

Sefton Council – Information for HAF Providers

2023/24



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Introduction

The government has made funding available to local authorities to coordinate free holiday provision, including healthy food and enriching activities. School holidays can be pressure points for some families due to increased costs and reduced income. This can lead to a holiday experience gap, with children from disadvantaged families:

- 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

Free holiday clubs are a response to this issue and evidence suggests that they can have a positive impact on children and young people and that they work best when they:

- provide consistent and easily accessible enrichment activities
- cover more than just breakfast or lunch
- involve children (and parents) in food preparation

This provision is for children who receive benefits-related free school meals. It will of course be optional for eligible children to attend this provision if they wish. The aim of the programme is to make free places available to children eligible for free school meals for the equivalent of at least 4 hours a day, 4 days a week, 6 weeks a year. The funding should cover 4 weeks in the summer and a week's worth of provision in each of the Easter and Winter holidays. In Winter there is also an option to provide 2 days of face-to-face provision alongside activity packs or hampers.

As a result of this, and for our objectives, we want children who attend this provision to;

- eat more healthily over the school holidays
- be more active during the school holidays
- take part in engaging and enriching activities which support the development of resilience, character, and wellbeing along with their wider educational attainment
- be safe and not to be socially isolated
- have a greater knowledge of health and nutrition
- be more engaged with school and other local services

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Enrichment Activities

Holiday clubs must provide fun and enriching activities that provide children with opportunities to:

- develop new skills or knowledge
- consolidate existing skills and knowledge
- try out new experiences
- have fun and socialise

This could include but is not limited to:

- physical activities, for example football, swimming, table tennis or cricket
- creative activities, for example putting on a play, junk modelling or drumming workshops
- experiences, for example a nature walk or visiting a city farm
- free play, for example fun and freedom to relax and enjoy themselves

Physical activities

Holiday clubs must provide activities that meet the [physical activity guidelines](#) on a daily basis.

In line with those guidelines, we expect:

- all children and young people participating in the HAF programme should engage in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity for an average of at least 60 minutes per day - this does not have to be in the form of a structured activity session, but can include active travel, free play and sports
- children and young people participating in the HAF programme should engage in a variety of types and intensities of physical activity to develop movement skills, muscular fitness and bone strength
- children and young people should aim to minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary, and when physically possible should break up long periods of not moving with at least light physical activity

Food

Providers must provide at least one meal a day (breakfast, lunch or tea) and all food provided at the holiday club (including snacks) must meet [school food standards](#).

The expectation is that most of the food served by providers will be hot. However, we acknowledge that there will be occasions when this is not possible, and a cold alternative may be used. Providers are welcome to prepare food on site or use external caterers and suppliers.

All food provided as part of the programme must:

- comply with regulations on food preparation
- take into account allergies and dietary requirements - [allergy guidance for schools](#)
- take into account any religious or cultural requirements for food

There is flexibility in the design of the food provision which should always be tailored to ensure that all food meets the dietary needs of the children and families who attend. The food served should also be appropriate for the nature of the session, for example, offering cold packed lunches for parks or outdoor venues or for day trips.

Increasing understanding and awareness of healthy eating

Providers must work to improve children's knowledge and awareness of healthy eating. This does not need to be formal learning activities and could include activities such as:

- Getting children involved in food preparation and cooking
- Growing fruit and vegetables
- Taste tests
- Discussing food and nutrition
- Including food and nutrition in other activities

Free Resources:

[Healthy Eating Resources](#) | Public Health England

[Free Teaching Resources](#) | Food a fact of life

[Food Facts](#) | Change4Life

[Food Topic for Kids](#) | Activity Village

[Healthy Eating Resources](#) | Twinkl

[Food Smart & Resources](#) | Healthy Schools

Food education for families and carers

Where possible we expect HAF providers to make available training and advice sessions for parents, carers or other family members. This can include advice on how to source, prepare and cook nutritious and low-cost food alongside increasing awareness of healthy eating. This could be combined with the nutritional education aspect of the programme, for example, by inviting children and their families to prepare and eat a meal together.

Free Nutritional Resources:

[Food labels](#) | NHS info on labelling

[The Eatwell Guide](#) | NHS info on nutrition, how we should be eating

[Budget recipes and advice](#) | BBC Food recipes and ideas

[Money Saving Family Recipes](#) | Jamie Oliver recipes and ideas

[Easy Dinner Ideas](#) | Healthy Recipes | Change4Life recipes and ideas

[@fulltimemeals](#) | Recipe ideas and information about food vouchers promoted/created by Marcus Rashford and Tom Kerridge

Safety

The safety of the children/young people attending your projects along with the safety of your staff, the organisations involved, the environment and families linked to your projects is paramount. Providers must be able to demonstrate and explain their safeguarding arrangements and have relevant and appropriate policies and procedures in place in relation to safeguarding, health and safety, insurance, accessibility and inclusiveness. Where appropriate, clubs must also be compliant with the Ofsted requirements for working with children.

