



29/06/23

Rt Hon Humza Yousaf MSP, First Minister of Scotland
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Dear First Minister,

In March 2023, we asked Scottish voters whether free school breakfasts should be a priority for your first six months as First Minister. An irrefutable 78% said yes. They, like the 250,000 young Scots who are going to school hungry each day, know that breakfast can't wait. Those children and *their futures* can't wait.

When your party chose you as their leader you told them, 'the Government I lead will renew and redouble our efforts to lift people out of poverty.' It is this commitment that gives me hope that you understand the importance of moving beyond words and taking action. It also gives assurance that you are aware of the importance and impact of your decisions and priorities. Particularly for the most vulnerable members of our society.

I know you and your government are faced with difficult decisions every day but this is not one of them.

To deliver on your promises – made in the SNP manifesto and your leadership campaign - we implore you to action the Scottish Government's pledge to deliver universal breakfast provision in all primary and special schools.

The Scottish Government made their commitment to universal provision back in the 2021-22 Programme for Government. This promise was most recently

reiterated on May 25th by Minister Natalie Don in response to written question S6W-17840.

This progressive universalist policy is not only supported across the parliament by every party, it is also affordable. My team put a manageable annual price tag of £26.8 million. It also has proven short- and long-term economic benefits.

Providing school breakfasts eases the financial hardship facing so many families across Scotland. School breakfasts have been shown to benefit students academically, with two months extra progression in key subjects in the early years of primary school. Furthermore, the evidence shows that for every £1 spent on school breakfast there is a £50 return on investment to the economy and public purse (Pro Bono Economics, 2021).

You know that one pupil going to school too hungry to learn is one too many. You don't need me to tell you this, or our youth campaigner Grace who spoke out publicly of her first-hand knowledge of hunger in schools, or the Scots who have been writing to their representatives calling on them to ask you to deliver, or the parents who wrote to you last week to share the impact breakfast has in their children's schools.

As Scotland's largest charity provider, we use the limited resources we have to deliver breakfast to around 4,000 young Scots each morning. As the First Minister, you can wield the full power of the state to end child morning hunger. It is no one else's decision but yours.

In just a few months the Presiding Officer will call on you to present your Programme for Government. Please don't forget your commitment to lift people out of poverty and your promises to young Scots. Please don't forget the most important meal of the day – breakfast.

Magic Breakfast will be publishing a copy of this letter.

Sincerely,

Dr Lindsey MacDonald