**Summer of Fun**

**Play, sporting & cultural activities for children & young people**

* Welsh children and young people have spent a large part of the last year at home, often online and only mixing with parents, siblings or small groups of friends. There is a growing body of emerging evidence on the impact of these **restrictions** on all children and young people. There are consistent themes which include the impacts on socialisation, communication, emotional and mental health, low levels of physical activity, increased sedentary behaviour, healthy eating and obesity.
* **Covid** itself has also had an impact on those who weren’t disadvantaged including those who have experienced bereavement, trauma or illness, looked after children and those on the edge of care.
* The **restrictions** have hadparticular impact on those who were already disadvantaged before the pandemic. In particular, looked after children, those on the edge of care, those who are disabled, black, Asian and part of ethnic minority communities.
* If we are to begin to address the impacts on children and young people, we need to put in place a package of support which addresses the broadest possible range of issues, with a wide range of interventions.
  + There should be a focus on support for interactive, creative and play-based initiatives for all years – a summer of fun: free and accessible opportunities for play, sport, the arts and other outdoor activities over the summer months for every child and young person in Wales from the ages of 0 – 25.

**The Summer of Fun Funding**

* The aim of the Summer of Fun is to ensure every child and young person in Wales has an opportunity to engage in creative and/or physical activities over the summer months.
* The Welsh Government believes access to activities such as these is critical to supporting the social, emotional, physical and mental wellbeing of children and young people, and that in turn is integral to supporting them in reengaging with learning and education, enabling all children and young people to reach their full potential.
* **Key priorities are:**
* Younger children (particularly up to age 7) not meeting key development milestones.
  + Social, communication and play-based activities are particularly important for this group as this is how they learn, and the impact of remote learning is particularly sharp as their ability to interact through digital means is limited compared to older children.
* Improvements in the social, emotional, physical, and mental wellbeing of participating children and young people, enabling them to better engage with learning and to reengage with wider society.
* The interaction and communication as a platform for/precursor of learning motivation, confidence and ability to learn.
  + Our priorities for this group should be weighted towards vulnerable and disadvantaged learners, affected by learning disruption and wider social restrictions and those who may have been disproportionately impacted as they are young carers, asylum seeking and travelling children, including disabled learners and Black, Asian and minority ethnic learners.
* Targeting communications to those who those who are disengaged as they are either part of the priority groups or those who are not digitally connected.
* Working with partners and expanding existing programmes.
  + The intention would not be to establish a new programme of activities, but instead to work with partners to expand existing programmes of support. This could include creating more spaces within existing programmes, or allowing those programmes to run for longer periods.
* Increased sustainability for the providers operating in this space.
  + Support them in resetting their services and moving to a more sustainable footing both financially and in terms of what they can offer to children, young people and their families.
* **The Funding Approach**
* The funding can be used for provision running from 1 July 2021 to 30 September 2021 as required by the local authority. The funding can be used for provision on weekdays or weekends, held during the day or in the evenings.
* Wherever possible activities should be held in accessible locations that can be accessed on foot or by public transport. Local authorities may want to consider covering some transport costs for children and young people where access to activities might be more challenging or for disabled children or young people who need support with transport.
* The audience is all children and young people age 0 – 25 and local authorities will need to ensure there is a balance of activities across all ages and all locations in their area. In particular,
* Children who were already disadvantaged before the pandemic including disabled children, children of black, Asian, ethnic minorities, looked after children and those on the edge of care.
* Children who have been effected by Covid themselves due to bereavement, trauma and illness,
* Children age 7 and under
* Provision should include activities in English, Welsh and bilingually. The Summer of Fun is intended to be an inclusive programme of activities, easily accessible by all children and young people who want to take part.
* The local authorities are asked to use the funding to provide activities for various diverse needs within the target audience including those:
* with disabilities and additional needs
* for whom Welsh is their first language or attend Welsh medium schools
* with other recorded cultural factors, including ethnic and cultural minorities that often face exclusion from play activities, such as young gypsies and travellers.
* where communities have less experience of diversity, the need may be for activity that enables children and young people to engage confidently with wider society.
* To address the variation in impacts, and tackle disadvantage, local authorities may want to proactively target some cohorts of children and young people.
  + This could possibly include the following groups:

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| * **Children/Young People whose parents have been/are:** * critical workers; * working from home; * unemployed or economically inactive * single parents * suffering with long term COVID-19. | * **Children/Young People that are:** * with no siblings; * with an additional learning need * educated outside of the regular school system * with an impairment; * Black, Asian, or minority ethnic; * on the edge of care, looked after or adopted; * refugee and asylum seeker; * in child carer families. | * **Children/Young People from families that have:** * low income or living in poverty; * had limited opportunity to use their Welsh as they usually attend Welsh medium settings; * suffered trauma or a bereavement due to COVID. * Experienced domestic abuse/violence |

