



Hungry to Learn:

**The impact of morning
hunger on our schoolchildren**



In February 2025, we surveyed 2,000 parents and 867 teachers across the UK to uncover the true scale and impact of morning hunger amongst children in the classroom.

Our research spotlighted the vital role teachers and breakfast clubs play in tackling this crisis together.

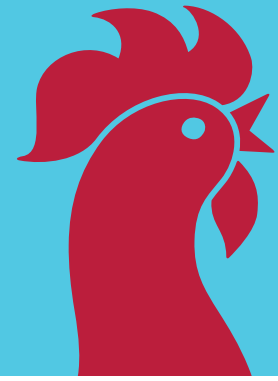
Key Findings

- **Over a third (36%) of teachers surveyed claim to see hungry children arriving at school every day, with almost half (49%) seeing an increase in the number of children in their classroom going hungry compared to last year.**
- **16% of teachers are using their own money to provide food to hungry children, with the average amount being nearly £25 per month.**
- **78% of teachers believe there is a significant issue with children not having daily access to food.**
- **97% of teachers believe that arriving at school hungry affects educational progress.**
- **Teachers report spending 4 hours per week of their teaching time dealing with hungry children.**
- **77% of teachers believe their role has become more pastoral, offering increased support to children and parents.**

Foreword

Professor Greta Defeyter OBE

Director of the Healthy Living Lab and
Dean of Social Mobility Policy Engagement,
Northumbria University



As a leading expert on social mobility, I am delighted that Kellogg's has commissioned this timely large-scale report. It highlights teachers' and adults' perceptions of the negative impacts of poverty and food insecurity on families, and the additional pressures this places on school budgets and school staff.

The inclusion of teachers' and adults' perceptions of school breakfast clubs adds further weight to the UK Government's own findings and other reports by NGOs and charities on the positive impacts of school breakfast clubs on pupils' health, educational attainment, and social and emotional development, and how school breakfast clubs help parents juggle the demands of work and childcare. However, the report also clearly illustrates how childhood poverty is placing an enormous strain on school budgets and on teachers at both a professional and personal level. The specific focus on school breakfast clubs in this report, with the much-needed inclusion of teachers' perceptions, will support and inform governments in rolling out school breakfast policies and programmes across the UK.

The need to provide ALL children and young people with a nutritious breakfast to start the day has never been greater. Data from the Households Below Average Income Survey shows that more households than ever are relying on some form of food aid. The percentage of children in food insecure households has increased and in 2024 there were over four million (28%) children in material deprivation in the UK. Governments have some tough decisions to make but teachers are on the front line and see the impact of pupils arriving to school hungry, and parents and carers trying to juggle work and childcare commitments on a daily basis.



Evolving role of teachers

Kellogg's believes that every child deserves to start the day with a full stomach and a fair chance. But the new research we've carried out paints a sobering picture, with the average teacher spending nearly £25 a month of their own money to feed hungry pupils. That's more than £220 over the course of a school year, coming straight out of their pockets to make sure no child goes without food at school.

£24.57

average amount teachers spend of their own money per month to support hungry children

On average, teachers are spending over half a day's teaching time each week (4hrs) supporting hungry children, and have reported some concerning patterns from those who do enter the classroom unfed.

According to the teachers surveyed, they felt some of the most common outcomes for children arriving to school hungry include feeling tired (81%), unable to concentrate (79%), feeling low or sad (56%) and exhibiting disruptive behaviour (50%).

With schools facing increased pressures when it comes to tackling childhood food poverty, teachers and school staff across the country are stepping into roles that go far beyond what they signed up for.

In fact, our research shows that 16% of teachers regularly dip into their own funds to buy food or snacks for students. Over a quarter (27%) have even given away food they brought in for themselves.

4

hours of teaching time lost per week



Over three quarters (80%) of teachers feel more like caregivers than educators. 78% also said that their schools have become community hubs, offering not just learning, but vital support for struggling families.

Sadly 7% of teachers said they might not have chosen this profession if they'd known how much extra responsibility it would bring — that's potentially 45,000 educators*. Another 30% say they would have had second thoughts.

