



**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

**ESRC CASE AWARD  
3 year PhD Studentship**

Biopsychology Group  
Institute of Psychological Sciences  
Faculty of Medicine and Health  
University of Leeds

**The effect of breakfast on academic and cognitive performance and behaviour in primary and secondary schoolchildren**

Supervisors: Prof. Louise Dye, Dr Clare Lawton & Hilary Asoko with Louise Solden – school based supervisor and Paul Hirst at the School Partnership Trust

The aim of this 3-year ESRC CASE studentship is to examine the effects of breakfast consumption in comparison to no breakfast in primary and secondary schoolchildren over a substantially longer period than previous studies (i.e. at least 12 weeks). The studies will assess a range of different cognitive domains alongside scholastic measures (in class tests; other performance indicators) and behaviour (e.g. concentration, task engagement).

The proposed PhD student will explore:

- i) Which cognitive domains are influenced by breakfast provision
- ii) Whether these effects coincide with changes in school performance
- iii) Whether effects of breakfast are influenced by age, gender, BMI and nutritional status of children (so that later interventions could target specific groups)
- iv) The perceptions of teachers and students regarding the importance of breakfast

Students who have obtained a 1st or upper second class honours degree in Psychology, Neuroscience or Nutrition, or a related discipline and a relevant Master's degree (or equivalent research training) are invited to apply. An ESRC recognized Masters would be preferable but equivalent research training and experience can be considered. As considerable time will be spent in school settings, an interest in education and some previous experience of working with young people would be advantageous. This experience might be in a formal setting such as a school or an informal setting such as with youth groups, sports coaching etc. The 3-year PhD studentship will take effect from October 2010.

The studentship will attract an annual tax-free stipend of £17,590 p.a. + UK/EU tuition fees, and research training support grant. The PhD will be based in the Institute of Psychological Sciences at the University of Leeds and The South Leeds Academy. There will also be an opportunity to work in partner academies in Doncaster, at Garforth Community College and feeder primary schools. Some time will also be spent at the School Partnership Trust offices.

To apply for this studentship applicants should complete a University of Leeds application form

[http://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/20023/postgraduate\\_research/86/applying\\_for\\_research\\_degrees](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/20023/postgraduate_research/86/applying_for_research_degrees)

This form should be **downloaded and emailed** together with a CV and a 1 page description of a possible study that you might design and carry out as part of this research project. You should attach all these documents to an email which you should **send to Julie Clark, Institute of Psychological Sciences, University of Leeds, Leeds, LS2 9JT.**

[j.r.clark@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:j.r.clark@leeds.ac.uk) ) For further information or informal enquiries please contact Dr Clare Lawton or Prof. Louise Dye (mail: [c.l.lawton@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:c.l.lawton@leeds.ac.uk); [l.dye@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:l.dye@leeds.ac.uk))

**Closing Date** for this studentship is **3<sup>rd</sup> September 2010**. Shortlisted candidates will be informed on 8<sup>th</sup> September and interviews will be held on **15 or 16<sup>th</sup> September 2010** at The South Leeds Academy. Candidates who are invited for interview will have the opportunity to tour The South Leeds Academy and to meet students and staff prior to interview.