

Report

Report to:	South Lanarkshire Council
Date of Meeting:	22 September 2021
Report by:	Executive Director (Education Resources)

Subject:	Standing Order No 18a – Breakfast Clubs
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:

- ◆ Respond to questions raised by Councillor Brown under Standing Order No 18a in relation to Breakfast Clubs.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Council is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the content of the report is noted;

3. Background

3.1. Nationally the introduction of breakfast clubs has mainly been driven by the need to tackle poverty and close the equity gap. Evidence based research has shown that a proportion of pupils are not eating breakfast and are arriving at school hungry, which can have a negative impact on their wellbeing, learning and behaviour. In line with the Council's approach to tackling poverty, the introduction of school breakfast clubs enables children to eat a healthy breakfast in a safe environment before the start of the school day.

3.2. The Children's Food Trust identifies the main aims of breakfast clubs as follows:-

- ◆ provision of food at the start of the day;
- ◆ improving pupils' education;
- ◆ meeting the social needs of children and improving social skills; and
- ◆ improving school relations with parents.

3.3. Attending a breakfast club can lead to an increase in pupils arriving at school early, improved attendance, and children being more ready to learn when the formal school day begins.

3.4. It is also worth noting that the Scottish Government Poverty and Inequality Commission's report recognises the role of local authorities and the third sector in tackling the impact of poverty related factors in communities. Breakfast clubs are one way of helping families in this context.

3.5. The Standing Order No 18a questions ask:

- whether the Council is still committed to providing a breakfast club in every school;

- how many schools do not currently have a functioning breakfast club;
- whether there continues to be staffing issues; and
- when there will be a full complement of breakfast clubs available to all children who want them in every school?

4. Response

4.1. Taking each question in turn, the following response is provided below.

4.2. **Whether the Council is still committed to providing a breakfast club in every school.**

The Council is still fully committed to providing universal access to a healthy breakfast to allow access for all of those children who need it. Breakfast club provision resumed following updated guidance from the Scottish Government after the spring break in April 2021. A small number are operated in conjunction with the voluntary/third sector e.g. Machan Trust.

4.3. **How many schools do not currently have a functioning breakfast club**

Pupils in all 124 primary schools have access to a breakfast service.

The provision of a healthy breakfast through the main delivery model of a breakfast club open from 8.15am to 8.45am each day is in operation for 104 of our schools. 7 of these are in conjunction with the local voluntary/third sector organisation e.g. Machan Trust.

An alternative, more flexible approach has been developed to accessing a healthy breakfast due to local circumstances in a further 8 of our schools. For example, in rural areas where a large number of pupils arrive by school transport later than 8.15am, the operation of a turnaround breakfast service, known generally as 'toast and go', is a more effective way of ensuring maximum access to healthy food before the start of the school day.

There are 12 remaining schools where the 'toast and go' model is available and we are working to identify adequate staff to reintroduce the 8.15 am start.

4.4. ***Whether there continues to be staffing issues and when there will be a full complement of breakfast clubs available to all children who want them in every school?***

Since re-establishing the breakfast clubs post the lockdown period, the Council has experienced some gaps in provision as we re-engaged with staff available to work additional hours in order to safely re-open our breakfast clubs. This included both support services and facilities services employees being approached to identify their availability to work extra hours each day.

To address any identified staffing issues, the Council has deployed staff who are able to work across more than one school, engaged with new staff who are able to work additional hours and used local recruitment campaigns. Due to the relaxation of national guidance, and where ongoing issues still exist, some schools are being asked to invite interest from parental volunteers.

5. Employee Implications

5.1. There are no employee implications in relation to this report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. There are no financial implications in relation to this report beyond our existing budgets being available to support breakfast clubs.

7. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 7.1. There are no direct climate change or sustainability implications from this report.

8. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 8.1. This matter does not require an equality impact assessment to be undertaken.

Tony McDaid
Executive Director (Education Resources)

Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives

- ◆ Improve achievement, raise educational attainment and support lifelong learning
- ◆ Support our communities by tackling disadvantage and deprivation and supporting aspiration
- ◆ Improve health and increase physical activity

List of Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:- Lynn Sherry, Head of Education, Support Services and School Estate

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