

# Report

Report to:	<b>Education Resources Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>18 August 2020</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Education Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>Provision of Emergency Childcare Provision for Keyworkers and Services for Vulnerable Children and Families during Summer Holiday Period 2020</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ Provide an update on provision of emergency childcare for keyworkers (Summer Sessions) and services for vulnerable children and families during the Summer holiday period 2020.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the delivery and impact of the Summer 2020 provision of emergency childcare for keyworkers be noted
- (2) that the activities and impact of services delivered to meet the needs of vulnerable children and families be noted

## 3. Background

3.1. As part of our response to the COVID-19 pandemic all schools, early learning and childcare (ELC) and other childcare services were closed to children and young people from 17:00 on Friday, 20 March 2020 with the exception of critical provision to protect some key groups or activities.

Critical provision included the delivery of childcare for the children of keyworkers on the basis that key workers help deliver essential services which support the vulnerable and aid local community resilience. They play a vital role in the national response to the pandemic. The Scottish Government issued guidance to local authorities that set out eligibility criteria for admission to emergency childcare provision. It is important to note that the position from the outset was that if children could be cared for at home, then they should be cared for at home.

The requirement for education authorities to provide ongoing critical childcare was enshrined in the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 and emergency childcare provision has continued to be delivered throughout the Summer holiday period from 25 June – 5 August 2020.

The central admissions processes established to support management of the term time Emergency Childcare Hubs was continued to support the Summer sessions programme led by Youth, Family and Community Learning Service, with eligibility for admission based on defined Scottish Government criteria. This enabled us to support a number of key worker groups employed in the NHS, within the care sector, the emergency services, prison services, funeral director services, the food sector, essential direct transport services related to health and food sectors, direct support to utilities and within the financial sector, specifically for HMRC and DWP employees.

#### **4. Emergency Childcare Provision-Summer Sessions**

##### **4.1 *Location and Attendance***

Ten school and twelve early years provision based services were established across the four localities.

Appendix 1 details the locations and average weekly attendance.

##### **4.2. *Operational Detail***

Summer sessions emergency childcare provision commenced on Thursday 25 June and ceased on Wednesday 5 August 2020. This enabled deep cleaning of all locations prior to schools re-opening to staff for the new session on Tuesday 11 August 2020. The service was delivered Monday to Friday from 9:00am until 5:00pm and was staffed by a range of staff from the following services:

- Youth, Family and Community Learning
- Early Years and Childcare
- Aspire Employability
- School based non- teaching staff

At 23 July 2020, 4,542 meals had been served to children.

##### **4.3. *Health and Safety arrangements***

Central to the strategy of safe delivery of the emergency childcare provision has been guidance from Public Health Scotland and the continued advice of the Scottish Government.

Risk assessments and participant information had been established for term time Emergency Childcare Hubs and these assessments and information were transferred to the new provision. Medical forms were updated for participants and Personal Emergency Egress Plans (PEEPs) were put in place for children that required them.

A strict cleaning regime continued to be delivered by the Community and Enterprises Facilities Service, utilising PPE as advised in guidance and ensuring children and staff were aware of and following the appropriate hygiene requirements.

#### 4.4 *Activities and experiences*

Children attending the Summer sessions benefited from a full range of activities and experiences delivered through a youth work approach. In order to meet the broad range of needs of children in each location, care was taken to ensure that activities were age and ability appropriate to promote and secure participant engagement.

Activities were explored and agreed with participants at the beginning of the programme and included:

- arts and crafts
- films
- physical activities
- fitness fun sessions;
- planting sunflower seeds and growing plants
- treasure hunts
- stop frame animation
- old school games (skipping, hula hoops etc.)
- group games
- non bake baking

From these discussions, a range of themes developed that provided a framework for the development of weekly activities which included:

- Rainforest
- Harry Potter
- Shrek
- Forest school
- Science and Space;
- Carnival and Circus
- Sun and Sea
- Superheroes
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)

Participants across all provisions engaged in the creation of a keepsake DVD recording of their Summer sessions experience and every participant designed their own t-shirt which captured their experiences and memories of 'Summer sessions life'.

