



Starting up a Breakfast Club at Your School

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June 2009 – Version 3

Breakfast Club Guidance

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[About this document](#)

This document is aimed at Head Teachers, Teachers , Governors and Staff who are considering or are in the process of setting up a Breakfast Club. It is a tool which can be shared with whoever eventually runs your club. This guidance covers all the areas necessary to help with the initial set up. Plus advice on how to sustain your club once it is up and running.

Examples are used from Primary Schools in Hertfordshire.

What is a Breakfast Club?

A Breakfast Club is a type of out-of-school provision for children. A Breakfast Club is a safe place for children to go to before school which offers childcare to parents who are in work, wishing to return to work and those in training.

Breakfast Clubs are usually based in schools as this is the most logical setting. Alternatively clubs could be set up in community centres and children would be transported back to local schools, however this has extra costs associated with it.

Breakfast Clubs typically run from 7:45am-9am, however, if there is a need, some clubs choose to open as early as 7.30am.

The majority of Breakfast Clubs in Hertfordshire are for children in Primary Schools aged 5-11.

Breakfast Clubs are normally open less than 2 hours a day and are therefore exempt from Ofsted registration. However if the club is run by the school it falls under the school's Ofsted registration and would be inspected as part of a School Ofsted Inspection. Breakfast Clubs run by committees or a private provider can join the Voluntary Ofsted Register. This is useful for parents who wish to claim tax credits as they will need your Ofsted number to do this.

The key features of the club are how the club is managed and funded. These areas are discussed in more detail in the following chapters.

Types of Breakfast Club

Listed below are the main types of Breakfast Club available:

1. Childcare

Most Breakfast Clubs in Hertfordshire are set up to provide food, activities and a safe place to go before school. These clubs are for childcare, for children whose parents are primarily working, returning to work or in training.

Childcare Breakfast Clubs are often set up in response to requests from parents.

The clubs may be open as much as one and half hours before school opening, as parents will drop children on their way to work. These clubs are funded through fees which the parents pay.

The majority of Breakfast Clubs in Hertfordshire offer this type of service.

Staff in these clubs are generally employed for their childcare experience and relevant qualifications.

2. Canteen/Catering Service

Canteen based Breakfast Clubs are mainly found in secondary schools. The school kitchen opens before school and the pupils meet in the canteen to buy their breakfast.

This service runs every day during term time and is provided by the school caterers.

This type of club is not run by the school staff and no formal activities are provided for the children. There is often no charge for the care provided but young people have to purchase food.

3. Learning activities-Health/Social Care/Educational Need

These clubs have been identified because of a particular health, social or educational need.

These types of Breakfast Clubs may aim to provide food for children at low or no cost.

In order to exist these clubs have to find a regular source of funding and/or supply of food. It is a good idea to develop links with local supermarkets and businesses in an attempt to achieve this.

As these clubs are reliant on external funding, there is always a danger that this funding may cease, which hugely affects the sustainability of the club.

Breakfast Clubs in Hertfordshire

There were 12 Breakfast Clubs set up in the early 1990s but the greatest increase has taken place since 2004.

Since 2004 the County Council has given funding for 53 Breakfast Clubs to be opened. These clubs were set up to offer childcare to parents and rely on fees to keep them sustainable.

The total number of Breakfast Clubs in Hertfordshire are shown in the table below. There may be additional clubs by the time this document goes to print.

District	Number of Breakfast Clubs
Stevenage	17 clubs
North Herts	19 clubs
St Albans	17 (16 primary, 1 secondary)
Dacorum	9 (8 primary, 1 secondary)
Watford	15 (11 primary, 4 secondary,)
Three Rivers	12
Welwyn/Hatfield	19 (15 primary, 4 secondary)
East Herts	22
Broxbourne	14 (8 primary, 6 secondary)
Hertsmere	14

Total= 158

June 2008

There are now over of 170 Breakfast Clubs with numbers continuing to grow. A number of clubs however will serve more than one school. In some parts of Hertfordshire, clubs provide a facility for 5 or 6 schools in a central venue and then transport the children to their individual schools. It is estimated that the existing clubs are providing a service to at least 200 schools. The issue with serving a number of schools is that there are added transport costs involved with taking children to their schools, and this can led to sustainability issues.

The majority of Breakfast Clubs are based in Primary Schools for ages 5-11.

There is increasing demand from parents for clubs for 3-4 year olds and for young people aged 11-14. Pre Schools are now beginning to offer breakfast clubs for the children, to aid parents return or remain in work,

There may be no need to have a Breakfast Club in each school when there are 2 schools on one site. Schools could work in partnership and children could attend other clubs.

Schools in Hertfordshire

Numbers of Primary Schools: 420

Numbers of Secondary Schools: 80

Benefits of a Breakfast Club

There are numerous benefits to running a Breakfast Club, for the school, the children and their families.

The provision of a Breakfast Club enables parents to return or remain work or to continue training, as they have somewhere to take the children before 9am, allowing parents to get to work on time. Breakfast Clubs are particularly popular with parents who have to commute to work.

