

HAF Worcestershire Summer 2024 Delivery Report

Introduction

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme is a Department for Education (DfE) funded initiative. The Programme was initially trialled in 2018 and success saw the programme expanded across the whole of England to every Local Authority in 2021/22.

Sutton Croft Ltd was commissioned by Worcestershire County Council (WCC) to manage the grant funding allocation and delivery of the programme 'HAF Worcestershire' between 2021 and 2024.

HAF Worcestershire is primarily aimed at children and young people between the ages of 5-16, in receipt of benefits-related Free School Meals (FSM). There is limited flexibility in the programme guidelines to offer places to other vulnerable cohorts including families considered to be 'just about managing'.

HAF Worcestershire has significantly grown since the start of the programme and works directly with holiday club providers, schools, charities, community groups and other organisations to offer an inclusive, varied and flexible programme for eligible children.

The Aim of HAF

Research has shown that children from low-income families are:

- Less likely to access organised out-of-school activities
- More likely to experience 'unhealthy holidays' in terms of nutrition and physical health
- More likely to experience social isolation

The aim of the programme is to reduce the pressure for families during school holidays by offering free access to activity clubs providing physical activity, enriching activities, healthy food and support for families.

Eligibility Process

HAF Worcestershire uses a central booking portal developed in collaboration with Bookinglab. Children and young people (CYP) must be approved as eligible for HAF to book activities. This process is as follows:

1. Families and parents sign up via the HAF booking portal to register for access to the HAF programme.
2. Once signed up, accounts are pending until they are checked against the FSM database and verified.
3. When individual child profiles are verified as either FSM eligible or referred status, parents and families can book on to activities.

Non-FSM eligibility

Providers have the flexibility to offer up to 15% of their total places to participants who are not eligible for benefits related free school meals but are considered to be vulnerable. These groups include but are not limited to:

- Children assessed by the local authority as being in need, at risk or vulnerable
- Young carers
- Children of refugee families
- Looked after children who are in Kinship Care
- Children living in areas of high deprivation or from low-income households who are not in receipt of free school meals
- Children in transition phases between nursery and primary school or primary and secondary school

Summer 2024 Overview

66 providers across 110 venues (including trips) were commissioned to deliver HAF during the summer holidays, including SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) clubs and activities. Across the county CYP were able to attend a wide offering, including water sports, outdoor adventure, forest school, arts & crafts, drama and performing arts, musical workshops, yoga and wellbeing, animal care and equine therapy through to multisport clubs.

HAF supported 2349 individual CYP, 2095 (89%) of which were FSM eligible, 19% secondary aged and 24% SEND.

Key points from the summer programme:

- Severn Arts ran multiple workshops across the holidays, which included a diverse, cultural range of activities from music and the ever-popular drums workshops to sculpting, crafting, photography and dance.
- Approx. 3500 FSM CYP now signed up and approved on the new booking portal
- Bookings opened over 5 weeks before delivery started
- Nearly all summer providers utilised the new booking portal however this came with teething problems and user difficulties and many providers opted to also use their own booking system

Attendance

84% of places offered were booked and 69% of places were booked and also attended. Overall, 21810 places were offered, 18245 places were booked, and 15086 places were attended.

Places attended breakdown:

- 7% of places attended were specifically for CYP with SEND
- 15% of places were attended by secondary-aged children

The following table breaks down places attended by the type of places and age group of places:

	Primary-aged	Secondary-aged
Mainstream places attended	11476	2012
SEND specific places attended	735	226
Total places attended	12211	2238

Individual Children and Young People

Overview of summer CYP

Key stats:

- 89% of CYP were eligible for FSM
- 81% of CYP were primary-aged
- 19% of CYP were secondary-aged
- 24% of CYP had SEND
- 83 CYP were from refugee families

This summer, there was a decrease in individual CYP attending from summer 2023. Possible causes for this include:

- The new booking site is still building up numbers of approved children
- New methodology for calculating individual children – significantly reduces number of children counted multiple times.

The following table shows the breakdown of individual CYP at summer 2024 by FSM and SEND:

	Primary-aged	Secondary-aged
FSM & Non-SEND	1402	234
FSM & SEND in universal settings	316	87
FSM & SEND in SEND specialist provision	39	17
Non-FSM & Non-SEND	81	66
Non-FSM & SEND in universal settings	58	22
Non-FSM & SEND in SEND specialist provision	13	14
Total attendees	1909	440

The following table shows the breakdown of participants by holiday period, from summer 2022 to summer 2024:

	Summer 2022	Winter 2022	Easter 2023	Summer 2023	Winter 2023	Easter 2024	Summer 2024
Primary-aged FSM & Non-SEND	6039	1725	2667	4257	1266	1324	1402
Primary-aged FSM & SEND	982	334	467	816	308	259	355
Primary-aged Non-FSM & Non-SEND	1405	378	476	174	205	167	81
Primary-aged Non-FSM & SEND	167	85	175	310	217	27	71
Total primary-aged attendees	8593	2522	3785	5557	1996	1777	1909
Secondary-aged FSM & Non-SEND	1367	628	402	747	125	209	234
Secondary-aged FSM & SEND	525	79	121	311	82	62	104
Secondary-aged Non-FSM & Non-SEND	717	74	145	67	29	56	66
Secondary-aged Non-FSM & SEND	206	34	62	42	68	9	36
Total secondary-aged attendees	2815	815	730	1167	304	336	440
Total attendees	11408	3337	4515	6724	2300	2113	2349
Of the total, from refugee families	191	38	95	158	69	43	83

Summer 2024 in the Big Picture

HAF supported an average of 587 children per week (4 weeks of provision).

We continue to see improvement in the following areas:

- Returning families and CYP to the programme.
- SEND inclusion in mainstream provision, with providers recruiting additional support staff where resources are available, and in some cases, taking further training to enhance staffing support.
- Continuous commitment from providers in understanding key objectives for HAF delivery and working collaboratively with peers and HAF team to ensure best practice.
- Commitment to reviewing venues/locations and exploring opportunities to fill gaps in provision.
- Support from external agencies in offering workshops or educational presentations within lead provider settings.
- Continued support of families who may otherwise struggle to access HAF (limited internet access/learning difficulties/illiteracy, etc).

Providers

Key stats:

- 66 total providers this summer
- 110 HAF venues (including trips)
- 253 community partners
- 95 young leaders or in roles of responsibility
- 83 volunteers
- 561 paid staff

The table below breaks down providers by type of organisation, from summer 2022 to summer 2024:

	Summer 2022	Winter 2022	Easter 2023	Summer 2023	Winter 2023	Easter 2024	Summer 2024
Voluntary or community based	47%	50%	45%	42%	47%	50%	53%
Private organisation	40%	42%	45%	39%	45%	37%	33%
School	10%	5%	5%	16%	6%	11%	11%
Local authority	3%	5%	5%	3%	2%	2%	4%

Funding Allocation

Funding allocation reflects the percentage of FSM eligibility. We work with providers to identify and fill gaps in provision across the county.

The following table breaks down grant funding allocation by district, from summer 2022 to summer 2024:

District	Summer 2022	Winter 2022	Easter 2023	Summer 2023	Winter 2023	Easter 2024	Summer 2024
Malvern Hills	£76,731.80(8%)	£46,231.54(17%)	£26,295.02(11%)	£106,752.80(11%)	£22,709.00(9%)	£40,060.00(18%)	£172,929.87(19%)
Redditch & Bromsgrove	£301,498.60(33%)	£57,109.55(21%)	£58,519.31(24%)	£291,144(30%)	£71,512.00(29%)	£57,524.00(25%)	£204,715.00(22%)
Worcester City	£244,123.90(26%)	£46,231.54(17%)	£45,415.70(18%)	£252,324.80(26%)	£85,312.94(34%)	£56,320.00(25%)	£244,581.58(27%)
Wychavon	£182,664.00(20%)	£84,304.57(31%)	£75,618.96(31%)	£155,276.80(16%)	£48,466.00(19%)	£48,110.00(21%)	£183,530.55(20%)
Wyre Forest	£119,376.00(13%)	£38,073.03(14%)	£38,284.00(16%)	£164,981.60(17%)	£22,830.00(9%)	£25,535.00(11%)	£106,784.00(12%)

Schools

For summer 2024 delivery, a total of 29 schools (primary, secondary, special, independent and alternative provision) supported the HAF programme, either as lead providers or as venues. Additionally, 26% of delivery venues were schools.

Schools operating either as lead providers or supporting providers by hosting suits the programme offers the following benefits:

- Reducing workload of holiday provision coordination for school, allowing a combined group of paid/HAF activities.
- Offering on-site consistency for pupils between school holidays.
- Offering paid opportunities for TAs during school holidays.
- Improves communication between provider and school to offer better support for CYP.
- Offers site familiarity for CYP and accessibility within local communities.
- Schools are recognised as safe, secure venues for parents with good facilities and often, sufficient catering areas to allow for hot food provision.

