

Hillingdon Holiday Activities and Food Programme 2023/24



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Introduction

We are delighted to present the 2023/24 Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme report for Hillingdon.

Since 2021, Hillingdon has been fortunate to receive funding for the delivery of this national initiative from the Department for Education. We provide nutritional food and enrichment activities to free school meal (FSM) eligible children and young people across the three main school holidays each year: spring, summer and winter.

The investment from the Department for Education is used to develop and co-ordinate the HAF programme across Hillingdon, offering valuable support to families on lower incomes, giving them the opportunity to access rewarding activities alongside healthy meals during the school holidays and enhancing the wider holiday and youth provision that already exists within Hillingdon.

“The HAF programme provides an amazing opportunity for children and young people across Hillingdon to have new experiences, develop their skills, gain knowledge and achieve their potential. It is fantastic to be part of such an important programme of work benefiting Hillingdon’s children and their families.

“During 2023/24, the HAF team worked in partnership with schools, charities, community interest companies and businesses ensuring the best possible outcomes for this programme. They have continued to build on their successes and experience while cementing relationships with both longstanding and new providers to offer the very best experience for our eligible children.

“As the programme continues to evolve, the team’s reach has grown to develop the offer to meet changing needs and this report highlights some of the fantastic achievements in recognition of that strength of partnership working in both our planning and programme delivery.”

Julie Kelly,
Corporate Director,
Children’s Services

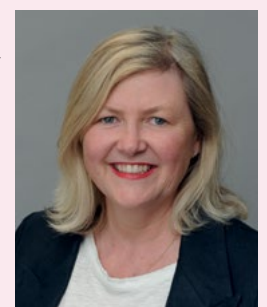


“We’re really proud of our HAF programme and delighted that so many children and young people enjoyed the exciting variety of courses and activities that Hillingdon had to offer this year.

“School holidays are an exciting time for children and young people, but we know times are really challenging for families at the moment. The holistic approach to wellbeing and support that HAF provides for parents and families has been very positively received and has provided families with access to healthy meals, positive activities and signposting to support services.

“The HAF programme has provided children and young people across Hillingdon with enjoyable fun, educational and stimulating experiences this year and I look forward to seeing another fun-filled year of activities in 2024/25.”

Cllr Susan O’Brien,
Cabinet Member for
Children, Families
and Education



Holiday Activities and Food programme overview

HAF is a national initiative funded by the Department for Education in response to research that shows the school holidays can be pressure points for families, leading to a holiday experience gap for some children. The HAF programme provides eligible children from reception to school year 11, and up to the age of 18 years with special educational needs (SEN), that are in receipt of benefits-related free school meals (FSM) access to funded holiday provision during the Easter, summer and winter school holiday periods. Providing healthy meals, enriching activities, and free childcare places to children from low-income families, benefiting their health, wellbeing and learning.

While the funding is primarily aimed at school-aged children eligible for benefits-related FSM – it is not exclusively, and we aim to include other vulnerable children experiencing challenges, economic and social disadvantage.

There are many benefits for children who attend HAF programmes and our aim is to deliver a range of quality programmes that result in children:

- receiving healthy and nutritious meals
- maintaining a healthy level of physical activity
- being happy, having fun and meeting new friends
- developing a greater understanding of food, nutrition and other health related issues
- taking part in fun and engaging activities that support their development and wellbeing
- feeling safe and secure
- getting access to the right support services
- returning to school feeling engaged and ready to learn.

Families can also benefit, through HAF providers:

- providing opportunities to get involved in sessions, for example family activities like cookery classes
- ensuring they are signposted towards other sources of information and support, such as health services or employment and education opportunities.

