



Department  
for Education

# **Breakfast Clubs Setup and Implementation: Briefing for School Leaders**

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# Introduction

## Aim of this briefing note

This briefing note was written by ICF Consulting Ltd. It outlines potential benefits of running a breakfast club, and shares lessons learned on how to set up a breakfast club, or reinvigorate a club that has lost its energy, so that pupils get the most out of it.

## Source of briefing materials

The lessons in this briefing are based on an independent research study evaluating a Department for Education (DfE) programme, which aimed to establish sustainable breakfast clubs in schools with high levels of deprivation. ICF conducted the evaluation on behalf of DfE. Forty breakfast club leads in primary, secondary, special schools and Pupil Referral Units in England were interviewed. Breakfast club leads were interviewed twice; in the first few months of opening their breakfast club and after a year's operation. Fifteen schools were visited to learn the views of staff, pupils, parents and school partners. The research team analysed data on the numbers and characteristics of pupils attending breakfast clubs. Attendance data was collected four times between December 2014 (when the first schools started in the programme) and October 2016 (six months after the programme ended). Data was analysed for 9,983 pupils (168 schools) in the first time point; 9,987 pupils (175 schools) in the second; 11,290 pupils (176 schools) in the third and 6,190 pupils (94 schools) in the final collection.

## The DfE breakfast club programme

The programme was targeted at schools with more than 35% of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM). Magic Breakfast, a registered charity, delivered the programme on behalf of DfE. The charity provided advice and support to schools to enable them to set up and run a breakfast club and helped them plan to make the club sustainable. The charity delivered free food to each school for twelve months. Schools were able to order low salt and sugar bagels, porridge, cereals and juice from the charity at no cost. Schools provided supplementary food, such as milk, spreads and any additional hot items, and staff or volunteers to organise and run the club. A grant of £300 was available for each school to buy equipment needed to introduce breakfasts. One hundred and eighty three schools completed the programme which ran from October 2014 to March 2016. Nearly all the schools continued with a breakfast club once the programme ended.

## **Structure of this briefing note**

This note starts with a checklist of key things to do if you are setting up a breakfast club. It then summarises the advantages schools identified from operating a breakfast club and reports the practical steps they told us were necessary to set up and sustain a successful club. There are three main stages; initial design and planning; developing and testing; and implementation and refinement. The note ends with some useful links for further information.

# Checklist

The following checklist summarises the key steps in each of the three stages.

## Initial design and planning

- Appoint a senior leader in the school to lead on the decision to open a breakfast club
- Identify the main reasons for your school wanting a breakfast club
- Do your research
  - Do you know the scale of the problems you are hoping to address?
  - Which pupils might benefit the most?
  - Ask parents and pupils what they want
  - How does the breakfast club link with a whole school approach?

## Developing and testing your breakfast club

- Is it open to all pupils or targeted at specific pupils?
- Is it free – for all or for some?
- What food are you going to offer?
- Are you offering activities?
- Who will staff it – staff or parent volunteers?
- Location – in one setting or in a few locations across the school?
- Opening times?
- Are you going to trial it?

## Implementing and refining your breakfast club

- Take the decision - involve your governing body
- Market and promote your breakfast club and keep doing this throughout the year
- Put systems in place for collecting the information you will need to have to know if the breakfast club is working. This includes information on who is attending and on costs.
- Mark a time in advance to review how the club is working. Key questions are:
  - Do the logistics work?
  - Are enough pupils, and target groups of pupils attending?
  - Are you seeing positive impacts on pupils?
- Plan early for the year ahead.

## What are the benefits of running a breakfast club?

The following advantages were consistently identified by school staff involved in the evaluation as reasons why they wanted a breakfast club. Many of the reasons were also identified by pupils and parents.

**Breakfast clubs can reduce the number of pupils coming to class hungry.** The most obvious reason, to reduce hunger in pupils, is nearly always the primary reason why schools want to introduce a breakfast club.

*'For us we felt this was a social priority. Even though we did not have any firm evidence our gut feeling was that we had significant numbers of children coming to school not fed well; not getting a good start to the day.'* (Primary school)

Breakfast clubs can have a real impact on reducing the numbers of children being hungry in the morning. Staff felt that that many pupils would not be eating breakfast if a breakfast club were not available.

