



Funded by



Department
for Education

***West Berkshire Holidays,
Activities and Food Programme
2024 Annual Report***

The Offer

HAF is a Holiday, Activities and Food programme for children in full time education and entitled to free school meals.

We hold the experiences of HAF children at the funded clubs at the forefront of our HAF programme and are committed to enriching their experiences and opportunities during holiday periods and reducing holiday hunger.

The West Berkshire Holidays, Activities and Food programme worked with 18 providers, delivering at 26 sites across 2024.

All the approved clubs offer physical activity, nutritional learning opportunities, engaging activities and a meal each day they attend.

We have a range of activities from rock climbing to paddleboarding and kayaking to coding and crafting.

We also achieved a 32% increase in SEND children accessing HAF.

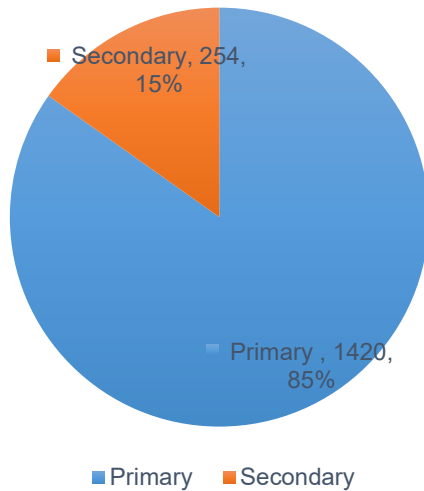
West Berkshire also commissioned several external companies to conduct visits to ensure delivery of those enriching and enjoyable experiences we strive to offer, as well as giving the opportunity to experience something that may have not been available or accessible to them otherwise. These include but are not limited to:

- Reptile Encounters
- Library representative visits and free books
- Nutritional workshop and games

Nutritional take home resources and activity packs, food parcels, budget recipe ideas were offered to all families that attended the provision. We also advised of other charities offering meals during school holiday periods.

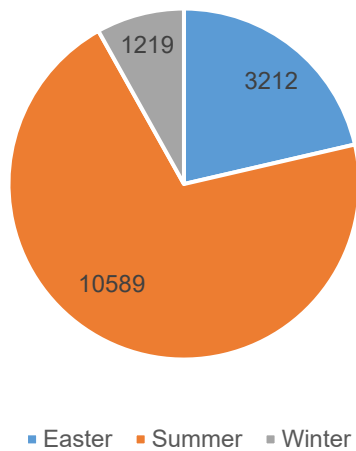
Feedback has been positive and encouraging and shows just how valuable HAF provision is for the families it serves. It also reinforces why we run HAF and try to make it a beneficial (and as fun!) as possible. We work with established and exceptional providers to ensure there is quality provision available.

Overview



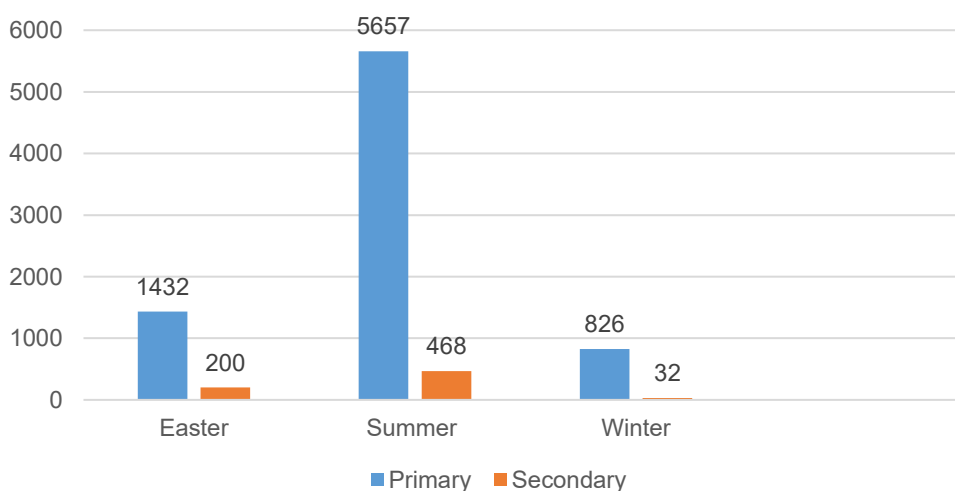
**18
PROVIDERS**

Places Available



**190
participants
with SEND**

Sessions Attended 2024



**26
different
SITES**

Feedback

It's brilliant and thanks for providing this for our children

We will continue to the provision in the future. My child had a great time"

It's a lifeline, and something the children really look forward to doing

My child being able to attend the HAF club was an invaluable resource. I would otherwise struggle to find affordable ways to stimulate him and keep him active over the holidays. It allowed him to meet new friends and has helped his confidence around peers.