Other benefits include

- Potential increase in concentration and achievement of children as they have had a healthy breakfast
- Providing a well balanced meal can improve overall nutrition of a child.
- Potential increase of school attendance figures and punctuality
- Encouraging children to socialise with other children and adults.

Quotes from parents at a Breakfast Club in Hertford:

“I use the Breakfast Club purely for childcare, my children still eat breakfast at home”

“The club is invaluable, without it I would not be able to go to work in London.”

Quote from a child at a Breakfast Club in Hatfield:

“I like coming to the Breakfast Club as I can meet my friends before school in the dining room. We can have a chat, play games and sometimes do homework together.”

Breakfast Club Management

The most important decision to be made once you have decided to run a Breakfast Club is how it will be managed. As a school you need to decide if you want to oversee all the management decisions of the club or if you want to let another organisation be responsible.

The chosen method of management will vary according to the needs of the local community, the school and the parents. Careful consideration needs to be taken when choosing a management format as it can greatly affect the club's set up.

There are 3 main management routes for a Breakfast Club.

1. School Managed Clubs

Schools are now able to set up and run Breakfast Clubs, if you believe that this is the right route for you a "Steering Group" will need to be set up, which will take on the Business Management of the club. This will include duties such as Market Research and forming a Business Plan to apply for Start Up funding through Hertfordshire County Council's Childcare Sufficiency Grant. The Steering Group should consist of a school governor, a member of staff (not usually the Head) and a parent.

It is the Steering Group's job to plan and oversee the running of the club. The Group should then report to the Governing Body on the progress of the Breakfast Club.

The school employs staff directly through Hertfordshire County Council. The club staff will be put on the school pay roll. The school office collects the club fees and pays them into the school bank account. The Steering Group is different to a Voluntary Managed Committee.

Note running a club is not always cost effective, employing staff through the council include very high on costs of about 24% including pension contribution (excluding National insurance). This can lead to sustainability issues.

Positives

Fully supervised and overseen by the school

Breakfast Club can adopt the school's policies and procedures

Breakfast Club comes under the school identity and reputation.

Negatives

Staff costs are very expensive

Extra responsibility for staff to run the club

More pressure on the school office to collect fees and book places

Can be hard to keep breakfast club finances separate from main school finances.

2. Privately Run Clubs

A school may decide that they do not want the additional responsibilities of running a Breakfast Club. The school may not have the time or the knowledge to run a club. Many schools instead use Private Providers to run their Breakfast Clubs. There are currently numerous Private Providers operating clubs in Hertfordshire. These may be Limited Companies, Partnerships or Sole Traders.

When choosing a private provider to run the club schools must use the School's Commissioning Toolkit, this will give the school a robust system of selection. Your local District Partnership Team will be able to inform you of the current providers in your area. Your school will need to request an expression of interest to the providers, once you have established the need for a club in the school. The Private Provider will then submit proposals to the Head and a Governor on the services they offer and how they would set up your Breakfast Club. The Private Provider should also conduct their own specific Market Research, as they will want to ensure setting up a Breakfast Club in your school will be sustainable for their business.

A number of successful Breakfast Clubs have been set up by parents from the school as a Business Partnership, or by one parent as a Sole Trader.

If you do choose a Private Provider to run your club, the school will need to draw up a partnership agreement with them and arrange to have regular meetings to monitor the club's progress. A good relationship between the school and provider is vital, and will ensure all parties are benefiting from the club. The provider will want the school's help, especially in promoting the club to the parents.

Positives

School does not have the extra responsibility of running the club.

Private providers can bring knowledge and experience of Childcare Businesses

Negatives

The school has less input in the running of the club

The company may cease trading and thus close the club at short notice.

The commissioning process can be time consuming.

3. Committee- Voluntary Managed Committee or Company Limited by Guarantee

A Committee (Board of Directors) Managed Breakfast Club is independent of the school. The committee is a self-governing body, which has its own constitution or articles of association, setting out the rules and regulations of the club and how it is run. It chooses how the business will be structured and set up. The club can choose to be unincorporated or incorporated. This document recommends setting up as a Company Limited by Guarantee if you are employing staff and entering into contracts, this is cheap to set up and gives the board of directors (committee) limited liability. The committee/ board of directors set up the club and recruit staff to run the provision on a daily basis. The committee/ board of directors is also responsible for all the business decisions.

Unincorporated Committee run groups are proving increasingly difficult to maintain- over the past 3 years in Hertfordshire the number of committee run childcare groups have steadily decreased. The problem with voluntary managed groups is that the committee is often changing as children go through the school, making it difficult to maintain a consistent level of management.

There are however some very successful committee run groups in Hertfordshire and it may be the most suitable management route for your school.

A good model to aim for is a committee/ board of directors of around 5 people: a governor, a member of school staff and 2 to 3 parents (the constitution/ articles of association will determine the maximum and minimum number of committee/ company members). The club leader should attend all committee/ board of directors meetings. They should meet once a month to review the running of the club.

