

Thousands of children offered nutritious breakfasts during summer

Children from more than 1,800 schools in England who are currently part of our Breakfast Clubs programme will now be offered healthy breakfasts over the summer.

The Department for Education has confirmed today, Friday 3 July, that charity co-ordinators of the National Breakfast Club Programme, Family Action and Magic Breakfast, will work closely with schools in disadvantaged areas so children most in need can continue to get a healthy breakfast in July and August.

As schools will remain closed during this period, Family Action and Magic Breakfast are making arrangements with schools on the programme so that they can access this provision over the summer, which may include parents collecting food parcels or breakfast food 'drop offs' to make sure families are getting the support they need.

The extension of the Breakfast Clubs programme builds on the Government's commitment to supporting families on low-incomes who, as a result of the pandemic, may be finding it hard to provide healthy food for their children outside of the school term. It follows the Department for Education's recent announcement of the Covid Summer Food Fund that will provide free school meals to eligible pupils nationally over the holidays.

Children's Minister Vicky Ford said:

My priority has always been to protect and support the children who need a helping hand, and it's more important than ever before that they remain at the heart of everything we do.

Extending our popular and successful Breakfast Club programme over the summer holidays will mean thousands of children continue getting a positive start to their day.

As a Government, we are responding to the needs of families who are struggling – that's why we put in place an unprecedented package of support to tackle the unique challenges they face.

The Covid Summer Food Fund will support children who are eligible for free school meals with a voucher to cover the full six-week summer holiday. The Government is also delivering at least four weeks of free activities and healthy food for around 50,000 children via its Holiday Activities and Food programme in 17 local authorities across England during July and August.

It follows the news that supermarket Iceland has joined the Government's national voucher scheme for free school meals, joining the existing list

eight shops already signed up to the scheme including Sainsbury's, Tesco, Asda, Morrisons, Waitrose, M&S, Aldi and McColl's where vouchers can already be redeemed. The Community Shop, which has several outlets around the country, will also join the list and families will be able to redeem vouchers for the Covid Summer Food Fund at all of these stores.

David Holmes CBE, Chief Executive of Family Action said:

Family Action and Magic Breakfast, as the providers of the National School Breakfast Programme, have succeeded in keeping this essential programme open and available to over a thousand schools and tens of thousands of children and families during lockdown. We are delighted to flex the Programme delivery so that we can now also support many National School Breakfast Programme schools, children and families with access to nutritious breakfast supplies during the coming summer holidays.