchy foods (also see additional requirement on deep frying below) these include all bread (eg chapattis), pasta, noodles, rice, potatoes, sweet potatoes, yams, millet and cornmeal	<p>A food from this group should be available on a daily basis</p> <p>Fat or oil shall not be used in the cooking process of starchy foods on more than three days in any week</p> <p>On every day that a fat or oil is used in the cooking process of starchy foods, a starchy food for which fat or oil is not used in the cooking process should also be available</p> <p>In addition, bread should be available on a daily basis</p>	<p>A food from this group should be available. With at least one not being cooked in oil</p>
Deep-fried foods	<p>Meals should not contain more than two deep-fried items in a single week. This includes products which are deep-fried in the manufacturing process</p>	<p>Menu should not contain more than two meals with deep-fried items</p>

Food Group	Application to school menu	Application to restaurant children's menus
Milk and dairy foods – includes milk, cheese, yoghurt (including frozen and drinking yoghurt), fromage fraise and custard	A food from this group should be available on a daily basis	At least one food from this group available on the menu
Drinks	<p>The only drinks available should be: plain water (still or fizzy); milk (skimmed or semi-skimmed); pure fruit juices; yoghurt or milk drinks (with less than 5% added sugar); drinks made from combinations of those in bullet points 1 to 4 of this list (eg smoothies); low-calorie hot chocolate; tea and coffee</p> <p>NB – Artificial sweeteners could be used only in yoghurt and milk drinks; or combinations containing yoghurt or milk</p>	<p>At least three of the following drinks should be available: plain water (still or fizzy); milk (skimmed or semi-skimmed); pure fruit juices; yoghurt or milk drinks (with less than 5% added sugar); drinks made from combinations of those in bullet points 1 to 4 of this list (eg smoothies); low-calorie hot chocolate; tea and coffee</p> <p>NB – Artificial sweeteners could be used only in yoghurt and milk drinks; or combinations containing yoghurt or milk</p>
Confectionery and savoury snacks	<p>Confectionery, chocolate and chocolate-coated products (excluding cocoa powder used in chocolate cakes, or low-calorie hot drinking chocolate) shall not be available throughout the lunch time</p> <p>The only savoury snacks available should be nuts and seeds with no added salt or sugar</p>	<p>Confectionery, chocolate and chocolate coated products should not be on the menu</p> <p>The only savoury snacks available should be nuts and seeds with no added salt or sugar</p>
Oily Fish	Oily fish shall be available at least once every three weeks	One portion should be available

School nutrient-based standards

The nutrient-based standards for school will be introduced in Primary schools in 2008 and in Secondary schools in 2009. They are closely based on the Caroline Walker Trust (CWT) Nutrition Standards. This analysis used the nutrient standards for a child aged five to 11. They are based on the proportion of nutrients that children and young people should receive from a school lunch. The figures are for the required nutrient content of an average lunch over five consecutive school days.

We also looked at the restaurant's information on nutrition, food policies and serving local and organic food and gave them marks out of a possible seven. Since completing the survey Hungry Horse has added nutritional information to its menu.

Table 3 Restaurant ranking: factors other than nutrition

	Nutritional information 0= no information 1 = some on website 2 = detailed on website 3 = point of sale information	Policy on additives and sweeteners 0 = no policy on artificial/sweeteners additives 2 = policy on additives & sweeteners	Serving up local and organic food 0 = none 1 = one menu item (either local or organic) 2 = more than one
Harvester	1	0	0
Brewers Fayre	0	0	0
Pizza Hut	2	0	0
TGI Friday's	0	0	1
Nando's	0	0	1
Garfunkles	0	0	0
Café Rouge	0	0	0
Little Chef	0	0	1
Beefeater	0	0	0
Hungry Horse	0	0	0

Appendix 2:

Children's menus analysed

The following restaurant menus were analysed between April and June 2006. Some changes may have been made since carrying out the research. Little Chef brought out a new menu in November 2006 and Hungry Horse has altered their menu slightly.

