

Equality Impact Assessment

**Summer Offer for Children
and Young People –
‘Get Into Summer’**

August 2021



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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Equality Impact Assessment Record

Title of policy/ practice/ strategy/ legislation etc:
Summer Offer for Children and Young People -'Get Into Summer' Programme
Minister:
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills Minister for Children and Young People
Lead official:
Julie Humphreys
Officials involved in the EQIA:
Covid Recovery for Children and Young People Unit – Carolyn Wilson Francois Roos Becky Robb
Directorate, Division, Team:
DG Education and Justice, Directorate for Children and Families, Covid Recovery for Children and Young People Unit
Is this new policy or revision to an existing policy?
New initiative

Screening

Policy Aim

Background

Children and Young People in Scotland have experienced significant disruption to almost every aspect of their lives as a result of Covid-19. The restrictions which were put in place to respond to and manage the prevalence and impact of Covid-19 were primarily concerned with protecting the right to life, but evidence¹ suggests that these decisions have also had detrimental physical and mental health effects for children and young people, particularly in terms of social connection and education.

¹ COVID-19: Children, young people and families October 2020 Evidence Summary [COVID-19: Children, young people and families October 2020 Evidence Summary \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/evidence-summary-2020-10-10/pages/10-children-young-people-and-families.aspx)

It was the unanimous view of the cross-agency Covid Education Recovery Group (CERG) that a focus on wellbeing, play and reconnection during the summer, rather than a 'generic' learning catch up programme was the best approach. Improved wellbeing and mental health will ultimately support children and young people to be successful learners; confident individuals; responsible citizens and effective contributors in the autumn and beyond. The Summer Offer is therefore a component of the overall Education Recovery work. In addition, the Summer Offer has been developed to ensure that a rights-based, stigma-free approach is at the centre.

Addressing Inequalities and Improving Outcomes

Existing evidence suggest that access to social interaction, play and activity, particularly outdoors, delivers benefits for children and young people and improves their mental and physical health. A range of interventions, pilot projects, and evaluation over the past three years have provided a body of evidence of good practice and learning on the potential for holiday programmes to help deliver a range of improved outcomes for children and families using a broad range of partners.

As noted, evidence² shows that Covid-19 has had a disproportionate adverse impact on certain groups such as children and young people experiencing poverty, disabled children, shielding or clinically vulnerable children and care experienced children and young people. A comprehensive evidence base regarding such impacts is included in the Equity Audit Report³ published by the Scottish Government in January 2021 and reports⁴ published by the Scottish Youth Parliament, Youthlink Scotland and Young Scot in April and May 2020 provide further specific evidence of these impacts on demographics of young people including by age, gender, education/employment status, ethnicity, those living in rural and urban areas, and in areas of multiple deprivation.

For many children and young people inequalities mean that access to food, activities and the support they need beyond formal education from early years, school or tertiary education or training depending on their age and stage which may help them rebuild, remain out of reach.

Education Recovery

Children, young people, their parents, carers, teachers and those who work within communities to support them report that what children and young people want, above all, is to reconnect with their peers and rebuild their

² COVID-19: Children, young people and families October 2020 Evidence Summary [COVID-19: Children, young people and families October 2020 Evidence Summary \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/equity-audit-deepening-understanding-impact-covid-19-school-building-closures-children-socio-economically-disadvantaged-backgrounds-setting-clear-areas-focus-accelerating-recovery/)

³ Coronavirus (COVID-19): impact of school building closures - equity audit: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/equity-audit-deepening-understanding-impact-covid-19-school-building-closures-children-socio-economically-disadvantaged-backgrounds-setting-clear-areas-focus-accelerating-recovery/>

⁴ Lockdown Lowdown: [LockdownLowdown - Breakdown of Key Findings - Young Scot Corporate](#)

'offline' life through socialising and engaging in activities and hobbies. For most, online learning has continued to mean their education has progressed, albeit in a different way than it would have done in their formal learning environment. The ongoing public discourse on 'lost learning' and a 'lost generation' has further compounded the impact of Covid-19 amongst children and young people, therefore contributing to anxiety levels and potentially causing some to disengage further from education and learning.

The Scottish Government has worked with local authorities and the education sector to mitigate the worst of the impacts – for example through ensuring free school meals continued during the period of school closures and over the holidays (supported by over £50m funding) and through provision of around 70,000 devices and 14,000 connectivity packages to learners across Scotland.

In total, Scotland's Education recovery programme to date has included over £400m investment over 2020/21 and 2021/22. Reports by the Nuffield daFoundation in February 2021⁵ found that, at that time, this was the highest such investment per pupil within the UK.

Scotland's Covid-19 Education Recovery Group (CERG)⁶ unanimously advised that in order to reduce inequalities for children and young people the Scottish Government's funding for Summer 2021 should focus on wellbeing, play and reconnection in the summer rather than focus on universal provision which focused on 'catch up' programmes for literacy and numeracy. CERG also advised on the need for a focus on supporting and trusting teachers to get it right for every child and young person so that they are able to be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors, assessing each individual's needs on their return to on-site learning and plan next steps, rather than focus on the deficit model of 'catch up'.

