



COVID Winter Grants Scheme to be known in Hampshire as the Connect4Communities Programme

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Department: Children's Services

Date of assessment: 01/12/2020

Description of current service/policy

The DWP COVID Winter Grant scheme will provide £2.89M of funding to HCC to support those most in need, with costs of food, energy, water bills and essentials. The conditions state at least 80% must be used for food and fuel, and no more than 20% on other items. Also 80% of the fund must be spent on families with children and up to 20% on other households including individuals. Our Connect4Communities programme will grant funding to schools, colleges and early years to support vulnerable children and families. This is for food vouchers for those families in school holiday periods until March 2021 and discretionary grant funding to use to provide support to a wider range of vulnerable families

Geographical impact: All
Hampshire

Description of proposed change

The Food Vouchers will be available to all families whose children are eligible for free school meals and to ensure support is delivered to the wider range of vulnerable households, we want to expand the cohort of children and families offered vouchers so these children are fed during the school holidays until March 2021. The Discretionary Grant will enable schools and colleges to be able to offer financial support to families

they deem vulnerable. Funding will not be restricted to those with free school meal or families with other benefit eligibility as schools/colleges will be encouraged to use their knowledge of families and their individual circumstances to provide appropriate support.

Impacts of the proposed change

This impact assessment covers Service users

Engagement and consultation

Has engagement or consultation been carried out? Yes

Engagement with schools/colleges via a survey and with Head Teachers to ensure that this proposal for free school meal vouchers and a discretionary fund is supported by them which it is. The outcome of schools engagement is to allocate funds to them so they can provide a food voucher to children eligible for free school meals and others identified in vulnerable and low income households. It was also apparent that there are other families/children within schools who would benefit from help with food/energy from a discretionary fund.

Statutory considerations	Impact	Mitigation
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<p>Age: Positive</p>	<p>Children who would normally receive a free school meal or have been identified as vulnerable by virtue of being open to early help services, previously having been eligible for FSM, allocated a social worker or in a low income setting will receive a food voucher to ensure they are fed over the school holidays until March 2021. Other children who do not fall into this category but are from needy households can also be identified to receive help from the school discretionary fund which could cover food, help with energy or other essentials.</p>	
<p>Disability: Positive</p>	<p>Many disabled children, regardless of household income, are open to a social worker and so will be eligible for a food voucher under the Connect4Communities Programme. Furthermore, any disabled child who meets the extended criteria we have set will be provided with food vouchers for the school holiday periods until 31 March 2021. Other children who are not captured by the voucher eligible criteria but are from needy households can also be identified to receive help from the school discretionary grant which could cover food, help with energy or other essentials.</p>	
<p>Sexual orientation: Neutral</p>		

Race: Neutral		
Religion and belief: Neutral		
Gender reassignment: Neutral		
Gender: Neutral		
Marriage and civil partnership: Neutral		
Pregnancy and maternity: Neutral		
Other policy considerations	Impact	Mitigation
Poverty: Positive	Additional funding will be distributed to help those children and families who live in poverty or are in need food, energy and other basic items. This funding also means that children who live in poverty and would most likely not be fed because they are on school holidays will receive food.	

Rurality: Neutral		
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Neutrality statement (if all considerations have a neutral impact)

Any other information