Beefeater

Over 5's (smaller portions)

Starters

- Garlic bread
- Breaded mushrooms with tomato ketchup
- Vegetable batons with dip

Main courses

- Chicken salad
- Burger in a bun with chips and peas
- Battered cod chunks with chips and beans
- Mini sausages in Yorkshire puddings with roast potatoes and peas
- Pasta in tomato sauce with garlic bread

Puddings

- Mini fruit plate (fruit chunks with chocolate dipping sauce)
- Ice cream sundae: ice cream with chocolate sauce

Under 12's (larger portions)

Starters

- Soup with bread
- Prawn with dipping seafood sauce and salad garnish
- Vegetable batons with dip
- Mushroom melt: garlic bread topped with mushroom cheddar cheese and salad garnish

Main courses

- Grilled salmon fillet with chips and peas
- Mega Mixed Grill: grilled chicken, sausages, and bacon rashers with chips and peas
- Grilled chicken breast with chips and peas and barbecue sauce
- Rump steak with chips and peas or baked beans
- Tomato in pasta sauce with garlic bread

Puddings

- Profiteroles
- Ice cream with flapjacks and toffee sauce
- Melon with orange slices
- Mini Chocolate Challenge: marshmallow, chocolate sauce, Maltesers, whipped cream with a wafer

Drinks

- Fruit Shoots: blackcurrant and apple or orange and peach
- Mineral water
- Capri-sun
- Fruit Shoot H₂O: orange or apple

Brewers Fayre

Mini meals (smaller portions)

- Mini fish and chips or mashed potatoes, peas or baked beans, salad or corn on the cob
- Cheesy fingers: cheese on

toast fingers with cucumber and tomato

- Pasta in tomatoey sauce, with cheddar cheese and garlic bread
- Mini sausages and mash potato (with swede and carrots), Yorkshire pudding, peas and gravy
- Cottage pie topped with potato skins and cheese with seasonal vegetable and gravy
- Chicken nuggets and chips or mashed potatoes, peas or baked beans, salad or corn on the cob

Mighty meals (larger portions)

- Sausage and mash with Yorkshire pudding, peas and gravy
- Spaghetti bolognese with cheese and garlic bread
- Kids combo: chicken breast, corn on the cob, vegetable sticks, slices of apple and mayonnaise
- Vegetarian kid's combo (as above with cheesy fingers instead of chicken breast)
- Cottage pie topped with potato skins and cheese with seasonal vegetables and gravy
- Chicken nuggets and chips or mashed potatoes, peas or baked beans, salad or corn on the cob
- Mini fish and chips or mashed potatoes, peas or baked beans, salad or corn on the cob
- Chicken dinner, roast chicken with mashed potato (carrot and swede), roast potatoes, Yorkshire pudding, seasonal vegetables, mini sausage, pork and herb stuffing and gravy
- Roast beef with roast and mashed potatoes, Yorkshire puddings, seasonal vegetables and gravy
- Chicken pakora curry with basmati rice, curry sauce and naan bread
- Cheese and tomato wraps with chips, cucumber and tomato

- Beefburger in a bun and chips or mashed potatoes, peas or baked beans, salad or corn on the cob
- Veggie burger in a bun and chips or mashed potatoes, peas or baked beans, salad or corn on the cob
- Steak and chips or mashed potatoes with peas and cherry tomatoes or salad garnish, corn on the cob or baked beans

Pudding (smaller portions)

- Ice cream with sauce and wafer
- Fruit dip: mango, strawberry and banana pieces with chocolate dipping sauce
- Doughnut with chocolate flavour dipping sauce

Puddings (larger portions)

- Ice cream with sauce and wafer
- Pieces of fruit: mango, strawberry and banana doughnut and marshmallows with a pot of chocolate-flavour dipping sauce
- Banana split with vanilla-flavour ice cream, strawberry ice cream sauce cream and wafer

Drinks

- Fruit Shoot H₂O: orange or blackcurrant
- Mineral water
- Fruit Shoot: orange and peach or blackcurrant and apple
- Capri-Sun orange
- Pepsi Max
- Tango: orange or apple,
- Cola or lemonade
- Milk
- Fruit juice: orange, apple or cranberry juice drink
- Delmonte smoothie lollies

