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16th February 2023

Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP
11 Downing Street,
London SW1A 2AD

Dear Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP,

We are Headteachers from across England, working towards a future where all children receive a good education. **We are therefore coming to you with an urgent request for your upcoming Spring Budget: to increase funding for the National School Breakfast Programme (NSBP) by up to £18million over the next 18 months, so that more hungry children can be reached with a school breakfast.**

We know from our own experiences that **too many children today come to school unable to focus, concentrate, or learn because of the hunger they feel.** Morally, this should not be occurring – children across England should all be able to learn and thrive to the best of their ability. Practically, it makes teaching incredibly difficult. We try each day to connect with children and create inspiring lessons to help them engage and learn. But when they are hungry, they cannot focus, and their behaviour changes: they can become unsettled and disruptive, which impacts the whole classroom and our teachers' abilities to teach.

All of us have seen the impact that morning hunger can have in the classroom – and it is steadily getting worse. The Food Foundation reported that **4 million children lived in food insecure households** in September 2022; a sharp increase from the 2.6 million reported just six months earlier. Behind this figure are thousands of children who are missing out on breakfast every school day. Tackling morning hunger is a crucial step in addressing the cost-of-living crisis, but a sustainably funded breakfast provision would have profound, positive long-term impacts.

Breakfast provision has been found to strongly improve educational outcomes and generate a remarkable return on investment. It can generate 2 months of additional progress in reading, writing and maths for children in Year 2, and children who eat breakfast regularly have been found to achieve on average 2 GCSEs higher than children who rarely eat breakfast. School breakfasts can also generate long-term benefits to the economy of around £9,200 per child, meaning a return of £50 to the public purse for every £1 spent.

We are doing what we can. Schools remain absolutely committed to delivering for young people, and the charity sector has stepped up - on the day you read this letter, Magic Breakfast will have served over 200,000 children and young people with a nutritious breakfast. But we simply cannot do this alone. You recently publicly thanked us for our work. You said that the 'message to heads and teachers and classroom assistants today is thank you for your brilliant work, we need it to continue.' You told the nation that 'being pro-education is being pro-growth', and that 'providing our children with a good education is not just an economic mission, it's a moral mission'. Now we're asking you to act.

There are approximately 10,000 schools in England with high levels of disadvantage. The current NSBP only reaches one-quarter of these. **Will you, in your Spring Budget on March 15, commit to expanding funding for the**

NSBP by £18million over the next 18 months, so that up to 2,500 more schools in England can be supported with breakfast provision?

We look forward to hearing from you after you respectfully consider our request.

Yours sincerely,

(Headteacher names included in private version which has been sent to the Chancellor. Removed here for privacy.)