Kids had a fantastic time and they are looking forward to going back. Thank you.

It's fantastic!!

The whole team are very nice and supportive.

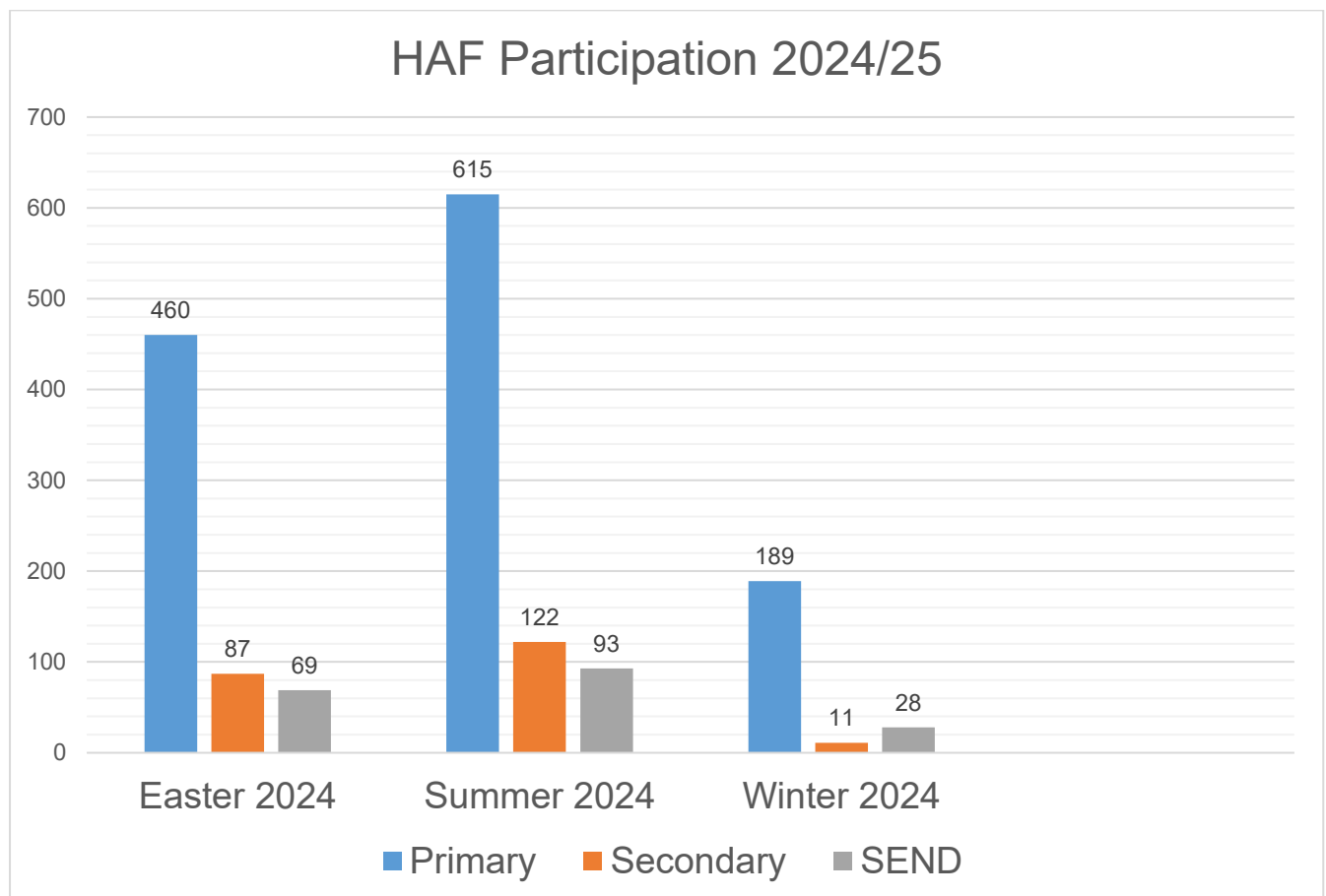
Unique Children Reached and Participation

Over the 3 HAF delivery periods: Easter, Summer and Winter, we reached a total of 1674 individual children.

