HEALTHY HOLIDAYS CALDERDALE

Funded by the Department for Education's Holiday Activities and Food programme.













Contents

Background 4 - 9 **Calderdale HAF Provision: How We Delivered** 10 - 11 **Headline Achievements** 12 **Quality of Provision** 13 - 15 **Providers & Partners** 16 - 21 **Case Studies** 23 **Signposting** 24 **Communications & Marketing** 25 **Budget** 26 - 27 **HAF Training Week & Awards**



Background HEALTHY HOLIDAYS CALDERDALE

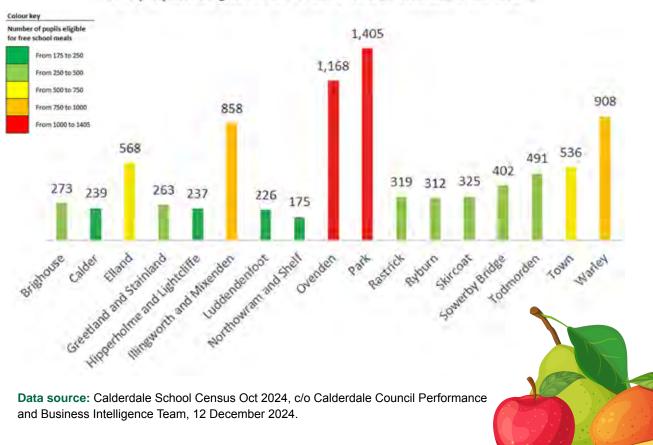
is the name of activities delivered by Calderdale Council and partners funded by the Department for Education's Holiday Activity and Food programme.

The HAF programme aims to support low-income families who fall into the following categories (DfE, 2022):

- Children eligible for benefits-related free school meals (FSM)
- Up to 15% to provide free or subsidised places to children who do not receive benefits-related free school meals, but the local authority believe they would benefit from the programme. This may include children assessed as in need, at risk or vulnerable, young carers, looked-after children or previously looked after children, children with an education health and care plan, children with low school attendance, children from high areas of deprivation.

All activities are free of charge for eligible children and young people.

All pupils eligible for free school meals Oct 2024



Calderdale HAF Provision: How We Delivered



During the school holidays during week days, children across Calderdale received a hot, nutritious meal plus snacks. Sadly, for some children, it would often be the only proper meal they would eat that day.

Providers made sure that the food was healthy and nutritious as well as tasty. They got the children involved in preparing some meals such as making pizzas and fruit kebabs and one provider taught the children the skill of cooking a fish over a fire which they enjoyed eating. Some providers grew vegetables with the children teaching them where food comes from, which they then harvested and ate. Meals included curries, lasagne, pasta with a tomato sauce, jacket potatoes, salad, fruit, and water. Healthy snacks and water were available for the children to help themselves to all day.

Providers added interest and fun by taking part in blindfolded taste tests, cooking their own food outside on forest school stoves, creating their own noodles, and blending their own shakes on blender bikes. These techniques helped even fussy eaters try something new. For many children, preparing and sharing food with friends gave them a sense of achievement and it was a great opportunity to bond friendships. For many of these children, it was the first time that they had prepared food, and the majority of children tasted food they had never tried before.

Extra meals and healthy snacks were sent home with children, helping to relieve pressure on families already facing the cost-of-living crisis.

Calderdale HAF Provision: How We Delivered

Nutritional Education and the promotion of healthy living/lifestyles:

Providers made learning about food fun and interesting so that they wanted to take part. Children enjoyed taste tests, cooking sessions, quizzes, and grew their own vegetables. By showing children how to prepare food they not only have them life skills, but grew their confidence too. It wasn't just the children who were taught healthy food prep as parents and carers received lessons and pop up cooking kits with the food and recipe boxes packed so that they could replicate the meal they had been shown to make enabling them to be able to cook affordable, healthy meals at home. Feedback showed that these boxes made a real difference to stretched household budgets, and helped build confidence around cooking from scratch across the whole family.

