

A group of young children are sitting at a long blue table in a school cafeteria, eating breakfast. They are smiling and looking towards the camera. On the table are yellow plates with food, small cups of juice, and containers of yogurt. The background shows a typical school hallway with lockers and posters.

Kellogg's

Exploring the Breakfast Club Gap

2026

The power of starting the day right

At Kellogg's, we believe every child deserves the best possible start to the day so they can go into their classroom fuelled and ready to learn. Having been at breakfast tables for over 100 years in the UK and supported Breakfast Clubs with cash grants for almost three decades, we understand what it takes to make breakfast clubs work, day in, day out – and the difference they make for children, parents, carers and teachers.

For many families, cost pressures and busy morning routines can make breakfast harder to manage. That's one reason school breakfast clubs have become such an important part of the school day. They provide a safe, welcoming space where children can eat, settle and play with friends before lessons begin.

They can also support academic performance: 96% reported improved concentration, 94% improved punctuality, 93% of schools saw benefits in making friends and socialising, and 86% reported stronger relationships with teachers and school staff¹.

Since 1998, we've supported school breakfast clubs across the UK, providing 7,223 cash grants to help 5,401 schools serve children a nutritious morning meal. Across the 2025/26 school year, our Breakfast Club Grants Programme has supported around 70,000 children, and we're committed to maintaining that support so more children can start the school day with the food and energy the need to learn, focus and thrive.

Breakfast clubs in 2026: A Community Effort

In 2025, the rollout of the UK Government's Free Breakfast Club Programme began, with the ambition of providing free 30-minute sessions before school every day, at every primary school across the country.

It comes at a time of significant need. Official Department for Work and Pensions data published in March 2026 revealed more than one in four across the UK are living in poverty².

Against that backdrop, we wanted to understand what breakfast clubs mean for children, families and schools, and what it will take to sustain and grow provision in a way that works for everyone.

To do that, we surveyed 1,000 UK primary school teachers and 2,000 parents of primary school children to understand how breakfast clubs impact their lives. Almost three quarters of teachers say demand for breakfast club is rising, but there are obvious pressure points making it difficult to keep up with that demand.

It also highlighted a significant community effort and the 'hidden helpers' who are running breakfast clubs up and down the country each morning:

- Half of all teachers surveyed are involved delivering breakfast clubs in their schools.
- Close to half of respondents say teachers' friends and family volunteer their time to support breakfast clubs.
- One third of teachers say pupils' parents lend a helping hand.

Read on to explore what's driving demand, where the pressure points are, and how government, business and charities can work together to protect and strengthen breakfast clubs for the children and families who rely on them.



Foreword

The impact breakfast clubs have on children's academic, social, and emotional development cannot be overstated. A balanced breakfast helps children start the day ready to learn, supporting energy release, concentration and healthy routines. But, as my research over more than two decades has shown, the value of breakfast clubs extends far beyond the food itself.

At their best, breakfast clubs provide structure, facilitate social connection, belonging, and friendships. They create a calm, welcoming start to the school day, where children can sit together, socialise and feel part of their school community. That matters enormously, particularly for children whose mornings may otherwise be rushed, unsettled or affected by wider pressures at home.

That is what makes Kellogg's research so important. As breakfast provision expands, we must continue to look not only at how many breakfasts are served, but at what makes provision effective, sustainable and meaningful for children, families and schools.

One of the strongest themes in this report is the role of the hidden helpers who make breakfast clubs possible. Teachers, support staff, volunteers, parents, carers and community partners are giving their time, energy and care every morning. They prepare food, set up spaces, welcome children, build relationships and create the conditions for children to begin the day well.

Their contribution deserves recognition. Breakfast clubs do not simply happen; they rely on people, often working within very real constraints. Rising demand, limited space, staffing pressures, time and resources all shape what schools can offer. These challenges should not lower our ambition, but they should inform how breakfast provision is designed, delivered, and supported.

We have a strong foundation to build from: decades of research, practical expertise in schools and a shared commitment to giving children the best possible start to their day. The opportunity now is to ensure breakfast clubs continue to offer not just nourishment, but consistency, dignity, connection and care.