85% of these were Primary School aged children and 15% were Secondary schools aged young people.

Of these, 190 children were identified as having SEND and were able to access some of the HAF provision.

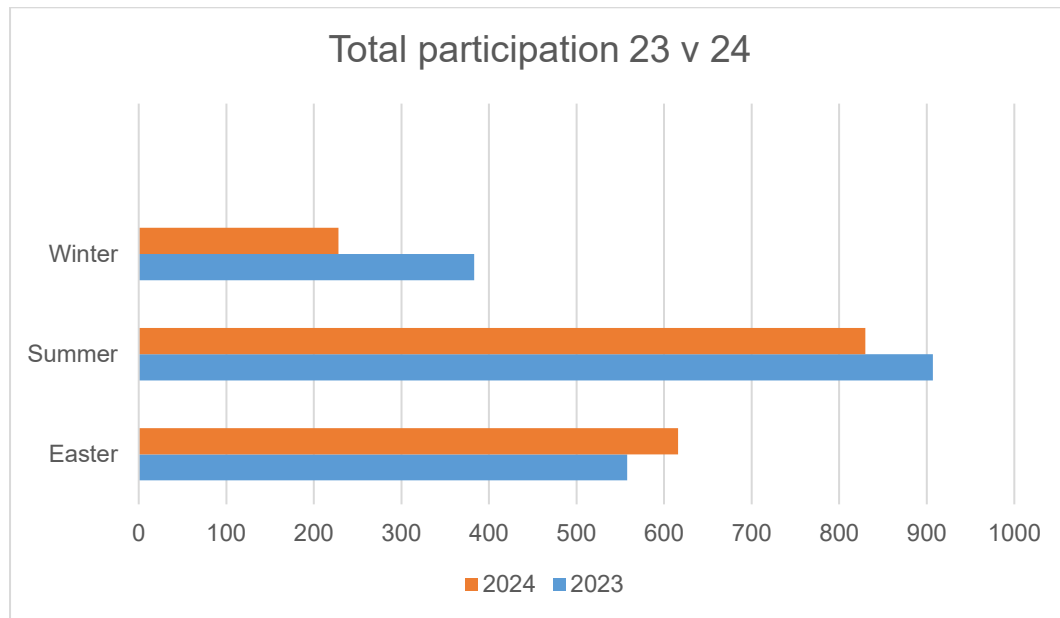
A breakdown for each delivery period is shown below:





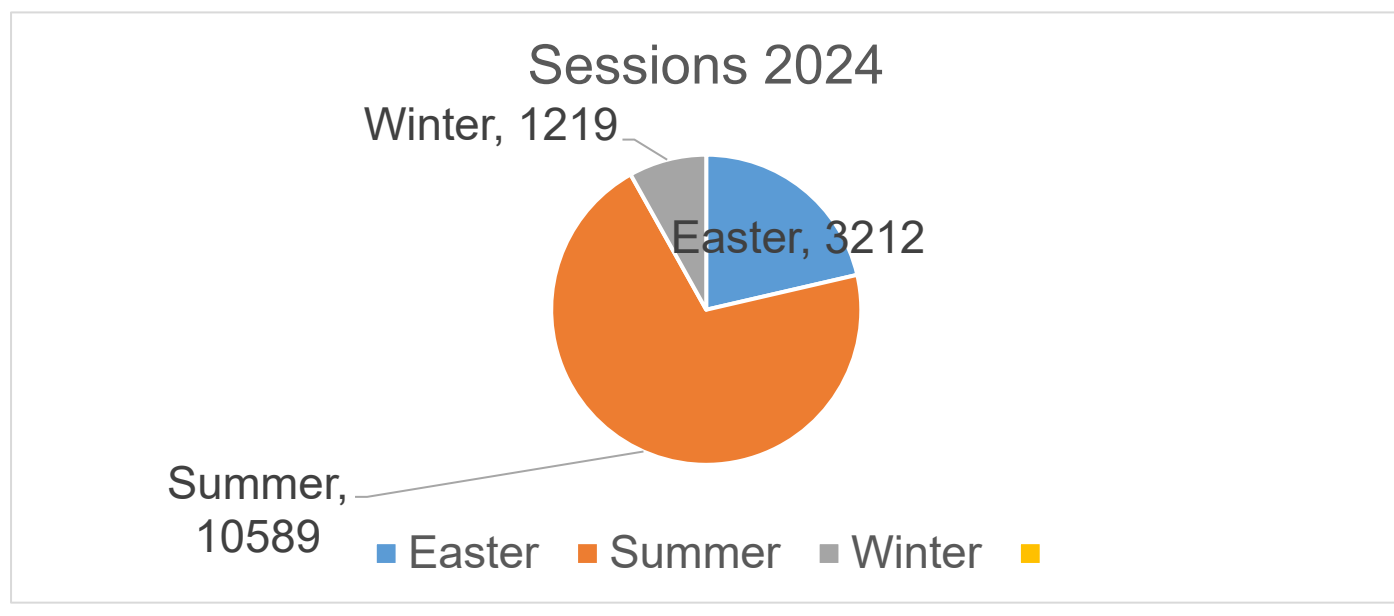
Comparison analysis

Below shows a 23/24 participation data in comparison to 24/25.
Our overall reach seems stable, and we are pleased with the increase in SEND HAF children we have been able to fund.



Sessions and Attendance

Over the delivery year 2024/2025, 15,020 sessions were fully funded, with each session offering a meal and exciting and enriching activities. Whilst we didn't expect all these places to be booked, it meant we could offer variety and ensure most got their first choice of provision. This is 54% increase compared to 23/24.



The DfE allows for up to 15% of funding to be used for children and young people who do not meet the eligibility criteria of benefit related free school meals entitlement. Throughout the delivery periods these places were allocated on a discretionary basis. A total of 291 children across 2024 were offered a discretionary HAF funded place.

We assess each on a case by case basis to determine if they qualify for a discretionary place.

‘I got to make new friends’

Steering Group

In 2024, for HAF we had a steering group consisting of 3 members of the local authority. The members of the LA conduct various visits to providers during the course of the year to ensure the quality of the provision is to our required standard and they are meeting the DFE HAF Framework of Standards.

The Steering Groups participation and role includes but is not limited to:

- New provider applications
- Funding amounts per child
- External/enriching visits approval
- Quality Assurance Visits
- Check-ins

Steering Group

HAF Coordinator

Principal Advisor for School Improvement and Governance

Schools Health & Wellbeing Co-ordinator

Organisations worked with in 2024

- Berkshire Reptile Encounters
- West Berkshire Libraries
- Dealmaker - Dish Up!
- The Wonder Company/Rainbow Factory
- Pot Gang
- Everyone Active Leisure Centres

*‘There is a good variety of
different activities and clubs’*

‘HAF is a lifeline’

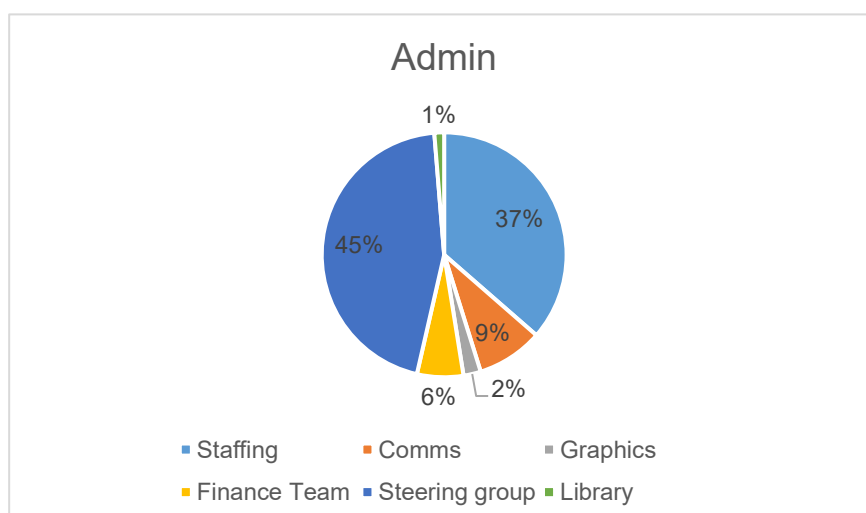
Finances

For the programme, West Berkshire Council had an allocation of £401150 from the DFE. No additional funds or grants were used or acquired to support the roll out and delivery of HAF.

