

Magic Mornings

PUPILS are starting the school day with full tums after joining a national initiative designed to boost learning.

AROUND 230 children at Springfield Academy are being offered the chance to enjoy bagels and cereal before getting their teeth stuck into lessons.

Research has shown that pupil performance is enhanced if they have had breakfast before the start of the school day.

Healthy breakfasts provide children with the energy and nutrients they need to flourish in the classroom, increasing alertness, improving behaviour and giving them the motivation to learn.

Research, funded by the Education Endowment Foundation and carried out by the Institute for Fiscal Studies, found that Year 2 pupils in schools providing a free, nutritious breakfast boosted their reading, writing and maths by an average of two months' progress per year, compared to those with no provision.

The school was awarded a start-up grant by the new National School Breakfast Programme (NSBP), funded by the Department for Education and delivered by the charities Family Action and Magic Breakfast.

It now receives free, healthy breakfast food, delivered direct to the door for four terms and funds to buy necessary equipment such as toasters or a freezer.

Springfield assistant head teacher Lynne Simpson said: "Many children miss breakfast at home and struggle as they are distracted by their hunger.

"We now take orders the day before so we know how many breakfasts to make. Our head boy Daniel Halliday and head girl Grace Alderson deliver the bagels and there is jam and honey as well as cereals.

"We have had a great take up and the children are definitely responding better in the learning environment after enjoying a good breakfast."

Grace said: "It is also exciting having your breakfast with your friends in the morning and it puts you in a better mood."

Principal Richard Gartland added: "We are already seeing the benefits of being able to offer everyone a healthy breakfast before lessons, with children now settled and ready to learn in the first classes of the day."

Chief Executive of Family Action David Holmes said breakfast provision played a key role in ensuring children had a healthy start to their day. "This is changing lives and life chances by preventing thousands of children from being too hungry to learn," he said.

Founder of Magic Breakfast Carmel McConnell added: "Crucially it will ensure a nutritious breakfast reaches many more thousands of hungry schoolchildren, unlocking up to four hours of learning each morning to support their education. This is an excellent investment in these children and in the future of this country."

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