Due to the restrictions imposed due to the pandemic, it was not possible to invite partners to deliver programmes as in previous years. However, NHS Lanarkshire were able to supply the provisions with toothbrushes and toothpaste for each child to take home, as an element of the annual Summer Child Smile programme.

#### 4.5 *Awards and achievements*

The Youth Scotland Hi5 award was offered to every participant aged 5 and over who attended Summer Sessions. The Award is owned and operated by Youth Scotland and has been credit rated and levelled by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). The Hi5 award provides a means of recording and evidencing the achievements of individual children and young people through their participation in the activities that the Summer Sessions programme offered.

In line with the 'Plan, Do and Review' cycle, the young person sets themselves a challenge based on an activity or series of activities they have chosen. In progressing through their challenge, they gather the evidence of their participation and achievements and in reviewing, the young person considers and comments on how they performed in their challenge.

During the period of COVID-19 lockdown with the resultant impact on learning, this award has helped those children and young people attending the Summer sessions programme to reflect on their experiences and identify how their participation has impacted on them, what they have learned and how they can use that learning in other settings.

The self-reflection element of the award is the basis for the evaluation process as it presents accessible questions that seek to determine the impact of the programme and activity on the participant.

#### 4.6. *Evaluation and Impact*

A central element of the process of evaluating and understanding the impact of the summer programme is through the set of challenge questions within the Hi5 award. In order to support the collection of evidence, each Summer sessions location was given a digital camera to capture photographs and video footage of participants.

Staff will participate in an evaluation exercise to explore the delivery model in order to highlight good practice and areas for improvement for future delivery. This is the third year of summer activity programmes delivered in school settings and the service is keen to continue to learn from good practice and those areas for improvement that can help build a positive experience for staff and participants, year on year.

Anecdotal evidence has been received from parents, carers and children ranging from improvements in speech and language skills, enjoyment in attending the hubs and the scope of the activities on offer.

*Thanks very much for this. I just want to say a huge thanks to SLC education and the volunteers at St Cuthbert's hub. It has been so well-organised and I don't know what I would have done without it being open. My children have enjoyed going each day. Thank you so much to all involved. (Summer provision parent)*

*I just wanted to take the opportunity to say thank you to all staff involved with any aspect of the emergency care provision, without it we would have found it incredibly difficult to attend our places of work. The children have loved their time in the hub and it provided a much needed distraction and reassurance for them in these unsettling times. I have found the whole process very easy to access from start to finish which is quite an achievement given that the world we knew changed almost overnight! (Summer provision parent)*

*Faultless, was anxious when it moved here but everything went well. If this happens again, I'd recommend you. (Summer provision parent)*

*Done a great job, thanks for all the help. Without it I wouldn't be able to keep working. (Summer provision parent)*

*I enjoyed the games room, gym hall and going outside when it wasn't raining. (Summer provision child)*

*I want to stay till 5! (Summer provision child)*

*Thank you for looking after my son so well (Nursery parent)*

*To everyone at Westburn Nursery, Thank you so much for making my daughter feel so welcome. She loved coming here! (Nursery parent)*

*Thank you all so much for making a difficult time easier for key workers. We appreciate all that you do and have done to make sure that our son was safe and happy when the world seemed to be turned upside down. He has loved his adventures at Glenburgh, especially jumping in puddles and cleaning with Margaret! (Nursery parent)*

*It was a magic nursery and I loved being here. (Nursery child)*

*I love my big nursery. I like playing the garden. (Nursery child)*

Attendance at an Early Years Hub has led to a number of parents making an application for their children to attend that particular nursery post lockdown,

## **5. Outreach provision – Activity Packs**

### **5.1 Themed Family Activity Packs**

A range of activities and supports were established to maintain contact with vulnerable learners and families during the Summer period. These activities drew on the pre-Summer COVID-19 experience and continued to meet the needs of new learners and maintain well established relationships with communities. The purpose of this activity was to promote engagement of children, young people and families who may have found themselves increasingly isolated and vulnerable during the period of lockdown. The activities were designed to be carried out on their own and/or with their families and were individualised, learner centred, and prioritised for those learners and families with limited access to technology or printing facilities.

