



FREE SCHOOL MEALS IMPACT REPORT 2020/21



 **WIRRAL**



STEVE WILLIAMS COMMUNITY MANAGER

Tranmere Rovers in the Community wanted to show their support for the nationwide support scheme to supply free school meals to those in need.

We have worked closely with Wirral Borough Council for a number of years, and they asked local charities, businesses and organisations for their support to ensure the scheme could be delivered.

As a partner of the Council, they knew we would have the resources to be able to support alongside our excellent team of volunteers, so we helped with purchase and delivery of food to schools across Wirral. This programme was coordinated by local food charity Neo-Cafe on behalf of WBC.

There is a massive need for support in Wirral. We were allocated a group of schools and we delivered to those venues, both over Christmas 2020 and February half term 2021.

From our perspective, it went very well as the schools we delivered too were very appreciative of the support and more importantly, we could see what a positive difference it was making. In particular, a delivery we made to local primary school, Egremont Primary, who required more than 100 free school meals.

It is not good children find themselves in a position needing this level of support due to numerous different reasons, but we are happy we can support this nationwide objective to help those in need during the hard financial times caused by Covid-19.

We had community volunteers and Club/TRIC staff who were helping out in and around the ground. The volunteers were involved right across the board from day one, and the more hands to the pump the better.

Before Christmas, we had to source the food by finding a supplier and then we had to deliver it in a couple of days. It was a real team effort, and we really pulled together to ensure we delivered all of the food.

And during the February half term, we needed to get the food from the suppliers', and they got it to us quickly. So, from there, we got it delivered to the club, and we had a day where we put it all into boxes and delivered them to the various schools around the region.

The important element is we are supporting people who are in need and it fits to our motto of Wirral's Family Club.

We'd like to thank NeoCafe' and Wirral Borough Council for their guidance and support during this important programme.



"The free school meals initiative was initially set up to help lower obesity levels alongside improving academic achievements for children who required the support."

Tranmere Rovers Football Club and Tranmere Rovers in the Community have shown their support for Wirral community in many different ways since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020.

The pandemic has highlighted the need for children to be able to access food and support important activities during the school holidays.

Analysis by the Food Foundation estimated that an additional 900,000 children in England may have applied for free school meals since March 2020.

As part of the Government's Covid Winter Grant Scheme, Wirral Borough Council allocated funds to support disadvantaged children on free school meals during the 2020 Christmas holidays and the 2021 February half-term holidays.

Co-ordinated by local charity, Neo-Café, on behalf of Wirral Borough Council, local charities and organisations, including Tranmere Rovers in the Community, teamed up to deliver more than 8,000 hampers and nearly 1,000 activity packs for the Christmas holiday period to support thousands in need.

The high number of delivery and the positive impact it made resulted in the decision being made to replicate the scheme during the February half-term break.

The grant provided with the aim to enable free, high-quality and healthy food in addition to essential stay at home activity packs to help children with their education during extremely difficult times.

The free school meals initiative was initially set up to help lower obesity levels alongside improving academic achievements for children who required the support.



WIRRAL

KEY NUMBERS



660

**FOOD HAMPERS PUT TOGETHER
AND DELIVERED TO LOCAL
SCHOOLS**



18

**SCHOOLS ON WIRRAL RECEIVED
THE FOOD HAMPERS**



4,950

**MEALS SUPPLIED USING THE
FOOD SUPPLIED IN THE HAMPERS**



35

**PAGES OF ACTIVITIES WERE
DELIVERED TO 660 PUPILS
INCLUDING ONE WEEKS WORTH OF
LIVE ONLINE ACTIVITIES.**

MAP OF DELIVERY

Below is a map of delivery to show the reach Tranmere Rovers made with schools across Wirral, with more than 600 food hampers delivered.

★ = Prenton Park 🍏 = Schools





**“THE HAMPERS REALLY
DO HELP PEOPLE
IN NEED, AND
THEY ARE ALL THANKFUL
FOR THAT APPROACH”**



Egremont
Primary School

“The food hampers have been a significant help for our families”

Strong words from Egremont Primary Head Teacher, Mel Eastwood, following the support the school received from Tranmere Rovers as part of the nationwide free school meals campaign.

