

CONNECT 4 SUMMER

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Provided holiday child care, family fun activities and healthy food throughout Hampshire



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INTRODUCTION



Welcome to our review document for our project, **Connect4Summer**.

We are two Community Managers from schools in Hampshire with 40 years experience between us in community development, supported by school management and governing bodies.

Jan Lefley is based at Romsey Community School and Susan Parish at Park Community School, both focus on the needs of students, their families and beyond. In the past both managers have provided free food and activities for students in the holidays.

In December 2018, The Department for Education announced grants to fund local coordination of free holiday activities and healthy food for disadvantaged children during 2019 summer holidays; both managers decided to work in partnership and apply.

It was confirmed on 4 April 2019 that we had been successful as one of eleven organisations to share £9.1m. From the 1 May planning could start but the official launch was not until 12 June 2019.

Partnership Board

We required partners who would be supportive in what we set out to achieve and also be critical friends providing challenge. The Board members are from various organisations who have a good mix of occupations, interests and professional skills. Members represented a range of partners: Test Valley, Havant Borough Councils, Hampshire County Council, BME Community, Outdoor Education, Salvation Army, HomeStart and Personal Best Education. We created Terms of Reference with the main focus being to develop, promote and recommend the Connect4Summer project to partner agencies and organisations and to review the Action Plan and key performance indicators for the project. This has worked well and has proved invaluable in joining up the dots to ensure support from other organisations. We would like to record our thanks to those that helped us.



We required a name for the project. The logo represents the colours of both schools, and the need to make connections across Hampshire.

The Department for Education aims of the grant programme are:

“To develop a more efficient and joined-up approach to free holiday provision for disadvantaged children; and to ensure there is enough good quality free holiday provision to meet the demand from children eligible for free school meals (FSM) in the local authority during the 2019 summer holidays”.

“This grant funding is to take on the role of testing the coordination of free holiday provision (including healthy food and enriching activities) for disadvantaged children during the 2019 summer holidays in the Hampshire Local Authority area in the South East Region”.

We created our project using contacts and partners from across Hampshire. Businesses and voluntary agencies, schools and community premises, unemployed and skilled practitioners, commercial food suppliers and foodbanks all came together to create a programme that would have a lasting legacy.

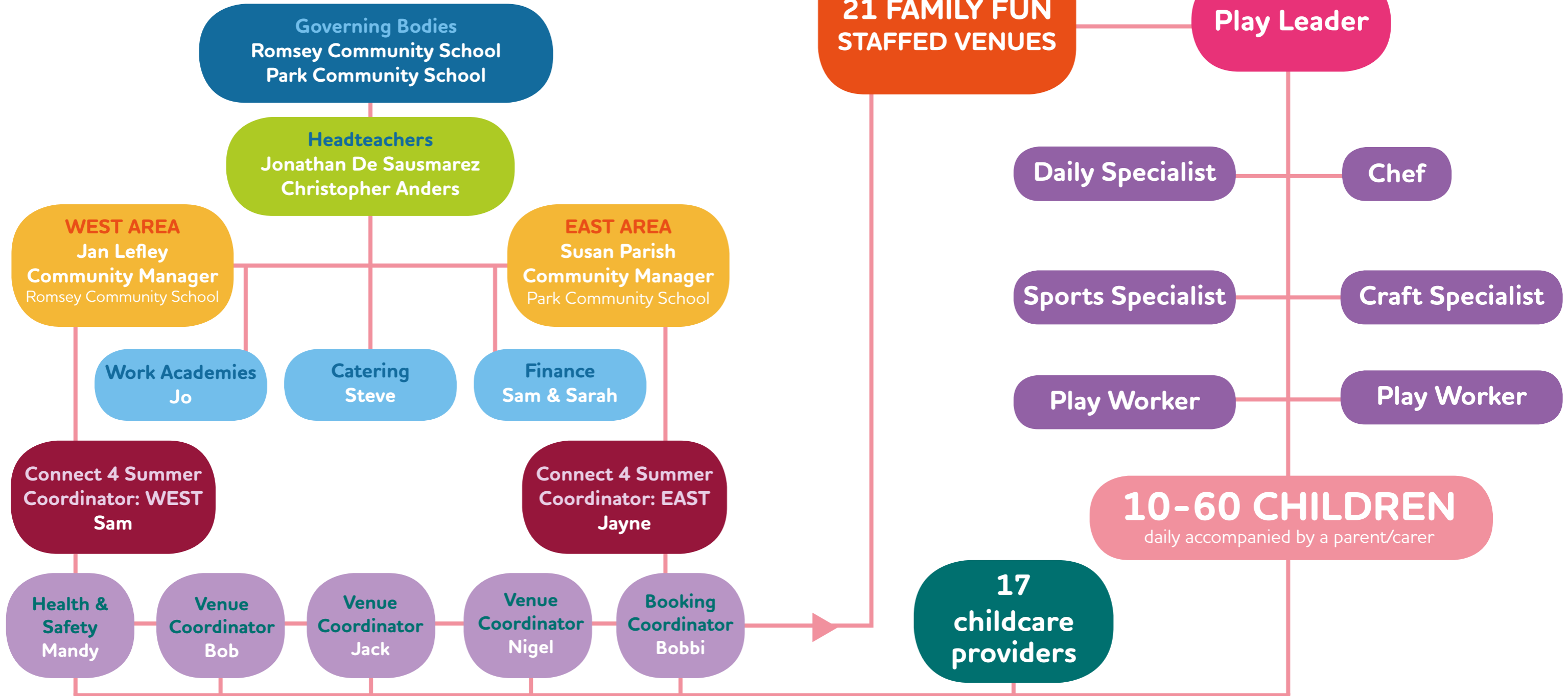
Our project consisted of:

