

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Chief Education Officer****Educational Services Committee: 18 September 2024**

Subject: Summer Holiday 2024 Programme Evaluation**1. Purpose****1.1** The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Update members on plans to reduce holiday hunger and family activities across West Dunbartonshire Council (WDC) during Summer 2024.

2. Recommendations**2.1** The Educational Services Committee is recommended to note:

- (a) Progress and impact of authority wide plans by partners to reduce holiday hunger and provide summer activities and;
- (b) Ways in which the fund has been administered and governed.

3. Background

3.1 In 2023 Council agreed to continue supporting the Holiday Hunger Fund to ensure the provision of free meals and social activities for school children over holiday periods, throughout West Dunbartonshire. £100,000 per annum was committed to enable community partners to work together to address the challenges of holiday hunger and associated increased costs for families. This has proved successful, and uptake and partnership working has been effective in meeting the needs of our children and families.

3.2 In line with the guidance, which was the same as that in 2023, Officers undertook liaison and planning with families and established Holiday Hunger partners who all delivered support. (Appendix 1)

4. Main Issues

4.1 It is recognised that holiday periods add to the stress of the financial challenges faced by families and can result in less access to food and social activity for them, than their peers. Resultantly, every summer session planned offered free access to activities and lunch or snacks as an integral feature.

4.2 A two-pronged approach to planning was undertaken the first being our mainstream programme. This year saw a significant increase in the number

of applications from community partners (29 up from 21 in 2023). This summer approximately 13,000 places were available for children and young people across the authority, accessing a range of activities delivered by 29 local not-for-profit partners. An additional 300 participants attended Fun in the Park activities.

- 4.3** Our SHINE partners represented communities from across West Dunbartonshire and included: YSort-Ilt, Digital Bellsmyre, West Dunbartonshire Youth Council, Dynamite Gymnastics, Vale of Leven Football Academy, Faifley Upcycling, Golden Friendships, Friends of Levensgrove, Haldane Youth Services, Awestruck Academy and Old Kilpatrick Food Parcels. Attendees included families identified in partnership with schools.
- 4.4** The second strand was the Additional Support Needs (ASN) programme which ensured all of the children in our Specialist settings were able to access holiday fun with transport provided over a four-week holiday period. This programme is supported by a range of partners including Active Schools, Independence and WDC Libraries as well as specialist setting staff (familiar to the pupils), delivering a wide range of fun, engaging and inclusive activities. The camp was staffed by familiar staff who were trained in providing the additional support and personal care required for almost all of our pupils. This summer we supported 107 individual children from across WDC specialist settings over a 4 week period. On average pupils enjoyed 3 days of activities with 456 day placements offered across the holiday period.
- 4.5** To ensure appropriateness of spend and scrutiny of projects, Officers visit projects and maintain regular contact with groups over the holiday period. They monitor the value for spend procedures in place, numbers attending and speak with staff, recording feedback from children, young people and families. At time of writing, evaluations from partners are being collected and analysed. These will inform next steps.
- 4.5** This Summer Programme offered over 350 free and inclusive activity sessions open to local children and families. Over 16,000 lunches and snacks were provided. Feedback informs us these were particularly welcomed during the ongoing cost of living crisis. Attendees included vulnerable families identified by schools. Notable examples of support and highlights of the programme are:
- 240 young people took part in Digital Bellsmyre's virtual reality and gaming sessions across 3 local venues.
 - 65 local boys and girls attended a week-long football camp offered by Vale of Leven Football Academy.
 - The Cutty Sark Centre held activities for over 600 participants.
 - Haldane Youth Services offered 48 local events including; breakfast clubs, family lunch clubs, BBQ's and fun activity sessions attracting well over 1,000 participants.
 - Rock Community Church's Olympic themed family sessions at

the Phoenix Centre engaged with 600 local children and their families.

- Strathclyde Autistic Society provided activities and trips for 600 children, young people and families affected by autism
- West Dunbarton Foodshare supported 700 children of families struggling with the cost-of-living crisis, through the provision of brunch bags that will cover breakfast and lunch for a week.
- Flourishing Faifley provided 14 nature and craft sessions for families, attracting over 1,700 attendees. Activities included mask and puppet making, and educational sessions focused on wildlife.

4.7 Feedback has been very positive from parents, carers, children and young people. At time of writing, the evaluation period is still open, however, feedback received from partners, children and families so far includes:

- *P loved the football camp and making new friends.*
- *Thank you for the brunch bags, this has been a great help to us, we've got more money left to entertain the kids now.*
- *Thank you for having W and T at Knowetop. Both boys have really enjoyed the experience. Thomas has told me all about the tree person he made today and that his favourite thing yesterday was making the bracelets.*
- *Thanks so much. My daughter D had the best time.*
- *I enjoyed everything at the club and it was the first time ever tried archery and table tennis .*
- *I made new friends and was able to play with them after the club.*
- *Me and my little sister made puppets and suncatchers and gave them to our gran.*
- *The targeted place for our child supported us in caring for our terminally ill family member and ensured our child still had fun summer experiences to look forward to and remember. Thank you so much.*
- *We really appreciate being selected as we know it was tight this year with numbers and funds. The funding we were awarded allowed us to run a hugely successful summer club with a huge attendance from kids and families from the Faifley community and surrounding areas.*
- *We are looking forward to working with you again in the future and if you can keep us in mind for any potential opportunities that would be greatly appreciated.*

4.8 Next steps include using evaluations to work with a range of wider council services to ensure a comprehensive whole family offer for next summer. As all funding was used supporting the summer sessions, there will be no support provided to partners for October or Christmas holiday periods this year.

5. People Implications

5.1 There are no people implications as a result of this report, however, these outcome focused plans aim to improve the life chances of children and young people

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 All activities related to the implementation of this policy are contained within the WDC Holiday Hunger Fund.

6.2 Final costs are still being clarified. It is anticipated the Summer SHINE costs will be approximately £100,000. Final figures will be clearer when the summer invoicing is completed.

6.3 There has been no funding this year from Scottish Government to support holiday programmes.

7 Risk Analysis

7.1 If the Council is unable to ensure positive outcomes for children, we will not be meeting their needs (Children and Young People Act 2014) (Equalities Act 2010)

7.2 If the Council is unable to ensure positive outcomes for all children and young people, it could result in reputational damage.

8 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 This fund and governance enhance the quality of the service provided to all children and young people and therefore can be seen to have a positive impact in terms of the equalities.

9 Environmental Sustainability

9.1 There are no environmental implications as a result of this report.

10 Consultation

10.1 Legal Services and the Section 95 Officer have been consulted in relation to the content of this report.

11. Strategic Assessment

11.1 This report reflects the Council's aspiration to reduce inequalities for the people of West Dunbartonshire.

Laura Mason
Chief Education Officer

Person to Contact: Claire Cusick– Senior Education Officer
16 Church Street, Dumbarton, G82
claire.cusick@west-dunbarton.gov.uk Tel
01389 737304

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Summer Holiday
Programme 3rd Sector Partners

Background papers: Holiday Hunger Report Education Committee 5th June 2019

Wards Affected: All wards

