

[News story: Funding boost to give more children healthy start to the day](#)

More children across the country will get a healthy and nutritious breakfast to set them up for the school day, thanks to an investment of up to £26 million and the appointment of two leading charities to run morning clubs, the Education Secretary announced today.

The boost to breakfast provision will be funded through the Government's soft drinks industry levy and will benefit over 1,770 schools across the country. This investment will be targeted at the most disadvantaged areas of the country – including the Department for Education's [Opportunity Areas](#) – to help make sure every child gets the best start in life.

Family Action, in partnership with Magic Breakfast, have both been named as the charities that will run the clubs. Family Action supports 45,000 of the most vulnerable families each year, while Magic Breakfast – which ran the department's previous breakfast club programme – has supported the provision of breakfasts to over 31,500 children across 550 schools.

Research shows that a healthy breakfast can help boost children's attainment by improving their memory and concentration. Thanks to Government reforms and the hard work of teachers, academic standards are rising in England, with 1.9 million more children in good or outstanding schools than in 2010, but there is more to do.

As part of the funding, experts at Family Action and Magic Breakfast will also look at how they can encourage more children to attend these programmes and improve collaboration and sharing of best practice across schools.

Education Secretary Damian Hinds said:

A healthy breakfast can help fuel children's concentration so they can get the most out of their school day.

Children only get one chance at an education and they deserve the best, whatever their background. That is why we are giving more pupils in some of the country's most disadvantaged areas the chance to go to a breakfast club.

Paid for by the Government's soft drinks levy, this investment will help raise education standards further and will make sure young people have happy, healthy childhoods.

The new clubs are due to start this spring. As well as providing a healthy and nutritious meal, many will also offer children the chance to be more active and develop their knowledge and skills through extra-curricular activities to improve their learning.

David Holmes CBE, Chief Executive of Family Action, said:

Breakfast clubs play a key role in ensuring children have a healthy start to their day. Family Action is delighted to be working with the Department for Education and Magic Breakfast on this ground-breaking programme – changing lives and life chances by preventing thousands of children from being too hungry to learn.

Carmel McConnell MBE, Founder of Magic Breakfast, said:

Magic Breakfast is delighted to work alongside the Department for Education and Family Action to deliver this programme. Crucially, it will ensure a nutritious breakfast reaches many more thousands of hungry schoolchildren, unlocking up to four hours of learning each morning to support their education. This is an excellent investment in these children and in the future of this country.

Fiona Pickering, Headteacher, Windsor Community Primary School, Toxteth, Liverpool, said:

Our free breakfast club is absolutely vital for our school! Children now start the day having had a healthy breakfast and time to socialise and chill, meaning that they are emotionally and physically equipped for the day ahead. It is, without doubt, one of the best parts of the extended provision we offer.

Today's announcement is part of the government's drive to support an active and healthy childhood through the Childhood Obesity Plan. It builds on the recent doubling of the Primary PE and Sport Premium to £320 million a year to improve PE and sport in schools, alongside the £100 million Healthy Pupils Fund to help young people live healthier lifestyles.

The announcement today follows wider support for the most disadvantaged families provided by the government, including the provision of free school meals to 1.1 million of the most disadvantaged children, the launch of new pilots to support disadvantaged families in the holidays and the £2.5 billion funding given to schools through the Pupil Premium to support their education.

The breakfast provision will be focused in areas of disadvantage, with a particular focus on in the Department for Education Opportunity Areas. The 12 Opportunity Areas are receiving a share of £72 million to help create opportunities and raise education standards in parts of the country where children and young people face greater challenges.