West Berkshire's spend for HAF 2024 was £362,664.91, meaning an underspend of £38485.10.

A breakdown is shown below on how the funding was spent.

Expenditure Type	(£)
Administrative Expenditure	22890.22
Capital Expenditure	0
Programme Expenditure <i>(all of the costs of providing free HAF places, including payments to providers and third parties for services provided)</i>	335823.77
Other Expenditure <i>(this is any expenditure that does not fall into the above categories)</i>	3950.92
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (for 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025)	362664.91





Promotions and Marketing

With such a broad Local Authority radius we wanted to ensure we raised the profile and awareness of HAF and reach as many eligible families as possible.

Promotional materials were produced and shared with schools and governors. School media friendly graphics were created to make full use of social media platforms for advertising and programme awareness.

Our promotional material was made to be eye catching and engaging and explained eligibility, the offer and how to book.

Our comms team in the past also actively visited clubs to take photos and film promotional videos. One of which was very successful and shared on social media platforms and gained a lot of attention and saw an uptick in bookings and interest. We shared these videos numerous times with the community to celebrate the success of the HAF clubs.

We also added a scannable QR code this year that linked to a video of a popular tech camp in the area, that gained a lot of positive feedback and local press coverage.

The summer provision was also featured on local radio where a LA councillor and SEND provider were interviewed.

[Waterside Centre](#) – Berkshire Youth

[Birch Copse Tech Camp](#) – Next Thing Education

[Northcroft Leisure](#) – Let me play



Signposting

As part of their delivery, HAF providers are required to provide information, signposting or referrals to other services and support that would benefit the children and families who access their provision.

The HAF team supports with this by supplying providers with local services, charities and support for them to share with their families.

We signposted on our website foodbanks and low cost/free activities that are local as well as charities that offer free meals to families in need. Below is an example of what the HAF team pushed out to providers.

Signposting for families

FOODBANKS IN WEST BERKSHIRE

4 FOODBANK CENTRE(S)

Warehouse

OPENING TIMES	ADDRESS
Mon - 09:00 - 12:00	80 Great Bank Business Park
Tue - Closed	Greenham
Wed - 09:00 - 12:00	Thatcham
Thu - 09:00 - 12:00	RG24 6AB
Fri - 09:00 - 12:00	Directions via Google Maps
Sat - Closed	
Sun - Closed	



Newbury Foodbank Centre

OPENING TIMES	ADDRESS
Mon - Closed	Northcroft Club, Northcroft Lane
Tue - 10:00 - 10:00	12 Dabblers Way
Wed - Closed	Newbury
Thu - Closed	RG14 6AB
Fri - Closed	Directions via Google Maps
Sat - Closed	
Sun - Closed	



Thatcham Foodbank Centre

OPENING TIMES	ADDRESS
Mon - Closed	Thatcham Baptist Church
Tue - Closed	Thatcham Green Way
Wed - Closed	Thatcham
Thu - 10:00 - 10:00	RG24 6AB
Fri - Closed	Directions via Google Maps
Sat - Closed	
Sun - Closed	



Hungerford Foodbank Centre

OPENING TIMES	ADDRESS
Mon - Closed	Hungerford Baptist Church
Tue - Closed	Wing Street
Wed - 10:00 - 10:00	Hungerford
Thu - Closed	RG17 1BN
Fri - Closed	Directions via Google Maps
Sat - Closed	
Sun - Closed	



Burghfield & Mortimer Foodbank Centre

OPENING TIMES	ADDRESS
Mon - Closed	St Oswalds RC Church
Tue - Closed	Abbey Park
Wed - Closed	Burghfield Common
Thu - Closed	Reading
Fri - 10:00 - 10:00	RG7 1PQ
Sat - Closed	Directions via Google Maps
Sun - Closed	



Theale, Calcot and Tilehurst Foodbank

OPENING TIMES	ADDRESS
Mon - 10:00 - 10:00	The Calcot Centre
Tue - Closed	21 Highways
Wed - Closed	Calcot
Thu - Closed	Reading
Fri - Closed	RG24 6AB
Sat - Closed	Directions via Google Maps
Sun - Closed	



SCHOOL'S OUT!