There is no single model for a successful breakfast club. Schools and communities are different, and the experiences of children, families and those running clubs matter deeply. What is clear is that sustainable provision depends on listening to schools, valuing the people behind the scenes, and bringing together evidence, experience and partnership.

M. A. Defeyter

Professor Greta Defeyter OBE
Dean of Social Mobility Policy Engagement
and Professor of Developmental Psychology,
Northumbria University

The people behind breakfast clubs

50%

of teachers are involved in delivering breakfast club provision

46%

say friends and family volunteer to help, while 33% rely on support from pupils' parents

3-5 hours

average time spent each week helping to run their club

A community effort

Behind every breakfast club is a community of teachers, support staff, volunteers and families working together to make it happen, often before the school day officially begins. Their commitment creates safe and welcoming spaces where children can eat, settle and start the day ready to learn, while also providing vital support for parents managing work, childcare and busy morning routines.

Our findings shows the dedication it takes from a whole community to make breakfast clubs happen every single day. Half of teachers are involved in providing breakfast provision, with many spending between three and five hours each week helping to run their club.

Schools also draw on support from the wider community, with 46% of teachers saying friends and family volunteer and a third (33%) relying on help from pupils' parents. Their tireless efforts make a vital contribution, helping schools provide more children with a positive and settled start to the day.

For the past 15 years, the Kellogg's Breakfast Club Awards have recognised the staff, volunteers and children who go above and beyond to make their clubs special each morning, celebrating their commitment and sharing ideas that can inspire other schools.

While many schools benefit from the support of their local communities, that's not the case everywhere. That lack of external support can put more of the responsibility on to teachers, and which can have a significant impact on their wellbeing. More than half (55%) of teachers say additional responsibilities outside the classroom have made them consider leaving the profession. If breakfast clubs are to thrive, every school needs the right support to protect the people delivering them while sustaining the benefits they provide for children and their families.

The value of breakfast clubs extends far beyond the school gates. Kellogg's research found that if breakfast clubs were to close:

46%

of parents would struggle to get to work on time

43%

say it would add pressure to their morning routines

35%

would need to reduce their working hours or flexibility

Case study: Southbury Primary School

What can look from the outside like a simple offer of breakfast before lessons is a tightly timed morning operation, made possible by staff who choose to go above and beyond for their pupils.

At Southbury Primary School in Enfield, the breakfast club is geared towards supporting working parents, while also providing vital structure and care for children who need it most at the start of the day. Based in a community where many families are on low incomes, with around 80% of pupils speaking English as an additional language and high pupil premium, anywhere between 10 and 30 pupils attend the breakfast club each morning.

The children eat together to encourage socialising and a calm start, with a range of healthy breakfast choices on offer. The school tries to reflect its community through the food it serves, with options influenced by the local Turkish, Somali and Bangladeshi communities, such as chapatis with honey, made from scratch by the staff that run the club.

After breakfast, pupils can take part in a broad mix of activities to help them settle in their own way, from mindfulness drawing and quiet areas for homework or reading, to sporting sessions.

The breakfast club is run by two learning assistants, including the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), who ensure the club is inclusive and beneficial for everyone that attends. They give up their time to put the sessions on every morning, before fulfilling their usual classroom responsibilities for the rest of the day.

Anna Wellbrook, Deputy Head at Southbury Primary School, said:

"Our breakfast club is a really important part of the day, but there is a lot that goes on behind the scenes. We need staff in early, enough food for every child who comes through the door, a safe space, and the right equipment to get everyone through breakfast before lessons begin.

"We see the difference it makes. For some children, without that regular routine, it can take a long time to settle and be ready to learn. For others, it's simply that they're fed. Lots of children come to school hungry, and it's hard to concentrate like that. The interaction with adults and being spoken to positively has a real impact on wellbeing and focus too."

Southbury Primary School has worked with Kellogg's for the past two years. The £1,000 grants have enabled the school to invest in their library area, where pupils can read quietly and take time to relax in the morning, and board games that build confidence and support social interaction. It has also enabled the school to offer a broader, healthier menu.

