

OFFICER DECISION

Decision: Agreement to extend free school breakfasts to Fishergate primary on a targeted basis subject to continued funding through the York Hungry Minds Steering Group.

Decision Date: 09/04/2025

Type of Decision: Director	Key		Non-Key	X
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Portfolio Area that decision relates to:

Leader (inc Corporate Services, Policy, Strategy & Partnerships)		Environment and Climate Emergency	
Deputy Leader (inc Economy & Culture)		Finance, Performance, Major Projects, Human Rights, Equalities & Inclusion	
Children, Young People and Education	X	Transport	
Health, Wellbeing and Adults Social Care		Housing, Planning & Safer Communities	

Background / Decision Summary:

The York Hungry Minds pilot project began in January 2024 and two schools were selected to implement universal free school meals (FSM) in KS2 and universal breakfasts. Westfield primary in one of our most disadvantaged wards has been supported with recurring local authority funding for school meals. Burton Green has been supported through York Hungry Minds (YHM) fundraising hosted by York Community Fund.

Ten schools were initially identified for consideration to be part of the wider FSM pilot (breakfast and lunch time meals). The criteria used were linked to the percentage FSM and the wider determinants of poverty provided by the indices of multiple deprivation.

Findings from interim evaluation reports demonstrated the positive impact of both the lunch and breakfast pilots on a range of indicators including attendance, punctuality and behaviour, but attributed potentially greater benefits to developing the breakfast offer.

Following the publication of the interim evaluations the YHM Steering group has supported the extension of the breakfast pilot to an additional school, but any further extension of the scheme will be dependent on successful fund raising to build the capacity of the York Hungry Minds community fund to sponsor additional schools.

In the absence of school readiness within the initial list of 10, there has been opportunity for other schools to show interest, considering either a full school approach (as designed in the initial pilot) or developing the model to further extend our learning through a more targeted approach. Doing so will help us consider opportunities going forward through a wider school poverty approach.

Extending the pilot to a school with a different method of school meal delivery is important to consider as the costs of delivery vary according to the school's individual circumstances.

Taking these issues into account Fishergate Primary which has been involved in piloting a team around the school early help approach communicated an interest in delivering a targeted school breakfast. Officers attended the YHM Steering Group in January who confirmed a commitment to provide two years funding.

The school introduced this in February using a proof-of-concept approach to understand if parents would engage sufficiently for financial viability. The school have confirmed their intent to move to full delivery for up to 30 children.

Options Considered:

Consideration was given to other schools but ruled out at this stage due to readiness to progress an extension of the pilot. Given funding has been confirmed through donations to the community fund this school is the most appropriate to progress.

Options Rejected:

To delay further implementation.

Consultation Process:

There has been ongoing consultation with schools to consider involvement in free school meals.

Implications

Crime & Disorder		Equalities	X	Highways	
Human Resources		Legal		ICT	
Financial		Affordability	X	Property	
Climate Change		Health		Other	
Environment		Human Rights			

Implications Contact:

Level of Risk: Acceptable

Wards Affected:

All Wards		Fishergate	X	Holgate		Rural West York	
Acomb		Fulford & Heslington		Hull Road		Strensall	
Bishopthorpe		Guildhall		Huntington & New Earswick		Westfield	
Clifton		Haxby & Wigginton		Micklegate		Wheldrake	
Copmanthorpe		Heworth		Osballdwick & Derwent			
Dringhouses & Woodthorpe		Heworth Without		Rawcliffe & Clifton			

Comments/Observations: The reach and impact of poverty, particularly in the aftermath of Covid has and will continue to have a detrimental effect on some children. As we learn from the immensely helpful pilot programs this is helping shape our thinking to a more extensive approach to poverty proofing across the education system. Further extending this work across another school with different demographics will be very helpful in exploring a blended approach to supporting young people who are most disadvantaged which for some children exist in pockets magnifying inequity. In the longer term extending our reach will help us bring greater equity reducing the disadvantage gap that has remained difficult to shift for over a decade. I strongly support the extension of this work.

Decision:

Agreement to extend free school breakfasts to Fishergate primary on a targeted basis subject to continued funding through the York Hungry Minds Steering Group.

Decision Made by: Martin Kelly

Contact Details: martin.kelly@york.gov.uk

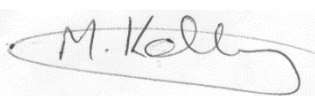
On behalf of: Corporate Director of Children and Education

To be implemented by: Head Teacher Fishergate

On Completion – Signed off by: Martin Kelly

Date:

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Martin Kelly,
Corporate Director of Children and Education