

## **Childcare Reforms- New Breakfast Clubs**

### **Key Messages**

Forum members are asked to note the update regarding the Government's new Breakfast Club programme.

### **1. Introduction/background**

The Government has committed to offering a free breakfast club offering both food and childcare in every primary school in England. This will build on both the national wraparound childcare programme and the national school breakfast programme. Breakfast Clubs' policy is in the early stages of development and the Department for Education (DfE) is engaging with the sector to inform that policy. This engagement includes LAs, schools and private, voluntary and independent nurseries (PVI's). PVI's are expected to have a role in delivery working alongside schools where required.

The DfE has invited schools to take part in an early adopter scheme. The scheme will seek to test and learn what works ahead of national rollout. Up to 750 state-funded schools in England with primary aged-pupils will work with the DfE. It will focus on how breakfast clubs can be delivered in a way that:

- Builds on what is already happening in schools.
- Meets the needs of parents ensures children start the day ready to learn early adopter schools will be confirmed by early 2025 and the scheme will launch in the summer term (April 2025).
- Ensures children start the day ready to learn.

### **2. Aims and Principles**

The new breakfast clubs will focus on the Government's aims and principles that childcare should:

1. Continue to be available when children start school.
2. Ensure that parents have flexible childcare to enable them to work.
3. Ensure opportunity for all pupils, regardless of their backgrounds.
4. Reduce child poverty.
5. Tackle food poverty.
6. Provide affordable childcare choices right across the country.
7. Support families with the cost of living.

### **3. Interest from Sheffield Schools**

DfE information and a link to express interest in being an early adopter was shared with all Sheffield schools in week commencing Monday 30 October via:

- Sharepoint;
- Education & Skills Bulletin;
- an email from Learn Sheffield;
- a Wraparound Childcare Support Launch event was held on 25/9/2024. A DfE representative talked directly to staff from schools/trusts/PVIs attending about the breakfast club scheme and early adopter opportunities.

Schools who express an interest in becoming an early adopter have been asked to notify the Education Sufficiency Team that they have done so. Three schools have notified the LA that they have expressed an interest.

Mapping of wraparound provision in Sheffield informs us that the majority of schools already have some form of breakfast club provision in place (offered by school staff or by an onsite or nearby private provider). Only 11 out of Sheffield's 136 primary schools do not offer a breakfast club at all and three of these offer breakfast but no childcare. Unless the school is registered for the National Breakfast programme however, parents need to pay for their child to attend.

### **4. How will the new breakfast clubs relate to the Wraparound Childcare Programme?**

The wraparound childcare programme is already increasing the availability of childcare, but parents are still required to pay for this provision. The breakfast club ambition will go further:

- It will use emerging data from the wraparound programme and learning about the barriers in setting up childcare before school.
- It will enable more affordable childcare choices.
- It will support families with the cost of living - reducing the impact of poverty.
- It will provide children with a breakfast every morning to make sure all children start the school day fed and ready to learn.
- It will consider the role of PVIs before school childcare as well as afterschool and holiday provision.

The need for some paid for wraparound care will likely remain to ensure that families can access childcare from 8am or earlier. Free Breakfast clubs can be thought of as a universal layer of support, within a broader offer of wraparound (with a chargeable element).

## **5. What is the current National Breakfast programme offer?**

Schools in disadvantaged areas are eligible for the programme if they have 40% or more pupils in bands A-F of the income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI). All participating schools receive a 75% subsidy for the food and delivery costs of breakfast club provision. All pupils in participating schools are offered breakfast supplies at no cost to them or their parents. However, the programme is due to end at the end of July 2025.

## **6. Recommendations**

Forum members are asked to note details of the programme and progress to date.