

magic breakfast

fuel for learning

Press Release

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WAITING LIST FOR FOOD AID IN BRITISH PRIMARY SCHOOLS:

Magic Breakfast launches a new approach to feeding hungry and malnourished children in schools across Britain.

Magic Breakfast today outlines a new approach to solving the problem of UK child hunger and malnourishment at the start of the school day, a problem the charity says affects 700,000 primary school children. The new approach involves two levels of support for the most deprived school communities; healthy breakfasts to support educational attainment and tackle child obesity, plus social investment to drive school breakfast club independence by helping teachers and the school community improve their self-funding skills. Magic Breakfast is seeing a hugely increased demand for its food aid, with 80 primary schools on its waiting list.

The charity, which recently won the Prime Minister's Big Society award, unveils its approach shortly after the Campaign to End Child Poverty's annual report showed that more than half the children in Tower Hamlets (52%) live in poverty - in Manchester the figure is 49%. Both areas have Magic Breakfast supported schools.

Charity Founder Carmel McConnell says: "teachers tell us they have to bring in food themselves as so many children arrive at school hungry or malnourished. How can this be the case in one of the richest economies in the world? If we want school age children to achieve social mobility, child hunger cannot continue to be such a huge barrier to educational access. We have to solve this at primary school level. Our school partners do a great job and our support programme transforms child attendance, punctuality, concentration and behaviour. It works. For example:

- 88%** report improved attainment and attendance among Breakfast club children
- 94%** of these children have healthier eating habits
- 93%** demonstrate increased concentration and energy in class"

Supported by a range of leading corporates such as Pearson, Quaker Oats, Tropicana Orange Juice, Morgan Stanley and John Lewis, the charity will be officially launching the new three year child nutrition and education investment programme before Easter, supporting 12 Tower Hamlets schools, plus a brand new food and social enterprise programme supported across 50 London primary schools will be unveiled later in the year. Events to launch the programme in Magic Breakfast schools in Manchester are also expected to be announced shortly.

The Mayor's Fund for London are also interested in supporting Magic Breakfast. Chris Robinson, CEO of the Mayor's Fund for London said: 'I am impressed by Magic Breakfast. They are meeting a real need in a practical way. We would like to raise some money to support them in developing their work not just by adding more schools but also by helping them improve their evidence-base and develop the capacity to sustain growth.'

Notes to Editors:

Child poverty is the biggest single barrier to children being able to realize their rights in the UK. It is estimated to cost £25 billion a year through costs to business, the police, courts and health and education services. UNICEF CEO, Dec 2010

1.6 million UK children live in severe poverty according to Save the Children.

1 in 4 UK children will have one hot meal a day, their free school lunch, according to the Child Poverty Action Group.

The charity is trying to raise and invest £13 million for healthy breakfast provision and self funding skills in the 1,000 highest free school meals primary schools, through a social impact bond or a coalition of business and Government funds. This will return an estimated £28 million over 20 years, in reduced demand for services such as health, youth offending and welfare costs. As well as provide the best start to a child's day of learning at school right now.

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2. It won the Prime Ministers Big Society Award in 2011. The charity is currently Pearson UK Charity of the Year. The charity won Guardian charity of the Year in 2005, and Carmel McConnell was named Social Entrepreneur of the Year in 2008 (New Statesman/Edge).

3. Magic Breakfast supports schools with over 50% Free School Meals by providing a free healthy breakfast and parent education support. It has a large and fast growing waiting list of schools asking for urgent free food deliveries.
4. According to the official government classification, any household with children where the parents have an income of less than 60% of British median income is classified as "in poverty". Currently, for a family with two children, this stands at £283.20 a week, after housing has been paid for. According to government figures, half of the pupils below the poverty line get no free school meal because the income threshold to qualify for free meals is lower than the current level used to define poverty.
5. Magic Breakfast is committed to the long-term sustainability of breakfast clubs and is looking at innovative ways to help schools fund the breakfast clubs themselves.
6. Magic Breakfast works with a range of private sector companies to reach the communities most in need. For example, Quaker Oats and Tropicana orange juice are provided free of charge by those companies. Other partners include Morgan Stanley, Pearson, All Star Lanes, LCH.Clearnet and ect.venues. In addition the charity receives support from the ASDAN and the Transformation Trust, an important ally in addressing child poverty in the education system.