Although no members of the school staff have to be on the committee/ board of directors it can be useful, as it ensures a direct link to the school. It is important that the committee/ board of directors holds regular meetings with the school to make sure the club remains sustainable. The club leader should be the person who maintains regular contact with the Head Teacher. The chair of the committee/ company should also have regular half termly contact with the Head Teacher. This contact should be more frequent whilst the club is becoming established.

Positives

All finances remain separate from the school so it is easier to monitor the sustainability of the club

This model allows the school to have an input in the running of the club.

Negatives

It is hard to recruit new member of the committee as many parents who use the service are working full time.

[Is there a need for a Breakfast Club in your school/community?](#)

Before setting up a club it is important to make sure that there is a need for such a provision.

You need to ensure the club is being set up for the correct reasons. For example, if you are setting up a club because a local school has a highly successful club, and you are worried they are attracting more pupils, it does not mean that there is the same demand for the service within your school.

In all cases it is essential to contact your local District Partnership Team when considering setting up a club. The District Partnership Team will be aware of what is already on offer within your area and will be able to advise you on the appropriate next steps. The team may give your school ideas that may not have been considered and suggest how best to achieve them. The District Partnership Officers are there to help you with the business aspect of setting up a club, and can help you to conduct Market Research. The District Partnership Team will also be able to advise on how to apply for funding through the Childcare Sufficiency Grant.

Market Research:

The key factor in setting up a club is to make sure there is a demand for the service.

Some parents at the school may have already requested a club to be set up. Numbers of who would use your club must be secured before progressing any further. It is important that the numbers are sufficient in order to maintain a sustainable club.

Surveys are a good way to determine what the average take-up will be. **However it is important to note that between 1-10% of all parents who say they will use the club will actually use it.**

Be prepared that the market research may not confirm your original belief on the needs of parents and have an idea in your mind of the figures that would show you that there is not a need for the service in your school and be prepared to stick to it.

You should ask parents which days the club should run, the amount they are prepared to pay for the service and the most suitable time the club should open. You should then look at meeting the needs of the majority from the responses you receive. If 75% of the parents are willing to pay between £2.50-£3.00 then charging £3.75 may mean parents will not use the service.

Surveys should be sent to both the parents and children, examples of these can be found in the appendix. District Partnership Officers can support you in your market research and can help you analyse your results.

You should also look in your local community to see what is available already for parents. Talk to similar clubs in your community about their experiences of starting up and researching the market.

Premises

You need to ask yourself the following questions

- Is there a suitable place to run your Breakfast Club from in your school?
- Is it a large enough area?
- Is it a suitable place to serve and prepare food?
- Will it be available for the times you need it? (Remember staff will need clearing up time either side of opening.)
- Will this space be available every day?
- Is it easily accessible?

Many clubs are based in school dining halls as they already have the appropriate equipment and are vacant before the school day, unlike classrooms which teachers need access to before the start of the day.

Breakfast Clubs can be run on premises outside the school but this does have disadvantages. External premises are often expensive and the costs are passed onto parents, fees can be very high.

There are also extra costs involved with transporting children to the school either by walking or by minibus or car. The provider must ensure that there are adequate staff to make sure the transition between the club and school is safe, this too can incur extra costs. All these extra costs are passed onto parents.

Sometimes the morning becomes very rushed for the children if the club is held on premises outside the school. They sometimes have to rush their breakfast to make sure that they are then ready to go to school. This does not make the experience a pleasurable one for some children.

Funding

The Childcare Sufficiency Grant-Start Up Funding

The Childcare Sufficiency Grant (CSG) can be applied for via Hertfordshire County Council. There is a new fast track Breakfast Club grant process to speed up the grant approval process for Breakfast Clubs based in school Premises. The Grant is a set amount of funding that is provided to help clubs set up in their first year. Clubs should aim to apply for the grant once they have conducted robust Market Research highlighting the need for a club.

Clubs can apply for between £3700-£4200 depending on the amount of places they wish to create. This is given to a club during the first year of opening in two stages. The money enables you to start up the club on low numbers and build up gradually. Clubs take time to grow and it is important that parents feel secure that the club will be reliable and will not close in the first year.

Should the club run into short term financial difficulty they can apply for Sustainability funding if eligible, you can claim this after two years of receiving the CSG. Details of this grant can be obtained from your local district partnership officer.

Application process for Start Up Funding:

- **Contact District Partnership Team**
- Market Research-check there is a need for a club
- Secure Premises-check viability
- With the support of the District Partnership Officer (DPO) complete the first part of the grant application form which becomes your business plan
- Complete the financial plan for your club with the DPO
- Submit a copy of the rental agreement to use the premises if applicable and the market research along with the application to the DPO
- Grant form will be assessed by a panel
- If the criteria is met: HCC agree to give a set amount according to the size of your club
- Money can be used for initial set up costs such as equipment, advertisement, initial wages during the first year

Breakfast Clubs should aim to be self sustaining after the first year
The fees charged must cover the running costs

Breakfast Clubs usually need 11.5 children per day to break even, more if staff are employed through HCC! Therefore if you are a small school it may not be viable to run a club on your own.

