

Councillor Victoria Cusworth – Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

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Ref	Direct Line:	Please Ask For
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23 July 2021

Councillor S Ellis

By email sue.ellis@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Councillor Ellis

Council 21st July 2021

I am sorry that you I was not able to answer your question at the Council meeting. However, I have detailed the question below along with my subsequent response for your information.

“As the number of families on low income continues to rise and in the absence of direct support from this Tory government , can you tell us what arrangements you have made for the summer holidays so that children do not go hungry during this period?”

We have provided benefits eligible parents with Free School Meal funding for the 6 week holiday through their schools and colleges, this was provided to 11,155 children and young people receiving £15 per week per eligible child/young person to supplement income and continue accessing free school meal support across the six week break.

In addition the Council is building on the success of the Easter HAF programme (Holiday Activity Fund) which provides free places at holiday clubs over the summer. This will be made available to children in the local authority area who are *eligible for and receive benefits-related free school meals. Holiday clubs must provide at least one healthy meal a day and must meet the School Food Standards.

The purpose of the grant is for local authorities to make free places at holiday clubs available in the Easter, summer, and Christmas school holidays in 2021. This will be made available to children in the local authority area who are eligible for and receive benefits-related free school meals.

The programme provides free places at Holiday Clubs for children who are eligible for Free School Meals

1 week at Easter 2021
4 weeks at Summer 2021
1 week at Christmas 2021
Each week = 4 days
Each day = 4hrs

*The children and young people who are who are defined as eligible are as:

- Free School Meals
- Elective Home Education
- Asylum Seeking (school age)
- Looked After (school age, placed in Rotherham)

Clubs will provide fun and enriching activities that provide children with opportunities to develop new skills or knowledge, to consolidate existing skills and knowledge, or to try out new experiences. This could include: physical activities such as football, table tennis, cricket; creative activities such as putting on a play, junk modelling, drumming workshops; or experiences such as a nature walk, visiting a city farm etc.

Clubs will also provide an element of nutritional education each day aimed at improving the knowledge and awareness of healthy eating for children. These do not need to be formal learning activities and could for example include activities such as getting children involved in food preparation and cooking, growing fruit and vegetables, and taste tests. And there will be at least weekly training and advice sessions for parents, carers or other family members which provide advice on how to source, prepare and cook nutritious and low-cost food.

In addition, Clubs will provide information, signposting or referrals to other services and support that would benefit the children who attend their provision and their families. This could include sessions, information provided by:


Citizen's Advice
School Nurses, dentists or other healthcare practitioners
Family Support Services or Children's Services
Housing Support Officers
Jobcentre Plus
Organisations providing financial education

At Easter, our programme ran very effectively, despite the tight timescales for implementation and the Covid restrictions in place, we managed to engage over 2,600 families.

For the summer we have tried to ensure a wide variety of reputable providers to match the areas with greatest demand and that provision is accessible to all FSM children. We will work with providers to expand provision into any identified gaps ensuring good coverage and accessibility.

I hope the information provided adequately addresses your question but please feel free to contact me again should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Victoria Cusworth
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People