- 4 week programme between 29 July through to 23 August 2019
- Free family fun activities 10am-3pm in 20 venues
- Free child care in 20 venues in Hampshire, Southampton and Portsmouth one venue in each additionally included
- Provide as many job opportunities and training for the long termed unemployed as we could
- Hot 2 course daily meals provided in every venue
- Daily Mile completed everyday

County of Hampshire

Hampshire is an area of 1400 square miles with a population of 1,370,700. Levels of FSM in schools across some areas of Havant, Gosport, Andover, Aldershot and Basingstoke are between 30%-56%. 17,534 are eligible for FSM. 5,500 families are supported through the Supported Families Programme in Hampshire when Southampton and Portsmouth population are included, our catchment area is 1.8 million people.

WHO'S INVOLVED



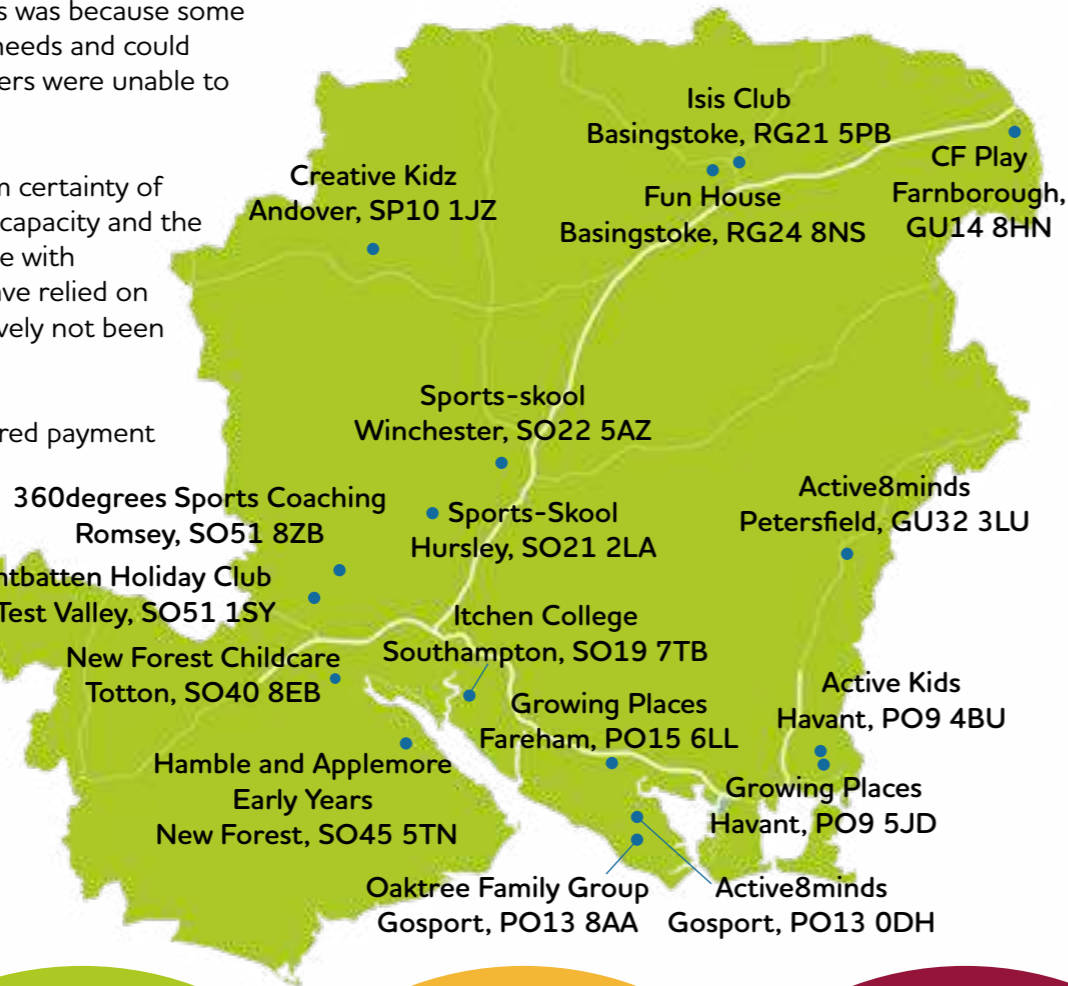
HOLIDAY CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

