



## **BEXLEY LABOUR GROUP PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Free Breakfast Clubs**

**28<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

### **Bexley schools urged to sign up for free breakfast club rollout**

Bexley Labour Group is urging local schools to sign up to join the 750 school 'early adopter' rollout of the government's new free breakfast club programme - and support local children to start the school day ready to learn.

Families in Bexley will soon be able to access 30 minutes of quality childcare ahead of the start of the school day as the government pushes ahead with free breakfast clubs across the country.

From today, schools in Bexley can apply to become one of 750 early adopters in the government's free breakfast club roll out, with clubs to launch from April 2025.

Labour's Cllr. Zainab Asunramu, Shadow Cabinet Member for Children's services and Education said,

"Free breakfast clubs are great for parents, great for kids, and great for our economy too.

"Labour's breakfast clubs will make a huge difference for families in Bexley - they make it easier for busy parents, carers and guardians to make the time for work and dropping off the kids, they ensure children don't start school hungry, and they help families with the cost of living too.

"Labour set out a transformational plan to ensure that every child has the best possible start to life regardless of their background or financial circumstance. A plan to ensure no child is left behind. This particular initiative is a huge opportunity for local schools to get in early and start reaping the benefits of free breakfast clubs from April next year, giving a child a healthy and hearty breakfast to kick start their day and ensure hunger isn't a barriers to their learning"..

"I strongly encourage local schools to apply."

This action to kick-start the programme comes fast after the Budget, which tripled investment in breakfast clubs to over £33 million for 2025-26, supporting the early adopter scheme as well as the continuation of the National School Breakfast Club Programme next year, so no child faces a cliff edge on current provision.



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Breakfast clubs in every primary school will make a huge difference to children, families, and schools - removing barriers to opportunity by helping children learn, making sure no child starts school hungry, and helping families with the cost of childcare around the school day, to help keep money in people's pockets.

More than 2 in 5 non-working mothers say that they would prefer to work if they could arrange good quality, convenient, reliable and affordable childcare, and over half of parents say they have problems finding formal childcare for their child that is flexible enough to fit their needs.

The breakfast clubs form part of the government's mission to break the unfair link between background and opportunity. Delivering change that can be felt by working people, early adopters will offer all children at their school access to a free breakfast and at least 30 minutes of free before school childcare, every day.

Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson said:

"This is a landmark opportunity for schools to be in the vanguard of change, as we build back the foundations of an education system that breaks the link between children's background, and the opportunities they have in life.

"From helping with flexible working for families, to improving behaviour and attendance, the supportive start to the day that breakfast clubs provide will help drive high and rising standards for every child. This government is delivering change that will make a real difference to families up and down the country."

Schools that become early adopters will have the unique opportunity to shape the future of the national breakfast club policy, contributing directly to its implementation.

The wider paid-for wraparound childcare offer – for all primary children to be able to access childcare between 8am-6pm – continues to roll out across the country.

The government is also developing an ambitious strategy to reduce child poverty and give children the best start in life, which will be published in spring. The Taskforce led by the Work and Pensions Secretary and Education Secretary are looking at all available levers across government to drive forward short-term and long-term actions to reduce child poverty.

- For further information, please contact Cllr Stefano Borella.