Tranmere supported families from the Wallasey based primary school both during the Christmas holidays and February half term holidays, to ensure those in need received vital food hampers.

Explaining in more detail, Mrs Eastwood discussed who received the support and why it is important the school work on important initiatives such as this with Tranmere Rovers.

“We have maintained a strong relationship with Tranmere Rovers Football Club, and we have been working for the Club for more than a year now.

“Last Christmas, we received a call from the Club asking if we would require any support as part of the nationwide free school meals initiative and it went from there.

“The support began from there, the Club delivered hampers and vouchers for the Christmas school holidays and then supported us once again in February.

“The food hampers have been a significant help for our families. During the last lockdown, we have been working on rotas and delivering 200 meals on a daily basis, and the difference it has made has been huge!

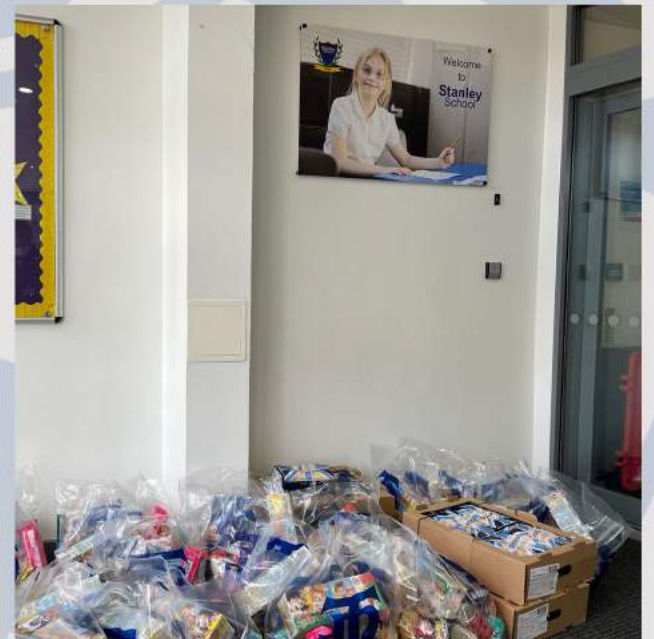
“The families are hugely grateful to the help that they are receiving, and we are making sure it's available, not just to the free school meals families but we have different categories of families which come to our school which fall under the free school meals or the working poor category.

“The help is also extended to families who may be having a particularly bad week or month. The hampers really do help people in need, and they are all thankful for that approach.

“A lot of children at our school are supporters of Tranmere Rovers Football Club and I think with what the Club and Tranmere Rovers in the Community provide, people are seeing first-hand what Tranmere do beyond being just a football club. From our point of view too, we are not just a school who provides an education, we are providing support such as this.”