Fees: These vary enormously with most clubs in Hertfordshire charging £2.30-£4. There are a few highly subsidised clubs charging £1 a morning. Whilst some childcare clubs are charging up to £5. (Summer 2008).

Don't be tempted just to charge what other local clubs charge, instead listen to what parents want from their market research and meet their needs. By listening to what parents want from the market research it is more likely they will use the club.

Best steps to take to increase the likelihood of a successful grant application:

Contact your District Partnership Team

The teams will help with the application and assist you in completing a financial plan.

Comprehensive Market Research

Ensure there is a need for a club, both parents and children have to show an interest. If you apply for the CSG you will need to use the questionnaire enclosed within this pack.

Secured Premises

A confirmed location is vital to the grant application, without one your application will not be considered. The District Partnership Officer will help you draw up a rental agreement to be signed by both parties if necessary.

If you are looking for funding to start up your club, the following contact details may be of use:

District Partnership Teams

Details can be found in the appendices

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/caresupport/childfam/younginherts/jobsinchildcare/settingupchildcare/howtocontact/>

Lottery Funding

www.awardsforall.org.uk

The lottery award grants to local communities, amounts of £500-£5000

Involving parents and the local community, ask local businesses for donations, in return for free advertising. They are often keen to provide money towards new equipment.

School fundraising could be used to help towards the set up costs. A stall at the school fair is useful and a good way of promoting your service.

Large companies such as Kellogg's and Greggs run grant schemes to help schools set up out of school provision, especially those in deprived areas. When setting up your club keep checking the internet to see which schemes are currently available and may be of use to your school.

Caution- If your club does accept outside sponsorship, you should be wary of being too reliant on that money, as you will then have to be constantly searching for further funding. You may decide to establish a fundraising group as part of your organisation so that there is a constant flow of sponsorship for your group. **Clubs need to be self sustaining and not become too dependent on an outside source of funding.**

National system of supporting childcare costs

The cost of childcare can be expensive for many families, particularly those with more than one child. There are national schemes which can help parent's cover charges on a more individual basis:

Working Tax Credits- help parents on lower incomes to pay for childcare

Childcare Vouchers- provided by employers, include them into employees' wages through organising a "salary sacrifice".

In order for parents to claim these benefits you need to be Ofsted Registered. If the club is run by the school based then parent's can use the school's Ofsted number to claim tax credit and childcare vouchers. Clubs not associate with a school which run under 2 hours can join the Ofsted Voluntary Register.

Finance

There are differences in the financial processes according to how the Breakfast Club is managed.

Finances and Financial Planning

All Breakfast Clubs require financial planning: who carries this out depends on the management structure.

The Business Plan will require you to look at all financial aspects of the Breakfast Club. This will include daily expenditure on food, as well as regular payments for staff wages and rent.

Profit and Loss Account

This is a useful tool as it will show where the club is making a profit or loss on a monthly basis.

Cash Flow Forecasts

This shows the cash flows into and out of your organisation. Businesses (even small Breakfast Clubs) often fail as the cash flow is not managed properly. Breakfast Clubs often fail as they will pay staff and the rent monthly, but the fee collection is more irregular, so cannot cover the monthly outgoings.

It is important to collect fees **in advance** and to get parents to book places **in advance**. This can be difficult when you are starting a new club but it is good business practice.

Bank Account

Private or Committee managed groups will have their own bank account. School managed groups can run the group through the school's general bank account, but have a separate line within it. The breakfast club must meet the same requirement as the financial management of the school itself. Schools proposing a school managed breakfast club are advised to contact Financial Services for Schools (FSS) if they use this service before deciding on use of any software which is not already being supported by FSS, or methods of reporting .

All bank accounts need to be managed professionally and there should be a monthly record which is checked to ensure there is enough money available.

Financial Software

Banks provide excellent "Business Start Up packs". These contain a CD with Profit and Loss and Cash-Flow pro-formas to assist you.

Management Software

There are many management software packages available which can help produce invoices, bookings and registers for your club. They range in price from £200 upwards, but are a useful investment as it can save staff a huge amount of time.

Planning

Which ever route you chose for your breakfast club be it school run, committee run or run by a private company, planning is essential to the success of the club. Using plans is a really good way of focusing your business on its keys goals and objectives and provides strategy to achieve them. Thorough planning is one of the keys to a successful business.

Business Plan

Setting out the goals of the business and how you aim to achieve them. This will provide the basis of your working strategy for sustainability. The business plan should focus on how to keep the business sustainable, through for example occupancy, marketing, fees and staff costs. This should be revised every year with the business's ongoing goals and objectives

Operational Plan

This is a plan for the day to day running of your club. This is a document which could be given to parents and will look at how the club is run including staffing, supporting the child and working with parents. It will also look at the clubs policies and procedures. Guidance on writing an operational plan can be found on the business support section of the Young in Herts website.

Action Plans

An action plan is a smaller document which allows you to achieve a specific objective. The action plan breaks down the actions needed to achieve a specific objective and allocates tasks and time frames to the people involved in achieving the objective. On objective could be for all staff to identify their training needs. This means in the action plan all staff would have an action to identify their needs. Again examples of action plans can be found on the business support section of the Young in Herts website.

