

## Members' Library Service Request Form

Date of Document	13/06/19
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Document Title	Engagement of Low Income Families within Active Schools.

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Library Reference	96/19
Date Received	16/06/19
Bulletin	June 2019

**REPORT TO:** Members' Library Service

**MEETING DATE:**

**BY:** Depute Chief Executive (Partnership and Services for Communities)

**SUBJECT:** Engagement of Low Income Families within Active Schools.

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the developments of the Active Schools targeted work to support low income families.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members note the information provided on the impact of the targeted work, including the free access to pupils registered for free school meals.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Following the East Lothian Poverty Commission Report in 2017, a summary of recommendations was considered by the Sport, Countryside & Leisure service. This included offering participation in Active Schools programmes free of charge to children and young people who are in receipt of free schools meals and/or clothing grant.
- 3.2 Free access to Active Schools activities for pupils registered for free school meals was launched on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2018. Prior to the launch (Aug. to Sept. 2018), 16.8% of free school meals registered pupils were active within the Active Schools programmes, this can be further broken down to Secondary Schools 23.9% and Primary Schools 14.4%.
- 3.3 Since the launch of the initiative, there has been an increase in the number of pupils in receipt of free school meals participating in Active Schools programmes. The table below summaries the initial 6 months impact of the intervention across the County:

	<b>Aug to Sept 2018</b>	<b>Aug to March 2019</b>
East Lothian	16.8%	21.6%
Secondary Schools	23.9%	25.2%
Primary Schools	14.4%	22.7%

- 3.4 At individual school level, significant improvements have been seen throughout the Authority, for example:

	<b>Aug to Sept 2018</b>	<b>Aug to March 2019</b>
Dunbar GS	14.1%	25.4%
Musselburgh GS	16.1%	26.2%
Tranent Primary Cluster	12.8%	25.2%
Musselburgh Primary Cluster	5.5%	14.2%
Prestonpans Primary Cluster	21.5%	26.4%
Haddington Primary Cluster	11.1%	23.8%
Dunbar Primary Cluster	21%	44.8%

- 3.5 The numbers are significantly higher across Primary Schools as there is more reliance on paid coaches to facilitate the activities, and as such, more activities have an associated cost. Therefore the free access initiative has a greater impact for families with Primary aged pupils. The policy was also extended to Looked After and Accommodated Children, however the data for this group has yet to be collated.
- 3.6 From the data we have seen some pupils in receipt of free school meals engage with Active Schools for a short period of time and then not re-join. This can be down to a number of reasons such as, moving into community activity, a change in family circumstances and availability. However, when a drop off is observed, the Active Schools Coordinator proactively contacts the family directly to remind them of the free access policy opportunity, and to see if there are wider barriers to participation that can be removed.
- 3.7 The Free Access Policy is one of a number of methods used to engage with Low Income Families. Active Schools Coordinators work with classroom teaching staff, Children's Services and third party agencies to help engage and encourage low income families to register for free school

meals and sign up with Active Schools activity. An increasing number of referrals are being received from colleagues to help remove the stigma and barriers associated with poverty.

- 3.8 Active Schools will continue to provide the appropriate interventions and opportunities for children in receipt of free school meals to ensure the Service plays its part in contributing to the East Lothian Poverty Commission Report and in tackling inequalities.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 This targeted work and Free Access Policy for pupils in receipt of free school meals contributes to delivering Outcome 3.2 within The East Lothian Plan – People are enjoying healthier lives.

#### **5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 The Free Access policy and targeted work is entirely aimed at reducing the inequalities for those who face significant barriers, and financial barriers in particular.

#### **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial – the cost of the free access is managed within the existing Active Schools budget and no new resource has been allocated to deliver the initiative. East Lothian Council receives partnership investment on an annual basis from sportscotland towards the cost of the Active Schools programme.
- 6.2 Personnel - none
- 6.3 Other - none

#### **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 None

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