

Introduction

The DCSF identified £256million funding for 2008-2011 to ensure that children and young people disadvantaged by economic circumstances and children in care were financially supported to take part in extended schools activities.

The key objective of the funding supports the National Indicators to narrow the gap in achievement and wellbeing, it will also contribute to the strategic outcomes of the Bournemouth Childrens Trust.

From April 2009-March 2010 £88,400 was made available to the Extended Services South Cluster to pilot opportunities for children and young people to access activities that they would otherwise have been unable to take part in due to cost. 100% of the funding had to be used to directly support the target children to access activities up to 2 hours per week in term time and up to 30 hours over the holidays over a year.

In order to minimise any stigma or put undue pressure on economically challenged families, the subsidy locally was called the “**Access2Activities**” Grant.

Key Strategic Objectives

The key universal objectives of this funding were to narrow the gap in attainment and wellbeing and narrow the gap in educational achievement.

Specific national indicators that this project will support:

NI 102	Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers at Key Stages 2 and 4
NI 99,100	Children in care reaching level 4 in English and Maths at Key Stage 2
NI 106	Young People from low income backgrounds progressing to higher education
NI 117	16-18 year-olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
NI 111	Reduce the number of first-time entrants to the criminal justice system aged 10-17
NI 112	Under-18 conception rate
NI 56	Obesity among primary school age children in Year 6

The project also contributes to the priorities and outcomes indicated in the Bournemouth Plan for Children, Young People and their Families 2006-2011 and the Extended Services Strategy document.

Local Objectives

In addition to the key strategic objectives above the Access2Activities funding will also contribute to more local cluster objectives as follows:

Objective 1	Increase the participation in existing out of school hours and holiday activity of the target group
Objective 2	Remove the financial barrier to enable children and young people to participate in out of school hours and holiday activities
Objective 3	To encourage schools to collaborate with partners to commission new activities to enrich the extended services offer across the cluster to all children and young people

Pilot Guidance

Schools involved in the pilot were provided with guidance by ES and DCSF about how the subsidy should be used. The full guidance document is included in *Appendix 1* of this report, but the guiding principles are included below:

Access	The funding should enable children and young people from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and children in care ('the target group') to access activities from which they would otherwise be excluded due to their inability to pay. (Schools are expected to charge the non-target group the full price for the activity).
Additionality	The funding should be used to make existing activities more accessible to the target group, and/or to commission new activities that better meet their needs.
Involvement	The target group and their parents/carers should be involved in choosing, designing and continuously improving the range of activities on offer.
Open to all	Any new activities should form part of the universal extended services offer, and be open to all children and young people. Those that can afford to pay should be encouraged to do so.
Relevance	Activities should be attractive and relevant to the target group. School and other staff should be creative in developing personalized approaches to support individuals.
Participation	The funding arrangements for activities should be sustained over time and be attractive to the target group to secure their ongoing participation.

Definition of the target group

Definition of the target group was set at cluster level and agreed by the multi agency steering group. The cluster followed the flexible model and all schools in the cluster pilot were using the same eligibility criteria to identify their target group. The cluster felt there was a definite need to add a wide range of other criteria to make the criteria more inclusive and to ensure other certain cohort of needy pupils did not miss out. *Appendix 2*

SUMMARY

This report examines data collected as part of the evaluation of the Extended Schools Disadvantage Subsidy pilot that ran in the South cluster of schools in Bournemouth. The cluster comprises 14 schools, 11 Primary, 3 Secondary and 1 Special school. The pilot was intended to provide answers to a number of key questions, these are shown as **KQ** in the Summary and Key Findings.

Findings are based on:

- ◆ A quantitative survey of schools
- ◆ Collection of feedback from schools
- ◆ Case studies amongst schools in the pilot
- ◆ Feedback from parents
- ◆ Feedback from children & young people
- ◆ Feedback from providers

As such, all findings are self-reported.

KQ. How can schools best identify the most economically disadvantaged children and target funding at them in a simple, transparent and fair way, while avoiding stigmatisation?

The cluster followed a flexible model and were free to choose how they defined economic disadvantage, this included pupils eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the LA as part of their target group. Schools in the cluster were involved in choosing the definition of the target group, and found it easy to identify which pupils should be included. Identifying eligibility criteria was crucial to ensure that the most needy pupils were being targeted and that an effective definition of economic disadvantage would be used. The official title of the subsidy was felt to be inappropriate and stigmatising so the subsidy was re branded Access2Activities to avoid stigma; other steps taken to avoid stigma included the use of non discriminatory language when speaking with students and families.

KQ. How best can children, young people and their parents be consulted about the sort of activities they would like to participate in?