Café Rouge

Main course

- Cheese croquet and fries
- Pasta tubes in tomato sauce

with cheese

- Sausages with mashed potatoes
- Chicken fillet goujons and fries
- Fish fillet goujons and fries
- Boiled egg and grated cheese salad

Puddings

- Ice cream (vanilla, chocolate or strawberry)

Drinks

- Fruit juice: apple juice, grapefruit juice, orange juice and pineapple juice
- Fizzy drinks: Coke, Diet Coke, lemonade

Garfunkels

Main course

- Beef burger with fries and baked beans or salad
- Margherita pizza with salad
- Spaghetti bolognese
- Fish with fries and baked beans or salad
- Chicken fingers with fries and baked beans or salad
- Ham omelette with fries or salad
- Cheese omelette with fries or salad
- Mushroom omelette with fries or salad
- Herbie salad (salad from salad bar)

Pudding

- Ice cream
- Fruit (whole apples, oranges and bananas in a bowl at the salad bar)

Drinks

- Milk
- Orange juice
- Cola
- Diet cola
- Sparkling orange
- Lemonade

Harvester

Main meal

Main meals include salad cart

- Tomato pasta with salad and
- Fluffy jacket potato with tuna mayonnaise, sweetcorn and spring onions
- Spaghetti bolognese
- Fish fillet in batter with crispy potato wedges or jacket potato and garden peas or baked beans
- Flame-grilled chicken dippers, crispy potato wedges or jacket potato and garden peas or baked beans
- Burger in a bun with crispy potato wedges or jacket potato and garden peas or baked beans
- Quarter of roast chicken with crispy potato wedges or jacket potato and garden peas or baked beans
- Bite-size bangers with crispy potato wedges or jacket potato and garden peas or baked beans
- Half a rack of ribs with crispy potato wedges or jacket potato and garden peas or baked beans

Pudding

- No-added-sugar fruit jelly
- Ice cream (vanilla with a choice of sauces)

Drinks

- Juices: orange, cranberry or apple
- Milkshakes: chocolate, strawberry or banana
- Fruit cocktails: orange and cranberry juice
- Apple and mango juice
- Apple and raspberry juice

Little Chef

Main meals

- Beef burger in a bun with chips or jacket potato, with baked beans, peas or side salad
- Chicken burger in a bun with

chips or jacket potato with beans, peas baked beans or side salad

- Jumbo fish finger with chips jacket potato, peas, baked beans or side salad
- Chicken and bacon salad
- Spaghetti bolognese
- Bacon or sausage in a bap with chips
- Chicken nuggets with baked potato, beans, peas or salad

Pudding

- Pancake with ice cream and maple syrup
- Cookie sundae

Drinks

- Coca-Cola
- Diet Coke
- Fanta
- Sprite
- Milk
- Orange juice
- Capri-Sun

Hungry Horse

Starters

- Tomato soup
- Corn on the cob
- Garlic bread

Main courses

- Lasagne with garlic bread and salad
- Spaghetti and meatballs with salad
- Pizza with cheese and pineapple or cheese and spicy pepperoni
- Chicken burger with chips, mashed potato, jacket potato, peas, carrots, beans or salad
- Double Whammy: two beef burgers with melted cheese in a toasted bun with chips, mashed potato, jacket potato, peas, carrots, beans or salad
- Kids Sunday Lunch: roast beef, roast pork, grilled chicken breast with Yorkshire pudding roast potatoes, roast parsnips, carrots, peas and seasonal vegetables covered in gravy

- Mix-and-match salad: choose two toppings from Cheddar cheese, prawns, chicken and tuna with mayonnaise or seafood sauce dip
- Baked potato with sausages, barbecue beans, melted cheese with salad
- Cheese and tomato omelette with chips, mashed potato, jacket potato and peas, carrots, beans or salad
- Chicken curry with rice and poppadum
- Chicken or vegetable nuggets with chips, mashed potato, jacket potato and peas, carrots, beans or salad
- Two 2oz beef burgers in a bun with chips, mashed potato, jacket potato and peas, carrots, beans or salad
- Plain chicken or Cajun chicken breast with chips, mashed potato, jacket potato and peas, carrots, beans or salad
- Fish sticks with chips, mashed potato, jacket potato and peas, carrots, beans or salad
- Two sausages wrapped in Yorkshire puddings with chips, mashed potato, jacket potato and peas, carrots, beans or salad