Free Meals for Families



Newbury Cricket Club, Northcroft Lane, RG14 1RS

Every Thursday from 27th July to end of August
From 12.30 to 2.30pm
(with last meal served at 2.15pm)

For the duration of the school holidays we are moving our sessions to Thursday lunchtimes. We aim to help parents and carers who are struggling with the cost of living, especially during the holidays when children are at home all day.

If you would like to join us please just come along to Newbury Cricket Club in Northcroft Lane. If you have any questions please call or text Gill on 07907122007



Loose Ends Newbury, Charity no. 11189240
Email: admin@looseendsnewbury.org
Website: www.looseendsnewbury.org

In addition to this programme, families who are eligible for Universal Credit may be able to claim back up to 85 per cent of their childcare costs, dependent on the club attended. To find out more, please visit the ['Help paying for childcare' page on the GOV.UK website](#).

Advice on living and eating well

As part of the HAF programme we are sharing information and advice for parents on how to live well and eat well:

- [Healthy sustainable diets](#) - videos and recipes from the British Nutrition Foundation
- [Full Time Meals](#) - cook along on Facebook with chef Tom Kerridge and Marcus Rashford
- [Healthier families](#) - find easy ways to eat well and move more, recipe ideas, 10 minute shake ups and much more
- [Eat them to Defeat them](#) - recipes and activities

Pages

[Sports and Leisure](#)

[Family Hubs](#)

[Our Libraries \(view all\)](#)

Links

[West Berkshire Directory](#)

[Family Information Service](#)

What's on - FREE/LOW COST ACTIVITIES!



We offered each HAF child, that booked a holiday place, a free-swimming voucher in December 2024.

■ <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/article/42955/5>
-Fun

- Family Information Service and Family Hubs
- Loose Ends – charity that provides meals during holiday periods
- Free School Meals team contact details
- ‘Help paying for childcare’ gov.uk website

Food and Nutrition

All providers must provide at least 1 meal a day (breakfast, lunch or an evening meal and all food provided at HAF clubs (including snacks) must meet [school food standards](#). For most children, the opportunity to enjoy a meal at a HAF club is important.

All food provided as part of the HAF programme must:

- comply with regulations on food preparation
- take into account allergies and dietary requirements (see the [allergy guidance for schools](#))
- take into account any religious or cultural requirements for food
- Should be ideally hot but we understand and accept that this is not always possible

A variety of meals were provided across the HAF programme, some meals were cooked and prepared on-site, whilst for the majority of clubs used a variety local providers to support the lunch delivery. Dietary requirements including allergies were catered for and we educated our providers on cultural requirements such as Ramadan where applicable. Many providers used facilities on site to involve children in cooking and/or preparing food. We even witnessed some clubs making fruit skewers and talking about the different kinds of fruit and benefits of such.

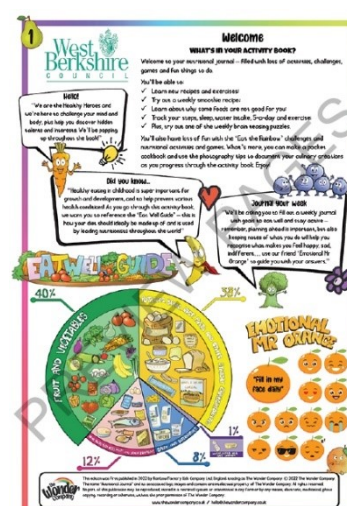
Nutritional Education is included in our HAF clubs.

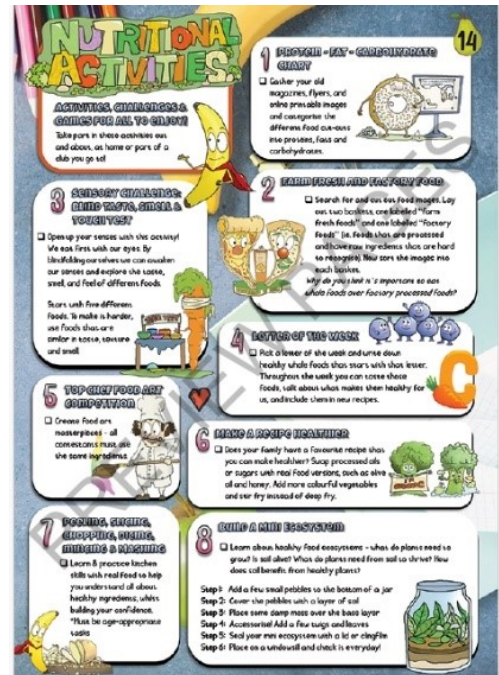
The HAF Frameworks advises HAF Clubs and providers should ensure children are

- receiving healthy and nutritious meals and
- developing a greater understanding of food, nutrition and other health related issues

West Berkshire commissioned healthy lifestyle workshops in a large number of clubs and each HAF child received a nutritional workbook (examples of some pages below).