Anna added: "Like many school clubs, it costs a huge amount for us to deliver, and that's the reality a lot of schools are facing. Demand is only increasing, and we want to support as many children as we can. The extra support we receive from Kellogg's has been - and will continue to be - invaluable."

What teachers are telling us



of teachers say demand has increased over last five years



identified risk of reduced capacity or closure without support



say staffing shortages are a barrier to further expansion

At present, just 29% of teachers say that all children who want to use a breakfast club are able to. Furthermore, 73% of teachers say demand for breakfast clubs has increased over the past five years. Yet only one in five schools think they'll be able to expand their breakfast club to meet rising demand.

One in seven (14.7%) say capacity could reduce or their club could close if no additional support is provided in the next 1-3 years. That would equate to almost 100,000 primary school children losing access to a breakfast club by 2029, and a further 637,000 seeing places reduced.

These findings underline the importance of listening to the teachers and school staff delivering breakfast clubs every day, and ensuring their experiences help inform how future provision is shaped and supported.

Main barriers to breakfast club expansion include:



Susan Richardson, Breakfast Club Lead at The Bluecoat Primary School, Stamford, said:

"The demand for our breakfast club continues to grow because more families recognise the difference it can make. We know how important it is to give children a positive, settled start to the day, but every additional place requires the right staffing, space and resources to deliver it well. Schools are committed to supporting as many children as possible, but long-term investment is vital to help us keep pace with growing demand."

The Kellogg's Breakfast Club Awards

Breakfast clubs do so much more than simply provide food. They help children feel settled, connected and ready to learn, and they provide meaningful support to families navigating busy mornings and financial pressures.

Kellogg's has supported school breakfast clubs for almost three decades, working with schools and partners to help expand provision where it's needed most. Since 1998, we have donated more than £6m to schools across the UK as part of our efforts to help alleviate hunger and help children start the day well. We have provided more than 5,000 individual schools with grants to support the success running of their breakfast club.

But as our research shows, goodwill alone cannot carry breakfast provision indefinitely. Demand is rising, and many schools are already balancing limited budgets, staffing pressures and space and resource restrictions. That's why we believe the future of breakfast clubs depends on long-term collaboration, with schools, government and organisations across the food industry working together to ensure provision is sustainable, consistent and high quality.

The Kellogg's Breakfast Club Awards

We want to recognise the hidden heroes across the UK who make breakfast clubs happen - from teachers and support staff to volunteers, families and pupils - and share examples to inspire other breakfast club providers. This is at the heart of the Kellogg's Breakfast Club Awards.

Now into its 15th year, the Kellogg's Breakfast Club Awards are just as relevant as they ever have been. We are looking forward to celebrating schools again this year and recognising the people and pupils who go above and beyond to make these clubs so special.

2026 Breakfast Club Award categories:

Six regional awards: Recognising the breakfast clubs across the UK that go above and beyond with extra-curricular activities and support for the children most in need.

NEW FOR 2026: Breakfast Club Star Award: This will recognise an extraordinary pupil who consistently shows enthusiasm, kindness and commitment at their breakfast club, helping to create a positive, welcoming and supportive start to the day for others.

Each winner receives £1,000 grant and attends an awards ceremony at the Houses of Parliament.

BREAKFAST CLUB BEST PRACTICE:

Inspiration from our 2025 winners

From budding young chefs to science kits, two of our previous award winners show how they're helping children start the day right by going beyond breakfast to create engaging, inclusive experiences tailored to their pupils.



Black Lane County Primary School, Wrexham

Black Lane Country Primary was named Kellogg's Breakfast Club of the Year 2025 in Wales.

Black Lane's breakfast club has been running since 2010, providing breakfasts and activities to up to 40 children every day. Children are welcomed every morning into a warm and friendly environment where they can enjoy a balanced breakfast, helping to fuel their bodies and minds for the day ahead. Alongside a variety of tasty food options, pupils take part in engaging games and activities that encourage creativity, teamwork, and social interaction.

What sets the club apart is its focus on making mornings both enriching and inclusive, with plans to create a quiet reading space, introduce STEM activities and hold themed breakfast days where pupils can explore food from different cultures.



