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Guidance

# Breakfast clubs early adopters: methodology for September 2025 to March 2026

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**Applies to England**

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## 1. Introduction

The Autumn Budget 2024 included over £33 million for 2025 to 2026 to support the breakfast club early adopter scheme and continuation of the National School Breakfast Club Programme, so no child faces a cliff edge on current provision. The early adopter funding will be split between the 750 early adopter schools selected from those that volunteered to be part of the scheme.

Early adopter schools will be selected to ensure a wide range of representation across different school types, sizes and geographical areas. We want to test and learn with as many different types of schools as possible before implementation of national roll-out.

This guide explains how we calculate the breakfast club provision funding for the early adopter schools for the period between September 2025 and March 2026.

## 2. Eligibility of the grant

Only breakfast club early adopter schools are eligible to receive this funding.

These schools cover an appropriate range of schools from those eligible in the national roll-out of the programme (such as: academy schools; alternative provision academies; maintained schools; non-maintained special schools, and pupil referral units).

This funding stream is to cover this scheme's breakfast club provision for primary-aged pupils, defined as those in reception to year 6, in those early adopter schools.

### 3. Paying the grant

The breakfast club funding for the early adopters will be paid to schools either directly from the Department for Education for academies or through their local authority for maintained schools. Schools will receive their funding in 2 tranches.

- An upfront fixed payment will be made at the end of November 2025 for local authorities and beginning of December 2025 for academies, to cover administration and start-up staffing costs for autumn and spring term. This will be paid alongside the arrears payment for summer term 2025.
- The remaining funding, which includes the basic per-pupil and per-pupil deprivation funding, will be paid in arrears at the end of February 2026 for local authorities and beginning of March 2026 for academies (based on the actual take up of pupils collected from the early adopter school). Arrears payments for the spring term will be paid within the next grant period.

### 4. Funding rates

To note: A ready reckoner tool can be found within the finance section of the [Early Adopter Breakfast Club Blueprint](#) which can help schools to calculate the funding amount they are likely to receive.

#### 4.1 State-funded mainstream schools

- a lump-sum paid to all schools, regardless of pupil number
- a basic additional per-pupil factor
- a per-pupil deprivation factor paid in addition to the basic per-pupil factor, for pupils who are recorded as having been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years (FSM6)

We apply an area cost adjustment (ACA) to the funding, to account for variations

in the labour market. We have used the same ACAs as the schools national funding formula for 2025 to 2026 and is published in the [Area cost adjustment for national funding formula 2025 to 2026: technical note](#).

The lump-sum amount is paid to all schools, regardless of the pupil number. The lump-sum amount covers the fixed admin and start-up staffing costs of the programme; the basic per-pupil amount covers the provision of the food and basic staffing costs. The deprivation factor ensures extra funding for schools with a higher proportion of pupils with additional needs.

The funding rates for September 2025 to March 2026 are:

- a lump sum of £2,482 for the September to March period (autumn and spring term)
- basic additional rate provided per-pupil of £0.60 per day of breakfast club attendance
- an FSM6 additional rate provided per-pupil of £0.78 per day of breakfast club attendance – this is on top of the £0.60 basic rate

The basic per-pupil rate will be multiplied by the actual number of pupils taking up the breakfast club provision which we will collect from the early adopter schools. We will then use the rate of FSM6 pupils, amongst primary aged pupils, at the school to estimate the number of FSM6 pupils taking up the breakfast club provision.

To note: the FSM6 additional rate is not dependent on actual FSM6 pupil attendance at the breakfast club. This is calculated as  $\text{£0.78} \times \text{number of pupils attending breakfast club} \times \text{FSM6 \% of school}$ . Therefore, if a school had 100 pupils attending breakfast club and the FSM6 rate of the school is 10%, the calculation would be:  $0.78 \times 100 \times 0.1$  to calculate the FSM6 additional rate total per day.

## 4.2 Special and Alternative Provision (AP) schools

The funding rates are:

- a lump-sum paid to all schools, regardless of the pupil number
- basic additional per-pupil factor

For the same reasons as the mainstream schools, we apply an area cost adjustment, but using the high needs ACA. Similar to the mainstream schools, this includes the lump-sum cost and the basic per-pupil cost. Due to the additional needs of these pupils, the basic per-pupil cost is higher and so a separate deprivation factor is not included.

The funding rates for September 2025 to March 2026 are:

- a lump sum of £2,482 for the September to March 2026 period (autumn and spring term)
- basic additional rate provided per-pupil of £3.23 per day of breakfast club attendance

The basic per-pupil rate will be multiplied by the actual number of pupils taking up the breakfast club provision which we will collect from the early adopter schools.

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