Pudding

- Candymania: chocolate brownie pieces with chocolate sauce, vanilla ice cream, chocolate ice cream, strawberries, white chocolate Maltesers, milk chocolate Maltesers, Milky Way Magic Stars, Milky Way Crispy Roll and a Wagon Wheel
- Probably the smallest dessert in the world: chocolate flavour mousse, topped with cream with Cadbury Flake
- Fresh fruit salad
- Fresh melon medley
- Mini doughnuts with chocolate or strawberry sauce
- Triple treat ice cream: vanilla, chocolate and strawberry with cream chocolate sauce

- and a wafer
- Ice cream lolly foot

Drinks

- Roald Dahl fruit juice,
- Coke
- Fanta 330ml
- Sprite
- Fruit Shoots
- Water
- Squash

Nando's

Main meals

- Chicken burger with chips or spicy rice
- Chicken wings with chips or spicy rice
- Chicken breast strips with chips or spicy rice

Pudding

- 'Bottomless' organic strawberry frozen yoghurt

Drinks

- Coca-Cola
- Diet Coke
- Fanta
- Sprite
- Mineral water
- Pure Nectar fruit juices: mango, orange, peach, pineapple and apple

Pizza Hut

Main course

- Macaroni cheese
- Spaghetti bolognese
- Magherita pizza
- Crispy chicken with crispy coated wedges
- Buffet: eat as much salad, pizza and pasta as you can

Puddings

- Two scoops of ice cream
- Raspberry ice
- Delmonte Fruitini Jelly
- Ice cream factory (unlimited)

Drinks

- Bottomless drinks: Pepsi, Diet Pepsi, Pepsi Max, 7up, Tango
- Bottomless squash: orange or apple and blackcurrant
- Orange juice
- Robinsons Fruit Shoot: Orange and Peach, Apple and Blackcurrant or Apple
- Milk
- Spring water

TGI Friday's

Main meals

- Fish fillets with French fries, Smiley Face and either baked beans, sweetcorn or cucumber and carrot sticks
- Hamburger in a bun with French fries, Smiley Face and either baked beans, sweetcorn or cucumber and carrot sticks
- Veggie burger in a bun with French fries, Smiley Face and either baked beans, sweetcorn or cucumber and carrot sticks
- Jumbo hotdog (foot long) in a bun with French fries, Smiley Face and either baked beans, sweetcorn or cucumber and carrot sticks
- Cheesy burger with French fries, Smiley Face and either baked beans, sweetcorn or cucumber and carrot sticks
- Tomato and past tubes sprinkled with cheese and garlic bread
- Tomato and pasta tubes with cheese chicken slices and garlic bread
- Grilled chicken breast in a bun with French fries, Smiley Face and either baked beans, sweetcorn or cucumber and carrot sticks
- Spaghetti bolognese with cheese and garlic bread

Puddings

- Malteser Munch Madness: chocolate brownie with vanilla-flavour ice cream, caramel sauce, Maltesers, whipped cream and a cherry

- Fruit sundae (fruit salad)
- Two scoops of vanilla-flavour ice cream or raspberry yoghurt ice cream
- Apple or banana
- Dirt and Worm Pie: vanilla-flavour ice cream with chocolate fudge sauce with chocolate curls and jelly worms

Drinks

- Fruit juice: orange, apple or pineapple
- Fruit Shoot: blackcurrant and apple or orange and peach flavours
- Robinsons orange squash
- Mineral water
- Pepsi float (with ice cream)
- Pepsi
- Diet Pepsi
- Lemonade
- Tango
- Smoothie: strawberry, banana and peach blend
- Milkshakes: banana, strawberry, chocolate, vanilla or cookie-flavour thick shakes
- Milk

Appendix 3:

Assessment criteria for tourist attractions

The following ranking was developed to assess the tourist attractions. Some improvements have been made since completing the research as a result of issuing this survey, including the addition of fresh fruit in kiosks and café in Great Yarmouth Please Beach and New MetroLand.

