**Feed and Read**

**Bolton Libraries/Urban Outreach**

**Contact: Louise Window** (louise.window@bolton.gov.uk)

**Target ages: KS1 (5-7 years old); KS2 (8-11 years old)**

**Summary**

Free lunches over the summer holidays targeted at children receiving Free School meals. Urban Outreach provide the food (Bolton Lunches – BL); libraries a place to eat and associated activities often themed to the Summer Reading Challenge.

**Partners**

Urban Outreach

**Description**

Urban Outreach is a Christian Charity providing a person-centred approach to support the most disadvantaged, vulnerable and complex adults and young people in Bolton. Urban Outreach provides summer holiday lunches (branded as *Bolton Lunches*) for children in more than 20 community venues (see <http://www.urbanoutreach.co.uk/portfolio-posts/bl_bolton_lunches/>) including 5 Bolton Libraries. In 2017 45,000 lunches were provided over the six week holiday, 3,100 from the libraries.

Bolton Libraries receive the packed lunches, store them in the fridge and give them to children who call in. The children stay and eat their lunch and the libraries sign children up to the Summer Reading Challenge (SRC), provide activities and encourage the children to read. Whoever turns up gets lunch – no-one needs to prove eligibility and the venues are chosen in the areas where entitlement to Free School Meals is highest. The library keeps a record of the children and which days they have had lunch. Lunch is provided Monday to Friday and libraries are opened if necessary.

Bolton Libraries have also provided outreach to a lunch venue on a hard-to-reach estate where children tend not to use library services. A box of books and SRC materials are taken to the lunch and children sign up and do the challenge from there. There were over 15 completers in summer 2017.

Bolton library staff promote the lunches at the same time as the SRC promotion work in schools. The majority of take up is from primary school age children.

Bolton Libraries have been part of the scheme for a couple of years and take up increases over time. Staff are planning to expand the activities in summer 2018.

**Cost –** there is no cost to the library service for the lunches. The only additional resource is in opening libraries if necessary to provide a Monday to Friday service. Please see below for more information about how Urban Outreach sources the lunches.

Top tip: this idea works with a suitable provider to provide the lunch) for cost and food hygiene reasons)

The scheme is open to all and no-one is turned away – it is welcoming and inclusive

­

**Urban Outreach**

The food is sourced by Urban Outreach (not from donations for quality control) and prepared by volunteers. The model is simple:

* Food must be stored safely (in a fridge)
* The lunch venue must be safe for children to come to
* No checking of eligibility – everyone who comes can have lunch

Urban Outreach breaks even on the costs – businesses and others make donations, Bolton Council has given some grant funding, a van hire company delivers the food – and the lunches are free. Over a hundred volunteers come each morning on their way to work and prepare the lunches which are then delivered to the lunch venues across the town.

**Feed and Read**

This is a name for several similar schemes across the country and many library services are involved in delivery including Rochdale, Oldham, Warrington, St Helens and Manchester. Potential partners include faith based organisations like Urban Outreach; Food banks and others involved in community food initiatives such as Fairshare and Community Shop. Housing Associations and other housing providers have also been involved in community kitchens and initiatives to encourage growing and preparing food.