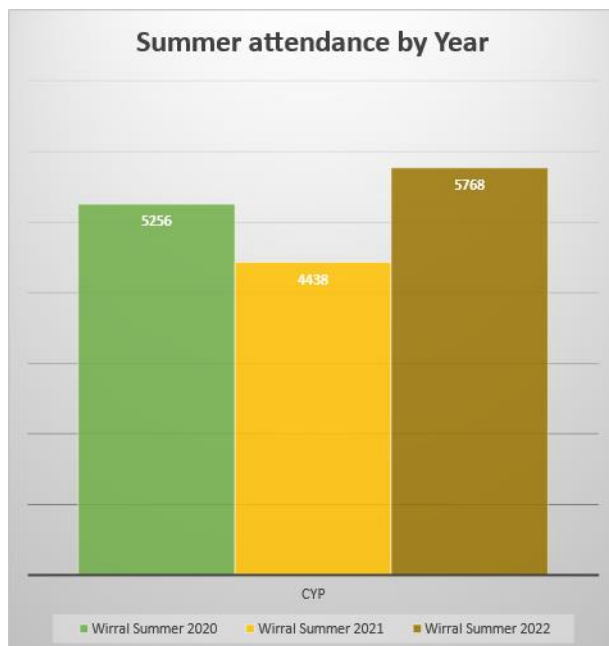


HOLIDAY ACTIVITY FUND WORKING GROUP SUMMARY REPORT

1. A report, presented to the Children, Young People and Education Committee on 1 December 2020, provided an update following the proposal agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee in respect to the provision of free school meals (FSM) in school holidays during the COVID 19 pandemic. The report explained that the Policy and Resources Committee agreed a proposal for a project co-ordinated on behalf of the Council by local charity Neo Community, working in partnership with schools and local community-based feeding groups and organisations, to provide food and activities to children eligible for Free School Meals over the Christmas 2020, February half-term 2021 and Easter 2021 holidays, using funding from Household Support Fund. This built upon learning from the operation of the Edsential Holiday Activity and Food programme over summer holidays 2020 (funded by Department for Education HAF fund), providing for adaptation of a successful model of delivery.
2. A recommendation arising from the report presented to P & R in December 2020, was to establish a Working Group with key partners to explore options in relation to supporting children with free school meals in the medium to longer term.
3. The HAF working group was established comprising of a member from each political party represented on the Children, Young People and Education Committee and initially met on a term time basis to review the progress of the project as co-ordinated by local charity Neo Community (on behalf of Wirral Council), working in partnership with schools and local community based feeding groups and organisations to provide food and activities to children eligible for free school meals.
4. The HAF working group met regularly in 2020 and an update report was produced and presented to the Children, Young People and Education Committee to inform of progress, budget allocation and uptake.
5. During 2021 the group met with partners including Edsential. Neo and Officers from Wirral involved in the project alongside an officer from the early years team.
6. From -2020, Edsential was commissioned by the Local Authority to co-ordinate in the provision of the HAF fund and on 27 October 2021, the government announced a 3 year funding settlement of over £200 million each year for the HAF programme. The first year of this funding settlement was 2022 to 2023 and 2023 to 2024 is the second year of the funding settlement. Overall, local authorities are now expected to offer the equivalent of 6 weeks' holiday provision to eligible children.

- 3.3 Since 2020, Edsential have coordinated the HAF programme.. The working group met to consider the work undertaken and the impact on the community. The working group considered uptake of provision and the impact on the community. Latest figures were presented to the group and are included in appendix 2 of the committee report.
- 3.4 During the final meeting of the HAF working group on 8 February 2023, it was felt that there was no longer a need for the group to meet on a regular basis as the project was now well established and HAF funding made available until 2025. They also noted that the group was established in a direct response to the Covid 19 Pandemic and therefore the remit of the group has now moved on.
- 3.5 Overall data was presented to Members within the final meeting as follows in relation to attendance :

	Clubs	CYP
Wirral Summer 2020	37	5256
Wirral Easter 2021*	20	3744
Wirral Summer 2021	70	4438
Wirral Winter 2021	44	4489
Wirral Easter 2022	64	3276
Wirral Summer 2022	76	5768
Wirral Winter 2022	42	2998
Wirral total 2021	134	12671
Wirral total 2022	182	12042



3.6 Final recommendations made by the group that would be put to the Children, Young People and Education Committee on 7 March were as follows:

- (1) the Children, Young People and Education committee acknowledge and support the work as reported to the Holiday Activity Fund working group undertaken by Edsential and Wirral Council;**
- (2) The Children, Young People and Education Committee particularly note and support the work undertaken to include children who are not entitled to free school meals and the long term planning to continue with this; and**
- (3) the working group concludes and the ongoing work of the HAF programme be reported to members on a regular basis.**