And the need is only growing. More than a third (36%) of teachers say they see hungry children coming into school every day. Almost half (49%) are also seeing an increase in the number of children in their classroom going hungry compared to last year.



*Based on BESA figures that there are 643,491 full-time teachers in the UK.
 $0.07 \times 643,491 = 45K$

Education today goes far beyond the classroom. From early years settings to schools, these spaces are more than places of learning, they're becoming vital community hubs that touch finance, wellbeing, health, and more.

Children showing up to early years settings hungry has, unfortunately, become more commonplace. In response to this, educators have started providing food paid for out of their own pockets. This goes to show what we have long known: the dedication, professionalism, and commitment of those working in early years settings is second to none.

For children to have the best possible start in life, it is crucial that they have access to good nutrition and that early years settings have adequate resources to provide this.

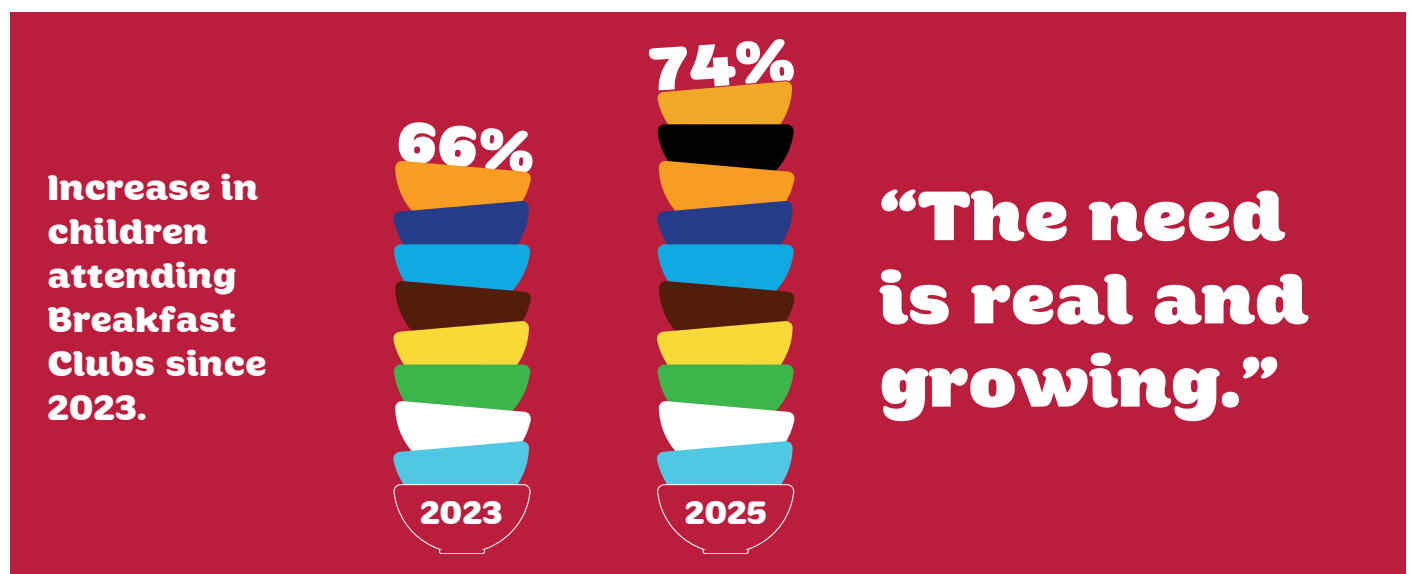
The report highlights the importance of getting it right for all children and it's great that companies like Kellogg's are championing and supporting vital initiatives to make this a reality.

Neil Leitch
CEO of the Early Years Alliance

Breakfast Clubs making a difference

We didn't just hear from teachers. In a broader survey of 2,000 adults, a quarter (24%) said they've struggled to put food on the table — and of those, 72% of adults have reached out for help. Many have had to cut back on heating (53%) or borrow money from friends or family (52%) just to feed their families.

Almost three quarters (74%) said that their child now goes to a breakfast club compared to two thirds (66%) in 2023 – highlighting just how big the demand for this provision is amongst families. And the awareness is growing too, with 71% of those surveyed saying they are aware of breakfast clubs, whilst 65% of parents who are not currently using one expressed an interest in sending their child to a club in the future.