The Eatwell guide, snack swap amongst other resources were used to deliver nutritional learning and education.





Enriching activities

This year we invited local companies to clubs to add further value and enjoyment to these. These included library visits, local petting zoo's and reptile handling. The HAF grant funded these extra, enriching activities for the children.

The reptile handling in particular was very popular.

It also meant that fee paying children attending a hybrid provision, also benefited from the visit as well as funded children – which we feel is a positive and important for all children.

Over a third of the children's favourite memory was the reptile visit! We hope to engage with them again in 25/26 to build on the, already, phenomenal memories.

The feedback from parents/carers and children was phenomenal and some comments are listed below:

'He absolutely loved meeting the reptiles wouldn't stop talking about it!'

'My child's favourite memory is when the reptiles came to visit'

'My daughter loved the reptile's day. She met and touched a huge snake and a lizard '

'Handling the reptiles was my child's favourite HAF memory '

Challenges

Non-attendance and no-shows

Whilst most clubs had a fair and table number of bookings, much like a number of other local authorities some clubs had bookings from children that did not attend. This happened across a number of clubs throughout 2024 again. However, this year we did have more engagement with clubs and they were actively contacting families that did not attend.

We continue to encourage providers to make contact with any family that do not attend as close to the start of the session as possible and to also ask if the club can expect them for the rest of their bookings. This way if they will not be attending, especially for those clubs fully booked, we can cancel their remaining bookings and release the place to another child on the waiting list, where applicable.

Last year to mitigate this further, providers were advised to let the HAF Coordinator know names of those that did not attend in order to implement a '3 strike' policy. We are still working on this and many either attended their 3rd or 4th session so there was no need to enforce this.

The HAF team has also tried to educate parents where possible about the importance of attending session that have been booked. We are hoping to introduce a booking system to further mitigate the risk of repeat non-attenders and ensure this reinforces the message somehow as well due to having to physically book via a portal.

SEND Provision

Specific SEND provision has been difficult to secure. We managed to secure 1 specialist SEND specific provision for summer that can accommodate complex needs but sadly there was no uptake, which did surprise the HAF team and provider. We worked tirelessly to promote the club through various channels.

The provider in question is still keen to pursue offering SEND HAF places for 25/26.

We also asked our mainstream providers if this was something they could look to accommodate and a number trialled this but unfortunately, not all of those with complex needs could not have their needs met.

This is something the HAF team is keen to secure even further and is working tirelessly to have this in place.

Looking forward

We feel very positive and excited for HAF in 2024/2025 and will strive to continue to drive up standards and ensure HAF is valuable and enjoyable for all.

There are a number of goals and aims for the next year of HAF. These include but are not limited to:

- Secure specialist SEND provision and ensure there is uptake and benefit for local eligible families and promotion is successful implemented – especially SEND provision for older children and young people.
- Encourage better and consistent attendance at HAF clubs – we will continue to discuss with providers ways to promote better attendance, such as attending parents evenings at the school where they operate. We as a local authority will continue to promote the benefits of attendance to parents/carers/guardians and the highlight effects of non-attendance.
- We also aim to develop and facilitate a way more young children/ those that attend can have their say and feedback on HAF via surveys and focus groups.
- Increase the take up and the HAF offer for Secondary aged children, which typically has lower booking and attendance figures.
- Continue to develop the HAF programme and offer enriching and interesting visits and provision for all eligible children.
- Implement and procure a HAF booking system that issues vouchers and codes to eliminate overbooking per child and ensures each child is reached and offered the chance to book a holiday club.

With thanks to:

All our wonderful HAF/Holiday club providers (a full list is included in the appendices)

West Berkshire Libraries

West Berkshire HAF steering committee

West Berkshire comms and graphics colleagues

Rainbow Factory/The Wonder Company

Chloe's Mobile Farm

Berkshire Reptile Encounters

Dealmaker - Dish up!