The activity packs had diverse content and included the resources required to enable young people and families to carry out the activities. Themes for packs included: health and wellbeing, STEM, family learning, cooking on a budget and gardening.

The packs were made up on a weekly basis and distributed directly by staff to the home of the recipient. This enabled regular face-to-face contact (maintaining social distancing rules) and the opportunity for staff to offer and arrange support if required. Over 1,000 activity packs have been distributed to families since March 2020.

### **5.2 After School Club Busy Bags**

The initiative was developed as a way in which to maintain engagement with remotely with the children and young people who under ordinary circumstances would have attended after school provision.

The original Busy Bags were large activity packs that included colouring-in sheets, pens, paper and skipping ropes and were followed by weekly themed 'top ups' including 'Make your own crispy-cakes' and 'Grow your own sunflower'. All of the resources and ingredients required to complete the activities were contained in each bag.

### 5.3 *Evaluation and Impact*

Weekly feedback from parents and learners has been extremely positive. Feedback has taken place through photographs, videos, face-to-face discussion and messages and examples are detailed below:

*Thank you for the great packs we have received, loved the video. (Young person)*

*I loved making the crispy cakes, please can we have more baking busy bags it's so much fun! (Young person)*

*My son is thoroughly enjoying the busy bags, it's keeping him off the I-pad and Playstation and it's giving us time to sit together. There is a wide variety of activities for him to pick and instead of playing Fortnite on the computer, he loved filling out the Fortnite word search and activity sheets. (Parent)*

*Due to the busy bags, my daughter now has something to look forward to each week, she looks out for staff arriving every week. Thank you so much. (Parent)*

*I think a fantastic effort has been made by all staff to ensure our children are receiving imaginative and creative activities for us to take part in as a family and individually each week. It has made a massive difference to us having the resources available to complete the activities within each bag. I cannot thank you enough for bringing a smile to my kid's faces each week. (Parent)*

*The packs are excellent, a good time filler and a good mixture for the different age groups. We are enjoying doing the activities together as a family, my daughter really liked the Covid-19 time capsule booklet. (Parent)*

*The packs are amazing. I feel very happy watching my son enjoy using the pack. I also enjoyed getting involved in the rainbow scavenger hunt (Parent)*

*They were great, fantastic! The kids enjoyed doing the activities, particularly the dot to dot and the colouring. There was a good variety for different ages. (ParThe activity packs are fun and very good. They provide something different for the children to do other than school work. They are still learning and the variety of activities holds their interest longer. This gives us as parents a much needed time to relax and do other things. My child likes the dot to dots and colour by number using addition as this helps her number work. (Parent)*

## 6. **Virtual Connections**

### 6.1 *Staying connected*

A key approach to maintaining connections with learners, families and communities has been through social media, telephone and provision of online learning activity ([#YFCLonline](#)).

Through these approaches, telephone and social media platforms are being used to stay in touch with staff for help, advice and even just someone to talk to. Young people are taking part in online mental health check-ins, enabling workers to provide assurances and signposting as required.

## 6.2 *Learning Online*

Learners have been engaging with learning videos on social media in subjects including positive mental health; mindfulness; healthy eating and cookery; physical exercise; arts and crafts; dance; drama; online guitar lessons and weekly challenges and quizzes, with regular group work sessions taking place across a full range of topics, allowing learners to remain in contact with staff and have an opportunity to talk to people from out with their own household.

## 6.3 *Health and Wellbeing*

Further examples of the broader social media engagement include: Stay at Home Challenge; GBX Workout; What A Load of Craft & Rainbow Pics; Arts and Crafts sessions; Photography Competition; Throwback Thursdays; Mental Health Check In; Movie Night; Tik Tok Challenge; Drawing Challenge; Question Time; Toilet Roll Keepie-Uppie Challenge; virtual 'drop ins'; IT 'drop in' and Employment Gateway groups.

