

Holiday Hub Steering Group 9/1/26

Attendance:

Lynne Binnie

Euan McLeod

Luan Sanderson

Agenda Items	Notes	Actions
Review of Criteria	Lynne and Euan developing a paper with options regarding criteria that will be presented to committee in March for decision. See addendums 1 and 2.	Steering Group meeting on 5 th Feb to be dedicated to discussion around criteria. Euan to schedule time and invite parents to contribute and discuss.
Feb Hub Data	Payment reminders were sent to February allocations on 11/12/25, four weeks before deadline. This reminder highlighted that flexibility was available to those that need it, in acknowledgement of financial stresses that some households may experience during the festive period. Cut-off date for Feb payment was 7/1/26. Summary re. spaces below: Allocated: 102 Confirmed/Paid: 66 Declined: 18 Unconfirmed: 18 Parents volunteered to meet Euan in December to discuss re-allocation mechanisms. See Addendum 3. Feedback is sought/welcomed from the wider group. Euan will be guided by these points in attempts to reallocate 2025-26 spaces, with a view of formalising and streamlining this process for future provisions.	Euan to chase up and reallocate declined/unpaid spaces as appropriate. Euan to link with Social Work to identify how many / which participants currently have active section 23 support plans. Euan to continue to work to formalise reallocations methods – schedule and invite parents to review after Easter and include in Application Guidance document.

Outcome of recent Procurement Initiation Notification – Luan Sanderson	Luan provided an update: We received 6x notices of interest in response to the PIN issue. We issued a questionnaire to each organisation that responded, inviting them to provide further details on how they could meet basic requirements of the provision, requesting responses be submitted to us by 07/01/26. We received 2/6 responses to this request: - 1 organisation who have experience of working with children and young people with ASN. - 1 who have experience of working with adults with ASN.	Meetings to be arranged with both organisations to discuss their proposal further. Further updates provided in due course.
Scot Gov Funding – proposal discussion with commissioning	Parents have already expressed a preference this money be spent on creating additional spaces. Officers continue to work to ascertain how this might be possible for the summer hub.	Finance trying to confirm with SG whether funding can be carried forward.
Standing Items		
Communication		Add Comms / Invites to agenda for next meeting.
Action Tracker	Provide update at next meeting	
AOCB	<u>Easter:</u> As Easter Monday public holiday falls on Monday 6th April, the first week of Easter holiday hub will run Tuesday 7th - Friday 10th April. Easter's second week remains unaffected.	Euan to contact and inform all Easter week 1 allocations.
Next Meeting	Thursday 5th Feb at 10am Agenda: Review of criteria AoB: Feb Update Group Comms: Invites	

Addendum 1 – Criteria SWOT analysis

STRENGTHS

- Existing criteria does currently identify those most in need of holiday hubs, who cannot access any alternation provision.
- Existing model takes wide variety of circumstance into account.

WEAKNESSES

- Number of available spaces and providers' staffing capacity hasn't matched the significant surge in demand experienced in recent years.
- Fixed number of spaces available within the provision. Officers are working with activity providers in attempts to create more available spaces but any successes here are minimal.
- Prioritisation of those who meet both primary and secondary criteria when over-subscribed resulted in 120 eligible families that would not be offered any provision at all. Within this group were families known as unable to access any alternative provision due to complexity/profoundness of needs.
- Does not currently include or reference care-experienced children.

OPPORTUNITIES

- The repositioning of the holiday hub provision internally within CEC better enables moderation of applications that utilises the knowledge of officers within Education.
- Any adaptations or improvements made could help to better define the purpose of the provision overall, which has been significant source of disagreement within the parent stakeholder group.

THREATS

- Planned improvements to CEC communications around the holiday hub makes possible increased future demand / number of future applications.
- Parents report feeling exhausted and disheartened from engagements in consultation processes around criteria.
- Frustrations and blame regarding who said what should be included in original version.
- Inconsistent level of knowledge in schools of what holiday hubs are, and their purpose.
- As the existing criteria accommodates a wide range of needs at present, some families currently accessing the provision will miss out due to any changes made.

Addendum 2 – Criteria Option Pros and Cons

Model	Pros	Cons
<u>Status Quo:</u> No weighting applied until prioritisation of those who meet both Primary & Secondary criteria in the event the provision is oversubscribed. Everybody receives four weeks provision choosing from Oct or Feb, one Easter week and two summer weeks.	Staggered support throughout academic year and equal access to available summer weeks. Existing primary criteria already targets families that need the holiday hubs.	Results in 100+ eligible families receiving no provision, many living with complex/profound needs unable to access any alternative/mainstream provision. Contingency to accommodate all eligible families with some form of support means any increase to individual allocation is challenging, as total spaces available are spread wider to equally accommodate any increased demand. Successes to create extra spaces are minimal and insufficient to match demand. External factors such as care inspectorate registration, and providers' capacities and recruitment capabilities also heavily impact increasing provision capacity. Anecdotal knowledge exists that some HH participants do in fact access mainstream services elsewhere.
<u>Refine Status Quo</u> Agree to refined version of existing criteria. For example: - Apply scoring system – attribute a “score” to each aspect of criteria and priority given to those who accrue the most “points”. - Replace “universal credit” with e.g. “imminent risk of family breakdown” in secondary criteria.	Refining instead of redeveloping maintains/grows existing awareness of criteria. Points accrual might fairly identify those most in need incapable of accessing any alternative. Tackling poverty could still be addressed in other areas of provision e.g. within payment structure.	Scoring system perhaps application of assessment within a non-statutory service that, by definition, has no needs-assessment. Replacing UC with e.g., imminent risk of family breakdown, or other, might still leave many spaces to somehow fairly allocate.
<u>Section 23:</u> Prioritise applicants with current section 23 support plans.	Targets provision towards children/families who cannot access any mainstream alternative.	Some children with complex/very complex needs might not currently be supported with section 23 plan.

Available remaining spaces at each hub are then distributed evenly amongst remaining applicants.	Mirrors most commonly approach adopted in other areas.	Waiting list for section 23 assessment currently extensive. Increases pressure on other CEC teams, e.g. social work, as families may push for re-assessment to access provision.
<u>First-Come-First-Served</u> Maintain current criteria but prioritise/allocate on first-come-first-served basis.	Applications are timestamped on submission document when received.	Challenges reported around circulation and timely access of Holiday Hub information. Implemented previously and disliked by parent group. Potential disproportionate take-up of spaces depending on needs.

Addendum 3 - Reallocations

Factors to consider when a space becomes available:

Due to high demand, any spaces declined by families/carers will generally not be re-allocated to other holidays.

When a space is unpaid or declined and becomes available, families/carers forced to decline spaces allocated to them due to emergency and/or exceptional circumstances outwith their control can be prioritised to re-allocate available weeks to.

After this consideration has been made, those who have requested the week in question that has become available with section 23 care plans in place might then be prioritised.

Beyond this, additional weeks will be allocated on a case-by-case basis with consideration to the issue of “new vs known” participants.

Due to staffing capacities, children new to the provision might be more challenging to accommodate earlier within the academic year so could be prioritised for any spaces becoming available later in the year. Repeat attendees within the provision may already be known to providers thus easier to accommodate and offer spaces becoming available in Feb/October, particularly.

To ensure fairness, unless in exceptional or urgent circumstances, no participant at each hub should be offered more than one additional week provision.