

Barnet Children's Partnership Board Report

Title: Holiday Activity and Food Grant

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Service / Dept: Family Services

Report to be Presented By: Karen Pearson

1. Summary

1.1 Background

Since 2018, the department for education have invested in local programmes that deliver free healthy meals and fun activities to disadvantaged children in the summer as part of targeted pilot programmes

- In summer 2018, £2 million in seven summer holiday pilots across England.
- In summer 2019 £9m in programmes in 11 local authority areas, to improve coverage, joint-working, promotion, consistency and quality.
- In summer 2020 £9m in 17 local authority areas

The learning from delivery in these areas is being shared now that the programme has been extended to all local authorities in England.

The Holiday Activities and Food programme will expand in 2021 so that children on free school meals in England will be offered free healthy meals and enriching activities over the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays.

£220 million will be delivered through grants to all local authorities, LBBs grant allocation is £1,163,420.

1.2 Aim

It has been demonstrated that school holidays can be pressure points for some families because of increased costs and reduced incomes and that some children are more likely to experience 'unhealthy holidays' in terms of nutrition and physical health. Evidence also suggest that some children from lower-income families are less likely to access fun activities. Free holiday clubs are a response to this issue. They can work best when they provide consistent and easily accessible activities, for more than just breakfast or

lunch and enable children to have access to physical activities, hot meals where possible and health eating education.

Such programmes promote a child’s welfare and development and improve their outcomes for education, health and wellbeing. Children who attend holiday provision will:

- Eat more healthily
- Be more active
- Take part in engaging and enriching activities
- Be safe and not isolated
- Have greater knowledge of health and nutrition
- Be more engaged with school and other services
- Have greater knowledge and awareness of holiday club provision

1.3 Criteria for Delivery

The DfE sets out the requirements for each activity delivered (see below) which will form the framework for allocation of funds and monitoring of outcomes



Each local authority is required to undertake the steps below and submit an initial survey to inform a delivery plan in early February.



A steering group with relevant partners has been established in order to progress this work in preparation for the delivery of the programme across the year. The group will establish

- Mapping of current provision and identify any gaps and how to address these – through survey and briefings to schools, out of school providers and key partners within the voluntary sector. This will also be informed by the positive activities lead within the 0-19 Early help service.
- Gathering and analysis of data in relation to the number of eligible children, areas of need and deprivation
- Integrated work with those leading on food security
- Development of application and monitoring process for those who wish to deliver
- Financial modelling
- Supporting families beyond the bespoke activities through communications and wider support in relation to healthy eating and exercise including accessing affordable food and menu planning
- Developing a quality framework for those who wish to deliver as part of the programme

There is allowed capacity in the budget to employ a co-ordinator for the programme given the volume of work required.

The programme funding and delivery does not commence until April and the Easter holidays. During the February half term, we already have a wide range of virtual activities in place through our positive activities programme and children's centres. Partners in the VCS sector are also delivering small targeted groups and virtual activities. The second payment of the Covid Winter Fund scheme will also take place in February and whilst this does not replicate free school meals it does provide food vouchers for families with children who have been financially impacted upon by Covid.

Work will continue in relation to food security so that children and families have access to foodbanks, community social kitchens and welfare advice through a range of partners.

1.4 Contingency Planning

We do not know when the lock down period will end and this may impact on delivery of face to face programmes. Should face to face be allowed we will focus where possible on outdoor venues. We are also developing activity packs and online activities that will be supplemented with food parcels/vouchers and menu cards.

2. Updates since last BCPB

N/A

3. Impact

- **Equalities and Diversity**

The criteria set by the Department for Education is that this scheme is targeted for all children and young people in receipt of the benefit element of the free school meal entitlement and activities delivered as part of the programme should be inclusive and accessible to all in the cohort.

Any partners who deliver as part of the programme will be required to demonstrate how they will ensure the activities are inclusive and accessible. Consideration will be given to identified additional needs of any child or young person and a plan to address these needs to enable access will be put into place.

Our communication strategy will ensure that information is accessible to this cohort and their families, particularly through working closely with the schools the children attend.

- **Corporate Parenting**

N/A

4. Consultation and Engagement

A series of briefings are being prepared for schools and the VCS sector to share the programme and engage these partners in planning and delivery.

A survey of schools, out of school providers and the VCS sector is also taking place to identify existing provision that can be built upon and establish any gaps.

A communication programme will be developed that will utilise existing mechanisms used for engaging children, young people and families such as the Schools Bulletin, Barnet web site, Barnet Youth webpage and social media such as Facebook and Twitter (through corporate accounts). The Young Barnet Foundation as partners will also promote through the VCS sector

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

An outline delivery plan for the Easter holidays will be submitted to the Department for Education in mid-February. Following discussions with the DfE and in looking at what other LA's are delivering the Easter programme will in the main be a virtual delivery of activities, activity packs and distribution of food. Some small face to face delivery in targeted areas and including those children who do not have access to online activities will also take place. There are working groups established that are planning and co-ordinating this delivery.

The programme will be expanded during the summer holidays when it is hoped Covid restrictions will be eased allowing more face to face delivery particularly as with improved weather more outside activities should be able to take place.

The Christmas delivery will be planned as face to face delivery however we need to be mindful that scientific advice currently is that even with the Covid vaccination programme some restrictions may need to be in place during the winter months. We will keep this under review and if required will use a blended approach similar to that being planned for the Easter holidays.

The board are asked to note the information provided in this report and recommend if update reports on the delivery of the programme should be presented at future board meetings.

6. Background papers



Holiday activities and
food presentation - L