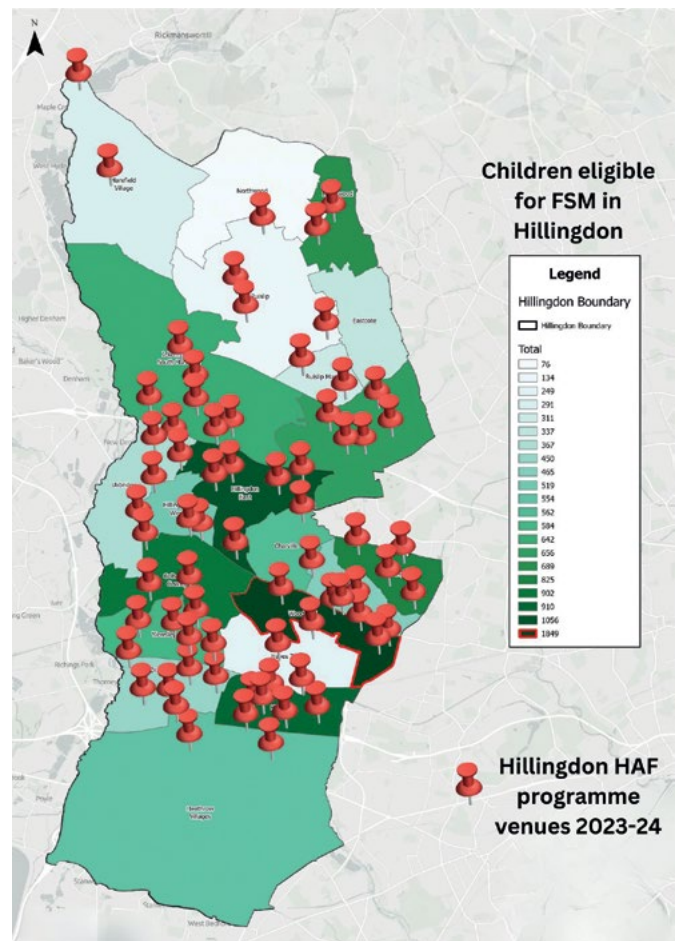


Hillingdon and Free School Meals – what we know

Census data tells us we have 11,526 children whose parents claim free school meals, and the government uses the figure 10,494 for Hillingdon in their performance tables (*Government Publication: Schools, pupils and their characteristics 2022/23*). In Hillingdon, we update this data regularly throughout the year in collaboration with local schools and now have more than 12,000 children listed as in receipt of benefits-related free school meals during the financial year 2023/24.

Of the children known to be in receipt of FSM in Hillingdon, data tells us that more than 1,800 have special educational needs (SEN) and require some additional support and a further 840 have an Educational Health Care Plan due to their more complex needs. This data is used to inform the number of SEN specific programme places we offer throughout the year and funding for support workers to ensure eligible children can access the support they need to engage in programmes.

Information is used and regularly reviewed from mapping exercises to understand where children in receipt of FSM live in the borough to ensure our programmes best serve the needs of children and families within Hillingdon and are spread geographically across areas that are most in need. We have chosen venues situated within local communities and easily accessible by public transport.



Programme content and HAF standards

The content of our HAF programme is informed by our families, incorporating the responses to our post-programme surveys, parent/carer and children's feedback via our providers' feedback forms and youth voice input from groups including Hillingdon Youth Council and Youth Voice. We aim to deliver a wide range of programmes across the year in venues local to our eligible residents that meet the needs and interests of our families in Hillingdon. Along with our geographical data and borough statistics this allows us to develop our programme offer to make sure we have the right activities, in the right places and spaces, and at the right times for our families.

To partner with us to deliver our HAF programme, all of the providers we fund are required to meet the HAF standards as outlined in the government guidance document. These standards focus on core elements of HAF and include food, enrichment activities, physical activities, and promotion of healthy lifestyles.

HAF standards: Food provision

On all our HAF programmes we offered children the opportunity to have at least one healthy meal during the day. All meals met the School Foods Standards and considered allergies, dietary requirements and religious or cultural requirements. Our providers used both external and onsite caterers, and several built cookery activities into their programme offer.

► Highlight: Canoe Sports Trust

The Canoe Sports Trust is an organisation of canoe sport enthusiasts providing opportunities for people to participate in canoeing, kayaking, stand up paddleboarding and other paddlesports from their base within the Bury Lake Young Mariners site at the Aquadrome.

The Canoe Sports Trust delivered a HAF programme aimed at 12 to 16-year-olds during the Easter and summer holidays. Young people participated in a range of paddlesport

activities and a canoe expedition down the canal to Harefield.

The Canoe Sports Trust partnered with the local onsite café in the park, working with the local provider to offer hot, healthy meals made with fresh organic ingredients for all participants, except on Friday when the group prepared their own meals under the supervision of a food tech teacher employed to supervise the on-site cooking activities.