Young in Herts

www.hertsdirect.org/younginherts

Policies and Procedures

If the provision is school run, the school's policies and procedures can be used for the breakfast club but some may need to be adapted to include the way the breakfast club runs.

If the provision is committee run or run by a private provider it is important that they have robust policies and procedures to protect children, parents and staff.

If you are serving children aged 5 and under your policies must include the 'welfare requirement' from the Early Years Foundation Stage, to show you are meeting it's criteria.

Below are policies and procedures Ofsted expect to be in place

- Safeguarding Policy & Procedure
- Equal Opportunities & Supporting Children with Disabilities
- Medicine Administration Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Procedure for Uncollected Child
- Procedure for Missing Child
- Emergency Evacuation Procedure

Other policies and procedures which are useful to have in place to protect you and the children include

- Health and Safety Policy
- Employment Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- No Smoking Policy
- Sick Children Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Attendance Policy

This is by no means an exhaustive list you need to decide what needs to be in place to protect you as the owner, the staff, parents and children. If you are forming a separate company or asking a third party to come in to run the provision, they must legally have these policies in place as a minimum when employing staff:

- Maternity/ Paternity / Adoption
- Leave and Absence of staff
- Equality and Diversity
- Working hours and overtime
- Health and Safety
- Pay
- Bullying and Harassment
- Disciplinary and Grievance
- Redundancy
- Smoking, drugs and alcohol
- Whistle blowing and protected disclosures

Breakfast Club Costs

Most clubs should aim to be self-sustaining fees need to cover the costs of food and other overheads.

Careful research and budget planning is required, you do not want to disadvantage any groups because of the fees charged at your club but you must be sustainable or the Club will close.

Listed below are examples of some of the costs that may occur. These costings are not definitive and should only be considered as guidance.

Set up Costs

It is difficult to give an exact amount, figures below are estimates:

Around £500 will be needed to cover kitchen equipment, especially if a fridge needs to be purchased. Some money will also be needed for advertising and Market Research. Around a minimum of £500 is needed for toys and play equipment.

Most Breakfast Clubs have a mobile phone for parents to call, so a contract phone would need to be set up. Costing around £100-£200 per year.

It is also important to remember that once you have set up you will need to replace some equipment on an annual basis.

Ongoing Costs

Staff and Wages

Wages are one of the major outgoings for a Breakfast Club, ensure you have budgeted appropriately for all staff members. (Wages may take up 70-80% of the total club budget).

Staff will be need to be employed a few weeks before the club opens to help set up.

Play workers must be on the minimum wage or above.

Leaders are usually on £7.50 per hour or more. A leaders' wages will vary according to experience, the numbers attending and number of staff they manage.

Staff will need to be paid to attend staff meetings and training. The leader will also have meetings with the club's management team and this needs to be built into the wages bill.

Rent

This can be a complicated issue and will cause much discussion between the different parties.

If it is a school managed club often no rent is charged. Many schools may decide to charge a rent once the club is established.

Private providers and committees are usually charged between £3-£5 per hour by the school.

Catering

Food needs to be purchased regularly to provide Breakfast for the children. Some groups will pay a staff member to do the shopping, they are paid extra for their time and are often reimbursed for the shopping using petty cash or through their monthly wages as an expenses claim. So groups choose to have their weekly shop delivered to the setting by a supermarket chain.

Advertising

It is often useful to have a small advertising budget for on going promotion of the club. This is especially useful to fund taster sessions or bring a friend sessions.

Building a Reserve

Clubs should try and budget to build a small reserve to deal with the unexpected, such as repairs or renewing equipment.

Equipment

Essentials:

- A suitable room
- Tables and chairs
- Crockery
- Cutlery
- Storage
- Toaster-commercial sized
- Kettle
- Use of a sink
- Use of a fridge-either purchase a separate fridge or share with the canteen
- Cleaning materials
- Register
- Secure place to keep cash
- Air tight containers for the food
- Games/Activities

Desirables:

- Blender/Juicer
- Microwave
- Home Comforts/decorations: Table cloths, cushions, radio, books, posters etc.

Some clubs have found that children like the area to be decorated, making it feel more “homely” and less like school.

Play Equipment:

The planning of activities will determine what is needed to be purchased. Once the club is up and running the children can be involved in choosing toys, games and activities. Table top games are most appropriate for a Breakfast Club. Games should be mess free and easy to pack away quickly at the end of the session.

Listed below are a few suggestions:

- Jigsaws
- Cards
- Board games
- Pens and paper
- A few empty tables for the children to do homework/own games on

Suggested Breakfast Menu

A balanced breakfast is a healthy way to start the day. It is vital the club provides the healthiest option it can with the money available.

It is best to keep the menu as simple as possible and have foods which involve the least preparation.

The food you provide may alter once you have set up the club and realised what is most popular amongst the children. Try to monitor which foods are most popular, by regularly asking pupils and parents for their opinions.

