

CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	Covid Recovery - The Summer Offer
Meeting date	27 July 2021
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report outlines the Offer for vulnerable young people in BCP during the Summer holiday. The Summer Offer will look to address mental health, gaps in learning, the lack of preparation for secondary school, exploitation and knife crime as well as ensuring that families have food during this period.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that: The committee note the Summer Offer that BCP Council are putting in place as part of the Covid Recovery Plan.
Reason for recommendations	Request by the committee

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Mike White, Lead Member for Children and Families
Corporate Director	Sarah Rempel
Report Authors	Kelly Twitchen and Sarah Rempel
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Information

Background

1. As part of the Covid Recovery Plan several offers are available over the summer holidays to support all children and young people but in particular, those that are considered vulnerable.

Options Appraisal

2. Holiday and Food (HAF) Fund:

BCP have secured 25 providers delivering a variety of activities, food and nutritional education as well as wider signposting and support. Activities are well spread geographically and although more places are available for primary school age children, our providers have stepped up to develop further provision for the secondary school age group.

Over 28,000 meals and activity sessions will be delivered, reaching between 1700 and 2400 children on benefits-related free school meals. An access pot of funding has been retained to ensure no child is refused a HAF place. This pot can be accessed as and when required by providers sending a joint email with a parent to request Financial support to enable attendance. This support should be outside of what providers would ordinarily offer within their own inclusion strategy.

In addition, planning has begun to establish a specialist holiday activity scheme for children with additional needs, their siblings and families. This HAF Inclusion Project will be funded and supported to remain an independent organisation in its own right beyond the HAF funding period.

In total over £780,000 has been committed to activity for the summer, leaving some capacity still within the budget to reach more children and young people, either over the summer or at Christmas. A total budget of close to £1 million is available for both summer and Christmas activity. It should be noted that providers themselves have secured added value in delivery worth over £172,000. The added value includes the use of volunteers, food donations, students, and support from community organisations etc.

Within the HAF budget we have secured permission from the DfE to spend up to 15% on non-free school meal children. This group will include looked after children, young carers, children who are home educated and children with additional needs. HAF providers will work closely with local schools to identify children who will most benefit from this offer.

In addition to HAF funding, an additional pot of £100,000 has been secured from Public Health to support children transitioning into school in September. Children who are on benefits-related to the free school meal criteria, are looked after, or have additional/emerging needs are being offered the transitions support funding. This offer means that Early Years settings will mirror the HAF offer of four hours a day, across four days a week, over four weeks of the summer holidays. The BCP 'Starting School Together' programme is up and running now and all through summer in the Family Hubs to support vulnerable children starting school in September.

Our providers are building extremely close links with their local schools to reach eligible children and young people and we are supporting with links to children's centres and other community groups where we can. The majority of providers report no concerns about reach and take up for the summer so far, with some already full within a week of going live with bookings.

3. Summer Schools:

DfE estimates that in the first half-term of autumn 2020, pupils in Years 3 to 9 were on average around 1.6 to 2 months behind on their reading; pupils in Years 3 to 7 were around 3.2 months behind on their maths and schools with high numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals were on average further behind those in schools with low free school meals eligibility.

Anecdotal evidence also points to children and young people's mental health having suffered from lockdown and from periods of individual or class isolation even after schools reopened fully in the autumn term.

Summer school provision with an academic focus has the potential to support attending pupils to make up for some of their missed education. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) finds that, on average, pupils attending a summer school can make two months' additional progress (compared with pupils who do not attend) and up to four months' additional progress if the summer school offers small group tuition led by highly-trained and experienced teaching staff.

Evidence suggests a broader benefit for families and communities, support for vulnerable children and young people, pupil mental health and wellbeing, improved education engagement and transitions, and reduced youth violence.

The aim of the programme is for secondary schools to deliver a short summer school with a blend of academic education and enrichment activities. Schools can determine which pupils would most benefit from a summer school, from any year group. However, that most will want to focus this provision primarily on pupils making the transition into Year 7. This transition is known to be a challenging one for some pupils, and the impacts of the pandemic have increased this challenge.