**Breakfast clubs can help pupils eat more healthily.** Breakfast clubs can have an impact on pupils eating more healthily, provided that the food on offer is healthy and nutritious. Some pupils who eat breakfast outside of a breakfast club may be eating fatty and sugary foods, such as take-away food, and not getting a strong, nutritional start to the day.

**Breakfast clubs can help pupils' punctuality.** Breakfast clubs can be a way of encouraging pupils to get to school on time. Providing breakfast free of charge can encourage parents to let their children come in earlier. Pupils generally like the food on offer and the opportunity to mix with their friends before lessons.

*'We targeted the hard core who are late at least once every week and encourage them to attend the club.'* (Secondary school)

Pupils can see the difference in their own punctuality.

*'We used to be late for school before and didn't have time for breakfast but now we're not late anymore.'* (Y5 pupil)

**Breakfast clubs can help pupils concentrate and pay attention in class.** Pupils being hungry has been linked with poor concentration in class. Schools believe breakfast clubs can have positive impacts on pupils' ability to concentrate, and that pupils are better able to settle into class and are more ready to learn when they have eaten breakfast.

Improvements tend to be seen for specific pupils who attend breakfast clubs rather than as a positive change for all pupils who attend.

*'The learning support unit leader can tell if someone has come in without eating breakfast. The feeling is it makes a difference to their learning.'* (Secondary school)

Pupils can see the difference in their concentration in class.

*'When I didn't have breakfast I was hungry in class and I struggled with my work. I used to quickly do my work so I could eat my snack at break time ... I only got five marks in my test last year but now I'm getting much higher.'* (Y8 pupil)

*'I used to get hungry before in class and used to get headaches and couldn't do my work.'* (Y4 pupil)

**Breakfast clubs can help improve pupils' behaviour.** Schools link pupils being hungry to poor behaviour. By reducing hunger with the introduction of a breakfast club, classroom behaviour can be improved. As well as helping individual pupils, having the routine of a breakfast club means pupils generally settle better into class and are more ready to learn, which impacts both on the pupils attending breakfast club and on the whole class. Pupils also recognise this link themselves.

*'It was taking up until around 11am for some children to settle down and concentrate but now since the breakfast club these children are settled by the time they come to class at around 9:00am. Because they've come into school that little bit earlier and they're not hungry, they're more focused and engaged.'* (Primary school)

*'Sometimes if I didn't eat anything in the morning I would get tired and grumpy and then I would get fed up when asked to do things in class.'* (Y4 pupil)

*'I don't moan in class because I haven't eaten now. I can concentrate more now and I get to school early as well.'* (Y5 pupil).

**Breakfast clubs can help pupils' social development.** Eating breakfast together makes it easier for children to mix with other pupils who are not in the same classes as them and with children in different age groups. It can encourage more reserved pupils to talk to each other and to talk to staff, fostering new relationships.

*“Socialising in breakfast club gives them confidence to speak to people. They will ask for things, it gives them courage to speak up.” (Secondary school)*

Where staff attend, breakfast clubs can also help staff get to know pupils better and to be able to spot if a pupil is having difficulties in school or outside school, which may need attention.

## Initial design and planning

The following lessons relate to the initial planning stages, when you are starting to think about how a breakfast club might work in your school. It is based on the steps which schools told us they went through, and on the things they said helped them decide whether they should start a breakfast club.

### Secure an engaged senior leader early on

Engage the head teacher or another member of your senior leadership team early on in the process. This will ensure you have senior backing for investigating whether a breakfast club can work for your school. It will make it easier to obtain any information you will need to collect from colleagues, and then make the case for a club.

If you are the head teacher, ask a member of your staff to help with developing the case for a breakfast club. For new head teachers, introducing a breakfast club can be a way of *'making their mark'* on the school.

Once you have obtained senior leadership support, you then need to start asking some questions and collecting information to help you think through how your breakfast club might operate.

### Know what you want the breakfast club to achieve

It is important to be clear about why you want to introduce a breakfast club in your school and what effect you want it to have. Think about what the issues are for your school. The previous section showed the main reasons why schools typically introduce breakfast clubs. You should be clear which apply in your school and which is the most important for your pupils.

