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Planning

Best Start Free Breakfast Club Programme Food Partnership - Academic Year 26/27

Department for Education

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2026/S 000-009966

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-0646e9

Published 4 February 2026, 1:01pm

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Scope

Description

This notice is not a call for competition.

Could your organisation partner with the Department for Education's (DfE) Best Start free breakfast clubs programme to help pupils start the day ready to learn?

The Best Start free breakfast clubs programme supports the government's aims of giving every pupil, regardless of their background, the best start in life. Free breakfast clubs break down barriers to every child achieving and thriving at school and in later life, by ensuring they are ready to learn as well as supporting families with cost of living, and tackling poverty.

The first Best Start free breakfast clubs opened their doors in April 2025, with 750 early adopter schools across the country. Our early adopter schools offer pupils a nutritious breakfast and a supportive start to the school day. National roll out of the programme begins in April 2026, with more than 500 additional schools set to benefit from the Best

Start free breakfast clubs.

In a landmark move, last October the government joined forces with four industry partners who are providing the 750 early adopter schools with discounts and/or free deliveries as part of a test and learn phase. These partnerships are helping schools to serve up more affordable, varied breakfast options whilst saving time for busy school staff. We have recently extended these arrangements to cover the additional 500 schools opening their free breakfast clubs in April. This initial set of agreements will remain in place until July 2026.

We are now exploring opportunities to build on these successful partnerships, looking forward to putting new arrangements into place from September 2026 when over 3,000 schools will be offering the Best Start free breakfast clubs, and 680,000 children will be benefitting from the programme.

Our partnerships have demonstrated that collaborating with industry can streamline delivery, help schools make the most of their budgets, improve access to nutritious food options, and enhance the programme's impact across schools of all sizes. We would like to open up this opportunity again as the programme expands.

As part of this initial market engagement, we welcome interest from organisations that would like to contribute to the continued success of the Best Start free breakfast clubs programme.

We are particularly seeking offers from food providers that can help participating schools maximise the value of their food budgets through preferential deals on healthy breakfast food which meets the school food standards, and ensure that sourcing food is as easy, reliable and flexible as possible.

The Department will be conducting a webinar via Microsoft Teams on 12th February from 11:00-12:00 for organisations interested in this opportunity.

To register your interest in attending this event please email breakfastclubs.partnering@education.gov.uk by 5pm on 10th February 2026 with the names and email addresses of proposed attendees.

If you cannot attend the Teams webinar but would like to express your interest or have any questions, please email breakfastclubs.partnering@education.gov.uk with your name, organisation and contact details.

Please note that this notice is for early market engagement and exploratory purposes and is not a call for competition. The Department reserves the right not to enter any formal processes or agreements. Accordingly, the Department will not be liable for any bid cost, expenditure, work, or effort incurred by a provider in acting based on this notice.

Total value (estimated)

- £0 excluding VAT
- £0 including VAT

Below the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 4 August 2026 to 31 July 2027
- 11 months, 28 days

Main procurement category

Goods

CPV classifications

- 15894210 - School meals

Contract locations

- UKC - North East (England)
- UKD - North West (England)
- UKF - East Midlands (England)
- UKG - West Midlands (England)
- UKH - East of England

- UKJ - South East (England)
- UKK - South West (England)

Engagement

Engagement deadline

4 March 2026

Engagement process description

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Contracting authority

Department for Education

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PDZG-3487-DPVD

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Organisation type: Public authority - central government