

Stennetts Community Cafe

Free lunch and activity project, including Food and Fun 2019

Background

Stennetts Community Cafe is a not for profit Social enterprise supporting adults with learning disabilities to be valid members of their local community, through work based training and activities and in addition offering training and work experience for those disaffected in the workplace through disability or long term unemployment.

We are an ethical business with a social purpose and one of the strands of our mission and purpose includes food waste, we support the love food hate waste campaign, as part of this we work with Fare share and also intercept bread and cakes from a local bakery once a week which we either use or share with our local community.

Following on from our free school meals and activity project during the summer holidays in 2018 we decided to continue this to include all school holidays (except Christmas when we have an annual 2 week closure)

In addition we were asked to put a project plan together to provide Food and Fun activities for children in the local area for 2 x 4 hour sessions per week, this is in connection with The Department of Education and Suffolk County Council

Trimley St Mary Parish council have supported us with a bouncy castle and children's entertainer in previous years and agreed to do that again this year

Concept

The initial idea was to offer a free lunch every Wednesday and Thursday of the school holiday, based on child friendly lunches, similar to those they would have at school, the lunch would be a set lunch and would be served at 12noon, we would include siblings and parents so that the whole family could eat together as this would meet social needs as well as practical food needs. Because of the take up last year we decide to serve this as a buffet style meal so that we could cope with the numbers and it would also offer people choice. We offered a cold buffet on Wednesdays and a hot buffet on Thursdays.

We would also offer free children's activities each Wednesday afternoon from 1-3pm along the lines of mystery cooking and a craft activity.

The mystery cooking would be typically based on using food waste and gluts of food we had, for example making French bread pizza using leftover bread and a glut of veg from fare share. This way not only would the children have an activity to take part in but we might also give parents an idea of what they could do with surplus

food and food from food banks and the local pop up shop (something I would like to develop further)

We would offer 4 sessions of cook and craft and a session of bouncy castle and a session of the children's entertainer. Previously our cook and craft activities had been priced at £3 a child as we had tried to keep the cost as low as possible, however for larger families even £3 a child could add up and make the activity prohibitive.

We would also offer a goody bag of groceries from fareshare each week, these would be different each week and dependent on what we received from fareshare.

Funding

I applied for a grant from Felixstowe Town council

We received a private donation from a customer

Food and Fun had funding attached to the programme which we could draw down after the event. This also included some free training for our staff team.

Children and Families

Word of mouth had increased the uptake this year as well as posting on social media

Food and Fun had its own referral route, once the summer holidays had begun, I was able to offer food and fun places to children from our immediate area too.

One outcome we had not considered was the dynamics of local families all meeting together and socialising, this had a very positive effect on many of the families and children and the friendships have continued after the holidays.

Food and Fun

4 hour session to include cooking, craft, lunch and sports (Level 2 Youth project provider)

As part of the craft projects each child decorated a pencil case which we filled with felt tips, pens, pencils, rubbers etc, this stayed at the café till the end of the holidays so they could use the pencil cases, at the end they took these home.

Each child completed a recipe book of the things we cooked and we added decorations and photos of the things they cooked and of the group taking part in activities, this was an ongoing project and they all took them home at the end of the summer which hopefully they could then use as a cooking resource, all recipes were simple ones that they should have no problems repeating .

Running of project

In 2018 over the 7 weeks we served 122 meals and 207 children took part in the free activities

In 2019 over a 5 week school holiday we served 462 free meals, provided 110 goody bags of groceries, 245 free activity places and 109 food and fun sessions.

For Food and Fun we provided 109 sessions working with 21 different children, we provided 21 filled pencil cases, 20 recipes books as well as various art and craft projects that the children completed and took home all over 10 sessions

Feedback

At the end of the project we circulate evaluation sheets to the children and parents involved, attached at the end of report typed up.

In conclusion

I felt that this was a very successful and busy summer.

At times we were certainly at our limit and took on additional staff members to cover this we also ran a reduced menu at the café and so the knock on effect for the café has to be a consideration.

The goody bags worked really well and I felt helped families

The buffet style lunch worked well and provided good food and choice.

While Food and Fun was a great project and I would like to continue it the mix of the children was difficult, some were really interested and keen, joined in and enjoyed it, while others were not interested and I was constantly having to keep bringing them back into the building, going forward with food and fun I think shorter sessions that included lunch would work better than a 4 hour session.

For Food and Fun we ended up with more children taking part than we had initially thought.

Moving forward to 2020

St Edmunds church provided free lunches on the last 2 Fridays of the school holidays and Trinity Methodist Church also provided free meals on Tuesdays. The salvation Army captains from last year have changed but I am in contact with the Children's worker and we plan to meet over the coming months

Photos from this year can be found on our face book page

Lisa Williams

Stennetts Summer 2019

What was good? What did you like?



(Form circulated around families attending + denotes someone ticked comment to agree)

- Different activities each week, wide variety of food on offer for lunch each week ++
- Well supported, many activities going on, Cakes are amazing, plenty of food for everyone. A good place for everyone to socialise. A big thank you to Lisa and Steve who have done an amazing job and also to Stennetts Community café Team. ++
- Great activities, fun for the children and also great to socialise with other families, plenty of food for everyone and a lovely atmosphere. We have both enjoyed every week here. Thank you so much for everything, really appreciate it. ++
- Everything has been brilliant. The support that all the staff have given myself and my children has been fantastic. Food has been unbelievably good. It was great to have somewhere to go. So grateful ++
- Very inclusive, it doesn't matter what culture, disability (seen and unseen), background or work status you have, you are made to feel welcome by staff and people who attend

Stennetts Summer 2019

What wasn't good?

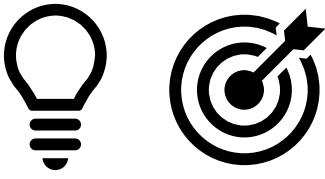
Thinks that you didn't like?



No replies to this, although we did circulate it to make sure

Why was that?

Stennetts Summer 2019



What next????

Suggestions

- Giant connect four or any other giant games
- Umbrellas (for shade)
- More picnic tables
- Selection of drinks – diet

Food and Fun holiday club 2019

What was good? What did you like?



Group evaluation completed with children

Feedback:

- What was good that I would like to play a match
- What was good that I could eat
- I made friends and had fun
- I liked baking food
- Eating food
- Craft tings

Favourite recipes: brownies, cookies, shortbread

Food and Fun holiday club 2019

What wasn't good?

Thinks that you didn't like?

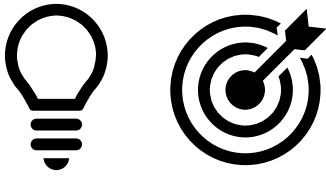


- Jam (making took too long)
- Sport
- Sport
- Sport level 2
- Not really making craft

Why was that?

- It take to long (jam making)
- It was boring
- Too long
- Horrible (sport)
- It was too long and boring (sport)
- It was ok

Food and Fun holiday club 2019



Things I would like to do/ try

Suggestions:

- Football
- Running
- Making slime
- Petting zoo
- Making ice cream
- Going to the beach and go litter picking
- Sports
- Sprinting, jogging
- Going to the cinema
- Go bowling
- Swimming
- Go to a farm
- Theme park
- Bounce
- Clip and climb
- Water park