



## GUIDE TO SCHOOL BREAKFAST CLUBS



**Everything you need to know about setting up your school's breakfast club.**

SIMPLIFYING SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

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# Contents

- Introduction to breakfast clubs . . . . . 3
- Rising household food insecurity . . . . . 4
- Is school wraparound care the solution? . . . . 5
- Benefits of breakfast clubs . . . . . 6
- How to set up your breakfast club . . . . . 7
- Things to consider . . . . . 8
- What are the regulations? . . . . . 10
- Getting funding . . . . . 11
- Manage the admin . . . . . 12
- About Tucasi . . . . . 13



“*Tucasi have brought everything together, rather than one thing here and one thing there. That is where we see the benefits, having everything under one roof.*”

This guide is created for schools who are interested in setting up a breakfast club, or are considering switching to use the Tucasi Extended Day module.

This comprehensive walkthrough provides key information regarding school club facilities, to give school business managers and admin personnel a firm foundation, planning tips and other useful information.



# Introduction to school breakfast clubs

# 53%

of children go to school  
without eating breakfast\*



**It is a sad fact that many children are arriving at school without eating breakfast.**

But missing breakfast has been proven to affect energy levels, concentration, and children's behaviour in the classroom.

The cost-of-living crisis has affected many families, who are now struggling to provide nutritious, healthy breakfasts.

As mentioned in the Spring Budget, there is a childcare crisis - with the UK being one of the most expensive countries for childcare. This impacts many working families, who are unable to afford the cost of conventional childcare.

\* Statistic from survey by the Association for Public Service Excellence on behalf of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for School Food.

# Rising household food insecurity

## It's a snowball effect...

A Food Standards Agency study found that: *"Food prices in the UK are rising rapidly... Alongside other rising costs, particularly energy, and with growth in real pay lagging behind, this has meant UK consumers are increasingly struggling to afford food."*

The cost of food itself is not the only factor contributing to the problem; household food insecurity is a consequence of the wider cost-of-living crisis, with housing, energy, transport and other costs all increasing. People are often forced to take steps to cut food expenditure first when times are tight - by switching to cheaper, sometimes less healthy options, reducing portion sizes or skipping meals altogether.

As of September 2022, The Food Foundation found that 4 million children lived in households that had experienced food insecurity in the past month.

A survey by the Association for Public Service Excellence found that almost half of respondents had reported a decrease in the number of paid meals being served in their school, and over a third had seen the quality of packed lunches reduced.

Furthermore, the majority saw an increase in the number of children arriving at school without eating breakfast.



# Is school wraparound care the solution?



With the infrastructure and personnel already in place, schools are perfectly positioned to provide high-quality, low-cost wraparound care.

School breakfast clubs, after-school clubs and holiday clubs are becoming increasingly popular.

Parents can be confident in the knowledge and experience of school staff and the safety of the school environment. Meanwhile, they know their children will be supported in building social skills and relationships, and have opportunities for new learning experiences.

All these factors make school wraparound care the most attractive option for parents.

*“All our breakfast and after school club sessions are now booked online which has removed a huge admin task from the office.”*

# Benefits of a breakfast club

## Our top ten

1. Provides pupils (and staff) with a healthy, nutritious breakfast.
2. This in turn, helps to improve pupils' concentration and behaviour in class.
3. It motivates pupils to make healthier choices.
4. Extra-curricular enrichment aids their learning, and children do better.
5. Structured activities encourage more physical movement.
6. Helps children to improve their social skills.
7. It benefits low income families, by providing either low-cost or free breakfast.
8. Can improve pupil attendance and timekeeping.
9. Affordable childcare for working parents.
10. Increasing community engagement/reputation (for schools that allow non-pupils to attend their clubs).



## Earn extra income for your school

Schools should not be any worse off by offering affordable wraparound care sessions. In fact, breakfast clubs, after-school clubs and holiday clubs can significantly contribute to the school's income – a welcome prospect in these tough times.

Sessions need to be well-organised; using the right system will help streamline the management of the wraparound care provision; from setting place limits and prices, to taking bookings (avoiding over-subscription), payments and communicating quickly and easily with parents.

These can all be time consuming, so careful thought is needed to implement a back-office system to efficiently manage your breakfast club. This ensures your staff resources can be dedicated to providing excellent care, not endless administration.

# How to set up your breakfast club

## Why start a breakfast club?

The primary goal of a breakfast club is to reduce hunger and give pupils the opportunity to eat more healthily. Encouraging pupils to get to school on time helps pupils to settle down and concentrate in class.

Also, with the government's plans over the coming years with regards to childcare provision, setting up a breakfast club early, could benefit your school and its families.

Will your club be open to all pupils, or target specific pupils, e.g. by year group? Will it be open to non-pupils too?

What do you want to achieve from the club? This, of course, will depend on the needs of your school community and the facilities and budget available.

## Involve your stakeholders

By asking your parents how they would want the club to operate, you can better plan what times to open your breakfast club, and also what kind of breakfasts to offer.