We provided grant funding to these Holiday Childcare Providers (HCP) to allow access for free to those children receiving FSM and their parents who were working. Each parent could book 10 days of free childcare. We planned for 20 providers but worked with 17 venues. This was because some centres had large capacity and needs and could meet demand; and some providers were unable to provide a hot meal.

For these providers it gave them certainty of income for the holiday, created capacity and the opportunity to make a difference with parents who ordinarily would have relied on friends and families, or alternatively not been able to work in the holidays.

Some families would have required payment plans to afford childcare. Social services signposted families who were in need, especially where poor mental health was an issue.

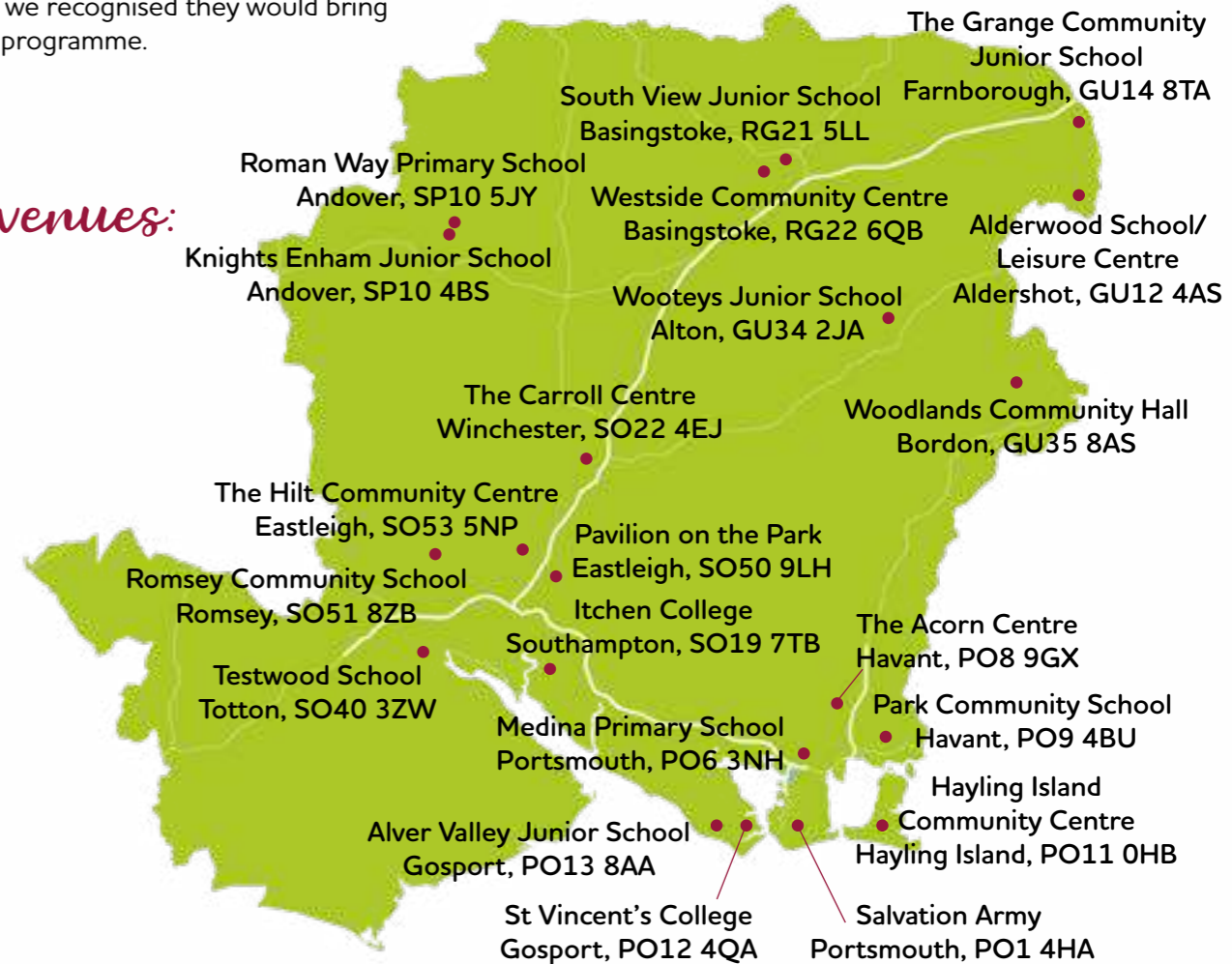
The 17 venues:



FAMILY FUN DAYS

With our expertise in community development this is where we believed we could make the greatest difference with parents being with their children and taking part in an exciting, different daily programme of fun and activities. We planned to use 20 venues but increased to 21 venues because we recognised they would bring a benefit to the programme.

The 21 venues:



TIMETABLE

We created a timetable in which three employed playworkers lead three sessions a day and one session was led by a visiting practitioner who toured venues to give a little added excitement and learning opportunities each day. We were able to recruit a good quality range of expertise to ensure each day was always unique.

The timetable of the day was:

TIME	RED GROUP	BLUE GROUP	GREEN GROUP	YELLOW GROUP
10.00	Registration, introduction and divide into groups			
10.05	Crafts together	Make, take and freeze at home	Team building/sport	Surprise specialist
11.00	Make, take and freeze at home	Surprise specialist	Crafts together	Team building/sport
12.00	Daily mile with children, parents and staff taking part			
12.20	Lunch everyone eating together			
1.00	Team building/sport	Crafts together	Surprise specialist	Make, take and freeze at home
2.00	Surprise specialist	Team building/sport	Make, take and freeze at home	Crafts together

"The mile walk is a good way to get everyone engaged."
Victoria

ACTIVITIES

Make, take and freeze at home

The families spent an hour each day with trained staff and followed a recipe to make something they were able to take home, bake and eat as a family or freeze. We used fresh ingredients and the recipes were created by, LACA National School Chef of the Year 2019 Steven Cross who ensured that they were healthy and ingredients were readily available in supermarkets, affordable and practical for a busy household.

Lunch together

It is important to be able to sit together at a table with others, have conversations and enjoy a meal. 20 recipe cards using meat were created, along with the same number for vegetarian options. We had a selection of cards for those with dietary needs. Each venue was supplied twice weekly with all the food to produce the meals, along with brightly coloured plastic reusable plates, bowls, cutlery and cups; we wanted to be environmentally friendly and not use throw away containers. In some venues we purchased small fridges and freezers because they did not have the capacity for all the food.



Friday weekend bags

To continue with the healthy options, every Friday the families went home with a bag of fresh ingredients including meat with enough to make two family meals over the weekend. The bag includes the recipe cards, cards with free activities that are happening in their area, or ideas of what a family can do to be active. Families have been delighted to receive them.



Crafts together

We provided over 30 craft method cards and all of the craft materials for families to make a whole range of products from weaving to stone painting, cross stitch to bird feeders, every day craft that could be done at home.



The Daily Mile

This has proved to be one of the most inspiring parts of the day. Initially, we were concerned whether families would participate. Families have embraced this and even become competitive, going from dawdling to lets see how fast we can get round.