### Do you know the scale of the issues you want to address?

Reducing hunger is the most common reason for introducing a breakfast club. Do you know how big a problem hunger is in your school? One approach is to do food surveys to find out what pupils are eating before they come to school and outside of school, and if they are hungry in early lessons. You could do something similar in your school, or you could ask classroom teachers and teaching assistants how big an issue they think it is for the pupils in their class.

Another reason for wanting a breakfast club could be to reduce lateness or encourage particular pupils to have a more settled start to the day, and so be more attentive in early lessons. If you want to use the breakfast club to improve punctuality and attendance, do you know how big a problem lateness and absence is in your school, and who the pupils are that you particularly want to encourage to attend?

## **Ask parents and pupils what they want from a breakfast club**

It is a good idea to consult parents and pupils beforehand to gauge what the demand is for a breakfast club and how they would like it to operate. You could ask parents how willing they would be to send their children to a breakfast club, what times they would want it to open, how many days a week they would want their children to attend, whether they would use it every day or just occasional days; and whether they would be willing to pay to cover or contribute towards the costs.

You could also ask parents what their main reason for supporting a breakfast club is. Be aware that for some parents, eating more healthily may not be the main reason for supporting a breakfast club. Many parents support the use of breakfast clubs because the start time for the club fits better with their morning arrangements.

## **Do you know what other schools do?**

It's useful to know what other schools do. If you are a member of an academy trust or a family of schools, it's a good idea to find out what kind of breakfast clubs other member schools operate and ask them what's worked and what's been a problem for them.

If you are a secondary school, find out what your feeder primary schools do. If they run a breakfast club, you may find that year 7 pupils are already open to the idea of eating breakfast in school and their parents may welcome one; they may even expect it.

## **Develop a whole school approach**

Think how your breakfast club can support other school activities or be supported by them. This could include links into the curriculum, lunchtime or after school activities, promoting good health, or developing links with parents. The School Food Plan<sup>1</sup> gives ideas on how healthy food can be an integral part of a whole school approach.

The schools that have the most integrated breakfast clubs start to consider how the breakfast club could link with other school activities in the early stages of planning. Doing

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<sup>1</sup> See the Useful Links section for further references.

this early on will help you introduce changes. It is also a good way of engaging staff across the school in supporting the breakfast club, either by thinking about how it might link with their work or in identifying pupils who would benefit the most.

Taking a whole school approach will work in mainstream schools, special schools and alternative provision. Special schools often find that breakfast clubs can be really helpful in supporting pupils' learning, either for the whole class, by incorporating food into lessons, or by helping individual pupils learn to experiment with new types of food and learn how to cope with changes in their routine.

## **Partnership arrangements**

Start to think about whether you want to run the breakfast club in-house or if you want to work in partnership with another organisation.

If you have a catering contract, a good starting point is to find out if your current contract enables breakfasts to be provided or if you would have to negotiate changes if you wanted this. If you are part of a shared contract with other schools, you should identify who you need to involve if you want to change provision, such as your academy trust if you share a catering contract with other academies.

You don't have to use your caterer; you could use your existing supplier to order breakfast items and provide breakfast using school staff, or use a new supplier to provide breakfast items.

There are also charities that can give advice on how to set up a breakfast club and help with sourcing the food you will need.

## Developing and testing your breakfast club

Once you have answered the broad questions you can start to develop the detail. There is no 'one size fits all' model of running a breakfast club. The delivery model you choose will need to reflect the space and facilities at your school and the extent to which the breakfast club is integrated with other school activities.

The way the breakfast club is run will be heavily influenced by the characteristics and needs of your pupils. For example, in infant and primary schools, staff typically lead in preparing and serving food and the breakfast club often incorporates supervised and structured activities. Breakfast clubs in secondary schools are more likely to have a more informal structure, with pupils serving themselves. Special schools tend to provide breakfast in classrooms because pupils often arrive at school together on school transport.

There are three broad operating models, which can be followed independently or in combination.

**Table 1 Breakfast Club Operating Models**

	<b>Location</b>	<b>Type of school</b>
Model A:	Breakfast club takes place in one location; usually the main dining area.	Primary schools are more likely to use this model.
Model B:	Breakfast offered in the main dining area for most pupils with satellite clubs for smaller groups.	More common in secondary schools with satellite clubs operating in learning support or off-site units.
Model C:	Breakfast provided in classrooms as part of the learning day.	Mainly operating in special schools.