Listed below are some foods you may consider serving:

Food

- Bread/toast- ideally wholemeal
- Cereal- non sugar coated e.g. Weetabix, Shredded Wheat, Rice Crispies, Cornflakes
- Fresh Fruit e.g. bananas, apples, oranges
- Dried Fruit e.g. sultanas, apricots
- Natural yoghurts
- Low fat margarine/ olive spread
- Jam/marmite/honey
- Semi skimmed milk
- Porridge
- Crumpets/muffins/bagels

Drink

- Water
- Milk
- Orange/Apple juice
- Avoid squashes that are high in sugar
- Hot drinks-such as herbal teas
- Fruit smoothies

Please note, some children choose to have their main breakfast at home with their parents so you need to consider this when planning food quantities.

Staffing

A key factor for your Breakfast Clubs is the staff. It is vital that motivated, professional and welcoming staff are employed. It may be possible to recruit staff who already work at the school such as lunch supervisors, as they will already know the pupils and the parents. It is, however, important to employ staff who have the correct qualifications, as listed at the bottom of this page.

It is important to have a club leader, who should be present every day. At least 2 workers will be needed to run the club each day. Staff to child ratios need to be considered- 1 member of staff to every 8 children is the requirement set out by Ofsted for children under 8. Clubs only need to be registered with Ofsted if they run for more than 2 hours per day. If the Breakfast Club is linked in with an after school club, it will need to be registered. However, the 1:8 ratio is still advised for Breakfast Clubs generally.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has a “welfare requirement” for all children aged 0-5years. All clubs will need to meet these new requirements within their policies.

Volunteers can also be very useful to the club. It is a great way to involve parents and members of the community in the club. It is however important to ensure consistency for the children, so volunteers should attempt to help at the club on a regular basis.

Staff can be employed either directly by the school (Hertfordshire County Council), by a Private Provider or by a voluntary managed committee and must all have enhanced CRB checks.

Staff qualifications

The Breakfast Club leader should have a Level 3 qualification or working towards one in childcare, playwork or early years.

It is recommended that assistants have or are working towards a Level 2 qualification.

All staff should have up to date training on Safe Guarding Children. At least one member of staff has to have a First Aid qualification.

Hygiene awareness courses are also recommended, contact Young in Herts for details on the courses groups are legally required to undertake.

How to make your Breakfast Club Safe

Insurance

The Breakfast Club may be covered under the school's insurance policy when the club is school managed. However private providers will need their own insurance. When setting up a club you must check the correct insurance is in place. School insurance policies may only cover the times 9am-3pm, so make sure the policy is extended accordingly.

If you are setting up a new company you will need at least Public Liability Insurance and Employers insurance. More details can be found on the business pages of the Young in Herts website.

In all circumstances it is worth contacting Hertfordshire County Council to check their procedure and what they need you to do.

Safe Guarding Children

All clubs which work with children must have policies and procedures on safe guarding children. If Breakfast Club staff are employees of your school, the school's policy should be adopted.

All paid staff must be CRB checked prior to starting at the club. Volunteers at the Breakfast Club also need to be CRB checked.

Each school should have a Child-Protection co-ordinator and staff at the club should be aware of who this is, in case they need to be contacted.

Food Hygiene

Hygiene awareness training is recommended for all staff running a Breakfast Club. Contact Young in Herts for more details on the courses available in your area.

Registration

It is important to operate a daily register of those attending the Breakfast Club. Some clubs get parents of children to sign their children in on arrival or you may choose to count the children as they sit down and eat. There should also be a policy on parents informing the club when children are not attending, especially if the child is a regular attendee. An accurate register is vital to fire procedures.

When new children join the club a registration form should be filled out, detailing contact numbers and medical needs etc. An example form can be found in the Appendix.

Advertising and Marketing

It is very important that you promote your service to parents, not just when it opens but continually. Your club may have a Unique Selling Point (USP) to attract parents to it, such as an early start or a sibling discount, use this in your advertising.

Here are some ways to promote your breakfast club

- Posters around the school
- Leaflets in all children's book bags
- A presence in the school newsletter
- Advertising on the school website
- Include the club in the school prospectus/ new parents handbook
- Ask the local ESCO to promote the club in their newsletters
- Promote the club at your local children's centre
- Have a big launch event, invite the local press
- Hold free taster sessions
- Introduce Bring a Friend days
- Make sure the club has a presence at school events i.e. the summer fete

Running a successful Breakfast Club:

- Undertake frequent meetings between club leader, club staff and school staff.
- Regularly review the food provided, ensure there is minimal wastage. Price check your food source as the original provider may have altered their prices and the service offered since the club opened. Many supermarkets now offer free delivery for orders over a certain price, which would save a member of staff having to do the shopping.
- Regularly review the activities provided, make sure they are age appropriate to the children who attend the club.
- Ask the parents and children every few months about the club and if they have any suggestions for improvement.
- Review the club's finances monthly, making sure the fees cover all overheads. If any outgoings significantly increase, consider altering charges accordingly.
- Continual advertising- ask the school for a slot in the newsletter every few months, telling new and existing parents about the service you provide.
- Themed weeks- link in with the school's activity weeks, getting the children to make the food or experience food from different countries.
- Check the equipment on a regular basis, replacing broken toys as appropriate.
- Maintain good relations with school staff-keep the area tidy and ensure the club does not affect the school day (make sure children are taken to class on time).
- Make sure the club's numbers are sustained. If they begin to fall, ask the parents why they have chosen to leave. It is very important to keep the numbers up in a Breakfast Club, so make sure you are constantly monitoring and evaluating attendance figures.
- If at any point you have concerns about the club contact your District Partnership Team, they can offer help and advice on all areas of club sustainability.