Summer Offer for Children and Young People – 'Get Into Summer'

On 24 March 2021⁷ Scotland's First Minister and Deputy First Minister announced the £20 million Summer Offer for Children and Young People which would focus on the wellbeing of children and young people during the 2021 summer holidays which would support existing provision of activities for children and young people and their families over the summer, ensuring they are provided with opportunities to socialise, play and reconnect within their local communities and environments.

The Summer Offer has sought to specifically target those children and young people most impacted by Covid-19, including:

⁵ Education Reopening and Catch-up support across the UK:

[Education-reopening-and-catch-up-across-the-UK.pdf \(kinstacdn.com\)](#)

⁶ COVID-19 Education Recovery Group: <https://www.gov.scot/groups/covid-19-education-recovery-group/>

⁷ [Enhanced summer offer for all children - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

- children from low income households;
- children from those priority family groups identified in the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan: larger families; families with a disabled child or adult; young mothers; families with children under one; and minority ethnic families;
- children from families who have been shielding during the pandemic and whose ability to engage in activities and socialise will have been very limited;
- children with a disability or additional support need;
- care experienced children and young people;
- young carers;
- children in need of protection;
- children supported by a child's plan and
- children who have undergone significant transitions during lockdown or will experience them this year, including starting in ELC, starting primary school, moving to secondary school and leaving school.

The objectives of the Summer Offer are to:

- address the negative impacts on children and young people associated with extended periods of isolation and lack of participation in normal activities;
- have children and young people's rights, voice and needs at its heart;
- to seek to provide opportunities to connect and socialise while accessing a range of activities combined with broader supports where needed;
- a focus on improving children's health and mental wellbeing;
- to improve outcomes for children who have been disproportionately affected by providing targeted support to children from low income households and those priority groups as identified in the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan⁸;
- offer additional opportunities for all children (across all ages) to engage in a range of play opportunities and activities within their local communities, based on what they tell us is important to them and
- involve a coalition of national partner organisations and local authorities.

The intended outcomes of the Summer Offer are to:

- help restore the wellbeing of all children and young people through opportunities to reconnect; play; be active; have fun and an opportunity to engage;
- ensure that all activity provided by partners support the overarching aims;
- ensure that the Summer Offer be effectively monitored and evaluated;

⁸ Every child, every chance: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2018-2022:
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/child-chance-tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-2018-22/>

- that the views of children and young people directly inform and be evident in delivery and
- ensure that the Summer Offer is accessible to all children, young people and their families, particularly the target groups.

Who will it affect?

The Summer Offer for Children and Young People, 'Get into Summer', intends to offer opportunities to all Scotland's children and young people, with a specific focus on supporting children and young people most likely to be experiencing continued disadvantage and who will therefore have been particularly adversely affected by the pandemic as detailed above. The age range this support is intended to reach is 0 – 25, recognising that support for care leavers extends beyond 18. Several groups of children and young people have particular wellbeing needs which require targeted support.

Whilst the Programme has a specific focus on improved outcomes for children and young people, including their mental health and wellbeing, it is anticipated that this will have a positive impact on those supporting the children and young people for example families, parents, carers or youth workers.

The Scottish Government published guidance⁹ on 7 May 2021 to support local authorities to deliver the Summer Offer and to enhance activities for children, young people and families in the 2021 school summer holidays.

The key areas for specific focus are:

- reaching children and young people most likely to be experiencing continued disadvantage and who will therefore have been particularly adversely affected by the pandemic;
- reaching children and young people in the age range 0 – 25, recognising that support for care leavers extends beyond 18;
- reaching groups of children and young people who have particular wellbeing needs which require targeted support as set out on pages 3 and 4 of this EQIA and
- reaching children and young people in remote / rural areas, where the range of existing provision could be more limited and geographic barriers to access services may be considerable.

Approach and desired outcomes

The guidance published for local authorities and issued to national partners specified that delivery should have a strong focus on **equity**, to ensure activities should be **accessible** to those children and young people targeted by the programme and that **barriers** to participation such as transport should be **mitigated** as far as possible.

⁹ Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on summer activities for children and young people: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-summer-activities-for-children-and-young-people/>

The guidance also specified that consideration be given to **how to meet wider needs** including through the integration of food, childcare, financial inclusion, family support and referral on to wider services where needed. Principles of **dignity and human rights** should be applied, promoting non-stigmatising provision of services and supports. Links to resources¹⁰ were made available to help integrate dignified food provision.

In developing this programme the Scottish Government is mindful of the three needs of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. We are also mindful that the equality duty is not just about negating or mitigating negative impacts, as we also have a positive duty to promote equality.

What might prevent the desired outcomes being achieved?

