

**Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel,
Tuesday, 13th July 2021, 10.00 am**

Lead Member PDS Report

Schools & early years settings

I want to start by thanking all schools and early years settings for everything they have done to support the education of our children and young people in B&NES. The pandemic has had a significant impact on education and self-isolation has undoubtedly taken its toll on children and families lives.

As we come to the end of the academic year, the DFE has signalled its intent to end bubbles and self-isolation for contacts of confirmed covid cases. This is a most welcome development. We know that the DFE has signalled that testing for secondary aged children may continue into the next academic year, but we do not have the details of this yet. All we know is contained in the updated advice below.

- [Guidance for special schools and other specialist settings](#)
- [Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#)
- [Actions for FE colleges and providers during the coronavirus outbreak](#)
- [Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus outbreak](#)
- [Use of PPE in education, childcare and children's social care](#)

I would also like to thank our Public Health team, who have tirelessly supported schools with Covid outbreaks and who, in turn, have earned significant praise from our education colleagues.

Free School Meals (FSM)

As you know, I have been lobbying for FSM vouchers to continue over the summer holidays. I am pleased to announce that the central government has now provided grant funding to do this. The amount received for summer holiday FSM is less than hoped for. These vouchers will now be distributed in the same manner as previously, enabling a high uptake by eligible parents. Alongside this, we will be promoting the Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) to FSM children and families.

Holiday Activity Food (HAF) Programme

The Department for Education has allocated funding to all Local Authorities to run a Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme throughout the Easter, Summer and Christmas 2021 school holidays.

The aim of the programme is for children who attend the HAF provision to eat more healthily, be more active and take part in engaging and enriching activities. This is to support their resilience and wellbeing and help them stay safe and reduce social isolation during the school holidays. The programme also aims to ensure that children, young people

and families have a greater knowledge of health and nutrition and can be signposted to other health, employment and education support where needed.

Bath and North East Somerset have a contract with Bath Rugby Foundation to lead a local consortium and ensure children and young people, who are eligible for free school meals, have access to healthy food and enriching activities during the summer and Christmas holidays.

Working collaboratively with a range of local providers, there is now a full and engaging programme of activities on offer this summer. These will be available through morning hubs where children aged 5-11 years can enjoy physical and social activities followed by a nutritious lunch, "Teen Breakout" afternoon/evening hubs for young people aged 12 – 16, access to outdoor adventure trips and Family Hubs where families can attend play opportunities across local parks. Food parcels will also be available for parent/carers when they collect their children from sessions. Children and young people with special educational needs will be supported to access the programme either through the main hubs or through other specialist holiday activities.

The HAF programme is also available for children and young people with additional vulnerabilities who may not be in receipt of free school meals including children in need, looked after children and those with a child protection plan. Any children and young people who aren't eligible will be signposted to alternative activities as providers will continue to work collaboratively and ensure a clear oversight of the wider support and activities available.

The hubs are running throughout the summer holidays across a wide range of areas covering Bath, Midsomer Norton and Keynsham. For further details, including times and venues, please visit www.bathrugbyfoundation.com/breakout

SEND Pressures

During the pandemic, the number of requests for SEND services has increased by roughly 15%. While services respond admirably, pressures on budgets (particularly the High Needs budget) support these children and young people have grown to unmanageable levels. This is an issue that isn't particular to B&NES and is affecting all local authorities. There isn't enough central government funding to meet demand. As Lead Member for children services, I will be lending my support to a coordinated approach across the South West to raise these issues directly with central government.

Music Service

As advised at previous scrutiny meetings, our music service has been going through significant changes following a review by its funding body, Arts Council England (ACE). I am pleased to report that the service has delivered a successful improvement plan to the Arts Council and is making good progress.

We are now turning our attention to the music service's long-term future. I am committed to ensuring that B&NES can sustain a local service and thrive in an increasingly competitive

environment. The service needs to be in a strong position if and when the service has to bid for future funding from Arts Council England. To do this, we are exploring a formal partnership with South Gloucestershire and North Somerset's joint music hub. We believe there are benefits to be gained by collaboration and the sharing of services that can support the long-term future of the B&NES music service. I will be looking to bring a more detailed paper on this item in the early Autumn.

Public Health Updates

- Covid-19 related work to implement the Local Outbreak Management Plan - this continues and is increasing as local rates rise. Work includes helping to manage outbreaks, supporting childcare and education settings, ensuring availability of community testing in targeted areas, coordinating the outreach vaccination bus, and advising on infection prevention and control.
- Mental Health Support for Schools - the mental health audit in schools has been completed and a review and update of mental health resources is taking place and will be available via the Hub.
- Schools Health and Wellbeing Survey – a contract has been awarded to the Schools Health Education Unit to continue providing a well-established online survey tool to all state funded schools in B&NES. This will provide valuable intelligence and insight about health and other needs and behaviours of children and young people.
- Progressing Smokefree NHS agenda and ambitions outlined in NHS Long Term Plan – working across B&NES, Swindon and Wiltshire with public health and clinical colleagues to make the case for tobacco dependency and control funding from the NHS Long Term Plan allocation to support this work as part of the Integrated Care System.
- Summer physical activity challenge – The past 15 months have had a huge impact on levels of activity including for children who have not been able to enjoy their usual activities and sports and many of whom have had to spend more time at home leading a sedentary lifestyle which has implications for physical and mental health and wellbeing in the short and long term. Developed a 'Get Moving. Get Involved' physical activity challenge which will take place over the school summer holidays. Worked with a local primary school (Ubley Primary) to develop a brand logo and name and will be using a reputable activity app (buddyboost) to track sign ups and activity levels.
- Completed the Community Asset transfer of tennis courts to Saltford Tennis Club
- Tennis in Parks project is progressing well with 4 courts in Alice Park and two courts in Sydney Gardens completed. The 4 courts in Keynsham will be completed by the end of July. An operator has been appointed to run the Tennis in Parks programme and maintain the courts. The courts will go live from the beginning of August.

- Quest Prime Assessment completed at Bath Sport and Leisure Centre. The assessment offers operators and local authorities the opportunity to demonstrate that their centres have robust processes and procedures to prevent the spread of Covid-19, with modules on general pandemic management and the approaches to engaging with customers who are not using the facilities. The centre was rated Very Good.
- Community Consultation on the Entry Hill Bike Park designs will go live on 12 July and invite communities from across Bath and North East Somerset to give their views on the designs and plans. The consultation platform can be viewed at www.ehbpconsultation.com and we want residents to have their say on a range of issues.