HAF standards: Enrichment activities

In response to feedback from children and parents/carers we continued to develop and increase the range of enrichment activities on offer from programme to programme across the year. Our HAF programme consisted of a range of programmes that provided children opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge, consolidate their existing skills and knowledge, try out new experiences, have fun, socialise and improve their wellbeing.

The programme content was varied and aimed at both primary and secondary age ranges. It included sports-based provision (football, basketball, cycling, cricket, watersports), arts-based provision (dance, drama, music, arts and crafts), life skills focus (personal development courses/building resilience, cookery skills), STEM activities (coding, radio controlled car racing) and multi-activity camps.

► Highlight: Beck Theatre - Summer Youth Project

We are lucky to have a range of arts and cultural organisations, including several theatres in Hillingdon. The Beck Theatre has run an annual Summer Youth Project for many years, a two-week theatre masterclass for children aged nine to 19 years. The aim of their summer project is to provide local young people with the opportunity to work in a professional theatre under the supervision of a highly skilled production team, including a



professional director, choreographer, musical director and musicians. The programme provides local children with a unique opportunity to take an active interest in the arts, helping to build confidence and develop skills while having fun in an imaginative and exciting environment. The programme seeks to inspire children that may not have access to theatre and provides a crucial artistic outlet for them during the summer holidays.

The show this year was Disney's *The Little Mermaid* which offered a fantastic creative opportunity for rich costumes and sets, and the chance to perform some of the best-known songs. We partnered with the Beck Theatre to fund HAF places on their Summer Youth Project so that children from low income or vulnerable families would be able to participate in this amazing opportunity.

HAF standards: Physical activities

All our providers incorporated a minimum of 60 minutes of moderate exercise per day to help develop movement skills, muscular fitness, and bone strength while minimising the amount of time children spent being sedentary. This was done through a range of engaging activities across the programme offer. For some activities this was simple and for others the staff had to be more creative!

Our sports-based programmes had children doing more than their 60 minutes while they ran, swam, cycled, paddled and bat their way to being more active.

► Highlight: Greenwich Leisure Limited – Junior Gym and family swimming sessions

During our winter programme we partnered with Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) to offer our families the chance to attend fully funded family swim sessions. Families were able to book sessions at one of three leisure centres in the borough, Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Complex, Highgrove Pool and Fitness Centre, and Botwell Green Sports and Leisure Centre. After their swim, they could access a healthy lunch from the onsite cafés.

GLL also provided Junior Gym sessions at Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Complex and Highgrove Pool for 11 to 17-year-olds wanting to work on their fitness. Junior Gym sessions help children learn how to use their local gym in a fun, supportive environment, with instructors on hand to offer advice and encouragement. These sessions benefit children physically and mentally and provide a safe space to meet new friends.

HAF standards: Increasing awareness of healthy eating, healthy lifestyles and positive behaviours

All our providers delivered an element of nutritional education and highlighted the benefits of healthy eating to children, offering activities that developed their knowledge of food, nutrition, and healthy lifestyle choices. They embedded educational content into their programmes and provided informal learning opportunities for children. This included getting children involved in food preparation and cooking, children growing fruit and vegetables and discussing food and healthy eating during mealtimes.

We also involved parents, carers and other family members by providing resources, worksheets, at home cookery packs and involved them in cookery lessons to develop their knowledge of food, nutrition and budgeting.

► Highlight: Learn Hillingdon

In Hillingdon we wanted to deliver a range of programming that supported not just children but also parents, guardians and carers to develop their practical skills and increase their knowledge of healthy eating, healthy lifestyles and positive behaviors to support long term positive impact.

We partnered with Learn Hillingdon – the council’s adult education service – to deliver a HAF cookery programme for children and their parents/carers at their adult education centre in Uxbridge, accessible to our families, with easy access by bus, train or car from communities across Hillingdon. Using their purpose-built cookery classroom and experienced tutors, Learn Hillingdon provided multiple workshops, supporting adults and children to work together to cook a different healthy meal each day. Participants were provided with practical cookery skills, ideas to engage their children in cookery activities, information on health and safety, nutrition and a healthy balanced diet.