Visiting specialists

400 hours of specialists were used throughout the project to provide challenges, learning and new experiences. Below is the variety we provided:

- Family first aid - Including how to do CPR
- Fun with clay - Create a Roman or Egyptian piece
- Dr Blendo the mad scientist - Science learning
- Tom the maths genius - Problem solving with sums
- T-shirt printing
- Martial arts - Skill and mental health
- Wacky art - Creativity
- Relax yoga - Stress relief
- Bowtie balloon guy
- Cheerleading - Physically demanding
- Pirate crazy
- Learn to count and sing in Spanish
- Hoola - Physical activity
- Puppet shows - Safety message throughout
- Create with lego - Compete best structure, maths
- Several styles of dance - Physical
- Percussion - Music making
- American footie - New experience
- Create with wood - Use woodwork tools
- Crazy bubble time - Science
- Twizzie the magician - Pure fun and laughter
- Circus skills - Co-ordination
- Baton twirling - Physical / Co-ordination
- Dance time - Different styles of dance
- Confidence building - Developing personal confidence



STAFFING

Very early in the planning after we decided the staffing structure, we looked at the size of the County of Hampshire. To make the logistics manageable we split Hampshire into East and West Areas and four co-ordinators looked after an area each.

Hampshire covers
1,400 sq.mile
Population
1,370,7000



Work Academies and Training

Connect4Summer created opportunities to offer employment in each venue across Hampshire.

Work Academies were established working in partnership with Department for Working Pensions (DWP), Wheatsheaf Trust and local housing associations to provide employment opportunities and training. Our particular focus was engaging with the long term unemployed. 7 Work Academies took place across Hampshire with over 100 attending.

We offered the following training to all and if they attended all the training they were offered a guaranteed interview.

- Accredited first aid training
- Level 2 food hygiene
- Employability skills such as working in teams
- Confidence building
- Creating and updating CVs
- Interview skills, including how to present yourself

The majority completed the training and took up the offer of guaranteed interviews, 60% were offered positions and took up the opportunity of paid work for 4 weeks in a supported environment. For those who did not feel ready to commit to the 4 weeks, volunteer roles were offered and taken up by 18 people. We have seen a noticeable increase in their confidence and they valued being part of a team.

For the holiday care providers and all staff, a programme of training was offered. It included:

- Level 2 in mental health awareness in children and young people
- Paediatric first aid
- Level 2 food hygiene
- Playworker training
- Safeguard training
- VRQ working with vulnerable children and young people in their community

Skills that were gained by the staff we employed:

- Time management
- Customer care
- Event set up
- Time sheet calculations (for those never been employed)
- IT skills in the workplace
- Functional skills – reading recipes, weighing ingredients
- Typing emails
- Understanding what employers require
- Communicating with a whole range of people
- Listening to peoples requirements and acting upon them
- Hosting
- Prioritising
- Working as a team

Overall 180 were employed for the project this included school staff employed on term time contracts; this improved parental communication. We were able to attract a great mix of people creating a very strong team including university and college students and members of the community with valuable skills in craft and cooking.

TESTIMONIALS

"I was so pleased when I saw the advert in the Job Centre for the Connect4Summer scheme. I applied because even if I did not get a job at the end I would get a chance of an interview and training. I completed all the training and was interviewed and got a Play Worker position. I have enjoyed it very much. I like doing the cookery and craft. I have enjoyed helping other families who are in a similar position to me. It has really helped me gain experience and I am now currently seeking employment within a child/school environment and have two future interviews coming up. Thank you so much for giving me a chance."

Kat

"I have thoroughly enjoyed working for Connect 4 Summer. Doing the training and then having the interview I feel it made me more confident and ready for it. It has also been lovely working with the same people I trained with."

Verity

"My 5 year olds enjoyed playing outside. They've both had a great time and are exhausted."

Lydia

"After fostering 5 grandchildren this is amazing. The children are all engaged in the different activities and it works for the different ages. Thank you for making the 6 weeks manageable."

Sarah

"My girls prepped the vegetable soup. They liked helping chop, measure, stir and make it. They will enjoy trying it tonight."

Hayley

What working for Connect4summer has meant to me...

"I am finding it very rewarding and it is so nice to watch all the families enjoying my food, which I have prepared and cooked with love, every time."