## 6.4 *Learner engagement*

Social media pages have shown increased 'hits', 'likes' and views of material that has been posted online. Staff were able to analyse engagement with learners which informed the service in relation to the optimum times of day to post and the content which was most relevant. This targeted approach was adopted and led to staff having ownership of creating posts, videos and having dialogue with learners across the various social media platforms.

This approach proved invaluable with increasing views being recorded. For example [@hamiltonuc17](#) posts were viewed in excess of 12,500 times, and over 230 hours of educational video were viewed through [@ekuniversalconnectionsatthekey](#) with a daily reach of over 1300 (number of unique Facebook Feeds post content originally appeared on).

## 6.5 *Video production – child protection*

In recognition of the impact social media engagement was having, the Youth, Family and Community Learning Service was approached by South Lanarkshire Child Protection Committee to design and produce an online video to promote the child protection service to children and young people during the lockdown period. Delivering the message about personal safety and child protection through social media and film, has allowed significant engagement with the information and there have been more than 30,000 views of the video to date. Presenting it in this way has also enabled partners, parents and carers to quickly direct to others and share the content widely.

The video can be accessed via the link below:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=3400825979939003>

## 6.6 *Empowering learners*

Learners have also supported the development and delivery of social media content. Vertigo Theatre for Youth, a group based at East Kilbride Universal Connections and supported by South Lanarkshire's Youth, Family and Community Service, have been undertaking a number of initiatives over the lockdown period. Every Thursday evening, an average of 22 young people from the senior group have been coming together online to talk about how they are feeling, participate in interactive drama sessions and discuss and plan projects that they can undertake to keep themselves creatively engaged and also entertain families and other young people within South Lanarkshire.

These projects include story-telling videos for children and families, including stories told through British Sign Language (BSL) and Makaton that are published weekly. The young people have also been producing videos of themselves performing music from their homes. During the course of one week, the videos produced by the young people reached over 1,200 members of the public and have had 395 engagements. ([@Vertigo360TY](#)).

## **7. Pathfinders Summer programme**

### **7.1** *Operational detail*

The Pathfinders Summer programme, supported by a grant of £10,000 from YouthLink Scotland, is supporting young people on the edges of care and at risk of disengaging from school. The Programme provides opportunities to build relationships and develop resilience, delivered alongside activities to address learning loss.

32 families have been invited to participate in the programme which includes horticulture, fitness and wellbeing, cooking and issue-based work such as health issues in the community. Activities offered have been aligned to the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence.

### **7.2** *Activity*

Each week, young people received a delivery of food and activities to undertake at home with online activity and digital group work sessions supporting the resources. Completed activity was uploaded to Glow. For some young people, this has represented a major breakthrough in terms of engagement with their education.

### **7.3** *Achievement Awards*

Young people are engaged and working on the Dynamic Youth Award supported by a Youth, Family and Community Learning Service worker.

### **7.4** *Evaluation*

The programme is being independently evaluated by 'The Lines Between' social research organisation.

## **8. KEAR campus Summer provision**

### **8.1** *Support framework*

The KEAR Youth, Family and Community Learning Service team has delivered weekly support to each young person from a designated keyworker. This support varied in levels depending on what was required for the young person and their family and involved a weekly phone call and check-in via text or social media. This information was recorded, collated centrally and shared weekly with KEAR's Senior Leadership Team and the central Inclusive Education Team to enable additional support to be provided timeously where appropriate.



## 8.2 *Themed family activity packs*

Themed family activity packs were delivered to 191 families (294 individual young people) during each week of the Summer holiday period. To date delivery has included:

- Family Movie Pack – including all of the things needed to have a family night in together, with a strong focus on including food that can double as store cupboard staples and act as a food parcel if required (without the stigma attached to receiving a food parcel).
- Family Sports Day – Complete with instructions on how to play games with the components of the pack (skipping ropes, pedometer, hula hoops etc.). Instructions on how to play games that require no outside components, to ensure family fun can happen without a budget being required. This pack also includes a food element for a family picnic including ingredients that can also be used as store cupboard staples.
- Family Cook Off – This pack was food themed, aiming to increase family confidence in cooking together as well as providing various fun activities. In addition to ingredients for a hot meal, this pack included all of the ingredients required to do some non-cook family baking, enabling young people of all ages to be included in the process. Inclusion of typed menus and a link to the KEAR Youth, Family and Community Learning Service social media pages, allowed access to video instructions for young people and adults with literacy issues.