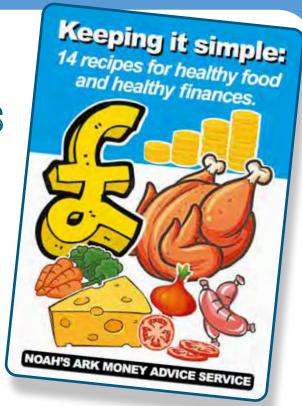
One provider took preparing healthy food a couple of steps further. Once the young people had volunteered and learned how to prepare food and cook, they employed them as chefs. This group then went on to not only make meals for their group, but also for other providers and their children.

All of the providers were given recipe books from Noah's Ark to give out to families. Noah's Ark are a money advice service and they produce this booklet showing families how to cook delicious, nutritional food on a budget.





The Noah's Ark Recipe Book that was given out to families with recipes and money saving tips!















Calderdale HAF Provision: How We Delivered

Physical Activity

Every provider that we visited was buzzing with children having fun and enjoying themselves. Whether it was football, nature walks, water polo, climbing, or archery, every child got moving often without even realising it was exercise. The majority of providers offered eight or more different types of physical activity, making sessions inclusive, engaging, and full of variety.

The intensity of activity was tailored to the situation, rainy playtimes were more sedate but still enabled them to do moderate exercise, and the outdoor activities were more vigorous.

All clubs were required to provide activities that met the UK Chief Medical Officer's physical activity guidelines of 60 minutes a day (UK Government, 2016), and as well as getting exercise through a wide range of sports and games they may not have tried before, they developed social skills by learning to share by playing together, developed friendships, and built their confidence.

Providers don't just 'offer sporting activities'; the leaders are passionate and engage the young people and give them the confidence to try something new and push themselves a bit further. With a genuine interest in giving children the opportunity to try different activities, most providers offer at least four different ways to get moving at different intensity levels. This year saw the widest range of activities on offer yet, with everything from boxing to rafting, street surfing to rock climbing, giving every child the chance to find something they loved and build their confidence through play.









Calderdale HAF Provision: How We Delivered

Enriching Activities

During the pandemic, many children missed out on interacting with other children which is crucial for their social development and we are still seeing the fall out from this. For these children a large part of their life was spent in lockdowns and isolation. This meant fewer opportunities to play, share, and simply be with other children. The impact has been profound and nationally we're seeing delayed social and emotional skills, with children struggling to make friends, take turns and share, or manage big feelings when things don't go their way.



That's why the Healthy Holidays Programme is so important. In every session, children are not just being fed and doing physical activity, they're learning how to communicate, work together and connect. Most clubs focused on children and young peoples team building skills by including team activities, ranging from team sports, to having to work together for a greater goal, such as the multicoloured parachute games.

All clubs were required to deliver fun and enriching activities and encourage children and young people to try out new experiences. Examples of enriching activities were based on the definition taken from the grant determination letter. The activities breathed energy, creativity, and inspiration into the children, whilst they are having fun.

There is a vast depth and breadth of enriching activities taking place across clubs. There were shared group games, foraging, whittling wood, bush crafting, den building, boccia, yoga, mindfulness, trips to local landmarks (eg, local nature reserves, outdoor bouldering), right through to arts and craft, reading, musical rhymes, and playing games. There has been a growth in mindfulness activities helping children learn how to deal with emotions positively and build emotional resilience.





Headline Achievements Programme Figures 2024/25

6,934

Unique participants attended the programme in total over 2024/25

4,108

Children attended our Summer Programme 2024

Number of unique participants attended:



Easter 1,570



-Summer 4,108 Christmas 1,256



Holiday Club places attended

Easter 3,170

Summer 19.565

Christmas 2.743

Hot meals provided annually

30,635



*Overall Attendance

40.1%

of children who attended are eligible for free school meals



*Overall Attendance: National average post summer 20024 is 21.5%.

In 2023/2024, overal attendance was 36% and in 2024/25 we achieved 40.1%!!!!
We are way above the national average reach for FSM families accessing the programme.