The programme had a positive impact on families attending, with participants giving feedback on how they had developed many important cookery skills, such as peeling vegetables and using knives safely.

HAF standards: Signposting and supporting families

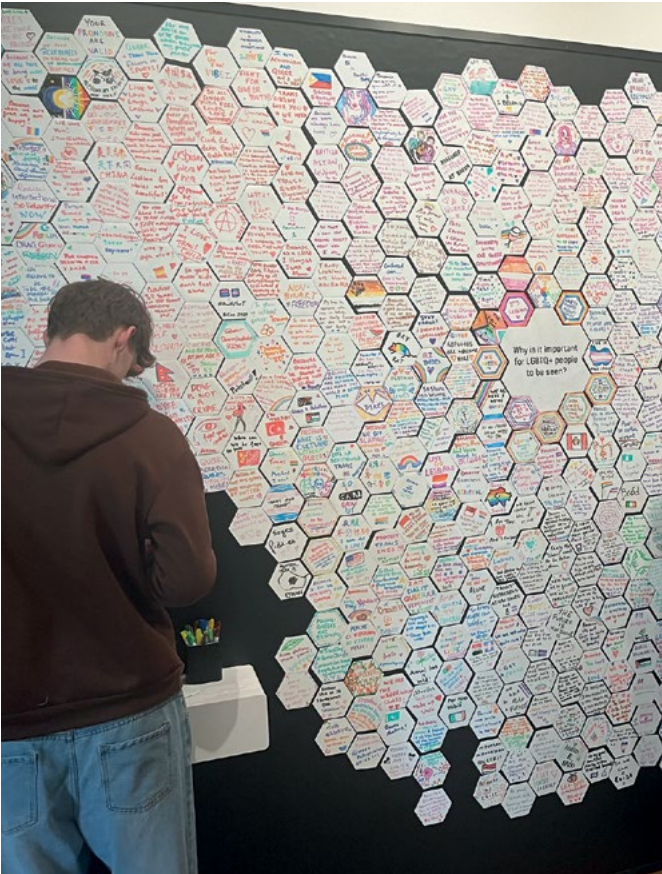
It is important to us that our families get access to the information and support they need. All our providers were well informed on local support services and were able to provide resources and signpost families to services that can support them. This included signposting to mental health, careers, and housing support services, and providing information about term time activities for children. Providers sent newsletters, handed out leaflets, gave activity packs, workbooks, and resources to families across the year.

► Highlight: Adolescent Development Service

Hillingdon’s Adolescent Development Service offers targeted support all year round to children at risk of negative outcomes in relation to their social, emotional and academic needs. The service provides support through a selection of workshops and programmes designed to engage, entertain and educate.

The Adolescent Development Service has delivered holiday activity programmes in partnership with the HAF programme across all three delivery periods this year. Their holiday programmes provide vulnerable children the opportunity to engage in a range of fun and educative activities.

Children and young people attending in holiday activity programmes are encouraged to participate in a range of term time programmes including, boys and young men’s programmes and mentoring to continue their engagement and endeavour to support needs. The Adolescent Development Service uses a comprehensive all-inclusive approach offering support to parents and carers and signposting them to information.



Overview of the Easter programme

Our HAF Easter programme ran from Monday 3 to Friday 14 April 2023. We worked with 26 providers to deliver 5,630 sessional places in 39 locations across Hillingdon. Programmes included sports-based provision (football, basketball, cycling, cricket, paddleboarding), arts-based provision (dance, drama, music, singing, arts and crafts), life skills focus (personal development courses, cookery skills), STEM based activities (coding, radio controlled car racing) and multi-activity camps.



Key highlights

We distributed 600 resource packs with at home activities, vegetable growing kits and healthy lifestyle information and workbooks to children and families across Hillingdon.

We piloted a programme delivered by Learn Hillingdon, providing families with the chance to participate in cookery workshops with their children. This was well received with more than 45 unique participants across the two weeks cooking a range of dishes and learning about food and nutrition.