Who can help?

Young in Herts:

www.hertsdirect.org/younginherts

Hertfordshire District Partnership teams:

The contact details can be found in the appendices

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/caresupport/childfam/younginherts/jobsinchildcare/settingupchildcare/howtocontact/>

Hertfordshire's Children's Information Service- Telephone: 01438 737502

Extended School Teams:

To find your local Extended School Consortium:

www.hertsextendedschools.org.uk/

The following website may also be useful:

www.breakfast-club.co.uk

www.breakfastclubplus.org.uk

www.4children.org.uk/

www.businesslink.gov.uk

Case Study examples

The Dell- Breakfast Club, Morgans School, Hertford

Background

The Breakfast Club at Morgans School has been running for 17 years. It serves a school of approximately 400 pupils. It is an extremely popular club, so only takes children from the school. On average 46 children per day attend the club. There is a waiting list of 15 children per day who wish to attend. The club is open 7.45am-9.00am. Most of the children who attend the Dell do so as their parents are working. The Dell also runs an After School club, so many of the children attend both clubs. The Dell has a Voluntary Managed Committee and is a registered charity.

Description

The club always has 2 members of senior staff working per session and the rest of the staff are play workers. The club works on the ratio of 1 adult: 8 children, so usually have 6 members of staff working each morning.

The club is held in the dining room of the junior school. At the end of each session the infants are escorted back to their building.

The children are offered toast with jam or a selection of cereals, and juice, milk or water. There is a designated table for eating, on which there is a table cloth and the rest of the tables are used for activities.

The children can choose from a variety of activities, including, drawing, board games, doing homework or just chatting to friends.

The food is available until 8.30am and then the children play until 8.45am. The children pack away the games and then line up in their year groups before walking to class.

Finance and Management

Charges (2008)

£3.33 Daily (if you attend regularly)

£3.55 Casual

The Dell is self sustaining. The club occasionally gets grants for new equipment, but the fees always cover staffing and overheads.

The club is committee run, made up of the club leader, parents, school staff and a club administrator. They meet regularly to discuss progress and possible changes.

Jousters Childcare- Homerswood Primary School, Welwyn Garden City

Background

Jousters Childcare is a Private Provider based in numerous schools. Jousters originally set up in one school in 2002 and have since expanded now running 5 Breakfast Clubs in Welwyn Garden City and the surrounding towns. Many of the parents who use this club are working, so use the facility for childcare.

The Homerswood based club is open from 7.30am-8.55am. There are 22-24 children attending the club daily.

Description

The club has 3 members of staff per session, including a supervisor. The Breakfast Club has its own specific room within the school. All the furniture and equipment has been bought by Jousters Childcare. The school installed a sink and fridge into the classroom, so they did not have to use the dining room.

The children are offered toast with jam and spreads, muffins and cereals. There are jugs of water and juice on the food table.

The children can choose from a variety of activities including drawing, board games and building bricks. There is a carpeted chill out area within which the children can read and chat to friends.

The Homerswood Club also take children from another school. At 8.30am a member of staff transports these children in a minibus to their school.

Finance and Management

Charges (2008)

£3.80 Daily

Parents are given a 10% discount if they pay their bill on time.

Rent

The school charges the club £5 rent per day to cover running costs.

Jousters Childcare give each club a credit card. The club supervisor is responsible for buying in the food and equipment.

Jousters Childcare pay their staff from a central bank account, rather than each club paying their own staff.

Helpful hints from existing Breakfast Clubs:

- If at all possible have your own room for the club. This works well as it allows you the flexibility to keep all your equipment and furniture in one place. If you do not have a specific room, ensure you have suitable separate club storage for equipment and food.
- Near the end of the session have tidy up time. Ask all the children to clear away the toys they have been using.
- Ensure you have the same rules when you are full as when you first set up your club. Have good practices in place from the start, i.e. a days notice to book a place. Parents, from the start, should be aware of the booking procedures for your club.
- If you are a Committee or Privately Run Club organise meetings at least once a term with the school's head teacher. Communicating regularly allows any problems to be quickly resolved. Invite the school staff to visit the club and speak to the children who attend.
- Market research- if you are a Committee or Privately Run Club conduct your own Market Research, beyond what the school has originally done. You must make sure the need is at the school before you begin.
- Keep it informal- staff should be called by first names and wear suitable casual clothes. This makes it feel less like school for the children.
- Allow children as much freedom as possible in the morning. Do not have too many structured activities before the beginning of the school day. Most children just enjoy eating breakfast and relaxing.
- Have a permanent suggestion box at the front of the room, allowing parents, children and staff to anonymously make comments.