Headline Achievements How We Delivered 2024/25

	Easter	Summer	Christmas
Number of Activity Providers	20	28	17
Holiday Schemes	24	36	20
Total Attendees	1,570	4,108	1,256
Primary Age Attendance Split	1,113	3,128	992
Secondary Age Attendance Split	295	980	264
Children with SEND Attendance Split	242	570	183

Quality of Provision

During the delivery of the provision, we visited every provider to conduct an audit on the holiday club. These visits gave us an opportunity to see first hand what was working well, share ideas and good practice between providers, and offer more support if it was needed so that every provider could offer the highest quality of sessions possible for them.

We audited every provider, and the results were all positive. Each one was delivering high quality sessions and going above and beyond to make sure children turned up, felt welcome, and had a great experience. From sending text reminders and also calling families, to preparing healthy, nutrious meals, and offering a mix of enriching activities and physical fun, every club was committed to giving children the best possible healthy holiday experience.

Example Audit Questions

- How many children were expected to attend today, and how many attended?
- Have you [provider] been able to contact families and send reminders to reduce no shows?
- How many children attending are eligible for free school meals, and how many are not eligible for free school meals?
- What are the age ranges of children attending?
- How many staff were in attendance during the visit?
- Are all staff suitably vetted?
- What activities are on offer?
- Details of meals and snacks provided:
- What nutritional education was provided?
- Does the provider have any comments or feedback or require further support from the HAF team?
- Do you have any observations regarding interactions between staff and children, parents and carers, activities offered or venue quality:
- Overall, how would you rate the session 1 (poor) to 10 (brilliant)
- We also gathered feedback from children





Providers

Organisations who delivered the Healthy Holidays Calderdale programme across the school holidays in 2024/2025

CMBC Sports MAC **ROKT Foundation** M and A Club Calder Communities CIC Project Challenge

Project Communities CIC Project Challenge

Active Lives Active Communities Imagination Gaming CMBO Positive Impact Sports Bridge End House Nursery, OOS & Holiday

Bridge End House Nursery, Park Lane Academy

Calderdale Community Coaching Trust

Calderdale Community Heritage

Calderdale Community Heritage

Calderdale Community Coaching Club Clc

Canctus Academy Amateur Revine Club Clc Sanctus Academy Amateur Boxing Club CIC Halifax Boxing, Sports and Fitness Invictus Wellbeing Foundation CIO Grass Roots Private Day Nursery ne Cricket Asylum Foun TAGS Programme Limited Nurturing Creativity CIC Esteemed Creatives CMBC Sports Tod

Partnership Work

Capitalising on connections with businesses, the Healthy Holidays programme received generous donations of fruit, vegetables, and snack bars which helped support the delivery of the programme.

We also partnered with the Melanoma Fund who gave suncream dispensers out to all providers and displayed their posters.

























Steering Group

The Healthy Holidays programme utilises a team of partners from across the borough to maximise, support and strengthen the programme to make it the best it can be. From public health to children's services, from active travel to community safety, every member brings valuable insight to ensure we reach the children and families who need us most to make the most impact.



"What makes Healthy Holidays Calderdale so powerful is the strength of our connections and partnerships. By bringing together people who understand the needs of local community, we're able to offer truly holistic support. It's about making sure that every child, no matter their background, has access to food, make friends, and opportunities that support their development whilst having fun."

The steering group continues to reflect on the programme and stretch the reach and improve the provision for children and young people in Calderdale. The group brings a wealth of knowledge, ideas, and contacts, and work well together to maximise the impact of this programme.

Case Study: SEND Programmes

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

The ROKT Foundation

Funds were used to produce a film to capture the experience of the SEND children engaging in Zulu Stomp as part of the HAF programme. They incorporated Zulu drumming from 'Zulu Stomp' and some of the children partaking in this film are low level SEND.

Drums, Beats and Blocs

Video link:

https://youtu.be/ObBCmwNhhlw?feature=shared



One is an SEND session where the children were engaging with the puzzle box game and are interviewed at the end.

Video link:

https://youtu.be/7HhAQW8HkIM?feature=shared



Nurturing Creativity CIC

This organisation works closely with local primary schools to offer SEND sessions alongside their mainstream HAF sessions.