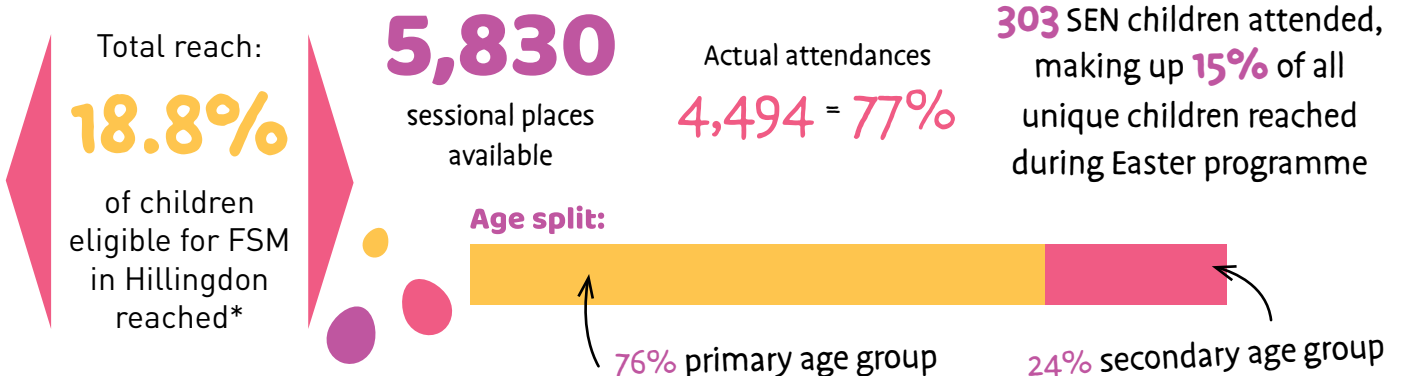
Challenges

During our Easter programme we had some challenging weather with wind and rain affecting attendance at some of our outdoor activities. Our delivery period also fell within the holy month of Ramadan, leading to some reduced engagement in physical and cookery activities for older children and families who were fasting. Our providers did ensure provision was made for families to take food home to eat in the evenings where appropriate.

1,978 total number of unique individual children who engaged



Of these **1,894** were eligible for free school meals and **84** were vulnerable children in receipt of a discretionary place



*Based on figure of 10,494 from Government Publication: Schools, pupils and their characteristics 2022/23

Overview of the summer programme

Our HAF summer programme ran from Monday 24 July to Friday 25 August 2023. We worked with 34 providers to deliver 19,398 sessional places in 53 locations across Hillingdon. Programmes included sports-based provision (football, basketball, cycling, cricket, watersports), arts-based provision (musical theatre, drama, arts and crafts), life skills focus (personal development courses/building resilience, cookery skills), STEM activities (coding, radio controlled car racing) and multi-activity camps.



Key highlights

We distributed 450 'Take and Make' cookery activity packs supplied by the Felix Project/ Mayor's Fund for London to children and families across Hillingdon.

A targeted piece of work was commissioned to provide specialist support to vulnerable asylum seekers/refugees living in the borough. The Compass Collective delivered a drama-based workshop ending in a short performance at the local Beck Theatre.

Challenges

Rising costs (energy, food, venues) have led to increased costs from providers to deliver sessions. This has meant a decrease in the total number of sessions we were able to deliver within the available funding this summer when compared to last year.

High demand for SEN specific places created pressure on available funding. Within the 2022/23 data, seven per cent of the HAF eligible children had a special educational need (SEN), we apportioned funding to ensure that the number of sessional places available on SEN specific programmes matched this, however 20 per cent of children attending sessions were listed as having SEN.

2,251 total number of unique individual children who engaged



Of these **2,080** were eligible for free school meals and **171** were vulnerable children in receipt of a discretionary place

Total reach:

21.5%

of children eligible for FSM in Hillingdon reached*

19,389

sessional places available

Actual attendances

13,300
= **69%**

456 SEN children attended, making up **20%** of all unique children reached during summer programme

Age split:



79.5% primary age group

20.5% secondary age group

*Based on figure of 10,494 from Government Publication: Schools, pupils and their characteristics 2022/23

Overview of the winter programme

Our HAF winter programme ran from Wednesday 27 December 2023 to Friday 5 January 2024. We worked with 30 providers to deliver 7,068 sessional places in 42 locations across Hillingdon. Programmes included sports-based provision (football, basketball, taekwondo, cricket), arts-based provision (dance, drama, music, arts and crafts), life skills focus (personal development courses/building resilience, cookery), STEM activities (coding) and multi-activity camps.