Consider sending out a questionnaire to parents or hold a meeting to find out:

- What additional activities, besides breakfast you could offer.
- What type of food and drink pupils like to eat for breakfast.

## Configure your session options

- What will you charge?
- How many children can you cater for?
- How will parents book places for their children?
- How will you handle Childcare Vouchers?
- Will you open up your club to everyone or do you want to encourage particular pupils to attend?



Many schools encourage Pupil Premium pupils, persistent latecomers and pupils who may need additional support. Most schools want to offer breakfast free of charge, especially to low income families.



# Things to consider

The main objective is to provide a healthy breakfast, but many clubs provide activities too.

The pupils need enough time to join in the activities as well as eat their breakfast.

Don't ignore the important social aspects of eating together, breakfast clubs are a great way of promoting social engagement. For some pupils, it may be the only meal that is eaten around a table with others and engaging in conversation.

## The location

Most schools generally have their club in one place, such as the dining area. Whilst special needs schools tend to favour running their breakfast clubs in the classroom.

## Who will run the club?

Most schools use teaching assistants, school catering staff, volunteers, or people who are employed specifically to run their clubs; whilst teachers more commonly help out in special needs schools.

Schools can typically staff clubs within their existing contracts and won't have to pay additional staffing costs.

## Breakfasts you could offer

Here are some ideas of foods you can provide to meet the healthy, nutritious criteria:

- Milk and fruit juice
- Eggs
- Toast
- Baked beans
- Fresh fruit
- Yoghurt
- Porridge
- Other cereals low in sugar/salt/fat

## Special dietary needs

For children with allergies, consider offering:

- Gluten-free bread
- Dairy-free milk alternatives (but be mindful of nut allergies).





## Activities

You can have all manner of activities to keep the children engaged, we have listed a few suggestions below:

- Arts and crafts
- Storytelling – for pupils to read or write their own stories
- Physical activities, such as dance or yoga
- Homework
- Fun takes on academic subjects
- Board games
- Quizzes
- Learn a totally new skill e.g. sign-language
- Drama
- Music and/or singing

## Will you charge?

You need to decide whether to charge a flat rate, set price bands, or nothing at all. How will you process Chilcare Vouchers?

Some pupils may not be able to afford to paid breakfast and could therefore be excluded, if charged. Try to keep costs to a minimum.

## Promote your breakfast club

Publicise your club to pupils, staff, parents and the local community if you are accepting non-pupils.

Make sure everyone knows:

1. When it will start;
2. Where you will hold the club;
3. Who can join in;
4. The menu; and
5. How much it will cost.

Promotion could include:

1. Put up posters around the school;
2. Add the club on your school notice board;
3. Include details in your next school newsletter; and
4. Add to your website and social media channels.



# What are the regulations?

Although there are no strict regulations for running a breakfast club, your staff should have undertaken all of the appropriate checks and training.

We detail below some of the training that your staff should complete:



## **DBS check (previously CRB check).**

Most importantly, all adults who work with children must have an up-to-date DBS check to confirm whether they are fit to work with children. See <https://www.gov.uk/request-copy-criminal-record>

## **Safeguarding children Level 2 certificate.**

Safeguarding training helps to keep children safe at school, and this may also help staff to spot signs of a child experiencing difficulties at home.

## **Food hygiene and safety certificate.**

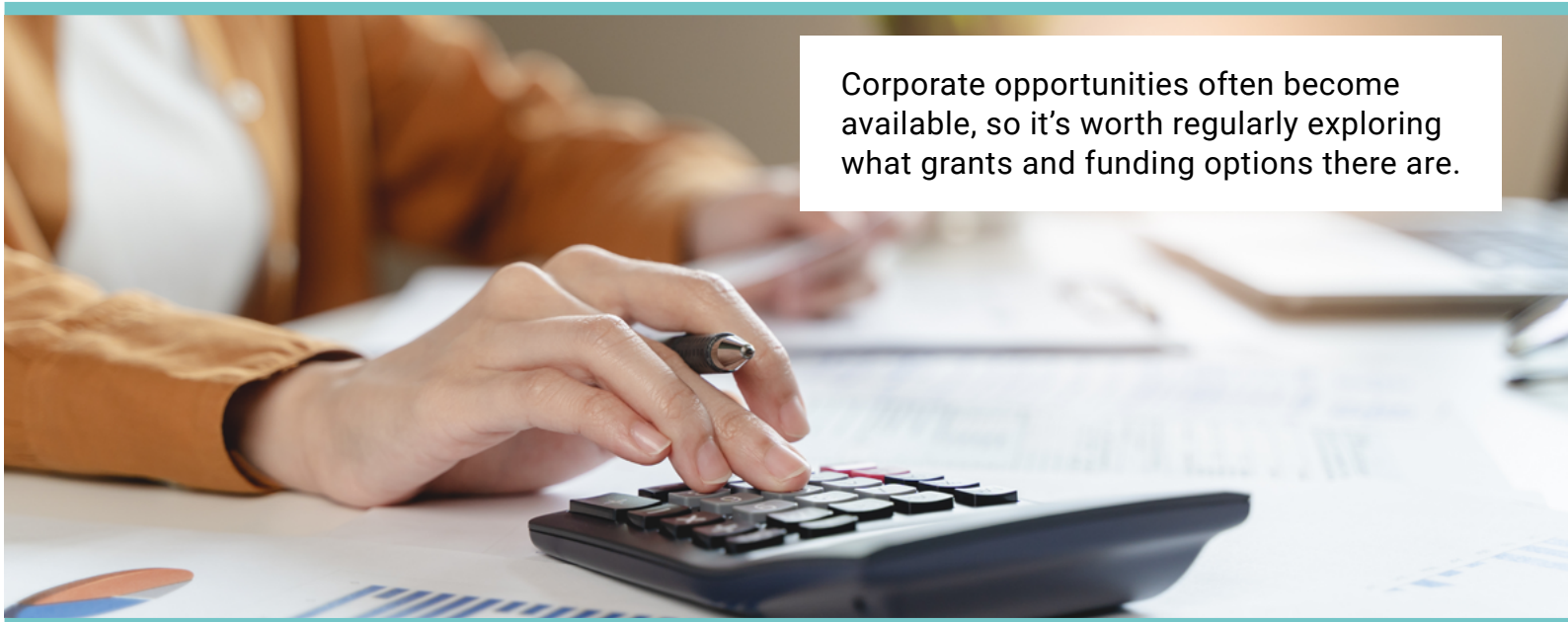
Training to help everyone understand the rules of preparing food for the children in their care. This is important for food safety and to prevent any allergy-related accidents, which could be fatal for some children.