Appendix

Examples of:

Market Research- Breakfast Club Questionnaire to both parents and children

Job description

Registration form for parents- contact details, doctor's numbers, medical requirements

Contact Details for the District Partnership Teams

Example of parent questionnaire:

Breakfast Club Questionnaire

Dear Parents,

We are considering the possibility of a Breakfast Club atSchool.

We would like to know if this would be of use to you and how many children would be likely to attend the club on different days of the week.

The Breakfast Club will open about one hour before school begins, where they would be given a healthy breakfast, enjoy playing with their friends under the supervision of experienced staff and then walked to their classroom for the start of school.

The cost of this will be in line with other Breakfast Clubs in the area. Many parents who are working would be able to claim Working Tax Credits, or apply for Childcare Vouchers through their workplace.

Questionnaire

1. Would you be interested in your child attending a Breakfast Club at School?

Yes

No

2. How many of your children would attend?

1

2

3

other

3. Ages of your children

4. When would you be interested in using the Breakfast Club?

Immediately

In 3–6 months

6-12 months

Breakfast Club Questionnaire

5. What opening time would suit you most?

7.30am 7.45am 8.00am 8.15am 8.30am

6. Which days would you use the Club?

Mon Tues Weds Thurs Fri

7. What is the most you would be prepared to pay for this service per session?

£2.00 £2.50 £3.00 £3.50 £4.00 £5.00

8. Would it help you if there was a discount for more than one child?

Yes No

Please complete the questionnaire and hand in at reception

If you have any further comments or questions please contact:

Ms A Person
The School
Etc.

Example of Pupil Questionnaire:

Breakfast Club

If everyone thinks it is a good idea we would like to start a Breakfast Club in our school. It would be a place to have breakfast and a chat to your friends in the school canteen before the start of school.

Have a think about the idea of a Breakfast Club in our school.

Please answer the questions below and help us decide whether to set one up.

1. Do you think it would be a good idea to have a Breakfast Club in our school?

Yes

No

2. Would you go to the club?

Yes

No

3. How many times a week do you think you would go to the club?

4. What would you like to do at the Breakfast Club?

Eat with my friends

Eat a nice healthy breakfast

Not have to rush breakfast at home

Other things

5. Tick what food and drink you might like to have at the club

Toast

Cereal and Milk

Porridge

Fresh Fruit

Fruit Juice and Smoothies

THANK YOU!

Example Job Description

Job Title: Club Leader

Requirements: To Lead the team of staff and provide a safe, fun Breakfast Club for all the children.

Rate of Pay: £8 per hour

Purpose of the job:

- Responsible for the professional standards of childcare at all times with due regard for children's safety and needs, both physical and emotional.
- Take overall responsibility for members of the club and the activities provided.
- To liaise with the school administrator in order to budget for the group.
- To order and maintain specific resources for the club.
- To oversee and arrange catering and activities for club members.
- To be responsible for the care, wellbeing and health and safety of the pupils and staff during the sessions.
- To control and care for the children during the activities and time attending the club.
- Developing, implementing and evaluation of policies and procedures to ensure the setting operates within current legislation and guidelines, and meets the standards required by Ofsted/Early Years Foundation Stage Welfare Requirements.
- Responsible for the collection of fees and the maintenance of financial records.
- Purchasing new equipment and resources as required.
- Responsible for maintaining the children's records and files and ensuring the register is checked and updated daily.
- To undertake other management duties that the management team feel are necessary.

Registration form:

Club Name

Child's full name:

Preferred name:

Home address:
.....
.....

Date of birth:

For Emergencies: Contact names, numbers and addresses

.....
.....
.....
.....

Name, address and phone number of anyone else who may drop/collect the child for any reason:

.....
.....
.....
.....

Child's doctor:Contact Number:.....

Does the child have any medical problems? Yes/No

If so please explain any special requirements

.....
.....
.....

Does the child have any special dietary requirements/food allergies? Yes/No

.....
.....

I consent to any emergency medical treatment necessary during the running of the club and authorise the staff the sign any form of consent required by medical staff, if a delay in getting my signature could endanger the child's health or safety.

I agree to abide by the terms and conditions of this club, which I have read.

Signature.....

Date.....

District Partnership Team- Contact Details

North Herts and Stevenage District Partnership Team

Tel: 01438 843374

Farnham House, Six Hills Way, Stevenage, SG1 2FQ

Three Rivers and Watford District Partnership Team

Tel: 01442 453467

First Floor, Apsley One, London Road, Apsley, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 9XJ

Broxbourne and East Herts District Partnership Team

Tel: 01992 556372

Room 166, County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DF

Dacorum and St Albans District Partnership Team

Tel: 01442 453839

First Floor, Apsley 2, Brindley Way, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 9BF

Hertsmere and Welwyn Hatfield District Partnership Team

Tel: 01438 843030

Farnham House, Six Hills Way, Stevenage, SG1 2FQ