

Food and Fun scheme offered to 2,500 pupils in most deprived parts of Wales

The funding, announced today by Education Secretary Kirsty Williams, will go towards the Food and Fun/Bwyd a Hwyl scheme – a school-based programme that sees schools providing breakfast, lunch, education about healthy eating and a range of different activities for pupils to keep learning and keep active.

The £500,000 is part of a match funding arrangement involving local authorities and participating schools.

An estimated 2,500 learners will take part in the scheme which will run in approximately 56 schools, covering 16 local authorities and all 7 Local Health Boards. Approximately 1500 children benefited from the scheme in 2017.

Food and Fun / Bwyd a Hwyl will run in two special schools this year and two local authorities will receive additional grant funding for special needs provision.

One of the aims of the scheme is to help close the attainment gap between pupils from deprived communities and those from more prosperous areas.

The Welsh Government has worked closely with the Welsh Local Government Association to distribute the funding.

Kirsty Williams said:

“The summer holidays can be a difficult time for some of our young people because they don’t have access to the kind of meals they would get in school. In some cases they could even miss out on meals.

“Activities and different play schemes can also be very costly and this means that once again pupils from more disadvantaged backgrounds could lose out.

“The Food and Fun/Bwyd a Hwyl scheme is an ideal way for pupils to get two healthy meals a day as well as a wide range of food education, physical activity and other fun sessions. They also get to make the most of local school facilities.

“Being able to eat healthily and keeping active and engaged also makes a real difference to pupils’ attainment when they go back to school in September.

“Reducing this attainment gap between pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers is at the heart of our national mission for education. That’s why I’m so pleased to announce this funding today and look forward to visiting the schools taking part over the

summer.”

Councillor Debbie Wilcox, WLGA Leader said:

“The Summer school holidays can often be a daunting time for families who are already struggling to make ends meet. The Food and Fun programme has firmly established itself in recent years not only as a fun and healthy way for children to socialise with their friends, but also as a lifeline for those families.

“By working together with colleagues in health and Welsh Government, and with the investment announced by Welsh Government, I look forward to seeing more children than ever take part in the Food and Fun programme.”