The Covid-19 pandemic mitigations

The prevalence of Covid-19 have remained an ongoing challenge leading up to, and during the school holiday 2021 period with potential impacts on the provision of the activities within the period for which funding is available. Local Authorities and national partners were provided with accompanying advice and guidance to support the Programme's delivery in this context and more generally. This included:

- public health advice and resources;
- guidance for organised unregulated activities for children and young people under 18;
- guidance for regulated childcare settings;
- physical distancing and protection level advice;
- guidance on supporting communities safely;
- food standards and safety advice and
- a range of case studies and reports on how to best support children's emotional recovery from the pandemic and how to promote wellbeing this summer.

Equity of access

The principles on which the funding was provided included:

- co-creation with children, young people, and families with their rights and wellbeing at its heart as set out in the UNCRC and Getting it Right for Every Child;
- building on, and enhancing, existing services, assets and knowledge of what works and

¹⁰ <https://www.nourishscotland.org/projects/dignity/>

- partnership working and coordination across existing partnerships through the Children's Services Partnerships.

The funding for local authorities was to provide them with a route to enhance the provision that was already in place and each local authority was asked to route this through their local Children's Services Strategic Partnerships. How this was achieved was up to local authorities to consider, based on their knowledge and expertise of their local areas, recognising the extent of funding available and to complement a range of activity already underway across local authorities to support education recovery. However we have worked with partners to ensure that opportunities are accessible, specifically for targeted groups.

Ongoing monitoring

Ongoing monitoring and engagement with local authorities and national partners is taking place regularly to ensure that, where possible, any challenges that may emerge are identified and mitigated collectively as appropriate.

Stage 1: Framing

Results of framing exercise

The Covid-19 Education Recovery Group (CERG) brings together decision makers and key influencers to ensure that the delivery of childcare, early learning and education maintains a strong focus on excellence and equity for all, within the necessary constraints of the Covid-19 response. It provides leadership and advice to ministers and local government leaders in developing the strategic approach to the response and recovery of the Early Learning and Childcare and education system.

The impact of Covid-19 on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing, their recovery from the pandemic and its associated restrictions, as well as the disproportionate effect it has on different groups, had been part of CERG's considerations throughout the pandemic. It had a particular focus at the Group's considerations at meetings on 28 January 2021 and again on 11 March 2021, when CERG advised that a key focus needed to be on prioritising children's wellbeing and supporting young people to achieve a positive mindset as they re-enter the classroom so they can make the most of their in school time when returning to the new school year.

With this in mind and considering the disproportionate adverse impacts on certain groups, as noted in the overview section of this assessment document, the Scottish Government apportioned its Summer Offer for Children and Young People funding¹¹ as follows:

- Support for local authorities in the form of a targeted offer for the targeted provision of holiday activities, coordinated by Children's Services Planning Partnerships to ensure a joined-up approach working with existing public and third sector services. The aim is to help improve the wellbeing of children and young people over the summer period, targeted at low income families, children and young people particularly adversely affected by the impacts of COVID and
- Support to a consortium of national organisations for the provision of a universal offer for all children and young people within their communities.

Alongside the funding provision, associated guidance was published¹² for local authorities enforcing the requirement for a rights-based approach in their consideration for as wide a reach possible in their targeted provision. Similar guidance was issued to national organisations for their consideration and planning for as a wide a reach possible in their universal offer.

Equality and reach was again considered in the Scottish Government's follow-up delivery discussions, which included:

¹¹ <https://www.gov.scot/news/get-into-summer/>

¹² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-summer-activities-for-children-and-young-people/>

- Individual sessions with each of the 32 local authorities;
- Roundtable discussions with local authorities on 15 and 24 June 2021
- Roundtable discussions with national partners on 8 and 9 June 2021.

Extent/Level of EQIA required

Several data sources are available relating to the impact of Covid-19 on children and young people. This is set out at stage 2.

Stage 2: Data and evidence gathering, involvement and consultation

A variety of information sources were used in compiling this EQIA. Key findings are noted below and reinforce the aims and objectives of the Summer Offer for Children and Young People.

In **June 2020**¹³ there were:

- 1,026,922 children (under 18 years old) in Scotland
- Of these, 207,091 children were aged 0-3 years and 499,162 children were aged 0-8 years
- There were 527,849 young people aged 18-25

A CEYRIS 1 survey¹⁴ of parents of **2 – 7 year olds** carried out in **June/July 2020** found that the youngest children also displayed a decline in mental wellbeing during the initial lockdown period:

- **(Protected characteristic – Age)**
 - **Mental wellbeing** – Almost half (46%) of 2-3 year olds and over a third (36%) of 4-7 year olds had a slightly raised, high, or very high Strength and Difficulty Score, indicating the presence of behavioural or emotional difficulties. This is higher than in a nationally representative survey completed just before lockdown (however, given that this was not a representative survey such comparisons should be interpreted cautiously).
 - **Behaviour** – Almost half (47%) of parents said that their child's behaviour was worse than before lockdown, 45% said that it was the same and 8% said it was better.
 - **Mood** – Almost half (47%) of parents said that their child's mood was worse than before lockdown, 45% said that it was the same and 8% said it was better.
 - **Concentration** – Four in ten parents (40%) said that their child's ability to concentrate was worse than before lockdown, around half (53%) said it was the same and 6% said it was better.
 - Children from low income and lone parent households, and children affected by disability had worse outcomes across all these measures.
- **(Protected characteristic – Disability)**
 - Children with a long-term health condition were less likely to receive a score of 'close to average' on SDQ. The biggest differences were hyperactivity and peer problems, where more children with a health condition required additional support.
 - The decline during lockdown in relation to children's behaviour and life was more severe for children with a long-term health condition. The biggest differences were in relation to sleeping and the ability to concentrate.
 - Parents of children with a long-term health condition were more likely to fare poorly in terms of their own mental health and wellbeing during lockdown than parents whose child did not have a long-term health condition.
 - A greater proportion of parents with a child with a long-term health condition were unable to access a health visitor/family nurse or a social worker when they

¹³ <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-estimates/mid-year-population-estimates>

¹⁴ <https://www.publichealthscotland.scot/publications/covid-19-early-years-resilience-and-impact-survey-ceyris-1/>

needed them during lockdown than parents with a child with no long-term health condition.

A Children's Parliament survey¹⁵ of **8 - 14 year olds** carried out over **April, May and June 2020** found that:

- **(Protected characteristic – Age)**
 - Over a quarter (26-28%) of young people often felt lonely.
 - Across the three months, around a third of respondents indicated that there were lots of things to worry about, while more than half expressed a general worry about the future. Around a quarter reported being worried about five or more things.
 - Other measures showed a fall in mental wellbeing between April and June. In June, 59% felt in a positive mood, compared with 65% in April, and 67% felt resilient, compared with 72% in April.
 - Girls, particularly older girls, had consistently worse mental wellbeing outcomes. Mental wellbeing also declined with age.

The Lockdown Lowdown 1 survey¹⁶ of **11 - 25 year olds** carried out in **April 2020** found that:

- **(Protected characteristic – Age)**
 - 4 in 10 were concerned about their mental wellbeing. Half were concerned about the wellbeing of others. Mental wellbeing was the topic young people were most concerned about, alongside the school closures, exams and coursework.
 - In qualitative research carried out in October/November young people discussed that the initial lockdown had made existing mental health concerns more pronounced, due to lack of time with friends and increased social media use.
 - Qualitative research on experiences of vulnerable children, young people, and parents during the Covid-19 pandemic (unpublished, link to follow) found almost all respondents reported reduced mental wellbeing during the initial lockdown.

The CEYRIS 2 survey¹⁷ of parents of **2 – 7 year olds** carried out in **November and December 2020** found that:

- **(Protected characteristic – Age)**
 - **Mental wellbeing** – Almost half (39%) of 2-3 year olds and over a third (31%) of 4-7 year olds had a slightly raised, high, or very high Strength and Difficulty Score, indicating the presence of behavioural or emotional difficulties. This is slightly lower than during the initial lockdown but remains higher than in a nationally representative survey completed just before lockdown (however, given that this was not a representative survey such comparisons should be interpreted cautiously).
 - **Behaviour** – Half (50%) of parents said that their child's behaviour was the same as during the initial lockdown, three in ten (29%) felt that it had improved, and two in ten (20%) felt that it had got worse.

¹⁵ https://www.childrensparliament.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/How-are-you-doing_Survey_Final.pdf

¹⁶ <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5cee5bd0687a1500015b5a9f/t/5ea06839dc787011f0394598/1587570754323/LockdownLowdown+Topline+Results.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://www.publichealthscotland.scot/media/2997/ceyris-findings-from-round-2-full-report-march2021-english.pdf>

- **Mood** – Just under half (46%) of parents said that their child’s mood was the same as during the initial lockdown, just over a third (33%) felt that it had improved, while a fifth (21%) felt that it had got worse.
- **Concentration** – The majority of parents (61%) said that their child’s ability to concentrate was about the same as during the initial lockdown, 27% said it was better, and 12% said it was worse.

The Children’s Parliament survey¹⁸ of **8 - 14 year olds** carried out in **September 2020** found that:

- **(Protected characteristic – Age)**
 - Respondents generally felt cheerful and in a good mood (64%); the largest increase in positive responses came from 12 to 14 year olds.
 - There were significant improvements in children reporting that they often felt lonely (from 26% to 20%). This was particularly so for the group of children who had reported highest levels of loneliness during lockdown 1, i.e. girls aged 12 to 14 (from 34% to 20%).
 - Rates of worry across a range of topics including school work and ‘the future’ remained constant and worry about child and family health, money problems and exams increased post lockdown. Girls aged 12 to 14 were consistently most likely to agree that there are lots of things worry about in their lives, whilst children aged 8 to 11 were more likely to report worrying about multiple areas than in previous surveys.
 - There was a decline in respondents saying they felt resilient post lockdown, particularly for older girls and 8 to 11 year olds.
- **(Protected characteristic – Sex / Gender)**
 - girls were less likely to feel resilient at both ages 8 to 11 (58%) and 12 to 14 (54%) than boys (76% 8 to 11; 69% 12 to 14%).