* Other groups may also need to be considered. Local authorities may wish to use data such as WIMD (see [guidance document](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fgov.wales%2Fwelsh-index-multiple-deprivation-index-guidance%23section-32829&data=04%7C01%7CFaye.Gracey%40gov.wales%7Cf68e7e971d0f463e97d708d91f8c4832%7Ca2cc36c592804ae78887d06dab89216b%7C0%7C0%7C637575509621701238%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=156893sesaSjR7Yo8W7kW0QnnYQouWXjpWzNKHVoYzk%3D&reserved=0)) and/or local intelligence to help target activities where they are likely to have the most impact and reach the most disadvantaged families.[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Local authority Children’s Services departments should be consulted and given the opportunity to refer children in need of support.
* **Funding allocations or referral to schemes should not result in any stigmatisation of children.**

**Programme of Activities**

* The Local Authorities should consider the following when planning their programme of activities:
* Look to build on existing programmes and existing providers, utilising their pre-existing relationships with children, young people and their families and supporting their own recovery.
* Effective communications for all audiences to let them know what programme of activities are available ensuring it reaches priority groups.
* Provide equality of access for children and young people – this may mean tailoring or increasing some services to address inherent disadvantages;
* Offer a range of play, sporting, cultural and educational activities for children and young people in a variety of settings which are available in English and Welsh;
* Offer a suite of age appropriate opportunities, with tailoring to address age related impacts;
* Predominately, but not necessarily exclusively, provide outdoor activities, given the lower risk of transmission outdoors;
* Ensure there is an inclusive and balanced programme of activities, easily accessible by all children and young people who want to take part.

**Partnerships and Providers**

There are already a range of programmes and providers working with children and young people aged 0-25. What is envisaged is not building something new that sits alongside or on top of these existing services, but making more use of those pre-existing opportunities and filling gaps, if needed? This could include:

* Supporting pre-existing providers and programmes to put on more activities, or run their planned programmes over longer periods offering more opportunities to benefit;
* Enabling pre-existing providers to hire more staff, increasing the numbers of children and young people they can support;
* Investing in additional spaces at pre-existing programmes to enable more children and young people to benefit;
* Boosting volunteer-led activities or those provided by grass-roots organisations including opportunities for children and young people to engage in volunteering activities;
* Bringing together a range of providers to develop new, collaborative programmes which offer a benefit to a broader number of children and young people.
* Build on existing programmes with existing providers to offer additional activities through the summer months and in additional areas within the local authority. Specific examples of such schemes already funded by Welsh Government include the School Holiday Enrichment Programme and the Playworks Holiday scheme. Local authorities should also be mindful of paid for holiday schemes and try to avoid direct competition where possible.
* All regulations and guidance regarding Covid-19 and the running of covid-safe operations must be followed. A Risk Assessment must be undertaken by providers.
* Staffing levels must be proportionate to the activity undertaken and the operating requirements of the provider. All settings must have a safeguarding policy and key staff must have received appropriate training. All staff working at the setting must have a valid Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
* While local authorities will lead and coordinate activities in their areas, this should be a joint endeavour working across the public, private and third sectors with involvement from, but not limited to:
* Play and Playwork providers;
* Youth and Youthwork services;
* Childcare and early years practitioners;
* Flying Start and Families First services;
* Youth Offending Services;
* Third sector organisations working with diverse and harder to reach groups
* Schools, Further Education, Higher Education and wider education providers;
* Sport Wales and the National Sport Governing Bodies e.g. Welsh Rugby Union, Football Association Wales;
* Arts Council for Wales and other cultural institutions;
* Local museums, archives and libraries
* Natural Resources Wales;
* Urdd Gobaith Cymru;
* Mentrau Iaith;
* Mudiad Meithrin
* Clybiau Plant Cymru
* Outdoor education providers;
* Voluntary sector including County Voluntary Councils.
* Free School Meals are being provided throughout the school holidays in 2021-22, where any of the participants or beneficiaries of a funded activity are likely to be school age children, meals and snacks **cannot be funded** unless the funding is from a source other than the Welsh Government. The only exception to this, is in cases where children have not eaten and are hungry.  In this instance, the Welsh Government expects local authorities to use their discretion to make provision for these children. Local authorities should follow their normal procedures when this occurs.

1. WIMD small area data has been published showing counts of people in income deprived households by age, including for children and young people, on [StatsWales](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fstatswales.gov.wales%2FCatalogue%2FCommunity-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion%2FWelsh-Index-of-Multiple-Deprivation%2FWIMD-Indicator-Data-By-Age%2FIncome-Deprivation-By-Age%2Fincomedeprivation-indicatordata-by-lowerlayersuperoutputarea&data=04%7C01%7CFaye.Gracey%40gov.wales%7Cf68e7e971d0f463e97d708d91f8c4832%7Ca2cc36c592804ae78887d06dab89216b%7C0%7C0%7C637575509621701238%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=OoO%2FQUcHJGXoCoBB3gBXOO1j0LFbiim1L9Q%2FBJDcQrE%3D&reserved=0). Note that WIMD income deprivation data relates to financial year 2016-17, and local authorities may wish to consider this alongside local intelligence on the impact of the pandemic and restrictions, for example on employment in their local areas. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)