We also heard how breakfast clubs are making a real difference to families. They don't just fill bellies — they help kids connect with friends, feel welcome, increase attendance and start the day in a positive way. 64% of teachers said their pupils love the chance to spend that extra time with their peers. Parents also cited how breakfast clubs enable their children to participate in physical exercise (22%), gain support with homework (18%), and engage in fun activities (52%).

And these positive impacts are felt outside of the school grounds too, with 57% of parents saying that breakfast clubs help them to get to work earlier – one of the biggest advantages reported for parents. And as we see a wider societal push towards getting working people back to the office, 62% of parents say that this has meant they've started using or increased their use of breakfast clubs.

But perhaps most striking is that 1 in 4 parents (26%) say that they would have to turn down work or even stop working altogether if there was no breakfast club provision, an increase since our previous survey in 2023 (24%).

Educators are keen to ensure investment continues for this vital morning provision with 67% of teachers telling us that additional funding is what is most needed to improve breakfast clubs.

**If there wasn't a
breakfast club at
their child's school**

1 in 4
**parents would have
to turn down work
or stop working**

65%

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one in the future**



Proud to do our bit

No child should start their school day hungry. Breakfast clubs provide a warm, welcoming space to connect with friends, build confidence, and prepare for learning. They help boost attendance, focus, and wellbeing, and we're proud to play a part.

Over the past **27 years**, Kellogg's has invested over **£6 million** providing grants to school breakfast clubs, focusing on communities with high rates of poverty. But the need is greater than ever.

We welcome the UK government's support for breakfast clubs, including the introduction of its free Breakfast Clubs scheme and planned England-wide rollout for primary schools.

While continuing our support for primary schools, we're also stepping up and expanding our reach into secondary schools, where we are seeing a growing demand. This will build upon the **150+ secondary schools grants** we've given out in the 24/25 academic year. Tackling classroom hunger is far from over, and we remain committed to evolving our support to meet the challenge.

This year, we're expanding our breakfast club grants programme to reach **70,000 children**, not just in primary schools, but in secondary schools too. That means **1,000 grants** will be made available, an increase from last year, and we'll also be delivering **1.5 million breakfasts** to over 2,000 schools through our partnership with Magic Breakfast.

Our grants are flexible and designed to meet the real needs of schools, whether that's funding food, equipment, or staffing. Whatever it takes to keep these clubs going and thriving, we want to help make it happen.

We're also continuing our work with UK government, sharing what we've learned over decades of supporting breakfast programmes. We believe that real change happens when businesses, charities, and policymakers come together with a shared goal, to make sure no child starts their day at a disadvantage because of hunger.



Our conversations with school communities in recent years has also told us that financial hardship, hygiene poverty, and mental health struggles are issues that schools have been dealing with alongside food insecurity.

The Kellogg's Money Matters programme offers benefit and debt advice to parents and carers through their child or children's education setting, with the primary goal of maximising the financial resources available to low-income families. The programme has been running in Greater Manchester since July 2022 and to date has secured £381,402 for 200 families. An average gain of £1,907 per family. Schools also reported that academic performance and attendance improved for some of the children of families who benefited.

This is a collective challenge, and we're committed to playing our part. Let's keep working together to support communities, fuel young minds, and build a future where every child starts the day with the nourishment and opportunity they deserve.

Methodology

- Research undertaken by Spark between 30 January 2025 and 20 February 2025.
- 2,000 participants from a Nat Rep audience, in addition to 867 teachers.

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Having supported breakfast clubs in communities for almost three decades, we've seen first-hand the transformative impact this can have for children and families experiencing food poverty. What's more, we've seen the incredible dedication and passion that teachers and school communities put into these clubs to make them a success.

Our research shows just that, but it's also worrying to see teachers putting their hands in their own pockets to help feed hungry kids. We want to help empower teachers to do what they know and love - to feed curious young minds and help set them up for the future.

We must therefore continue to work together as educators, businesses and government to ensure that children don't start the day hungry. We view this as a collective responsibility and will continue to do our bit through our extensive and flexible grants programme. ”

**Chris Silcock, Managing Director Kellanova,
(the company that owns Kellogg's)**

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