The best way to ensure that actions have been taken to reduce and mitigate risks is to undertake risk assessments on all activities associated with the operational delivery of your project. Some specific areas which will require consideration: Suitably qualified and trained staff, adequate first aid provision, appropriate insurances, data protection, facilities and equipment that is fit for purpose and appropriate to the activity and its participants and engagement of third-party organisations.

Safeguarding:

Each provider is responsible for ensuring that suitable safeguarding measures are in place, including: Staff DBS checks, adequate supervision (staff ratios), signing in and out procedures, consents are in place for photographs, suitable child protection policies and reporting processes.

If you feel a child is in immediate danger, please call 999.

If you are worried that a child or young person in Sefton who may be suffering significant harm please call the safeguarding team on **0345 140 0845**. Operating hours are Monday to Thursday – 9am to 5.30pm and Fridays – 9am to 5pm

If the issue cannot wait until the next working day, please contact our Emergency Duty Team outside of the above hours, including weekends and bank holidays, on **0151 934 3555**

For more information and to fill in a Child Referral Form please visit our [Worried about a child](#) webpage. See also below links for raising adult safeguarding concerns and concerns regarding domestic abuse:

[Raise a concern about an adult](#)
[Domestic Abuse](#)

Signposting and Referrals

Providers must be able to provide information, signposting or referrals to other services and support that would benefit the children who attend their provision and their families.

This could include sessions provided by:

- Citizen's Advice
- school nurses, dentists or other healthcare practitioners
- family support services or children's services
- housing support officers
- Jobcentre Plus
- organisations providing financial education
- early years and childcare, including help to pay for childcare (such as Tax-Free Childcare)

Useful Links:

[Sefton Support Hub](#) | A digital One Stop Shop for residents to find help, advice and guidance, as well as financial and social support.

[South Sefton Foodbank](#)

[Help on a low income](#) | Citizens Advice

[Turn2Us](#)

[30 hours free childcare](#) | You may be able to get 30 hours free childcare if: you live in England & your child is 3 to 4 years old

[Free education and childcare for 2-year-olds](#) | Check if you are eligible for free childcare

Monitoring

The Department of Education require data to be captured and reported back to them about each project, the children/young people that attend the projects, and the costs associated.

At end of each week of delivery a short questionnaire will be sent out to be completed and returned by the following Monday. This information to be collated by providers and sent back to the Local Authority will be used to report back to the DfE, the Director for Children's Services and to local Councillors/leaders. An evaluation from the 2021 provision was commissioned. The findings are in the link attached: [Evaluation of the 2021 Holiday Activities and Food Programme](#).

Providers must provide the following information weekly throughout delivery:

- The number of individual and unique children that you have supported through attendance at a holiday club.
- Of those participating children, what percentage were eligible for FSM?
- How many days did participating children attend on average?
- The percentage of primary children and the percentage of secondary children that participated
- The number of SEND children in attendance at your session.

Following completion of each round of HAF there will be an opportunity to provide detailed feedback, evaluation, case studies and photographs from your delivery.

Free School Meal Eligibility

At the end of each round of HAF provision we will also ask for a full register including every child in attendance who has been funded through the HAF programme. Please record the **full name, address, date of birth and number of sessions attended** of all HAF funded children so we can check these against our records.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Can HAF funding be used to deliver provision after school or during half terms?

A. The HAF funding is currently ringfenced for 1 week during the Easter and Christmas holidays and for 4 weeks during the Summer

Q. Is provision only funded for FSM children aged 4-16?

A. Yes, the funding is for school-aged children only. This would include 4-year-olds who have already started in reception.

Q. Can I offer a morning and afternoon session?

A. Yes, if they are for unique groups of children. If the same child attends both morning and afternoon this will be classed as one session.

Q. Can I also charge for additional holiday club spaces?

A. Yes, we encourage you to offer paid places to children who do not meet the HAF eligibility if the provision is of the same standard and there is no risk of stigma attached to the funded children.

Q. Do children need to attend every session?

A. Each eligible child should be offered at least 4 days during Easter and Christmas and 16 days over Summer. If they do not wish to attend every session or drop out these sessions can be offered to other eligible children.

Q. How long will the funding take to clear once the invoice is sent?

A. Payments take up to thirty days from the date of processing the invoice.

Q. Do you have to be Ofsted registered to be part of this programme and receive funding?

A. Providers do not have to be registered with Ofsted if their provision is exempt from Ofsted registration. A list of provision which is exempt from Ofsted registration can be found here – [Registration exemptions - Childminders and childcare providers: register with Ofsted](#)

Q. Will the funding allow delivery without the food aspects of the programme?

A. No, the provision of food is an essential part of the programme. Holiday club provision must include food as well as enriching/physical activities.

Q. Can we use volunteers to help deliver our programme?

A. Yes, if all volunteers are DBS checks and have undertaken appropriate training.