The Teen Covid Life 2 survey¹⁹ of **12 - 18 year olds** carried out in **August to October 2020** found that:

- **(Protected characteristic – Age)**
 - A fifth (20%) of young people reported feeling lonely most or all of the time – a smaller proportion of young people than during lockdown 1 (29%), but still substantially higher than pre-lockdown levels (9%). Girls were more likely to say that they felt lonely than boys.
 - 53% of respondents reported low mood as measured by the World Health Organization Well-Being Index (WHO-5), an improvement from the previous survey, where 58% reported low mood. Older respondents and girls were more likely to report low mood.
- **(Protected characteristic – Sex / Gender)**
 - a higher percentage of female participants (56% for those aged 12 - 14, 64% for those aged 15 - 18) reported low mood compared with male participants (33% for those aged 12 - 14, 46% for those aged 15 - 18).

¹⁸ https://www.childrensparliament.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/How-are-you-doing_Survey_Final.pdf

¹⁹ https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/2021-02-01_teencovidlife2_general_report_v1.pdf

The Lockdown Lowdown 2 survey²⁰ of **11 - 25 year olds** carried out in **September to November 2020** found that:

- **(Protected characteristic – Age)**
 - Overall, wellbeing outcomes worsened with age
 - Only 4 in 10 respondents aged 11-25 said that they felt good about their mental health and wellbeing.
 - This was very strongly patterned by age, with 69% of young people aged 11 to 13 agreeing, compared with 32% of those aged 16 to 18, and 20% of those aged over 18. Young people in the most deprived areas were least likely to agree.
 - The survey also found significant anxiety – about Covid-19 itself, exam pressure and employment prospects.
- **(Protected characteristic – Disability)**
 - that young people with a disability or long term illness had worse outcomes than other groups across most questions.
 - This included lower self-assessed physical and mental wellbeing; lower satisfaction with educational arrangements; lower percentages reporting good relationships with family and friends; lower levels of optimism about both current and future employment; and higher levels of concern about catching and transmitting Covid-19.
- **(Protected characteristic – Race / Ethnicity)**
 - Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) respondents were less likely to feel good about their physical health (52% agreed they felt good) than white respondents (60%), and less likely to feel that their educational establishment had reopened in a safe way (51% compared with 64%).
- **(Protected characteristic – Sex / Gender)**
 - male respondents were substantially more likely to agree that they felt good about their mental health & wellbeing (59%) than female respondents (34%).

In qualitative survey answers to the Lockdown Lowdown 2 survey²¹ of **11 – 25 year olds** carried out in **September to November 2020** and in associated focus groups carried out in October and November 2020, many young people discussed the mental wellbeing benefits of being able to meet up with their friends again and not being confined to their homes.

In qualitative research on experiences of vulnerable children, young people, and parents during the Covid-19 pandemic (unpublished, link to follow) most respondents reported improvements in their mental wellbeing once restrictions eased over the summer and autumn of 2020, although many continued to experience low mental wellbeing.

The 'In isolation instead of school' (INISS) survey²² and focus group research with **14 – 20 year olds** carried between **August and September 2020** found that:

²⁰ <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/5678/dec2020-lockdowlowdown-v2-survey-final.pdf>

²¹ <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/5678/dec2020-lockdowlowdown-v2-survey-final.pdf>

²² <https://www.cso.scot.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/COVIDI2016-1.pdf>

- **(Protected characteristic – Age)**

- 9% of young people responding to the survey met ‘clinical threshold’ levels for depression, 7% for anxiety, and 28% were categorised as having elevated avoidance and intrusive thoughts and behaviours in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Between a third and two fifths of all young people surveyed, reported that school closure had negative impacts on their mental health and wellbeing: 34% reported that feelings of anxiety became much or a bit worse; 44% reported that feelings of depression became much or a bit worse since the start of the pandemic.
- Returning to school generally had a positive impact on wellbeing, though this was coupled with anxiety about Covid-19 related risks.
- Qualitative findings included mixed feelings around the cancellation of examinations in 2020, some stress related to learning at home, difficulty for some in maintaining motivation to learn, the increased and supportive role of social media, and some difficulty in accessing support from school during the first lockdown.