The remainder of this section highlights the key decisions you should address when developing your model.

### Should we offer the breakfast club to all pupils?

Irrespective of space constraints, think about how wide you would want access to the breakfast club to be. Most mainstream primary and secondary schools typically opt to offer and promote their breakfast club to all pupils. This approach can be beneficial; as well as maximising the number of pupils who might attend, it can help avoid any stigma that might become attached to the club if attendance is restricted to certain types of pupil. Even if selection is sensitively done, pupils and parents may feel they are being targeted in ways they might not welcome.

It is also possible that any filter you might apply could be a blunt instrument. If you were to limit attendance to FSM eligible pupils, you could be excluding pupils in low-income families who may be struggling to provide a healthy breakfast at home.

In special schools, it might be more appropriate to restrict the breakfast club to certain pupils because of the nature of their disabilities or medical condition.

In mainstream schools, it might be more appropriate to limit the breakfast club where there is limited space in the school to run the breakfast club. If this is the case, you need to consider whether you want to limit it to pupils you feel might particularly benefit, such as those who are frequently hungry or persistently late, pupils who have behavioural problems or pupils who would benefit from any educational activities provided alongside the breakfast club. An alternative might be to introduce a rota or waiting list.

## **Should we charge pupils to attend?**

The, obvious, big advantage to making the breakfast club free for all pupils is that you maximise the number of pupils who are likely to attend. As well as encouraging the largest numbers, keeping it free also makes it more likely that FSM eligible pupils or pupils from low income families will attend. Not having a fee structure stops any stigma attached to being eligible to attend for a lower cost. Keeping it free also keeps it administratively simple, as you won't need to organise payments.

If your school cannot afford to keep it free for all pupils, then the next best option is to keep it free for FSM eligible pupils and waive payments in cases where you think charging may stop other pupils being able to attend. If you do charge, keep the charge as low as possible.

Another option is to request voluntary donations, though this does not tend to result in significant income.

## **What food should we offer?**

There is a wide range of food that you could provide. All food should be in line with the School Food Standards.

Schools in the DfE programme typically provided bagels, cereals and juice. Bagels in particular are very popular with pupils. Some schools also offered fruit. Some offered hot food, such as porridge, sometimes limiting this to certain days of the week. For some pupils, breakfast clubs were giving them access to new kinds of food, which schools thought was an added benefit as it introduced pupils to new experiences. Think about what might work in your school.

Within special schools, you might need to consider more carefully what food to provide for pupils. For example, pupils with autism tend to be very particular about the food they eat and may only want to eat specific cereals. This means food from a general catering contract may be less appropriate. You will also need to cater for any dietary requirements because of health conditions.

You might want to offer food for pupils who miss the breakfast club and are hungry. For example, you could keep back some bagels and offer them in the playground to pupils as they come in to school or at morning break time.

## **Should we offer activities alongside breakfast?**

Games and activities alongside the breakfast club seem to work best in primary schools where structured activities are led by a member of staff or by a pupil mentor. If your breakfast club targets a specific group of pupils then this is a good opportunity to run activities alongside the breakfast club to help pupils' development; for example by providing maths and reading activities at the same time.

Games and activities are less commonly offered alongside breakfast clubs in secondary schools. Where they are, an informal, unstructured approach often works best.

If you are going to organise activities, think about how pupils could help run them. Some schools encourage pupils to lead peer learning or to offer mentoring support to younger pupils. This helps older pupils develop their skills and confidence as well as supporting younger ones.

Infant and primary schools may also wish to include childcare with their breakfast club. Typically, childcare is offered before breakfast club starts and then everyone eats breakfast together. An example of this model would be parents dropping their children off at 8:00 for a paid-for structured activity. The breakfast club could then open at 8:30 when the non-paying children come in, when all the pupils sit down together to eat breakfast.

## **How can we staff it?**

Teaching assistants are often very important in the running of breakfast clubs and tend to lead the day-to-day running of the club in many schools. In special schools and PRUs clubs tend to be more classroom-based, so you are more likely to involve teachers in the staffing of the breakfast club. Sometimes schools involve a member of the schools' catering staff, typically where hot food is provided.