100% of schools in the pilot consulted with parents of FSM pupils on role, using a questionnaire as part of the letter informing of the grant.

KQ. How can schools best engage the target population in activities?

All schools did something to promote the uptake of activities amongst the target group, the most common methods being sending letters to parents and speaking informally to parents and pupils. However, there were also information sessions, coffee mornings, market place events and other methods employed to promote uptake. Encouraging promotion through word of mouth was also an effective strategy.

Participation in activities

Amongst target group pupils that took part in any activities:

- ◆ the average number of hours taken up was 25
- ◆ 20% (139) of those that took part purchased annual memberships
- ◆ Of the 100 memberships monitored 54 had been used regularly
 - 85% weekly
 - 13% more than once weekly
 - 2% more than twice weekly

There was enormous variation in the levels (and hours) of take up between different schools. It was difficult to engage teenage girls in activities, even activities they had specifically requested. Some of the case study examples provided in the appendix also illustrate impact in terms of increased levels of participation in activities amongst pupils in the target group.

Charging for activities

Most schools were charging for some activities before the introduction of the subsidy but some schools did not and this did raise some issues about whether the introduction of a charging system might deter students from participating.

KQ. How can schools be encouraged and supported to engage with outside organisations to commission a varied range of activities?

Many schools in the cluster were working with external providers and some have formed new partnerships with external providers since the introduction of the subsidy. External providers were being used for a wide range of activities, but most commonly for sporting activities. Schools recognised the need to work collaboratively with a range of partners and welcomed the opportunities that partnership working provided. Some providers offered provision from the school site, in other cases, schools signposted to local provision.

Benefits of the subsidy

Schools in the cluster have done some of the following as a result of the subsidy:

- ◆ Provided new activities for economically disadvantaged pupils
- ◆ Increased the number of activities offered to economically disadvantaged pupils
- ◆ Improved economically disadvantaged pupils' access to activities
- ◆ Improved the quality of its provision for economically disadvantaged pupils

Schools with higher levels of economically disadvantaged pupils were more likely to see the above impacts.

KQ. How can the impact on the workloads of teachers, school leaders and support staff be minimised?

Retaining the invoicing/payment of providers within the LA Extended Services team reduced the increase on school staff workload. Workloads were mostly increased in schools with higher levels of economically disadvantaged pupils, most commonly the workloads of the parent support worker and administrative or support staff were increased. Most schools coped with the increased workload by assigning a named person to the subsidy and reassigning workloads between staff, although a few took measures to increase staff resource.

Identifying and overcoming challenges

Some schools encountered problems or barriers in implementing the subsidy, this was more common in secondary schools than primary schools. The most frequently cited problem was the additional workload around organising activities and administering the subsidy; some schools mentioned the lack of funding for administrative time. Most schools would have liked some additional support to implement the subsidy; the two main areas of additional support schools wanted were help with or funding for the time spent on administration and implementation of the subsidy; and more guidance as to what the money can be spent on.

Access to funding

There was a two phase allocation of the pilot funding to the cluster schools based on the number of children and young people eligible for free school meals and looked after. The first phase ran from April 09 – October 09 and the second phase from November 09 – March 2010. Each schools allocation was held centrally by Bournemouth Borough Council and invoices processed within the Extended Services team to minimise work for schools.

Methods used to promote Access2Activities

Letters to parents were the most frequently employed method of promoting activities amongst the target group. Speaking informally to parents and pupils were also popular ways of encouraging participation. Some schools used school assemblies to promote the uptake of activities amongst the target group, and some invited activity providers to attend parent events to showcase their activities. It was found that uptake was greater in primary schools where the Parent Support Worker was actively engaged in the subsidy pilot and in secondary schools where year managers/pastoral workers were involved in giving information on the grant to pupils.

Key Findings

- ✚ 86% of the pupils who accessed the grant were FSM
- ✚ 2.5% were LAC
- ✚ 11.5% made up from additional target group indicators
- ✚ Overall 65% of the target group accessed the grant
 - 66% through primary schools
 - 30% through secondary
- ✚ The special school reached 76% of it's eligible children & young people
- ✚ The secondary school with the least economic disadvantage reached 23%
- ✚ 5 young people NEET accessed the grant following referrals from Connexions
- ✚ 2 referrals were received via PACS
- ✚ 1 referral was received via Locality

Of Secondary schools in the cluster with the highest level of economic disadvantage:

- ◆ Portchester school managed to reach 62.4% of its eligible students of these 61% purchased annual memberships to a local leisure centre; feedback from the leisure centre confirms that *“the general standard of behaviour from the young people has much improved and rather than just ‘hanging out’ at the facility they were enjoying participating in activities”*
- ◆ Avonbourne school engaged 40% of their eligible students though it was found that teenage girls were more difficult to engage even when activities were tailored to their specific requests and that a different approach may be required.