Additional packs include:

- Family Games Night –board game, cards & snacks.
- Memory Scrap Book –disposable camera (with a voucher to get the photos printed) and everything needed to complete a family photo album.
- Back to School / Ready for Work - These packs will be delivered in the week prior to the end of the Summer Holidays. The inclusion of shampoo, shower gel, bubble bath, school stationery and ingredients for a family meal will give all KEAR young people the best possible start to returning to school or moving on to their post school destination.

## 8.3 *Feedback*

Feedback from families via text, phone call and social media – has been extremely positive and they have have praised how much it is bringing them together. Families are ‘tagging’ KEAR Youth, Family and Community Learning Service social media ([@yfclkearcampus](#)) weekly in Instagram posts to show the packs in use, generating great evidence of impact!

## 9. **Next Steps**

- 9.1. Formal evaluation of the impact of all aspects of the delivery of services for the children of keyworkers and vulnerable children during Summer 2020 will inform future activity in this area, and this is currently underway.
- 9.2. Early indication is that the provision has had extremely positive impacts on the health and wellbeing of children, parents, carers, families and staff.

## 10. **Employee Implications**

- 10.1 A total of thirty five school support staff received training in the Hi5 Award to enable them to support children’s engagement.
- 10.2 Staff have indicated that working and engaging with communities across the provision referenced within the report has resulted in positive impact in their mental health and wellbeing during the period since lockdown began in March 2020.

## **11. Financial Implications**

11.1 The costs associated with running the summer programme have been met.

## **12. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications**

12.1 There are no significant implications for climate change, sustainability and the environment arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **13. Other Implications**

13.1 None

## **14. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

14.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and therefore no impact assessment is required.

14.2. There is also no requirement to undertake any consultation in terms of the information contained in the report.

**Tony McDaid**

**Executive Director ( Education Resources)**

11 August 2020

## **Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives**

- Protect vulnerable children, young people and adults
- Increase achievement, raise educational attainment and support lifelong learning

## **Previous References**

- None

## **List of Background Papers**

Scottish Government Guidance – emergency childcare provision

## **Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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## Appendix 1

Name of establishment	22 June Average numbers per day	29 June Average numbers per day	6 July Average numbers per day	13 July Average numbers per day	20 July Average numbers per day	27 July Average numbers per day
Biggar Primary School	11	12	12	13	10	11
St Mary's School	20	24	25	25	20	23
St Athanasius' School	24	27	22	20	15	17
Machanhill School	15	23	21	22	21	18
Woodside School	30	38	40	35	35	26
St Cuthbert's School	44	48	44	42	35	43
Loch School	20	16	16	14	11	9
Calderwood Primary School	13	36	32	32	26	23
St Hilary's School	13	36	32	32	15	25
Halfmerke School	12	39	42	41	34	35
Ballerup Nursery Centre	14	4	6	4	3	5
Calderside Nursery	12	14	14	14	14	14
Cathkin Community Nursery	6	6	4	5	7	7
Early Learning Unit	10	12	11	10	10	10
First Step Community Nursery	11	5	5	5	4	4
Glenburgh Nursery	10	9	10	10	9	7
Halfmerke Community Nursery	12	11	13	11	7	7
Hollandbush Nursery	10	6	8	7	6	6
Larkhall Children's Centre	10	11	8	9	8	12
Rigside & Rural Communities Nursery	4	4	4	5	6	4
Westburn Nursery	6	5	5	5	5	5
Woodlands Nursery Centre	8	7	8	8	7	8

A total of 346 children aged 3-13 years attended the school based provision. 73 were aged 3-5 years and 39 had additional support needs.