I have never been a professional chef but have cooked in residential homes for adults with learning disabilities, whilst doing support work and I love cooking for other people and feel I can do a good job with an extra personal touch.

The recipes are very good and quite easy to work with and the training in Havant was definitely worthwhile and it was nice to meet the Head Chef.

This has been a fabulous "stop gap" for me, as I lost my job last month and really needed the work. I will miss it and hope to stay in contact."

Mary

"Food was amazing. My daughter is coeliac so they provided an alternative."

Sanoba

"The chef makes very good dinners! Everyone is very kind and welcoming."

Sarah

"My child had the best day, so much to do!"

Carina

"It was so nice to bond with my son. I was only 16 when I had a baby and struggle to meet other young parents. It had a good focus on 'healthy'"

Zoe

"I really enjoyed playing rounders with the kids and they loved playing against the parents."

Jemma

"It has been a great day for all the family - it is difficult to find activities that are suitable for both a 7 year old and a 2 year old - so it has been much less stressful for mum too!"

Katie

"My daughter loved the magic show! The freedom to play in between is perfect too! Would recommend to anyone with young kids."

Kim

"It was really nice to be able to get out for the day. I struggle with mental health so it took a lot to come. The staff were amazing and made me feel at ease."

Rachel

"It was great to be able to do lots of different activities with my daughter, even activities I wouldn't have thought of doing."

Teresa

"Maths was a big hit for my children."

Maggie

"Thank you for a fun filled day that flew by. It was great for the children to be around each other with fun craft, cooking and games."

Jennie

"Proper quality time as a family. Very calm, relaxed. Welcoming environment. Lots of fun."

Samantha

"It has pretty much saved my summer by giving it some routine as my boys need lots to do. Thank you very much."

Sally

"Such a great day. Great fun for the children and adults. Stopped my girls being bored and taught them some great skills."

Justine

"It has made my day! Kids had the best time."

Violet



FAMILY FUN DAY FACILITIES

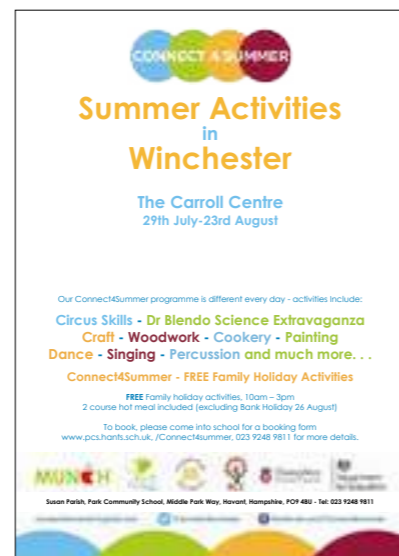
We planned for 20 venues but increased to 21 venues. Every facility was visited and checked to ensure that it met the standards we set out and signed a Memorandum of Understanding which included our delivery expectations.

Each facility received:

- Legal pack containing all documentation
- Marketing templates for their use
- Marketing leaflets and posters for distribution
- Large non-perishable food order at the beginning
- Twice weekly fresh food deliveries
- Cleaning products for the venues
- Craft supplies
- Sporting and activity equipment
- Step-by-Step method cards for all activities
- Kitchen utensils and equipment
- Weekend bags for food to go home
- Recipe cards

Included within the legal pack was information on data protection, staff handbook, risk assessments, kitchen policies, safeguarding, medication, allergies, first aid and accident reporting.

"Great for meeting other families and the kids had loads of new friends to play with."
Hannah



5,200
free child care
sessions offered

5,620
child care sessions
used, numbers were
increased to
meet demand

16,000
offered
Family Fun
sessions

150kg
kilos of meat
600kg
kilos of fruit and
vegetables were used

27,800
meals served

19,360
children and adults
attended family
fun sessions

1,500+
weekend
bags given
out

30
previously
unemployed staff
offered interviews/
jobs after
the project

1,500
feedback
comments
received

5,261
children
had fun

180
staff
employed

Average daily
attendance for
each family fun
venue was 44
children

Open for
20 days
10-3pm

FEEDBACK

We have received fantastic feedback which has been very encouraging. Initially numbers booked did not reflect the numbers attending with many no shows and others turning up without booking. This raises a question, 'If something is completely free do families book?' If something happens on that day they will not make it a priority to attend, whereas if there was a financial loss would this change? Equally charging would this restrict those most disadvantaged?