Of Primary schools in the cluster with the highest level of economic disadvantage:

- ◆ Pokesdown primary engaged 74% of their eligible children with the highest % accessing activities during school holidays.
- ◆ Kings Park primary school reached 79% of their eligible children with the greatest proportion becoming engaged in the last 3 months of the project following appointment of PSW




St Katharines and Stourfield Junior schools reached 100% of their eligible children and Stourfield Infant 93%; Corpus Christi exceeded 74%. Bethany, St Clements, St James and St Michaels all exceeded 60% reach.

Outcomes

KQ. How can schools measure the impact of the subsidy funding?

Qualitative data on the impact of the subsidy was collected from schools through 21 case studies, 5 focused on secondary schools – one of which has been used as case study material by Continyou – and 16 on primary or infant schools. The special school was unable to provide case studies due to the number of hours attended by pupils being too low as to draw any correlation between A2A and attendance, behaviour and attitude to learning.

7 schools provided quantitative data on the impact of the subsidy on a total of 378 eligible children & young people who had accessed the grant, of this group they reported:

-  **9% improvement in attendance**
-  **18% improvement in behaviour**
-  **37% improvement in attitude to learning**

Case studies include a combination of input from school staff, parents and pupils.

A small number of telephone interviews were conducted with parents to collect quantitative and qualitative data, of those interviewed

- ◆ **23% said their had been an improvement in their child's attending school**
- ◆ **35% said their child's motivation/attitude to learning had improved, 1 parent said it had worsened**
- ◆ **53% said their child's behaviour had improved**
- ◆ **47% said their had been an improvement in their friendships**
- ◆ **23% felt there had been a positive impact on family life**

Comments from parents were very positive with:

- ◆ **88% confirming accessing the grant had been of benefit to their child/family,**
- ◆ **76% saying their child was happier/more confident and several commenting that their child had made more/new friends.**

A small amount of feedback was received directly from pupils of those asked :

- ◆ **100% wished to continue with the activity**
- ◆ **78% of them saying they had 'brilliant fun'.**

Pupils said...

“I’ve been to the gym once or twice but use it to swim more, it will be easier in the summer when the days are lighter and I can go on my bike; I have been with a few of the other boys who are on A2A, if I hadn’t had the A2A I wouldn’t have been able to go as we couldn’t afford it, It has been really good and helpful for me”

“Thank you for this opportunity to learn to swim”

“The best thing about it has been making new friends and achieving new things like playing golf”

Parents Said....

‘Opportunity made available to us is amazing, she can now swim which is vital and will hopefully keep on improving’

‘We are thankful for the A2A scheme as it has enabled him to participate in fun after school activities such as swimming, imperative for a healthy and safe childhood; without this scheme we would have struggled to afford these lessons so Thank You!’

‘My son really enjoyed surfing and his behaviour has improved dramatically, we once again have a happy household’

Dorset Police said...

Dorset Police congratulated Portchester school on the overall improvement in pupil behaviour and as part commented:

“Portchester School is also an ‘extended service facility’ meaning that it offers pupils after school activities which is proving very popular. It is also involved in an initiative called ‘Access2Activities’ which offers identified pupils the chance to use facilities at the Littledown centre out of school hours. The centre manager has noticed that pupils have been acting more responsibly whilst using the centre which in turn is improving the perception of Portchester pupils to other members of the public”

Providers said....

Littledown Leisure Centre

'I am really pleased to confirm that since becoming involved in the A2A scheme, we as a centre feel that the general standard of behaviour displayed by the young people has much improved. It appears that instead of coming down just to 'hang out' they are using their visits constructively and now enjoy their participation within the activities. We therefore hope that this approach to their exercise and general respect towards the centre continues in the future'

Bournemouth Surf School

Good that children get the opportunity but some didn't turn up, little incentive as no cost to them

Ole Spanish Club

Very clear process, some increase in numbers, no impact on capacity, invoices paid quickly, overall impression Excellent!

Executive Summary

The TDA Impact Evaluation Model has been used to produce the Executive Summary, key findings from the pilot fed into the summary and interim findings were used by schools and partner agencies when determining the protocols and processes for the subsidy roll out across all Bournemouth schools in April 2010.

Appendix 1

Guidance notes for Schools

Appendix 2

Eligibility Criteria

Appendix 3

Case Studies



Access²Activities