Everyone Active

Pot Gang vegetable kits suppliers

Appendix 1

Full list of providers

Go Beanies
 Get Active
 JG Tennis
 Next Thing
 Playsport/Let's play
 Wild Wood Club
 MNR Coaching
 Funtastic Kids
 Baily's Comets
 Whitelands School Club
 Andrew Simpson Centre
 Berkshire Youth
 Community Youth
 Hungerford Youth
 Mighty All Stars
 Premier Education
 Elite Youth Sports
 Innov8

List of schools/Sites

Westwood Farm Schools
 Thatcham Park C.E. Primary School
 Bradfield School
 Bradfield College
 Spurcroft Primary School and Nursery
 Hungerford Primary
 Long Lane Primary School
 Birch Copse Primary School
 Burghfield St Marys C.E. Primary
 The Calcot Schools`
 The Winchcombe School
 Springfield Primary School
 Falkland Primary School
 Kennet Valley Primary School
 Francis Baily
 Whitelands School
 Lambourn C.E. Primary School
 Northcroft Leisure Centre
 Bradfield Leisure Centre
 Waterside Centre
 Hungerford Community Centre
 Newbury Tennis Club
 Pangbourne Primary School
 Greenham Community Centre
 Hermitage Primary School
 Hungerford Youth Centre



Appendix 2

Snapshot of our current webpage



Welcome to West Berkshire

Careers

Services ▾

Your Council ▾

Your Community

Home > Your Community > Community Support and Events

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme

About the HAF programme for 2025, as well as videos from our 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 programme.



We have great news! The Department for Education has confirmed that HAF has been renewed for 2025-2026.

There are free holiday club places available for children and young people eligible for free school meals. This opportunity is provided as part of the government's expanded Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme being delivered across West Berkshire, which also covers the Christmas holidays.

The aim of the HAF programme is to support children to eat more healthily, be more active over the school holidays and have a greater knowledge of health and nutrition, as well as being more engaged with school and other local services.

The scheme provides enjoyable activities and nutritious meals for primary and secondary school aged children who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals.

See the [HAF Information Poster \(3MB\)](#) for full details.

[Click here for answers to our most commonly asked questions \(142KB\)](#)

Check out our videos at the bottom of this page to learn more about what to expect at our HAF camps!

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Department
for Education

Read our [HAF Annual Report 2023/24 \(1MB\)](#) and the positive impact it has made across West Berkshire.

Getting involved - HAF 2025/26

HAF 2025/26 - Holidays, Activities and Food Programme!



Eligible children will be able to access sessions throughout the holidays, at no cost to you. The sessions will include a variety of fun and enriching physical activities, including sports, music, arts and other exciting opportunities to learn and develop skills, alongside a nutritious meal each day. Nutritional resources will also be made available to children attending the sessions.

The holiday club places will be available for the equivalent of at least four hours a day, four days a week, six weeks per year: one week/4 sessions in the Easter holidays, four weeks/16 sessions in the summer holidays and one week/4 sessions in the winter break.

To find out if your child is eligible and how to book a place, please contact your child's school or contact the HAF team.



Summer HAF 2025!!

Please note: West Berkshire HAF partners with Holiday Activities, who will provide a centralised booking system. This means all clubs available to book for HAF provision will be in one place and accessible via a unique booking link that will be emailed to all eligible families in due course. Please check your email inbox for your invite link to sign up and register.

Please note, you must login in the same way you register for the portal.

Contact the West Berkshire HAF Coordinator if you have any queries or have not received your HAF voucher code.

[Click here to see a full list of our HAF providers. \(201KB\)](#)

Please note that your eligibility for HAF holiday places will be independently verified upon booking. Sharing codes is not allowed!

Spaces are limited, therefore if you have a booking you can no longer attend, please ensure this is cancelled or the holiday club is notified. Thank you.

If you have any queries regarding the HAF programme, please contact our HAF Coordinator Hannah Lee via email hannah.lee1@westberks.gov.uk.

In addition to this programme, families who are eligible for Universal Credit may be able to claim back up to 85 per cent of their childcare costs, dependent on the club attended. To find out more, please visit the ['Help paying for childcare' page on the GOV.UK website](#).