The Department for Education contracted Ecorys UK who specialise in policy and research who provided several surveys in different mediums. The results of those will be available in March 2020.

We received lots of feedback regarding the make, take and freeze from...

- I never realised cooking did not need to be stressful
- I enjoyed cooking with my children
- I had no idea how easy it was to make a tasty soup
- I thought making a cake with vegetables would be horrible. We made courgette cake it was yummy.
- My children have tried vegetables for the first time
- The cooks encouraged them to try everything that was cooked
- We priced up a meal and it was cheaper than buying a ready meal and went further



FREE holiday childcare and fun activities being delivered in all these venues across Hampshire

360 Degrees Sports Coaching - Acorn Centre Active Kids - Based at Park Community School - Active8 Minds
 Aldershot Alver Valley School - Bordon Junior School - Carroll Centre - Creative Kidz Andover
 Fun House Grange Community Junior School - Growing Places - Hamble & Applemore Early Years
 Hayling Island Community Centre - Hilt Community Centre - Isis Club - Itchen College
 Knights Enham Junior School - Little Flyers - Making Miracles Nursery & Preschool - Medina Primary School
 Mountbatten Holiday Club - New Forest Childcare - Oaktree Family Group - Park Community School
 Pavilion on the Park - Roman Way Primary School - Romsey School - Salvation Army - School Out For Fun
 SCL Clubs - South View Junior School - Sports Skool - St Vincents College - Testwood School
 The Carroll Centre - Westside Community Centre - Woodlands Community Hall - Wootleys Junior School

connect4summer@gmail.com



Tell us what it means to YOU!

Connect4Summer was created by Jan and Susan from Romsey and Park Community Schools.

We want to do it again next year so please tell us:

- What was good
- Next year what else would you like
- What a difference it made to you

We both hope you had a great holiday.

Best wishes
Jan and Susan

FREE PRIZE DRAW
4 tickets to Marwell Zoo with your contact details

Dear Jan and Susan,

From (Name):
 Email address:
 Telephone number:
 I do not give consent to be contacted with future opportunities from Connect4Summer

It was important to us to find out what families thought of the service that we provided, therefore daily postcards were made available for parents to complete and there was a daily feedback sheet for both children and adults to complete.

ADDITIONAL VISITORS TO THE FAMILY FUN DAYS

Partners that we had worked with previously wanted to be involved and we are extremely grateful to them for the part they played in this successful project.

National Citizens Service Personal Best Education, provided us with 100 young people to complete their volunteering service. They came with energy, enthusiasm and willing to give anything a go. They helped unpack over £25,000 of goods from sports equipment, craft and dry food goods, divide and distribute to each of the 21 venues. When the project was up and running they helped the parents join in with the children and were a great asset.

Citizens Advice – provided support sessions and many parents took the advantage of getting very useful information, many booked individual appointments for further discussions. The staff being available in our venues was congenial and gave the parents confidence to ask for information.

Men Sheds – have been able to provide construction kits to make with easy to read instructions, worked with families on woodland projects for some of the venues.

Family Support Services and Children's Services – have visited the venues and supported the referred families in an informal setting.

Local councillors and MPs have visited and given their support to the staff and volunteers working in the venues.

Food banks – we identified food banks close to the venues and they supported by providing additional food for the Weekend Bags and also referred families in, which was extremely helpful and well received by them.

Housing Support officers have visited and met with residents who have attended the family fun days.

School nurses – provided information stands and drop ins which challenged the children and parents as to what was the healthy options when it came to snacks and drinks. There was information on childhood illnesses, stress in children, giving up smoking info for parents, how to encourage healthy diet and activities. The feedback we received from them was that they were able to meet with parents who would normally stay as far away from them as possible. The school nurses felt it was valuable time spent.

Homestart – have been able to engage with their families and help them book and supported them in making the first visit.

DID WE ACHIEVE?

This has proved one of the most challenging projects we have ever completed. However, without exception, we have found it the most rewarding to do. It is hard to quantify exactly what the benefits are to the families we were in contact with. Some benefits are just not measurable and only anecdotal and it will only be visible in the long term.

