Free breakfasts

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School breakfast scheme

All Blackpool primary school children are entitled to a free breakfast under a scheme to improve the health and well-being of the town's young residents.

In excess of 11,000 breakfasts have been delivered daily in 33 schools since the start of the scheme, with children having the opportunity to enjoy a variety of breakfast products including:

- Toast
- Cereal
- Fruit loaf
- Low sugar pancakes
- Malt loaf
- A piece of fruit

The impact of the scheme on the health, wellbeing and educational engagement of pupils has been evaluated by a team of developmental psychologists, health psychologists, nutritionists and statisticians from Northumbria University.

Key findings

- Overall children who attended breakfast consumed significantly more healthy items for breakfast than non-attendees
- 70 per cent of children taking part in the research attended free breakfasts
- The scheme has the potential to reduce inequalities in the nutritional quality of children's diets
- Parents and staff suggested there is a definite need for the scheme
- Universal element of the scheme prevents stigma
- Children feel happier and more alert
- There are potential benefits for punctuality and classroom performance

Research recommendations

- Review and carefully consider the start time of school breakfast
- Review the location in which school breakfast is served
- Review the menu and daily nutritional intake
- Staff training
- Parental / cultural change is crucial to long term sustainability
- Evaluation of long term educational attainment and short term cognitive performance

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