Key highlights

We put a focus on family activities for our winter programme and:

- distributed 500 at home cookery activity packs, with recipes and resources to make at least four meals for a family of four
- partnered with our three local leisure centres to provide over 1,200 places on swimming sessions
- commissioned 450 pantomime tickets from the Compass Theatre for our children and families.

Challenges

Cold, wet and windy weather led to low attendance at some of our sports-based programmes, particularly those using outdoor facilities.

Due to the dates of the school holiday and when Christmas and bank holidays fell, we had a 'split' delivery pattern, which impacted programme delivery and attendance. Children's average attendance was two of the four days available to them.

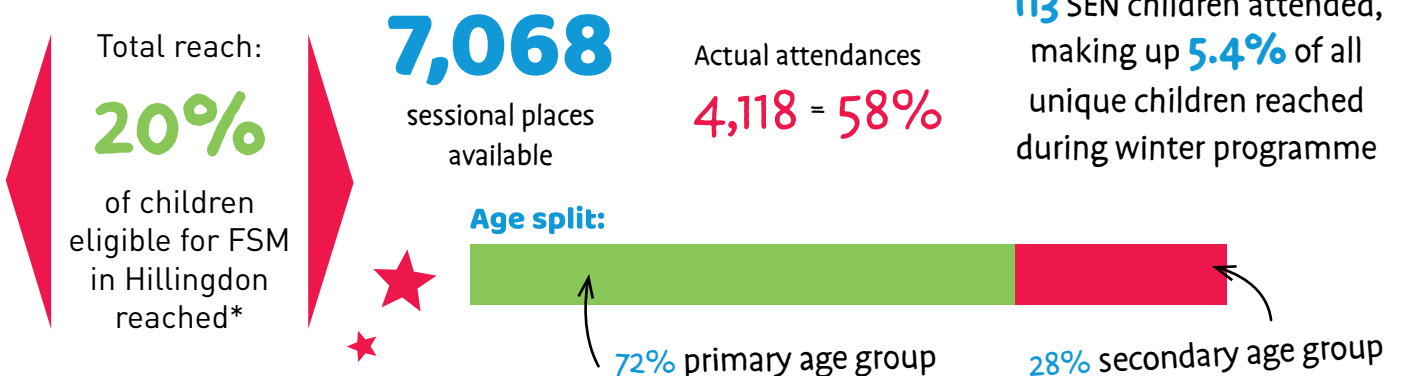
Historically we have seen a lower number of places booked on our winter programme when compared with Easter and summer, but a higher demand for at home resources, so we amended our planned expenditure to allocate additional funding to these activities including family swimming, pantomime tickets and cookery activity boxes.

A shortage of providers able to run SEN specific programmes led to a lack of places to meet the high demand. We worked with all our providers to increase the level of support they could offer and allocated extra funding for additional staff to support our children with SEN to access provision. We also increased the number of family activities available and gave priority access to families with children that have SEN.

2,085 total number of unique individual children who engaged



Of these **2,033** were eligible for free school meals and **52** were vulnerable children in receipt of a discretionary place



*Based on figure of 10,494 from Government Publication: Schools, pupils and their characteristics 2022/23

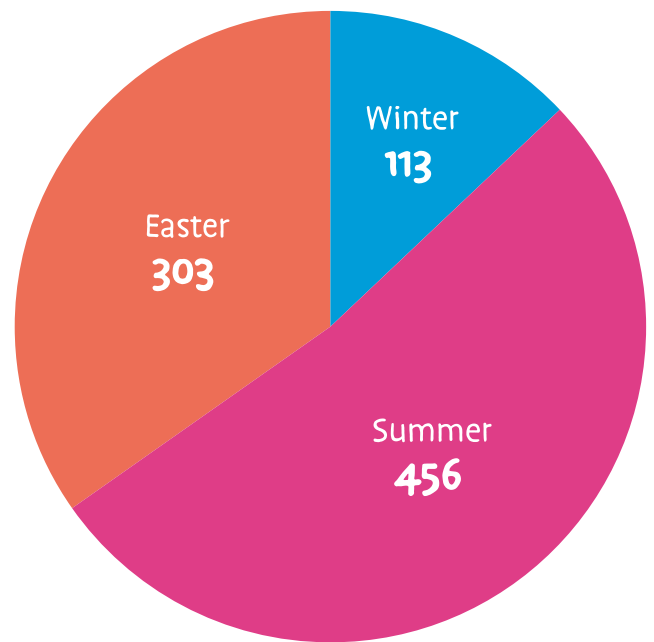
Overview of Special Educational Needs provision