Pupils leaving primary school this year may have missed a significant proportion of Key Stage 2 face-to-face teaching and therefore missed valuable preparation for secondary education. They are likely to need additional support with English and maths, for example, to make it easier for them to access the secondary curriculum. A summer school gives an opportunity to offer that face-to-face support before they start a new school. Summer school also offers an important opportunity to support pupils' wellbeing. Schools must include enrichment activities, such as team games, music, drama or sports activities. The cultural capital pupils have lost out on is important too. Pupils may not have heard as many words as they do on a normal day or read the books or been to the different places they might have otherwise. Some pupils won't have had access to a garden or other safe outdoor space during lockdown, so schools might want to offer those opportunities as part of the summer school.

Where a school runs a summer school for its incoming Year 7, those pupils will have an opportunity to build a community with their fellow pupils, forge relationships with new teachers and familiarise themselves with their new school environment.

To date, nine secondary schools have signed up to run a summer school:

School	Type	Target Pupils	Curriculum
Highcliffe School	Mainstream	Y6s transitioning	Mainly enrichment - art, graphics, computing, cooking, teambuilding, Maths, English, sport, gardening
Magna Academy	Mainstream	Y6s transitioning	Only for limited number targeted at supporting transition
Glenmoor and Winton Academies	Mainstream	Y6s transitioning	Core and Foundation subjects with enrichment each day.
Cornerstone Academy	Mainstream	Y6s transitioning	Sports
The Grange School	Mainstream	Y6s transitioning	English, Math, Science, PSHE, Sport and Culture
Poole High	Mainstream	Y6s transitioning Current Y7 Current Y8	English, Maths, Science, Geography, swimming, team building, life skills and sports days etc
Linwood School	Special	Y6s transitioning Current Y7	Sensory play, communication support, sports, cookery, arts and crafts, socialization skills, following the guideline for pupils' independent educational learning
Winchelsea	Special	Current Y7 Current Y8 Current Y9	Catch Up curriculum for one group and a wellbeing curriculum for one group
Avonbourne Boys' and Girls' Academy	Mainstream	Y6s transitioning	English, Maths, Science, Arts, PE

4. Free School Meal (FSM):

The Covid Local Support Grant (CLSG) which replaced the Winter Fund Grant has been extended to the end of September 2021. The conditions of the grant are that at least 80% must be spent on households with children. Up to 20% can be spend on households without children and single individuals. The allocation for the summer

holiday months has not been as generous as previous iterations, falling short by £500k.

Our first priority with the grants has previously been to purchase vouchers for food for children who get free school meals, and other vulnerable children identified by schools, at £15 per child per week of each holiday. The remaining grant allocations have been shared between younger children for food vouchers, and with the community (via the CAB) for households with and without children experiencing hardship due to the pandemic, principally providing support with food and utility bills. Given the reduced grant allocation the value of the voucher will be £12.50 per week per child. Whilst this is a lesser per week value than previous holidays this is in line with the cost of school meals - that the maximum number of weeks that we will provide vouchers for is six weeks. Remaining monies will be available for allocation to the younger children cohort and via the community (CAB).

5. Seasonal response:

As part of our wider summer resilience plans, £100,000 has provisionally been agreed to support prevention and education of our young people around county lines and exploitation. County Lines has been an increasing trend in many seaside resorts and unfortunately, the inclusion of young people in these practices has also increased. As part of the Council's response to this the young outreach provision in our key areas, to engage young people and deter negative behaviours, has been increased.

The TSA Project, a charity run by an ex-county lines nominal that looks to warn young people of the risks associated with carrying knives and exploitation, will undertake joint outreach to engage with any key young people of concern. The same charity will be visiting schools to deliver courses before the summer holidays around "say no to knives" and the dangers of exploitation. Practitioner training for front line staff will be delivered over the summer to support staff knowledge and engagement. Finally, any remaining funding will be given to local charities and community groups to support engaging activities in both key locations and home estates, to offer diversionary activities and support alternative options for young people.

Summary of financial implications

- 6. Holiday and Food Fund: £780,000 (from government funding)
£172,000 (from providers themselves)
£100,000 (from Public Health)
- 7. Summer Schools: Schools apply for government funding directly
- 8. FSM Vouchers: £1,005,484.78 (from DWP)
- 9. Seasonal Response: £100,000

Summary of legal implications

- 10. None

Summary of human resources implications

- 11. None

Summary of sustainability impact

12. None

Summary of public health implications

13. The Summer Offer will look to improve mental health for vulnerable young people in BCP

Summary of equality implications

14. The Summer offer gives the opportunity for young people in BCP the opportunity to 'catch up' with learning and therefore be at a similar starting point to their peers in the new academic year.

Summary of risk assessment

15. None

Background papers

None

Appendices

None