

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – 13th NOVEMBER 2002

SUMMER PROGRAMME FOR CHILDREN EVALUATION REPORT

Report by Director of Community Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an executive summary of the evaluation process associated with the Summer Activity Programme for Children.
- 1.2 The Key aims are to report on performance and to focus on areas which will contribute to the continuous improvement of this well-established programme.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Summer Programme has been developed and expanded since its introduction in 1996. The Programme is co-ordinated by the Recreation Section and is made up of a wide range of Sports and Leisure opportunities, which are targeted at young people living in and around East Ayrshire.
- 2.2 The Summer Programme is delivered in conjunction with a number of internal partners including Libraries, Museums, Arts and Theatre, Community Safety and the jointly funded football and curling posts. In addition extensive input is received from external partners such as the East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership, Ayrshire and Arran Health Board Health Improvement Fund, The Galleon Centre and Newmilns Dry Ski Slope.
- 2.3 An extensive evaluation process, which is informed by the Best Value Regime and is in line with the Excellence Model, has been incrementally developed over the last four years.
- 2.4 The process employs a range of innovative and traditional techniques to produce quantitative and qualitative results. Utilising a systematic framework it is possible to examine performance trends, share relevant information with funding partners and focus upon the continuous improvement of the service.

3. PERFORMANCE RESULTS

- 3.1 The overall aim of the Community Services Summer Programme is to provide a comprehensive choice of high quality, fun activities for all children and young people throughout East Ayrshire during the school holiday period. In order to fulfil this aim a Summer Activity Guide was developed incorporating the following activities:-

3.1.1 Recreation Led Sessions –

- 27 sports sessions (curling, football, golf, tennis, basketball)
- 55 Kids Clubs (Kids Club Network, Travelling Kids Club and CHAMPS Special Needs Club)
- 10 Arts Workshops (Wizardry and Medieval themes)
- 13 Fitness Sessions (Active Kids Challenge)
- 3 Wannabe Popstars.

3.1.2 Other Sections/Departments Activities

- Library Services – reading, storytelling and crafts.
- Museums, Arts and Theatre – exhibitions and visits.
- Countryside Rangers Service – events and environmental activities.
- Galleon Centre Clubs – sports and leisure sessions.
- Newmilns Ski Slope – introduction sessions.
- Yipworld.com – leisure activities.
- Active Primary School Co-ordinator – promotion of events in schools.

3.2 In order to ensure the highest levels of quality a number of key procedures were put into practice:-

- All Kids Clubs had been previously registered under the Children's Act 1989
- All Staff were vetted previously
- All Staff took part in comprehensive training
- Each team had a designated line manager
- Regular inspections were carried out by Supervising officers
- Each team was provided with an extensive range of equipment

3.3 Up to 20 workers attended a specially designed five-day training course prior to the commencement of the Summer Programme. The results of the training evaluation are as follows:-

- 100% of staff who attended rated the majority of sessions as being good to excellent.
- 95% felt that the training co-ordinators were very approachable, knowledgeable and taught them new skills
- 90% felt that training was useful in preparing them to work in teams
- One comment from a member of staff was as follows – “I've been so impressed by the whole content and delivery of the training week”

3.4 During the six weeks of the programme 18 Kids Club Network Sites received two sessions per week, 14 Travelling Kids Clubs received one visit per week and four CHAMPS Special Needs Clubs had one session per week.

3.4.1 Innovative questionnaire booklets were completed by a range of children who attended Kids Clubs in the final week of the programme, 704 children took part in this group activity and the questionnaire covered the following topics:-

- Publicity
- Venue suitability
- Method of transport
- Activities on offer
- Fitness
- Quality of leaders
- Payment Methods
- Enjoyment

3.4.2 The children were also asked to draw pictures, complete puzzles and write their views of the clubs. A summary of results is as follows:-

95% of children took part in a variety of activities
97% of children enjoyed the activities
90% of children would like to attend similar activities at weekends
90% of children felt that leaders were approachable

3.4.3 The following represent a range of comments which were received:-

- “I would definitely come back to the kids club because it's cool”.
- “It thought it was great, there were no problems, I just loved it, thank you”.
- “You can have great fun at the kids clubs”.
- “I had a great time and loved all the workers”.

3.4.4 The overall attendance at Kids Clubs over the last three years is displayed below:-

YEAR	2002	2001	2000
Total Kids Clubs Attendance	6067	4463	5496

The overall attendance has increased on last year. This can be attributed to a new range of ideas being introduced into the training programme and the implementation of these new activities into the Kids Clubs. Other reasons for the increase include a wider range of choice such as specialist arts and sports workshops. The introduction of the HIF funded RAD card (Recreation Activity Discount) has also had an impact on the attendance figures in the North of East Ayrshire.

3.5 Fun Fitness Sessions were run in various venues throughout East Ayrshire These innovative activities were as follows:-

- 13 Active Kids Challenges (8-12 years)

3.5.1 The overall Attendance's over the last two years are displayed below. Whilst there is a slight decrease on last year this activity was extremely well received by participants

Year	2002	2001
Total Fun Fitness Attendance	151	166

3.5.2 Questionnaires focused upon assessing the levels of children's fitness and outputs showed that the sessions resulted in children becoming more physically active in a fun environment.