Most schools in the DfE programme did not have additional staffing costs arising from breakfast clubs. This is because they met staff costs by altering the times staff work within their existing hours, such as teaching assistants coming in one hour earlier and replacing other work with their breakfast club activities.

Infant and primary schools may want to involve parents in a voluntary capacity in running the breakfast club, alongside school staff. Schools who do this really value this parental engagement. As well as supporting the breakfast club, it can help build links with your parent and carer community.

## Where should we hold it?

School halls or dining areas are the most common locations for breakfast clubs in primary and secondary schools.

Offering breakfast on different sites across the school may be a good option if you need to accommodate different groups of pupils. For example, where some pupils require a quieter, calmer place to eat or to allow activities (such as games or reading groups), breakfast clubs may be held in a learning support or behavioural unit. This can offer a way of settling pupils in and building social skills within the group. It can also help staff engage more intensively with pupils and offer them additional support.

*Case study example:* A large secondary school offers breakfast on three sites. The main location is in the dining room before school starts. This is open to all pupils with around 80-100 pupils attending. Breakfast is additionally offered in a Learning Support Unit classroom on the main site which around 20-25 pupils attend, and in a separate off-site unit for another 20 students who are in alternative provision.

In special schools, breakfasts are normally held in classrooms. This fits well if pupils tend to arrive together on school transport and go straight into class. It also helps integrate breakfast into learning activities for pupils.

## Should we start small and trial it?

Before you commit to a decision to run a breakfast club you might want to trial it to test how the club works before widening it out to more pupils. The advantages of this are that it allows you to judge the demand for the breakfast club and to get a sense of any problems or issues you might need to address before offering it more widely. It also allows you to test out how to promote the breakfast club; you might want to test letters home or other promotion methods with a small group of pupils or parents and ask them whether this method got their attention.

Schools which trial the club before starting find this very helpful. Trialling the club might involve starting the club with particular year groups or with pupils who attend a sub-site within the school, such as a behavioural support unit.

## How will we measure the clubs success?

Before you introduce a breakfast club, you should think about how you will know if it is working and how you will measure success. Think about the main reasons you want to introduce a breakfast club and how you might capture information to see if they are being achieved. The next section addresses monitoring and evaluation during implementation, but you should start to think early on about what information you might need to collect.

What are the key metrics you might want to look at during the year? These might include:

- How many pupils are attending?
- What are the characteristics of the pupils attending? (gender, year group, FSM or Pupil Premium eligibility, for example)
- How frequently do pupils attend, and does this vary over the week or at certain times of the year?
- What does the club cost to run over a year?

To monitor how many, and what type of pupils attend you could keep an attendance register each day for the breakfast club, or you could set aside one week every term to record who attends on each day of that week.

You could also run a short survey to ask pupils if they attend breakfast club and what they think about how it operates. This way you could also find out from pupils who do not attend why this is the case, and what might attract them in.

It helps to set a budget and keep clear records of costs throughout the year within your financial management system, so that you can see how much you are spending on the breakfast club and whether it is operating within budget.

Remember that building in expectations and collecting data at the start will give you some baseline data to help when you when you are reviewing the club's effectiveness later on, and considering whether to continue.

# Implementing and refining your breakfast club

## Taking the decision

In most schools, the head teacher leads the decision to implement a breakfast club. Schools may also seek the support of the governing body. Involving the governing body helps build a whole school approach. Schools that do this are more likely to have thought through how the breakfast club can support other priorities in the school and link the breakfast club to school development plans. Once you have taken the decision, it is important to keep an eye on how the breakfast club is operating.

## Marketing and promoting the club

Getting the promotion of the breakfast club right and keeping pupils and parents aware of the offer is an important aspect of the successful implementation of a breakfast club. There are a variety of methods you can use to alert parents to breakfast clubs including letters home, newsletters, posters in school and social media.

Pupils are a key source of information about the breakfast club and many pupils ask their parents if they can attend, often so they can see their friends in the morning. It is therefore vital to ensure that pupils are aware of the breakfast club.

Remember that communications need to be maintained to keep up awareness of the offer. You may want to repeat promotions during the year, at the start of each term or linked in with other school promotions.

Involving parents in running the breakfast club can also help to promote the breakfast club as parents will share information about the club among their informal networks.