These are our thoughts:

- We kept over 5,000+ children physically and mentally active, and entertained over 4 weeks
- Did we reduce the brain drain for the children by being stimulated? We believe so. We embedded maths, English and science and provided instructions and recipes after the tasks to take home which promotes communication skills between parents and children. All the specialists were engaged to provide challenge and new experiences. Maths specialist through competition and team work encouraged families to use adding, subtracting, multiplication and division to get across a room.
- Families learnt how to cook healthily. Impact of taking the food home, one child said 'I am taking it home to eat with Dad'.
- Whole families received a hot 2 course meal at every session.
- We employed 60 who were long term unemployed, and 10 have then got further employment.
- Staff have felt they have made a difference and have made a lasting impact.

- We increased footfall to community buildings throughout the summer allowing them to engage with families many new to their centres. There is the possibility of families engaging in future events and activities.
- We utilised schools and centres that are not normally open bringing in added revenue. Schools were able to engage with parents
- New skills were learnt by both parents and children, one parent commenting that the Maths Specialist helped her understand multiplication for the first time.
- Families making new friends.
- We collected for charities in venues.
- Programme was delivered in some of the most challenging areas in Hampshire.
- As two organisations who delivered this we feel we have learnt and have a blue print to be able to progress forward.
- Partnerships with other organisations have been made and will allow us greater community collaboration in the future.
- Families taking up better opportunities. and moving into further training opportunities.

"It made such a huge difference. My kids are so happy!"
Lubna

EVEN BETTER IF...

- There was a longer lead in time for more planning and creating partnerships.
- All schools bought into the project. One school said "I am not going to put 'my' families into this" which was disappointing.
- Catering companies using schools kitchens were on board fully.
- Improved food deliveries to various venues.
- Centralised data base - National.
- More time to train staff as a team.
- An online booking system for use in centres, especially for 'walk ins'.
- Central marketing produced by the Department for Education.
- To have employed a social media guru early on.

Hopes and dreams for the future

If the Department for Education were to consider funding a similar project, it should be to feed families and provide activities as a family unit. The parents we spoke to were equally in need regarding food and the activities provided gave something for everyone. If we were to be granted a second year it would be even better. Feeding just school age children does not support the whole family or those children entitled to 15 hours free nursery care in term time.

"I was amazed at how well organised the sessions have been. The kids are spoilt for choice. Everyone has been so generous. The people involved have been outstanding."
Jaspreet

"Massive help with the food. So accommodating of my son's allergies. All 3 love coming and is a huge help financially and with keeping them occupied. My kids loved tasting the difference food."
Francine

"My son enjoyed it much more than any other holiday club that he has been to as it was held at his own school in familiar surroundings and lots of his friends attended too which was a bonus."
Dan

"It has been great and helpful to have a supportive, safe and understanding environment to bring my 3 boys around summer. With no family to help it is easy to feel overwhelmed with the long summer days."
Evelyn



AND FINALLY...

What an exciting, fast moving, rewarding, compassionate making a difference summer we have had!

We are really proud of what we have achieved, 17 organisations have provided free daily child care and 21 organisations have provided free family fun days for 20 days and the feedback from parents has been tremendous.

Every child and parent had free high quality food at lunchtimes, enjoyed making food to take home each day and the weekend bags providing two meals have been very much appreciated.

180 were employed, of which 60 were unemployed and we understand 20 have future interviews.

We have formed a great team of people and working in partnership with organisations we collectively have made a huge difference to families throughout Hampshire. We have learnt a lot and we would want to do it again every year.

This has been no sticking plaster. Some of the benefits and legacy are clear to see now and in the fullness of time children and families will continue to use the skills learnt and will continue to thrive going forward.

Thank you one and all who made this happen, it could not work without your tenacity, hardwork and enthusiasm.

Thank you to the Department for Education for awarding us this grant, we will definitely want to do it again!

Best wishes,
Jan and Susan



**Thank you to everyone that has supported
this programme you have been amazing!**

Thank you to all those local organisations
that added value

Thank you to all the staff, volunteers and centres

Thank you to both Governing Bodies and Headteachers
that gave us the freedom to fulfill our dream to do this

Thank you to the Department for Education
in granting us the funding

**Thank you most of all to all the
families who came to join us.**

Summer 2019 was amazing!

All information stated is correct at time of printing – September 19

www.romsey.hants.sch.uk

www.pcs.hants.sch.uk

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