Points Assessment criteria

Access to free fresh drinking water

- 3 Widely available
- 1 Only available once
- 0 None available

Availability of healthy drinks in vending machines

- 4 Good selection of healthy drinks available throughout the site
- 2 Water always available
- 1 Water available infrequently
- 0 Not even water available

Availability of healthy cold drinks (milk, pure juices and or smoothies, excluding water) in shops, kiosks, restaurants or cafés

- 5 Good choice widely available
- 3 Good choice but restricted to larger outlets
- 2 Limited choice in a few larger outlets
- 1 Poor choice and hard to find
- 0 None available

Fresh fruit

- 4 Good choice widely available
- 2 Only available in some main outlets
- 1 Rare and difficult to find
- 0 None found

Points Assessment criteria

Children's meals and lunch boxes

- 4 Children's meals both hot and cold always includes fruit, vegetable portions and a healthy drink
- 3 Children's meals generally had all of the following: fruit, vegetable portions and a healthy drink, or half portions of good quality (fruit, vegetable and healthy drink) adult meals encouraged
- 2 Children's meals generally had at least one or more of the following (a portion of fruit and of vegetables and a healthy drink)
- 1 Children's meals occasionally have some healthy items (fruit, vegetable portions and a healthy drink)
- 0 No meal includes any fruit, vegetables portions or a healthy drink

Food promotion

- 5 Actively promotes good and healthy food choices throughout
- 3 Beginnings of good food choices in main outlets but smaller outlets need to be improved
- 2 Junk food dominant but pockets of good practice
- 1 Junk food dominant throughout
- 0 Actively promotes and encourages consumption of large quantities of junk food throughout



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- 30 Since releasing the report taking our children for a ride New MetroLand contacted the Soil Association stating that they are introducing fresh fruit into kiosks and water into vending machines
- 31 **Blythman, J.** (2006) *Bad Food Britain.*
- 32 **Hall, R and H.** (1999) *The quality of meat from beef cattle: is it influenced by diet?* R and H Hall Technical Bulletin, 4.; **Heaton, S.** (2002) *Organic farming, food quality and human health;* **Wang et al.** (2005) *Changes in protein and fat balance of some primary foods: implications for obesity?* Institute of Brain Chemistry and Human Nutrition: London Metropolitan University.
- 33 For more info see www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk



Influencing policy makers, food companies, farmers, consumers and citizens is an essential part of our work, to create the conditions for a major expansion of organic food and farming. Our policy reports include:

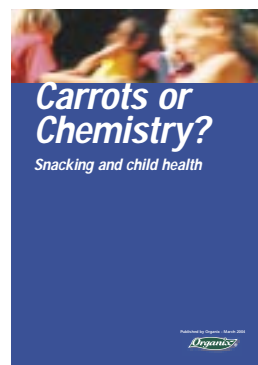
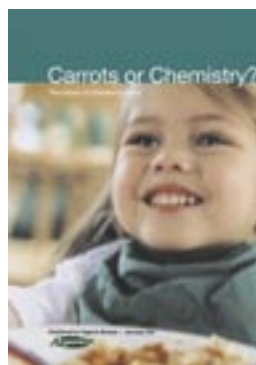
Batteries not included: organic farming and animal welfare

Food for Life: the Soil Association school meals action pack (for parents, pupils, teachers, governors and school cooks)

Seeds of doubt: North American farmers' experience of GM crops

Too hard to crack: eggs with drug residues

For copies please call the Soil Association on 0117 314 5180 or visit our website www.soilassociation.org



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Organix is a pioneering food company who campaign to raise standards in the quality of food fed to children.

Organix first report, *Carrots or Chemistry?*, detailed children's food and its impact on their health. Its second *Carrots or Chemistry?* report looked at the quality, availability and promotion of snack food. Organix have worked in partnership with the Soil Association to produce *The Real Meal Deal* as part of their continued commitment to improving the nutritional intake and health of the nation's children.



Printed by Polar Print Group Ltd. ISO 14001 registered

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Price £12.00 ISBN 1904665195 © Soil Association 2006