Most schools stress the need for discretion and subtlety when targeting promotion at particular pupils or parents. For example, if a pupil is persistently late or slow to settle into class in the morning, you could start a conversation with the parent to let them know that the school provides breakfast and that it is free, positioning this as a service the school provides which they may want to take up, rather than as a criticism of their child's behaviour.

Another example is to consider how you promote the club to older pupils. Older pupils in secondary schools are less likely to attend than younger pupils so it is worth tailoring some communications to them. They may think the club is only for younger pupils or they may not like the word 'club' as, again, they think this links in to younger pupils. Your student council might be able to suggest ideas.

## Monitoring who is attending

A key component of having a successful breakfast club is knowing whether the pupils most in need are those attending. It is important to monitor who is attending your breakfast club, not just so that you can know that it continues to be popular and that overall attendance is in line with expectations, but also that key groups of pupils are attending.

You can do this by maintaining a daily register of attendees or by collecting information on attendees on specified days or weeks in each term, or during the year. You should record the name of attendees and their key characteristics such as gender, year group, and FSM or Pupil Premium eligibility, to collect useful information on which to review the effectiveness of the club.

Key groups you may wish to monitor are:

- FSM pupils. You will want to know what proportion of pupils attending the breakfast club are FSM eligible. This figure should, at least, be in line with the proportion of FSM pupils on your school roll, or higher if you want to specifically encourage this group of pupils.
- Other groups of pupils you particularly want to attend, such as pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools, looked after children or EAL pupils.
- Specific pupils you have encouraged to attend such as persistent late comers or pupils from families that are not FSM eligible, but where you know money is tight.
- Year groups. Pupils tend to attend breakfast clubs fairly evenly across primary school year groups but older pupils in secondary schools are less likely to attend, and if they do attend, they may only attend for one or two days a week.
- Check the gender balance to ensure boys and girls are equally likely to attend. In most schools, there isn't a difference but you will want to know the gender balance roughly matches that on your school roll.

Think about how you will know who is attending in your school and how you will change your approach if you are not getting the pupils attending that you would most like to.

## Evaluating

As well as monitoring who is attending the club, you should ask pupils and parents for their views on how the club is working for them. This could include looking at the food offer and the opening times to see if there are ways of encouraging more pupils to attend. This is also a useful way of asking pupils who do not attend why they are not interested and what might encourage them to attend.

You might also want to run a hunger survey or repeat one that you ran before the club started to see what pupils are eating for breakfast and if they are hungry during early lessons.

In order to get the most from a breakfast club, you should set aside a regular time each term to review the information on the usage and impact of your breakfast club, to check it is achieving the expected outcomes. You could set aside some time in one of your senior leadership team meetings every term to review the information.

There are several impacts on pupils you may wish to monitor, either formally or more informally. The impact of introducing a breakfast club on school attendance rates and punctuality can be monitored by comparing school absence and lateness figures before introducing the club, and at regular intervals after introducing the club. If specific pupils who are often late or absent are encouraged to attend the breakfast club, then their teacher could also keep a record of any changes to their attendance or punctuality. Attainment could be measured by comparing standardized test scores or teacher assessments of attainment across the school, before and after introducing a breakfast club. Be aware that you are less likely to see differences using standardized measures than with teacher assessments<sup>2</sup>. It is likely that other impacts such as behaviour, concentration, and social benefits are measured more informally. Teachers may wish to keep a record or have regular discussions with the senior leadership team to note any changes seen across the class in general, or for specific pupils attending breakfast clubs.

It is important to remember that other initiatives and changes at school can impact the same pupil outcomes. You should take care to consider whether any observed impacts can be attributed exclusively to the breakfast club, and what contribution other factors may be having.

## Communicating

It is important to keep parents and staff informed of the way the breakfast club is running. This can help promote the club to parents. It can help build a wider support network for the club and it can help staff think about how the breakfast club can support their area, or to think about whether there are pupils they work with who could be encouraged to attend.

Remember if you fund your breakfast club with Pupil Premium money, communications to parents and staff about the breakfast clubs success will be a good way of showing the

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<sup>2</sup> Impact of the implementation of breakfast clubs in the Magic Breakfast Programme on attainment has been independently evaluated separately by Education Endowment Foundation (EEF); see Useful Links section.

premiums' effectiveness, and can be part of the information you put to your governing body and publish on your website about how you spend it.