The provider employs the SEND support staff at the schools throughout the school holidays so the young people have a familiar face and feel comfortable attending a familiar environment.

Over 20 SEND families access the provision each day.



Case Study: SEND Programmes

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

Unique Community Hub

This organisation has over 150 young people attending each day. They run a SEND only group which is extremely valuable to the community which is predominantly BAME. Families feel comfortable attending and most of all feel included in all aspects of the provision.

The families involved with children with additional needs have really found this club beneficial as all children feel accepted and welcome. The parents love the staff and think that the staff are amazing with the children. Lots of families comment how valuable this provision is as it keeps the children in their normal routine of getting up and going to out which is vital for children on the Autism spectrum.



One young girl with visual impairments joined the SEND sessions at the Hub. At first, she found it difficult to take part as she wasn't confident being in a group settings and hesitated when it came to taking part in physical activities. The staff have so much experience dealing with SEND children, they quickly built her confidence and gained her trust. They gave her tailored support and she was gently introduced to sensory play, then cycling and scooting on the new track. She was made to feel safe by staff lining up and clapping so she could hear them, not only did it help her navigate her way safely, but it also gave her confidence and encouragement. By trying new things and having successful experiences, her confidence grew and she was smiling more and happier.

The little girl's Mum said, "She looks forward to these sessions every week and is even starting to make friends."

Toyoba, the SEND session lead, added, "It was a heartwarming moment, and it's inspiring to see everyone come together to support this young girl's journey. The spirit of inclusion truly makes a difference."

This story is just one example of how, with the right support, every child can take part, feel seen, and thrive.

Case Study: SEND Programmes

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

Project Challenge

This project includes training and upskilling vulnerable young people with SEND. They are taught food preparation and cooking skills which they can progress by then becoming volunteers. After a period of volunteering, Project Challenge then hire them giving them valuable employment as chefs that they can then use for the future.



Willow Park School, Project Communities CIC

Emily*, a 12-year-old girl with Special Educational Needs (SEND), was referred to Willow Park HAF camp. Due to financial difficulties, her parents have never been able to afford a birthday party for her which had an impact on her self-esteem, and she felt disappointed that all her friends had birthday parties, but she didn't.

When Emily started at the HAF camp, she was shy and hesitant. She struggled to take part when there were lots of children taking part in group activities. Staff were patient and supportive, using different ways to communicate and offer reassurance. After a few sessions, Emily began to grow in confidence and has a caring and fun side when playing in small groups with her friends. When the staff found out that she had never had a birthday party and it would be her birthday during the HAF camp, the staff decided to organise a surprise celebration completely tailored to her needs. Staff decorated the outside with balloons and bunting, and provided a cake, and when Emily realised the party was for her, she was overwhelmed with happiness and began to cry. She hugged every staff member and thanked them repeatedly. It was an emotional moment for everyone. The party was planned with low lighting, minimal noise, and friends and included arts and crafts, music and sports which are Emily's favourite activities. Staff and her parents commented how much her confidence had grown and she proudly wore her birthday badge all camp.

Because of the HAF programme, staff were able to make Emily feel loved, valued, and celebrated, by having a birthday party for the first time in her life. This will have had an important impact on her mental wellbeing and self-esteem.

^{*}Name changed for confidentiality.

Case Study: Higher Up Club, Club Edge: Brighouse

During the Easter Camp at Club Edge, we welcomed three siblings who are currently in foster care. One of them, Teddy, initially found it very difficult to settle. His behaviour was challenging for staff, as he frequently argued with his siblings and was unkind to other children and adults.

After speaking with Teddy's foster Mum, staff gained a small but important insight into his difficult upbringing, helping them better understand the reasons behind his struggles with social interaction and his tendency to sabotage activities he took part in. His key worker patiently built a relationship with Teddy, and he started to engage more and his confidence grew. Teddy made friends and was really happy. One thing Teddy particularly enjoyed was helping to prepare meals as he wasn't allowed to help at home. This responsibility not only helped his self-esteem but taught him about nutrition and how to prepare food.