3.6 The Recreation Section provided a wide range of sports coaching courses throughout East Ayrshire. These included:-

- 3 Golf Courses
- 4 Tennis Courses
- 4 Girls Football Courses
- 25 general Football Courses
- 6 Curling Courses
- 1 Basketball course

3.6.1 Attendance's for Sports Coaching are as follows:-

YEAR	2002	2001	2000
Total Attendance's at Sport Courses	518	401	170

3.6.2 Sports attendances have increased incrementally over the three-year period. This can be attributed to the range of joint funded partnership posts and the consistently high quality core Sports Development programme within Recreation Services.

3.6.3 61 questionnaires were returned and a summary of the results are as follows:-

- 93% of children thought that the Coaches were good or excellent in terms of enthusiasm, knowledge and teaching new skills
- 79% of children gave the session an excellent enjoyment rating

3.7 Building upon the success of previous years the Recreation Section ran the following specialist arts workshops: -

- 5 Wizardry Arts Workshops
- 5 Medieval Arts Workshops
- 3 Wannabe Popstars

3.7.1 Attendance figures were as follows:-

YEAR			2000	2001	2000
Total Attendance	Specialist	Workshop	166	219	127

3.7.2 Although the workshops still remain popular, there was a decrease in this year's attendance. This could be attributed to the increase in Sports Development and Kids Club provision offering more choice.

3.7.3 76 questionnaires were returned detailing the following results:-

- 60% of children rated the instructors as good or excellent in terms of enthusiasm, knowledge and teaching new skills.
- 68% of children gave the sessions a good or excellent enjoyment rating.

3.8 The Museums, Arts and Theatre Section although undergoing refurbishment during the summer months contributed to the Summer Programme by providing the community with the opportunity to attend exhibitions on the following:-

3.8.1 The SCHMUCK International Contemporary Jewellery Exhibition ran from 4th June – 27th July at the Dick Institute. Sixty three of the worlds most outstanding and pioneering jewellers from all over the world revealed their creations.

3.8.2 "My World" by the Ayrshire born artist/photographer Charles Craig included a collection of paintings which were inspired by the scenery of Scotland. The exhibition also included a selection of stunning photographs taken during a recent exhibition to the Himalayas in Nepal.

3.8.3 The Burns House Museum in Mauchline held an exhibition celebrating the most creative period in the life of Scotland's National poet Robert Burns. Exhibits included two manuscripts of satirical poems, the "Holy Fair" and "Holy Willie's Prayer" and rare Kilmarnock edition of Burn's first collection "Poems chiefly in the Scottish dialect"

3.9 The Library and information Service ran a wide range of initiatives aimed at children and the wider East Ayrshire community during the summer months.

3.9.1 The "Reading Planet" is a UK wide initiative which has been made available in 22 Libraries and 2 mobile Libraries throughout East Ayrshire. The aim of the initiative is to encourage children to read at least six books during the summer months. For every book read the children received free promotional material and a certificate. There was a prize draw with a gift token for each lucky winner at every community Library. Approximately 600 children took part in total.

3.9.2 350 children attended storytelling and craft activities throughout the summer. The banners and posters made were displayed at Libraries throughout East Ayrshire. One Community Librarian commented "the banners and posters really brightened up the Library."

3.10 The Countryside Ranger Service ran 50 events aimed at children and families from March to September. Some of these events included Family fun days, Woodland games, Tracks and Trails and Treasure hunts. The total attendance for this period was 6696.

4. PUBLICITY/PROMOTION

4.1 Extensive research was carried out in terms of the publicity and promotion of the Summer Programme. A new range of advertising techniques were piloted or introduced this year to compliment existing approaches. These techniques included:-

- Organised visits to every school in East Ayrshire to promote the Summer Programme
- Press releases in local sections of newspapers
- Advert on local radio
- Free fliers
- Poster in shops/libraries/community centres

4.1.1 These techniques were used in conjunction with the distribution of the Summer Activity Guide to all children in East Ayrshire via schools. In addition the SIP funded RICK card scheme (Recreation Inclusion Card for Kids) was in operation in the South of East Ayrshire. The HIF funded RAD card scheme (Recreation Activity Discount) was also introduced this year and operated in the North of East Ayrshire.

4.1.2 Evaluation results showed that 81% of children attending activities received a summer activity guide at school. This method and the introduction of the promotional School visits remain the most effective in terms of raising awareness about the programme. In addition over 60% of respondents used a RICK/RAD card and this is particularly encouraging for the SIP and Health Board funded Recreation Partnership Project which operates the scheme.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Summer Programme is funded from existing Recreation Development Budgets, specific section budgets and a cocktail of external funding.

6. LEGAL/AUTHORITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Not applicable

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Summer Programme is delivered within the framework of the Leisure Strategy, the Council Plan, the Community Services Department Action Plan, the Children's Service Plan and in line with key social inclusion objectives. In addition the programme is underpinned by core health priorities in relation to improving the mental health and physical well being of local children.

8. CONCLUSIONS

8.1 The Summer Programme continues to be a success with children receiving a great deal of choice and a range of high quality opportunities.

- 8.1.1 The distribution of the Summer Activity Guide to schools alongside the promotional School visits continues to be the most effective form of publicity.
- 8.1.2 Discount/membership cards, such as RICK/RAD, tend to be the best incentive to attend clubs.
- 8.1.3 The extensive range of evaluation feedback will be utilised proactively in order to continuously improve the Summer Programme.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 It is recommended that committee note the contents of this report.

William Stafford
Director of Community Services

25th October 2002

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1. Summer Activity Guide 2002
- 2. Evaluation Results, 1998 – 2002
- 3. “About You” children Questionnaire booklet

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers listed above should telephone Tammy Devlin, Play Development & Grants Manager, Tel No. 01563 576706. E-mail – tammy.devlin@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

AGENDA