

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM: 15 May 2019

REPORT: MANAGING DIRECTOR, ESENTIAL COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Edsential has had a solid third full year fulfilling its mission as a Community Interest Company. We have delivered our business plan and have established ourselves as the sustainable, high quality provider that schools can rely on during these challenging times.

We have continued to reduce our costs to make our services the best value in the region and we have seen a positive impact of our focus on improving quality.

We have increased our efforts to bring external funding to our schools to help with the financial challenges they face in providing the support and experiences our children deserve. We have successfully won, or helped win, several hundred thousand pounds of funding for children across Wirral and CWAC.

Edsential's grant fund has awarded £100,000 to projects submitted by our schools, 60 Wirral schools will benefit from being part of successful applications.

This highlights the key difference between Edsential and other service providers, we are a Community Interest Company and **the money you spend with us stays within the system.**

2. BACKGROUND

Improving outcomes for children and young people, a summary of our scope:

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| <i>Residential and outdoor education Service</i> | 639 different schools hosted |
| <i>Creative, performing and visual arts service</i> | 4080 GCSE/ A Level sessions |
| <i>Learning outside the classroom</i> | 597 schools supported across 4 LAs |
| <i>Governor service</i> | 3084 hours of clerked meetings |
| <i>Music service</i> | 2000 children played alongside the Halle Orchestra |
| <i>Catering service</i> | 5,320,000 meals served |

Highlights from 2018-19

- **Sailability** - BBC Countryfile filmed a segment at the Conway Centre Anglesey highlighting our work as the premier Sailability centre in the UK, the RYA's national programme enabling people with disabilities to try sailing and take part regularly. Edsential were also 2019 winners of the RYA's "More Than Sailing" Award for the impact of our Sailability work on visiting school children with disabilities and the North Wales community.
- **Catering** - Over **£1.1m** in savings will have been passed to our schools and parents by the end of the next academic year due to the price freeze and management fee reductions. All whilst providing the best quality meals with highest ethical standards in the region.
- **Sustainable Palm Oil** – Edsential catering service were a major part of Chester Zoo's successful initiative to make Chester the world's first sustainable palm oil city. Edsential are going further to help our schools contribute to tackling deforestation and helping local communities in East Asia, we are in the process of becoming the **world's first** school catering provider to be fully sustainable palm oil certified by the RSPO. This should be achieved in June 2019.

- **Duke of Edinburgh** – Edsential are, once again, the largest and most successful provider in the North of England. We are rated number 1 in participation and completion rates at Gold, Silver and Bronze. We have launched the new “junior” DofE scheme this year that is targeted at KS1 & KS2.
- **Collaboration** – Gaby Crolla is leading our consultation with schools to shape the next 5 year plan for Edsential. We are committed to keeping schools’ views at the heart of our planning processes to ensure we meet your changing needs.

Bringing grant funding to our schools

Edsential have won or supported schools to win bids for the following funds:

- **Edsential grant fund** has awarded **£100,000** to fund 12 projects. 60 Wirral schools will benefit from these grants
- Early years music - **£100,000** has been won to fund the development of Early Years Music over the next 2 years
- Holiday activity and healthy food grant: **£550,000** – Edsential bid on behalf of CWAC for the DfE fund to provide holiday activities and meals in several deprived areas of Cheshire West. We are working with several partners to benefit over 4000 children in summer 2019. We were the only successful bid in the NW England.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the report is noted.

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