

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

## WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM: 24 November 2020

### REPORT: MANAGING DIRECTOR, ESENTIAL COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY

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#### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Edsential has fulfilled its mission as a Community Interest Company during this difficult year. We have constantly adapted to schools' needs and safety requirements to be the sustainable, high quality partner that schools could rely on during these challenging times.

Please see our latest impact report : <https://edsential.com/impactreport>

We have brought in over £2m to our boroughs from national funding bids for the arts, music and holiday hunger relief.

Our rigorous management of the company has ensured we will come through the covid situation with minimal long term impact on our ability to deliver the services Wirral children need.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

##### Holiday Activity and Food pilot programme 2020

Edsential won a bid for £1.8m (of the £9m national fund) to provide a pilot HAF programme for Wirral, CWAC and Halton during the summer of 2020. The team rapidly adapted the planned structure to account for Covid restrictions and delivered a very successful programme.

We commissioned 160 community groups to deliver the programme, along with direct delivery by Edsential teams where appropriate.

Over 11,000 children and young people took part in the programme, which delivered over 155,000 cumulative attendances at activities. Over 147,000 meals were delivered by us and our partners.

The Wirral headline statistics are:

- 5,256 children and young people participated, breakdown by age phase:

Early years	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4	Not disclosed
580	865	2239	979	538	55

- 86,883 attendances at activities
- 68 settings/ groups provided food and activities

Additional impact reported from our stakeholders:

- Reduced family stress
- Welfare checks and referrals
- New youth provision
- Increased family interaction and engagement
- Safe place to be
- Increased family cooking skills

## Service delivery

Significant resource and work was invested to ensure health and wellbeing services have been adapted to the current needs of schools. We have worked collaboratively on our risk assessments with schools to ensure our teaching and service delivery was done safely. A range of provision has been delivered face to face, remotely and outdoors; including support to address behaviour and dips in social, emotional and physical health. There are a range of new teaching and learning resources available.

The learning outdoors service (LOtC) has increased its specific work in schools to support the curriculum, including pupils' language, mathematical and communication skills.

We have been commissioned by Wirral LA to provide the governor bulletin.

We are piloting a new leadership and personal development programme for Wirral foster service, and also for the Youth Service, that aims to provide a positive impact and life skills for vulnerable young people.

## Covid impact

The covid lockdown obviously had a significant impact on Edsential, however we are proud of the support we were able to offer Wirral schools during this difficult period. We continued to provide school meals, cleaning and governor support services throughout and phased in the remaining services as you told us you were ready for us to do so.

Our 6 residential centres are closed and our expectation is that they will remain so until next Easter, unless guidance changes in the meantime.

Our shareholders asked us to focus on protecting the jobs and incomes of our teams, which we have been able to do. However, as a result the company will make a £2 million loss for this year. As we only make a 1% surplus on our services, it is likely we will need the next decade to pay off the loan we have taken to cover the loss. Due to strong cost control and cash management during this period we are very confident about our ability to weather this storm and continue to support you in the future.

On behalf of our near 1000 staff I would like to thank everyone who supported us during this year.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the report is noted.

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