## Looking ahead

Schools should look ahead and regularly review whether the breakfast club is sustainable for the coming school year. Set a date to do this in advance, during your business planning each year.

Schools need to start to address the following questions well before the end of the school year to evaluate whether the breakfast club is sustainable:

- Is there an ongoing need for a breakfast club? Do the reasons you introduced the breakfast club still apply?
- Is the breakfast club attracting enough students and/or the students you most want to attend?
- What positive impacts can you see? If you have collected breakfast club attendance data, you could look at your school attendance and punctuality statistics to see if this is making a difference.
- If you stopped the breakfast club or started to charge for attendance, what do you think the implications would be?
- Does the breakfast club provide value for money? In considering this bear in mind that this is not a simple profit or loss question. Breakfast clubs bring benefits to pupils that cannot be quantified financially.
- Are there funds in the school budget in the coming year to pay for the breakfast club?
- Who will run the breakfast club? Are there any staff changes coming up that mean you have to identify new people to get involved?

Thinking this through well in advance of the new school year is necessary to identify alternative food and resourcing options or any other changes to arrangements you want to make.

Review the key decisions in the initial design section to see if you want to make any changes to the way your breakfast club operates which will make it run more smoothly and/or attract more pupils in; as always keep senior leadership engaged.

Finally, remember to communicate your decision and let pupils, parents and staff know the breakfast club is continuing. As well as providing practical information to families already using the club, this can build future interest and foster a whole school approach.

## Useful Links

**Children's Food Trust:** A charity sharing the skills, knowledge and confidence to cook from scratch, helping anyone who provides food for children to do a great job.

[www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk](http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk)

**Evaluation of Breakfast Clubs in Schools with High Levels of Deprivation - Full Report:** The full research report evaluating the DfE funded Breakfast Club Programme on which this briefing document was based. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications>

**Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services Nutrition Criteria (GBSF):** These standards are applied by central government procurers; other organizations are encouraged to follow them alongside the School Food Standards. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-procurement-the-gbs-for-food-and-catering-services>

**Guide and Checklist Tool for School Caterers:** A guide by Public Health England (PHE) and Children's Food Trust for school caterers; offering advice on buying healthier food and ingredients, and to help them to meet the Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services (GBSF) mandatory nutrition criteria. <http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/childrens-food-trust/schools/school-food-standards/resources/advice-on-buying-healthier-food-and-ingredients/>

**Magic Breakfast:** A UK based charity who support schools with 35% or more pupils eligible for free school meals, or with 50% Ever 6 FSM, delivering nutritious food and bespoke advice on the optimum way to reach every malnourished and vulnerable child. [www.magicbreakfast.com](http://www.magicbreakfast.com)

**Magic Breakfast Project Evaluation:** The report details findings of a randomised controlled trial commissioned by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) testing the impact of the introduction of breakfast clubs primarily on attainment and school and attendance. <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/our-work/projects/magic-breakfast>

**Recipe Hub:** Over 100 recipes, including breakfasts, created by school cooks and caterers, supported by Public Health England (PHE) and the School Food Plan. Children's Food Trust has checked each recipe against the School Food Standards, best practice guidance and recommended typical portion sizes. <http://whatworkswell.schoolfoodplan.com/articles/view/517>

**School Food Plan:** An agreed plan published by the Department for Education in July 2013, it sets out seventeen actions to transform what children eat in schools and how they learn about food. [www.schoolfoodplan.com](http://www.schoolfoodplan.com)

**School Food Standards:** Department for Education Guidance on the standards for planning and providing food in schools in England, including information on the school food plan, the provision of milk and the free fruit and vegetables scheme.

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/standards-for-school-food-in-england](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standards-for-school-food-in-england)

**What Works Well:** An online hub provided by the School Food Plan, including guidance for head teachers, governors, and local authorities as well as examples of existing schemes, examples and ideas for delivering great food and food education in schools.

<http://whatworkswell.schoolfoodplan.com/>

**Whole School Approach to Food – Checklist for Head teachers:** A downloadable checklist of actions from the School Food Plan that can make a big difference to take-up and food culture in schools. <http://www.schoolfoodplan.com/checklist/>



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