The following table shows the percentage of Worcestershire primary schools operating as lead providers of HAF venues:

	Summer 2023	Winter 2023	Easter 2024	Summer 2024
Primary schools	9%	10%	7%	10%

The following table shows the percentage of Worcestershire secondary schools operating as lead providers of HAF venues:

	Summer 2023	Winter 2023	Easter 2024	Summer 2024
Secondary schools	25%	9%	14%	16%

The following table shows the percentage of Worcestershire special schools operating as lead providers of HAF venues:

	Summer 2023	Winter 2023	Easter 2024	Summer 2024
Special schools	22%	11%	11%	11%

The following table shows the percentage of total Worcestershire schools (secondary, primary and special) operating as lead providers of HAF venues:

	Summer 2023	Winter 2023	Easter 2024	Summer 2024
Total schools	12%	9%	9%	11%

HAF Activities & Clubs

Summer 2024 contracted places across districts:

- Worcester City had 6043 places, 28% of the county total
- Malvern Hills had 3142 places, 14% of the county total
- Wychavon had 4715 places, 22% of the county total
- Wyre Forest had 2819 places, 13% of the county total
- Redditch and Bromsgrove had 5091 places, 23% of the county total

Summer 2024 activities included:

- Drama
- Cricket
- Arts & crafts
- Dance
- Forest school
- Kayaking
- Football
- Swimming
- Horse riding
- Team building
- Sensory

Quality Assessment

As part of our commitment to offering a quality provision for summer HAF, we monitored quality assurance in a number of ways. The table to right shows the average scores from provider self-assessment.

The following table breaks down our quality assurance methods:

Measure	Description
EOI Quality Response	Detailed EOI application form detailing provider experience, evidence and proposed plans.
Safeguarding and Policies	Health & Safety and Insurance checklists and organisations submit all documentation prior to delivery.
Provider support and training	Ongoing mobilisation and delivery support, access to training courses designed for HAF.
Delivery reporting	Final delivery report including registers, summary of delivery, photos and family feedback.
Self Assessment	Providers complete a self assessment of delivery
Site Visits	The HAF Programme Team performed site visits during activity sessions and completed an informal assessment sheet.
Provider feedback	Providers completed a feedback process to review the HAF Easter delivery programme.
School feedback	Schools that participated in HAF were asked to provide feedback.

For summer 2024, each self-assessment criteria's average rating is as follows (criteria can be rated very poor, poor, acceptable, good, or excellent):

- Food offer was rated good
- Physical activity was rated good
- Enriching activities was rated good
- Nutritional education for CYP was rated acceptable

- Nutritional education for parents or carers was rated acceptable
- Signposting and referrals for families was rated good
- Accessibility and inclusivity was rated acceptable

Case Study (written by Bonterre CIC)

This summer, we worked with a 9-year-old girl, Sophie (name changed), who has mild autism and sensory processing challenges. She has had issues surrounding friendships and parents describe her as lonely and isolated from her peers.

Sophie's parents were eager for her to build confidence, spend time outdoors and interact with peers, but they were concerned about her ability to cope with new environments and group settings. This presented both a challenge and an opportunity to integrate Sophie into the program, ensuring her needs were met while she participated alongside other children.

We started by learning to understand her specific needs and preferences. To create a comfortable environment, we adapted activities to be sensory-friendly and offered Sophie the option to step away when she felt overwhelmed. For example, while other children engaged in energetic group games, Sophie could choose quieter activities like planting seeds or crafting nature-inspired art. We also used visual aids and gave clear, simple instructions to help Sophie follow the day's schedule. Sophie was given a key member of staff that she could go to at any time and that staff member would keep a casual eye on her during the day, supporting her when needed and helping her integrate with the other children.

Sophie was initially only booked in for one day, but she enjoyed herself so much that her parents booked her in for the whole week, the transformation in Sophie was clear. Initially reserved and hesitant to participate in group activities, she grew in confidence as she became more comfortable in the environment. Sophie particularly thrived during animal care and gardening, where she learned how to care for the animals on the farm, carry out health checks and meet their needs, also, to plant vegetables and prepare healthy snacks using the produce she helped grow. These hands-on activities not only developed her fine motor skills but also developed an interest in outdoor ed. Her parents noticed positive changes in her willingness to try new foods and were grateful for the skills Sophie gained.

By the end of the summer club, the positive impact on Sophie was remarkable. Initially, she was quite reserved, preferring to stay on the sidelines during group activities. However, as she became more comfortable in the environment and with the staff, her confidence grew significantly, her sense of humour came out, she was a pleasure to work with.

Parent Feedback

- 'My son absolutely loved all aspects of the club. Meeting new friends and doing lots of varied activities. He especially loved the animals visit the best. The clubs have helped me no end meaning less time off work due to the holidays and being self employed means no money coming in! They've been a life saver! Thankyou again'
- 'The provider we used were excellent in understanding my child's special needs'

- 'Friendly, fun, encouraging and caring staff, totally excellent venue with lots of various activities to offer.'
- 'Absolutely loved all the clubs and staff were absolutely brilliant'
- 'It's been a life saver'