



Department
for Education

Holiday activities and food programme

Our focus

- School holidays can be pressure points for some families because of increased costs and reduced incomes
- Some children are more likely to experience 'unhealthy holidays' in terms of nutrition and physical health
- Some children from lower-income families are less likely to access fun activities
- Free holiday clubs are a response to this issue. They can work best when they provide consistent and easily accessible activities, for more than just breakfast or lunch



Our programme

- Since 2018, we have invested in local programmes that deliver free healthy meals and fun activities to disadvantaged children in the summer.
- In summer 2018, we invested £2 million in seven summer holiday pilots across England.
- In summer 2019 we invested £9m in programmes in 11 local authority areas, to improve coverage, joint-working, promotion, consistency and quality.
- In summer 2020 we invested £9m in 17 local authority areas, including projects that covered more than one LA.



Our summer 2020 projects

- StreetGames UK – Newcastle upon Tyne
- Edsential – Chester West and Chester, Halton and Wirral
- Gateshead Local Authority – Gateshead
- Leeds Community Foundation – Leeds and Bradford Metropolitan District
- Mayor’s Fund for London – Lambeth and Southwark
- The Romsey School – Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council and Isle of Wight Council
- Spring North – Blackburn with Darwen
- Suffolk Local Authority – Suffolk County Council
- Tower Hamlets Local Authority – London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- Voluntary Action Sheffield – Sheffield

Covid-19 had a great impact on the delivery of the HAF 2020 programme, but we worked with our 2020 coordinators to ensure that the programme went ahead and supported thousands of children and families.

Expansion in 2021

- The Holiday Activities and Food programme will expand in 2021 so that children on free school meals in England will be offered free healthy meals and enriching activities over the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays.
- Our investment of up to £220 million will be delivered through grants to all local authorities.
- We greatly value the important role that community and voluntary organisations have played in this programme over the last three years, and we encourage all local authorities to work with a wide range of partners in the delivery of this programme.



Impact of January 2021 Lockdown

- We don't know when schools will re-open again and when it will be safe to run HAF clubs face-to-face
- The 2020 programme showed us what was possible despite the restrictions
- The offers ranged from full face-to-face clubs with a focus on outside activities to food parcels with home activity packs
- LAs may want to plan for a combined approach – but we appreciate this is not ideal
- We will confirm further advice and guidance on the impact of the latest lockdown ASAP



Our minimum standards aim to support high quality provision



Healthy food



Enriching activities



Physical activities



Nutritional education



Policies and procedures

And a few other requirements:

- Inclusive and accessible provision (e.g. SEND and rural children)
- Provision offered to all FSM children in the local authority
- At least 4 hours for 4 days a week. For 4 weeks in the summer, and for a week in Easter and Christmas.

Our model aims to support high quality provision coordinated across a local area

Local coordinator objectives



MAP
PROVISION



AWARD
FUNDING



SUPPORT
PROVIDERS



PROMOTE
PROVISION



WORK WITH
OTHERS



DEVELOP
SUSTAINABLE
APPROACHES

We want children attending clubs to:

- Eat more healthily
- Be more active
- Take part in engaging and enriching activities
- Be safe and not isolated
- Have greater knowledge of health and nutrition
- Be more engaged with school and other services
- Have greater knowledge and awareness of holiday club provision

Feedback from parents

We asked holiday parents/carers about their experiences of the programme in 2020. Findings included:

- Despite Covid, the overwhelming majority confirmed their child had accessed provision in person with a clear majority attending exclusively in person
- The majority of respondents told us that their child attending a holiday club reduced stress and pressure, many told us it financially supported them and many told us it provided reassurance that their child was somewhere safe.
- Most respondents had been provided with advice on cooking healthy meals by their club.
- Most respondents would be willing to purchase longer hours, if they were offered. But some respondents were unaware they could reclaim up to 85% of the costs for attending Ofsted rated settings through Universal Credit

What has worked well?



Huge amount of work done by coordinators and staff



Variety of approaches, from centrally-set programmes to club-led programmes and combination of the two



Big focus on building capacity in the sector



Some innovative approaches to mapping demand, ensuring that provision was in place in areas of real need



Minimum standards seemed to work well



4:4:4 seemed to work well - this needs to be applied flexibly



Some really good engagement with parents and families

Challenges and reflections



Building the widest possible local partnerships, including schools and other partners



Collecting data and management information



Some settings needed to work hard to meet the food standards



Areas need sufficient time to plan and prepare



Some smaller clubs needed intensive support

DfE implementation team



Regular conversations with local authorities from January 2021 and responding to issues.



Convening regional peer-to-peer support networks, sharing best practice and linking to relevant national organisations.



Reviewing delivery plans in advance of holidays and reports of provision submitted by local authorities following each delivery period. This may inform future payment instalments.



Providing more support for local authorities that need it.



Transition to national support partner from April 2021 but with DfE local implementation support continuing

Next steps

Further meetings

- Repeat of meetings planned for February
- First delivery report due by 19 February, setting out the intended scale and reach of their programme for Easter 2021 (we will be in touch shortly to provide you with a short template for these)
- Areas encouraged to continue to meet if it is useful
- Surgery sessions

Contact details

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