Teddy's Foster Mum said, "Every night Teddy tells me how much fun he has had and every morning he can't wait to come to the HAF camp. I've really seen his confidence grew, he's tried new things, made new friends and is proud of what he has accomplished in the activities he has done. For a little boy who has seen so much disappointment and disadvantage, it's great to see him achieve a success and be happy."

By providing a nurturing environment and diverse opportunities, the Higher Up Club made a meaningful difference in his life during the Easter holidays.



Case Study: Nurturing Creativity CIC

Nurturing Creativity work closely with a family of four children, a little boy aged 5, and three sisters aged 6, 8, and 10-years-old; two of which have SEND. Recently the little boy has recently been diagnosed with sensory processing challenges and is blind in one eye. The 10-year-old little girl has had a past traumatic bereavement and has anxiety as a result. The 6-year-old little girl struggles with engagement and often finds busy, overstimulating environments overwhelming. She is significantly more settled in quiet, sensory-based settings.

School holidays are difficult for the family as they have struggled to find the structure, calm, and individualised support these children require with mainstream holiday clubs which has led to the family feeling isolated in the holiday and has put increased pressure on the parents.

Nurturing Creativity have built a strong and open relationship with the children's mother, and they are constantly in touch. This ongoing communication helps them adapt their provision to meet the children's changing needs, for example they now offer a smaller, sensory-informed holiday club alongside their mainstream provision. This flexible model enables all four children to come to the HAF camp; the 8 year old little girl can take part in the main club alongside her friends, the 10 year old little girl can decide each day whether she wants to join the main group or stay in the smaller, quieter space, the 6-year-old little girl prefers to take part in the smaller group, and the 5-year-old little boy benefits from sensory-focused activities tailored to his specific needs. The outcomes and impact have been phenomenal. There has been an increase in attendance from all children, the provider delivered Child-Led Choice giving them control over their environment reducing their anxiety and improving their engagement with other children and staff, and this has made a huge different to the family as the parents are less stressed knowing that their children are in a safe environment where they are understood and supported.



Feedback from families Parent feedback

"Before the club, I was really anxious about my daughter taking part. She's never been to anything like this before, and because of her additional needs, I wasn't sure if it would be the right environment for her. But I've been completely amazed at how happy she's been and how much confidence she's gained in such a short time. She's currently awaiting an autism diagnosis, so I'm always very cautious about new experiences. I'm just so grateful to have a safe, supportive place like this where I know she's not only happy and healthy but truly thriving...and she even made a few friends!"



"Our son hasn't been able to attend any clubs for years due to anxiety. But this playscheme - with staff he knows and trusts - changed everything. He felt safe, supported, and came home smiling. It's made a real difference." "Layton hasn't been in school for a year, but he asked to come during the holidays - because here, he feels free to be himself. He's tried new foods, made new friends, and now comes home more relaxed and happy.

That means everything to us."





Signposting

Healthy Holidays Calderdale isn't just about what happens inside the clubs, it has ripple effect that reaches into homes, schools, and communities. Every provider played a vital role in connecting families with the support they needed, whether it was advice, referrals, or practical help.

Thanks to strong relationships with local charities, food banks, sports clubs and schools, providers are able to spot when families were struggling, and step in and help or signpost them to someone who can help. One school has a full-time social worker who continued supporting families throughout the holidays. At one of our provisions they noticed a child had stopped attending. They worked with the Headteacher and pastoral team, who visited the family and discovered they were without a cooker. Through partnership working, they arranged financial support and sourced a new one. Without this intervention, that family would not have had a hot meal all summer.

Over Christmas, 1,000 'Dish Up' recipe boxes were handed out, packed with ingredients to help families prepare healthy meals together. One provider teamed up with a local church and community centre to open their doors on Christmas Eve, creating a welcoming space with warm food at a time when it was needed most.

All providers also shared Noah's Ark Centre recipe booklets and First Aid booklets from Flat Stan First Aid. Some even ran training sessions for young people on basic first aid and providers received CPD on allergies and how to safely use an EpiPen.