## **First aid training.**

Club leaders must have the knowledge to deal with children becoming unwell or having any accidents whilst in their care.



# Getting funding



Corporate opportunities often become available, so it's worth regularly exploring what grants and funding options there are.

## Government backed breakfast clubs

The Government's national school breakfast club programme is available to schools in England with 40% or more pupils in bands A-F of the income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI).

This includes state-funded primary, secondary, special schools and alternative provision.

The programme gives participating schools a 75% subsidy for the food and delivery costs of breakfast club provision until the end of July 2024.

The subsidy is funded by the Department for Education, and food items are sourced and delivered to schools by Family Action, the supplier for the programme.

Participating schools only need to contribute 25% of the cost for the food products and delivery, and all pupils are to be offered free breakfasts, under the scheme.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-school-breakfast-club-programme>

# Manage the admin

Coordinating breakfast clubs can demand a lot of staff time and effort.

There are many different tasks to manage, such as calculating and ordering supplies, managing dietary information, setting place limits, taking bookings, collecting and recording childcare vouchers and payments - the whole process has the potential to be lengthy and difficult.

## Minimise the paperwork

Seamless links with online payments and reporting (e.g. attendance and income) and automating as much paperwork as possible, will ensure the smooth running of your club.

Using the right software, that provides as much automation as possible, will help make the administration of your breakfast club stress-free. Tucasi's Extended Day Module takes away much of this admin burden, letting staff focus on the success of their club and the positive outcomes for their pupils.

- **Dynamic link to your MIS** means your club leaders can be certain they know any special dietary information.
- **Enable parents to book and pay online**, and removing the handling of cash further reduces the need for admin and by only allowing bookings with payment, this should also omit the need for debt chasing, another time consuming task.
- **Easily run reports** for example you can download registers, run income summary and also attendance summary reports.



With Extended Day, you can also:

- Set place limits, to avoid over booking.
- Record, track and receive payments and adjust account balances instantly.
- Easily identify Pupil Premium children and record Childcare Vouchers.
- Send reminder alerts and communications.
- Generate individual pupil statements.
- Our template reports will help you to monitor and analyse the data.
- Easily add notes to a child's account.
- Parents select specific days, book and pay for clubs in advance online or via our SCOPAY app.

# About Tucasi

At Tucasi, we work closely with schools, academies, nurseries, multi academy trusts, local authorities and caterers to provide software to support seamless administration.

Our modular software is tailored to meet your needs. It helps to reduce time spent on administration tasks and provides an easy way to receive bookings and payments, either online or via our free SCOPAY app.

Tucasi was formed in 2004 to address the issues relating to the income collection process in schools. We provide exceptional software, used by nurseries and schools across the country.

Tucasi is one of a constantly growing number of companies run within the Vesta Software Group, which in turn, is one of many operating groups of Constellation Software Inc. As a company, Tucasi benefits from the operational and financial support of the Vesta Software Group.

## Get in touch

To find out more about the Extended Day module and its functionality, you can book a free demonstration, and our product experts will show you the software in action and answer any questions you may have.

To book a free demonstration, call **02380 016 563** or email [sales@tucasi.com](mailto:sales@tucasi.com)

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*We found out about Tucasi by asking schools in the area. They have quite a significant presence in most schools. We weighed it up by talking to our peers, as everyone has a story about them.*

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© This impartial guide was created by Tucasi to inform schools on the wraparound care process, procedure and guidance.

All information has been gathered as a result of our extensive experience providing software to schools across the UK.

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