Focus groups with parents from lower occupational groups conducted in **January 2021** (unpublished) found that:

- For both parents and children and young people, mental wellbeing was (at that time) at its lowest since the start of the pandemic.
- Most parents reported low mental wellbeing among their children, and some reported anger, anxiety, depression, boredom and worry in their children.
- Due to the weather, children were staying inside and peer contact was often online only. Older children could be reluctant to spend more time on a screen after being on one all day and some chose not to speak to friends

At the UK level, a Public Health England evidence report²³ on mental health and wellbeing drawing on data from the beginning of the pandemic up to January 2021 found that:

- There is growing indicative evidence that Covid-19 and associated interventions have likely had an adverse effect on the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people, but also that there is increasing evidence that many children and young people are coping well overall and some have reported benefits for their mental health following the reopening of schools.
- Experiences vary by children and young people’s characteristics, with those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, those with existing mental health conditions, those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and those living in low income families more likely to have been negatively affected than other children and young people.

A survey by Family Fund²⁴ carried out during **March and April 2020** found that:

- **(Protective characteristic: Disability)**

- 94% of families said the health and wellbeing of their disabled or seriously ill children had been negatively affected, an increase from 89% in first few weeks of the lockdown.

²³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-mental-health-and-wellbeing-surveillance-report/7-children-and-young-people>

²⁴ <https://www.familyfund.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=0dcfffe-f803-41de-9a4a-ccc8fef282d4>

- 89% said their disabled or seriously ill children's behaviour and emotions were being negatively affected and 82% reported a negative effect on their mental health.
- 65% said their access to formal support services for their child, such as physiotherapy and mental health services, has declined since the Coronavirus outbreak.

The Disabled Children's Partnership²⁵ has published findings of a survey with of disabled children and their families in England conducted in April 2021. It found:

- A high proportion of disabled children and their families were still experiencing severe levels of social isolation despite the easing of restrictions.
 - Over half of families were unable to access therapies vital for their disability and 60% of families were experiencing delays and challenges accessing health service appointments.
 - Disabled children and their families were at risk of developing additional long-term health problems.
- **(Protected characteristic – Race)**
 - A report by Intercultural Youth Scotland²⁶ based on a small survey of 63 BME **15 – 25 year olds** carried out over the summer of 2020 found that more than half of respondents were worried about the disproportionate impacts of Covid-19 on black and people of colour and more than a third of respondents felt uncomfortable with the increased police presence during lockdown. Almost half agreed with the statement that they 'had less opportunities than my white counterparts, and Covid-19 has highlighted this'. 68% of respondents believed that their education was at greater risk than their white counterparts due to Covid-19 disruption.
 - Qualitative research on experiences of vulnerable children, young people, and parents during the Covid-19 pandemic (unpublished, link to follow) includes findings from two young people in gypsy/traveller families **aged 13 and 16 years old**. The research found that:
 - Findings suggest many similar experiences as other young participants, for example around mental health, peer relationships, family tensions and social media.
 - One finding related to this particular group was that neither interviewee attended school prior to the pandemic. One young person described having no form of formal or informal support with learning during the first lockdown. This changed throughout the second lockdown, where she received support through a third sector organisation. She was happy that she had moved from no home learning at all during the first lockdown to supported learning.
 - The young people in gypsy/traveller families understood the necessity of Covid-19 mitigation measures but expressed frustration about the length of these. Throughout the pandemic, the two young people became increasingly bored and were upset that the pandemic impacted their plans for the future.

A report²⁷ on mental wellbeing, bullying and prejudice by Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) includes some findings on LBGTQ+ **13 – 24 year olds**, in particular their experience of online bullying and prejudice. The report found that:

²⁵ <https://disabledchildrenspartnership.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/No-End-in-Sight.pdf>

²⁶ <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b9aaa1c0dbda3921bdda433/t/5f74cd3e560f724947cdd939/1601490289574/COVID+IN+COLOUR+FINAL+UPLOAD+VERSION.pdf>

²⁷ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/covid-19-children-young-people-families-december-2020-evidence-summary/pages/4/>

- **(Protected characteristic – Sexual orientation)**
 - LGBT+ respondents (approximately 350 young people) were more likely to experience online bullying during the national lockdown than their heterosexual young people (36% compared with 14%). 76% of LGBT+ respondents reported that the online bullying they have seen and/or experienced during the lockdown period was happening more than usual (compared with 49% of heterosexual respondents). 72% of LGBT+ respondents had seen more prejudice online during lockdown (compared with 48% of heterosexual respondents), and they reported seeing homophobia at more than double the rate of heterosexual young people.
 - LGBT+ respondents reported higher rates of negative mental wellbeing as a result of not being in school/further education compared with heterosexual young people (53% compared with 34%).
 - LGBT+ respondents reported lower emotional wellbeing before and during lockdown compared with heterosexual respondents. In this survey, 26% of LGBT+ respondents rated their emotional wellbeing as negative before lockdown (compared with 14% of heterosexual respondents) and this rose to 69% during lockdown (compared to 40% with heterosexual respondents).
 - LGBT+ respondents were more than twice as likely to have used or tried to access online support services during lockdown when compared to heterosexual respondents (32% compared with 14%).