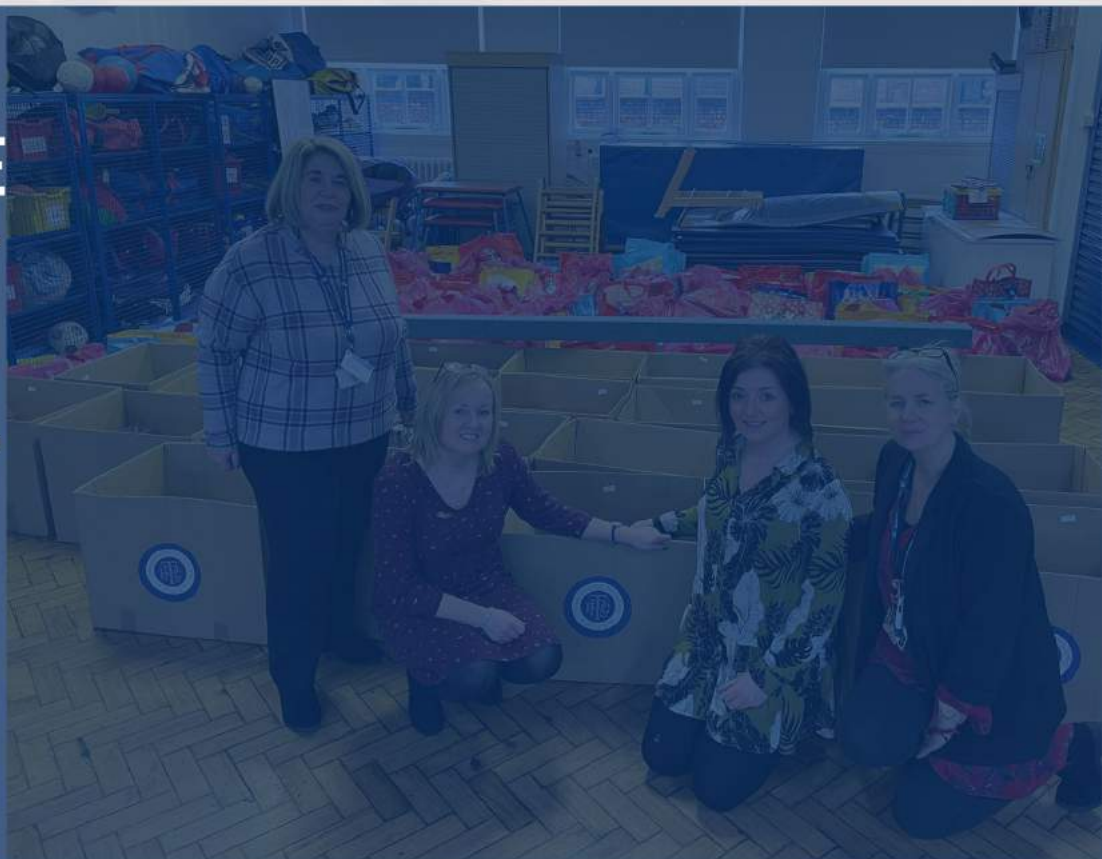


DECEMBER IMAGE GALLERY



FEBRUARY IMAGE GALLERY

"SHE DIDN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT WHAT WAS IN HER CUPBOARDS"



Tranmere Rovers worked with a number of schools across the region in order to help support the Government's national free schools campaign.

One of those schools which worked closely with Tranmere Rovers to support families during the Christmas and February half term breaks, was Devonshire Park, based in Birkenhead, not too far away from Prenton Park.

The school's business manager, Matt Fitch, said: "When school is open, we provide a safe, stable environment for our pupils and can ensure they will have at least one nutritious hot meal a day.

"At times during the pandemic and the school holidays this has not been possible so the link with Tranmere Rovers has been invaluable and has ensured that we were still able to reach our most vulnerable families with the support they needed.

"As everyone is aware, school budgets are extremely stretched, and it would not have been possible for school to provide the finance or man power to support the free school meal scheme during the holidays.

"The support from Tranmere was therefore vital in providing our vulnerable families with hampers, food parcels and meals during this time.

"Our school has always benefited from being close to Tranmere and our pupils have benefited over the years from various trips and other initiatives involving the club. This relationship has strengthened further during the pandemic as families have received direct support.

"The scheme benefited over 100 pupils and all of our most vulnerable families. The pandemic has impacted everyone in one way or another, but the crisis has been especially hard on the most vulnerable in society. The community schemes and initiatives to support these groups has therefore been a vital part of the response to ensure the difficulties that families face isn't exacerbated during the pandemic.

"I remember receiving a call from Nicola Palios the day before we broke up for October half term and within hours the club had arranged with a local business to provide hot meals at the club for all of our free school meal pupils during the school holiday. It was a great example of the impact that Tranmere can have in delivering community initiatives. The school, who have a designated family liaison officer, Jenny O'Sullivan, added: "All families were extremely grateful for the Christmas food hampers and vouchers provided and many have been asking how they can thank the club for providing the much-needed support.

"One single parent household with three children was overwhelmed with the generosity of the Christmas hampers and she commented that she could relax and enjoy Christmas that bit more knowing that she didn't have to worry about what she had in the cupboards.

Head teacher, Jill Billinge, concluded by saying: "Our families have truly appreciated the efforts of Tranmere Rovers in supporting them during the pandemic.

"The club has a wonderful reputation in the local community for helping when most needed and fully demonstrated what an important resource they are in helping deliver community initiatives at short notice during this crisis.

"I look forward to working with them to continue supporting local families in the future"