Brooklands Farm Primary School, Milton Keynes

Brooklands Farm Primary School was awarded the Free Breakfast Club Programme Early Adopter Award, which was introduced in 2025 in partnership with the Department for Education. It recognised their efforts participating in the DfE's Early Adopter scheme, which provided early access to government funding to deliver free breakfast clubs.

Each morning, the breakfast club at Brooklands Farm, one of the largest Primary Schools in the UK, offers a rich variety of engaging play-based activities alongside breakfast to 850 pupils. These include arts and crafts, water play, construction, sports, physical activities, mindfulness sessions, and much more, ensuring every child starts the day stimulated, active, happy and ready to thrive.

Its Young Chef Programme makes the club particularly distinctive, giving pupils the opportunity to work alongside the school's in-house chef, help prepare breakfast and take an active role in running the club.

This hands-on experience helps pupils build confidence, develop practical skills and strengthen their sense of responsibility and self-esteem.

Securing the future of breakfast clubs

Breakfast clubs are now a core part of the school ecosystem for many communities. They help children begin the day in a safe, supportive environment, and they provide practical help to families managing early mornings, childcare and work.

Our research highlights three clear messages:

- 1 Families value breakfast clubs and rely on them. Parents tell us clubs support morning routines, childcare and getting to work on time.
- 2 Demand is rising. Teachers report increasing need for breakfast provision across the last five years.
- 3 Capacity is under strain. Schools' ability to expand provision does not currently match demand, and additional responsibilities are contributing to workload pressure.

As breakfast provision evolves in 2026 and beyond, sustainable delivery will depend on the right support being in place. That means:

- Resourcing that reflects the true cost of delivery, including staffing time, food, equipment, space and administration
- Workforce support that protects teachers' time, with models that do not rely solely on goodwill of busy teachers, friends and parents
- Clear, practical guidance for schools, so breakfast provision can be delivered safely, consistently and inclusively
- Partnership approaches, bringing together schools, government and responsible businesses to help reduce pressure and share best practice
- Celebrating what works, so strong, scalable ideas can spread - from calm spaces and enrichment activities to pupil leadership opportunities

Kellogg's will continue to play our part, supporting breakfast clubs, championing collaboration, and celebrating the people behind them through the annual Kellogg's Breakfast Club Awards.

Find out more:

Support for school breakfast clubs:

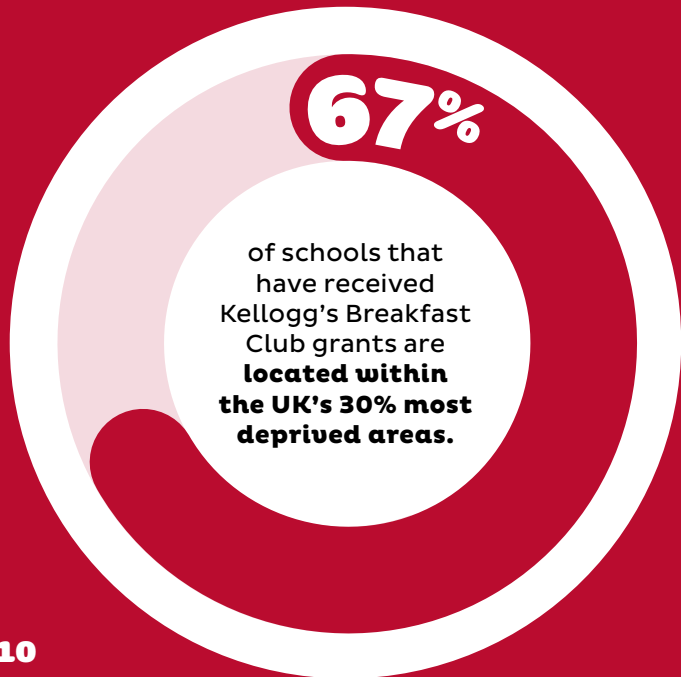
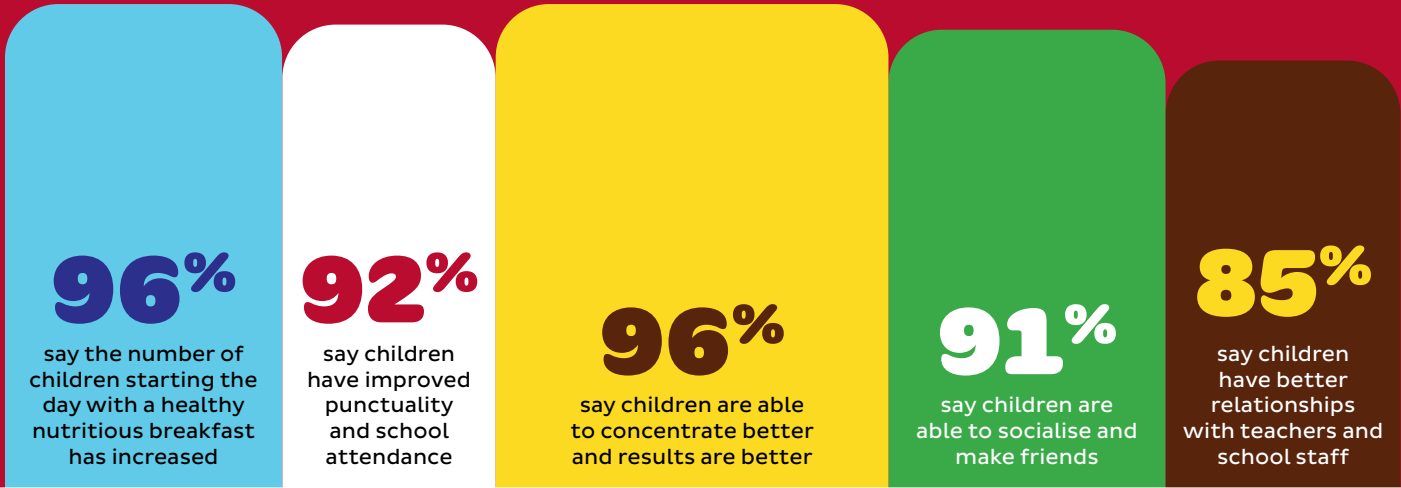
www.kelloggs.co.uk/en_GB/our-story/feeding-people-in-need/support-for-school-breakfast-clubs

The impact of Kellogg's Breakfast Club Grants

For almost three decades, Kellogg's has supported school breakfast clubs in some of the UK's most disadvantaged communities, helping children start the day ready to learn and thrive. Through our grants programme, schools receive flexible funding that can be used in whatever way best meets their needs, from food and equipment to staffing and resources that help schools open their gates early and provide a welcoming environment for children.

What teachers are telling us

We've surveyed teachers from schools that have received a Kellogg's Breakfast Club Grant since 2017 to find out what impact breakfast clubs have on their pupils:



Kellogg's Breakfast Club Grants since 2011:



Our breakfast club gives some of our most vulnerable pupils the chance to start the school day with breakfast when they may not have otherwise done so. More recently, we have noticed a large number of pupils who arrive at school hungry. We would not have had a budget to do this without the amazing help from Kellogg's."

School breakfast club in West Dunbartonshire, Scotland



Our breakfast club has gone from strength to strength over the years with grant support from Kellogg's. We have been able to develop a wide range of food options and activities. It is a real positive aspect of our school."

School in Kirklees, Yorkshire & Humber



Research overview

The teacher research was conducted by Censuswide among a sample of 1,000 UK primary school teachers aged 23+ whose school operates a breakfast club. The data was collected between 28.05.2026 and 04.06.2026.

The parent research was conducted by Censuswide among a sample of 2,000 parents of primary school children aged 19+. The data was collected between 29.05.2026 and 05.06.2026.

Censuswide is a member of the Market Research Society and the British Polling Council, and a signatory of the Global Data Quality Pledge. Censuswide adheres to the MRS Code of Conduct and ESOMAR principles.

¹ Forever Manchester, survey data from recipients of Kellogg's Breakfast Club Grants, 2017 to 2026

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-for-financial-years-ending-1995-to-2025>