In addition to the above data sources, the Scottish Government commissioned direct engagement session with children and young people²⁸²⁹ ³⁰to understand the impact of COVID-19, inform decision-making, and shape the guidance for delivery of summer 2021 activity programmes. Key messages include:

- participants were keen for a range of opportunities to be available, not just formal clubs and camps and for consideration to be given to how access to local and national opportunities could be supported through help with transport costs, entrance fees and equipment hire for example.
- Participants expressed the importance of informal, unstructured play and for young people to feel that they are welcome in public spaces. The Scottish Government should consider how its key messaging can support children and young people to get outdoors, have fun with their friends and encourage adults to view this positively.
- The impact to children and young people’s mental health was a key concern.
- Challenges faced during Covid restrictions include education; employment; digital access; extracurricular opportunities; the impact of friends and family; inequalities; the impact of news; and isolation, mental health and wellbeing.
- The cost of activities must be free or discounted to ensure equal access no matter background or experiences, as well as clear and easy to understand information about how to access this.
- Activities and spaces must be available for all young people no matter their gender, race, or sexuality.

²⁸ [#YSHive Jam: Exploration of COVID-19 Recovery - Young Scot Corporate](#)

²⁹ Commission from Children in Scotland (in draft)

³⁰ Commission from Starcatchers (in draft)

Protected characteristics not relevant for the purposes of the equality considerations for the The Summer Offer for Children and Young People, 'Get into Summer' Programme includes:

- **Pregnancy and maternity**
- **Gender reassignment**
- **Religion or belief**
- **Marriage and civil partnership**

Stage 3: Assessing the impacts and identifying opportunities to promote equality

Having considered the data and evidence you have gathered, this section requires you to consider the potential impacts – negative and positive – that your policy might have on each of the protected characteristics. It is important to remember the duty is also a positive one – that we must explore whether the policy offers the opportunity to promote equality and/or foster good relations.

Do you think that the policy impacts on people because of their age?

Age	Positive	Negative	None	Reasons for your decision
Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	X			<p>Delivery partners have a specific focus on target groups and delivering activity in a non-stigmatising format.</p> <p>The guidance published for local authorities and issued to national organisation partners specified that delivery should have a strong focus on equity, to ensure activities should be accessible to those children and young people targeted by the programme and that barriers to participation such as transport should be mitigated as far as possible. Activities are being provided in such a way as to meet needs such as food, childcare, financial inclusion, family support and referral on to wider services where needed in a wider package without stigmatising children and families. For example, links to resources³¹ were made available to help integrate dignified food provision.</p> <p>Opportunities to participate in physical and digital activity are being offered equally for children and young people up to the age of 25 and their families.</p>
Advancing equality of opportunity	X			All children have been encouraged to participate.

³¹ <https://www.nourishscotland.org/projects/dignity/>

Promoting good relations among and between different age groups	X			Participation has been encouraged with a range of children and young people of different ages. Some activities also invite the participation of parents, carers, kinship carers and wider families.
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Do you think that the policy impacts disabled people?

Disability	Positive	Negative	None	Reasons for your decision
Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	X			Delivery partners are encouraged through guidance to offer targeted provision for disabled children or children with additional support needs.
Advancing equality of opportunity	X			Local authorities are delivering targeted provision for children with additional support needs through professional community level networks. In many community settings the offered activity includes participation by disabled and non-disabled children and young people.
Promoting good relations among and between disabled and non-disabled people	X			As above, in many community settings the offered activity includes participation from disabled and non-disabled children and young people which should help promote good relations.

Do you think that the policy impacts on men and women in different ways?

Sex	Positive	Negative	None	Reasons for your decision
Eliminating unlawful discrimination	x			<p>Summer holiday activity is offered in all local authorities to all children and young people regardless of sex, offering equal access to the Programme.</p> <p>In some local authority settings, children have communicated their preference for 'girls-only' sporting activities, which has been accommodated equally in addition to similar sporting activity open to all sexes.</p>

Advancing equality of opportunity	X			Local authorities are delivering the offered activity for children and young people regardless of sex.
Promoting good relations between men and women	X			Activities are being provided for children and young people regardless of sex and by doing so this may help promote good relations.

Do you think that the policy impacts on women because of pregnancy and maternity?

Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive	Negative	None	Reasons for your decision
Eliminating unlawful discrimination				n/a
Advancing equality of opportunity				n/a
Promoting good relations				n/a

Do you think your policy impacts on people proposing to undergo, undergoing, or who have undergone a process for the purpose of reassigning their sex? (NB: the Equality Act 2010 uses the term 'transsexual people' but 'trans people' is more commonly used)

Gender reassignment	Positive	Negative	None	Reasons for your decision
Eliminating unlawful discrimination	X			Summer holiday activity is offered in all local authorities to all children and young people regardless of gender identity, offering equal access to the Programme.
Advancing equality of opportunity	X			As above.
Promoting good relations	X			Activities are being provided for children and young people regardless of gender identity and by doing so this may help promote good relations.

Do you think that the policy impacts on people because of their sexual orientation?