Signposting adds so much value to this programme that can't be measured. Providers have formed trusting relationships and know their families so that when they need to step in and help, they are able to. This can be a lifesaver for some families. The programme may focus on delivering enriching activities and nutritious meals, but its reach is much deeper and makes a meaningful difference where it matters most.





Communications & Marketing

Communications activity this year included interviewing Head Teachers in Calderdale schools, news articles, flyer translations, new social media branding, providers winning regional awards, and a highlights film from the summer programme which featured providers, young people, parents, and carers.

Providers spread the word about their provision by contacting families who have booked previously. We send digital leaflets to be distributed through schools, specific charities whose service users maybe excluded digitally, libraries, community centres, foodbanks, and a digital leaflet to schools.

The Healthy Holidays Calderdale programme is also promoted on our Council website as well as the weekly e-call to internal Council staff, digital flyers are circulated to all Calderdale schools and banners provided to display outside HAF venues. The programme is also regularly promoted in our cost of living campaigns as well as having market stalls at face to face events. We promote places on our social media channels and in local Facebook groups.

Link to our marketing video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TL4UCFJyktl



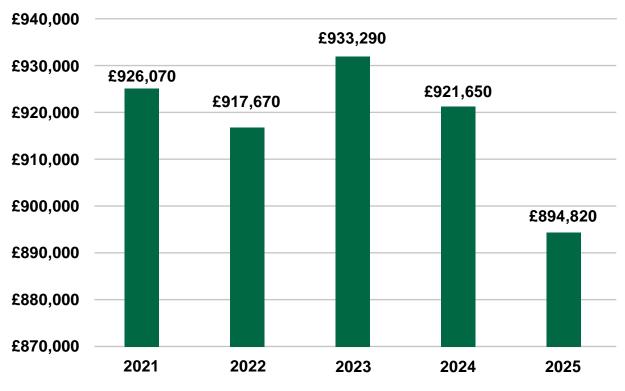


Budget



In 2021 Calderdale Council partnered with the Community Foundation for Calderdale (CFFC) to deliver this Government funded programme for the first time.

Below is a graph showing the overall funding that Calderdale Council have received from the Department for Education to deliver the HAF programme since 2021.







HAF Provider Training Week



We ask providers for feedback of what they need to be able to maximise the programme they are running and this insight shapes a week of training designed to boost confidence, build skills, and spark new ideas.

In June, we brought providers together for five workshops which were well-attended and people fully engaged and took part. This was an opportunity to not just to learn, but to connect, collaborate, and learn from each other. The training sessions give providers practical skills to deliver safe, inclusive, and inspiring events. We covered a range of topics including bushcraft, first aid, using an EpiPen, managing challenging behaviour, and understanding Autism.

Workshops also explored how to adapt sessions so that every child feels welcome, as well as the power of outdoor play and how to design experiences that build confidence and hope.

The response was overwhelmingly positive with providers leaving the week feeling more prepared, energised, and excited to make this summer more than food and fun for their children and young people.



Awards Ceremony



Earlier this year, we invited our brilliant HAF providers to come together to celebrate the special success of the programme. We held an Awards Ceremony to recognise the incredible efforts from our providers and say a big thank you.

Every provider received a certificate of recognition, and we presented a series of awards to celebrate different ways providers stood out and those contributions went above and beyond of the programme.

Award categories included:

Best Social Media Campaign, Strong Partnership Work, Innovative Delivery Model, Exciting Enriching Activities, The Most 'Can Do' Provider, SEND Support Superstars, Going the Extra Mile, Young People's Engagement, Best Newcomer, Best Progress, School Engagement, Sustainability Award, and The 100% Club.

Adding even more social value, the event was planned in part by a work experience student, offering them a meaningful project to lead and gain valuable real world experience.

We are really lucky that we have such dedicated providers delivering the Healthy Holidays Calderdale programme. This event was just one way of saying thank you and celebrating the difference they make to families across our borough.







HEALTHY HOLIDAYS CALDERDALE

Funded by the Department for Education's Holiday Activities and Food programme.













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