Sexual orientation	Positive	Negative	None	Reasons for your decision
Eliminating unlawful discrimination				n/a
Advancing equality of opportunity				n/a
Promoting good relations			x	n/a

Do you think the policy impacts on people on the grounds of their race?

Race	Positive	Negative	None	Reasons for your decision
Eliminating unlawful discrimination	X			<p>Delivery partners have a specific focus on target groups and delivering activity in a non-stigmatising format.</p> <p>The guidance published for local authorities and issued to national organisation partners specified that delivery should have a strong focus on equity, to ensure activities should be accessible to those children and young people targeted by the programme and that barriers to participation such as transport should be mitigated as far as possible. Activities are being provided in such a way as to meet needs such as food, childcare, financial inclusion, family support and referral on to wider services where needed in a wider package without stigmatising children and families.</p>
Advancing equality of opportunity	X			All children have been encouraged to participate to ensure that they have the opportunity to take part.
Promoting good race relations	X			Activities are being provided for children and young people regardless of race and by doing so this may help promote good relations.

Do you think the policy impacts on people because of their religion or belief?

Religion or belief	Positive	Negative	None	Reasons for your decision
Eliminating unlawful discrimination	x			<p>Delivery partners have a specific focus on target groups and delivering activity in a non-stigmatising format.</p> <p>The guidance published for local authorities and issued to national organisation partners specified that delivery should have a strong focus on equity, to ensure activities should be accessible to those children and young people</p>

				targeted by the programme and that barriers to participation such as transport should be mitigated as far as possible. Activities are being provided in such a way as to meet needs such as food, childcare, financial inclusion, family support and referral on to wider services where needed in a wider package without stigmatising children and families.
Advancing equality of opportunity	X			All children have been encouraged to participate to ensure that they have the opportunity to take part.
Promoting good relations	X			Activities are being provided for children and young people regardless of faith or belief and by doing so this may help promote good relations.

Do you think the policy impacts on people because of their marriage or civil partnership?

Marriage and Civil Partnership³²	Positive	Negative	None	Reasons for your decision
Eliminating unlawful discrimination			x	n/a

³² In respect of this protected characteristic, a body subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (which includes Scottish Government) only needs to comply with the first need of the duty (to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010) and only in relation to work. This is because the parts of the Act covering services and public functions, premises, education etc. do not apply to that protected characteristic. Equality impact assessment within the Scottish Government does not require assessment against the protected characteristic of Marriage and Civil Partnership unless the policy or practice relates to work, for example HR policies and practices.

Stage 4: Decision making and monitoring

Identifying and establishing any required mitigating action

Have positive or negative impacts been identified for any of the equality groups?	No direct or indirect unlawful discrimination has been identified within this impact assessment. Impacts of the programme's delivery will be continuously monitored. Appropriate action will be taken to eliminate any discriminatory impacts found. Positive impacts identified across many of the protected characteristics, for example, age, disability and race. Activities are offered to all participants and are designed to help ensure that we can advance equality and foster good relations through participation.
Is the policy directly or indirectly discriminatory under the Equality Act 2010 ³³ ?	No
If the policy is indirectly discriminatory, how is it justified under the relevant legislation?	n/a
If not justified, what mitigating action will be undertaken?	n/a

Describing how Equality Impact analysis has shaped the policy making process

The Equality Impact analysis has shown that The Summer Offer for Children and Young People, 'Get into Summer', Programme of activity will have a positive impact on most equality groups where children and young people are involved.

No negative impact is anticipated.

This impact assessment should be read in conjunction with impact assessment developed in parallel; which relates to The Summer Offer for Children and Young People, 'Get into Summer', Programme, including:

- Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) and,
- Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA)

³³ See EQIA – Setting the Scene for further information on the legislation.

Monitoring and Review

The Scottish Government intends to undertake a national evaluation of the Programme once concluded. To inform the evaluation, local authority and national organisation delivery partners will provide light-touch reporting, providing information on delivery and reach of the funding and help inform future policy and practice, as well as equalities monitoring.

Integrating opportunities to learn and adapt throughout project delivery is encouraged and will help inform reporting and next steps.

Stage 5 - Authorisation of EQIA

Please confirm that:

- ◆ This Equality Impact Assessment has informed the development of this policy:

Yes No

- ◆ Opportunities to promote equality in respect of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation have been considered, i.e.:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation;
- Removing or minimising any barriers and/or disadvantages;
- Taking steps which assist with promoting equality and meeting people's different needs;
- Encouraging participation (e.g. in public life)
- Fostering good relations, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

Yes No

- ◆ If the Marriage and Civil Partnership protected characteristic applies to this policy, the Equality Impact Assessment has also assessed against the duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation in respect of this protected characteristic:

Yes No Not applicable

Declaration

I am satisfied with the equality impact assessment that has been undertaken for the Summer Offer for Children and Young People and give my authorisation for the results of this assessment to be published on the Scottish Government's website.

Name: Julie Humphreys

Position: Deputy Director - Covid Recovery for Children and Young People

Authorisation date: 6 August 2021



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