All providers were expected to be inclusive and offered places for children with mild to moderate support needs. Additionally, specific SEN provision was offered through the following providers who delivered holiday programmes and activities for children with more complex needs and those requiring intensive 121 support:

- Primary Sporting Development (PSD)
- Hillingdon Autistic Care and Support (HACS)
- The Eden Academy Trust
- Hedgewood School
- Community Connex.

Where appropriate extra funding for additional staff was allocated to providers delivering mainstream programmes to support our children with SEN to access provision.

SEN children supported at:



The year in numbers

Over the course of the year...

32,296 sessional places on offer to children across Hillingdon

3,693 unique children accessed the funded holiday provision, **35%** of eligible cohort



Including **497** children with SEN (**13.5%**)

We distributed
2,450
at home activity packs,
cookery packs and
'Take and Make' boxes

We provided **32,296** healthy meals

Feedback

The content of our HAF programme is informed by our families, incorporating the responses to our post-programme surveys, parent/carer and children's feedback via our providers' feedback forms and youth voice

input from groups including Hillingdon Youth Council and Youth Voice. In response to feedback from children and parents/carers, we continue to develop and grow the HAF programme.

Parents' comments

"I am happy with everything, my special needs son really enjoyed it, and the staff are amazing and very helpful."

"It is great, thank you for providing such useful and enjoyable sessions."

"I learned to make what is considered convenience food but from scratch. I was surprised how easy it actually is."

"I want to make it known that I am extremely grateful for the facility and also the hardworking staff running the activities. The activity days were a huge success and my daughter, although anxious, really enjoyed herself."

Children's comments

"It's been really great to have the opportunity to spend time in a theatre environment, it's something I wouldn't normally do as I couldn't afford it. This is a great opportunity for someone who hasn't been in this environment before and a good way for a beginner to get involved in theatre. I would tell people to try it out to see if they like it."

"Fab recipes and very tasty."

"Paddle boarding is best. Think it's going to be cold, but once you're in the water you're living your best life."

"I did this last time and I begged my mum to let me come back."

"It's fun, it's good to be outside and not staying in all the time."



As well as the positive feedback we want to hear challenges and ideas for improving the programme. This year you said, and we responded...

“My child is 15 and would prefer not to go to clubs without having friends there... Perhaps if children were able to bring along a friend it would help?”

- We responded by encouraging and funding more providers that offer a blended model, where the programme has HAF places and places for non-FSM eligible children, available to members of the public to book.

“I would like some activities so that the kids and parents both can join together”.

- We responded by offering parent and child cookery classes with Learn Hillingdon, increasing the number of family activity packs and cookery packs and piloting new family activities, swimming sessions and Panto tickets during winter.

“Improving the HAF programme for the SEND children and families. If more days and finance could be provided to the organisations that know how to accommodate SEND families and children.... dates should be increased and provided for FREE to SEN children in general”.

- We partnered with more providers that support children with SEN, provided additional funding to increase staffing levels in provision to support children with SEN engage in the wider programme offer and offered family activities. This is still a work in progress and each programme we aim to further develop our offer to FSM eligible SEN children. During 2023/24 we expected seven per cent of attendees to have an identified SEN, however over the year 13.5 per cent of our participants had identified as SEN.



Funding

During the financial year 2023-24 the Department for Education provided Hillingdon with £1,087,628 of funding to deliver the HAF programme.

We distributed a total of £968,314 in HAF grants to providers delivering programmes and providing activities during the Easter, summer and winter holiday periods.

- £208,734 Easter
- £576,123 summer
- £183,457 winter

Our steering group

A strategic delivery board was established for the Hillingdon HAF programme whose role it is to support the delivery of the programme and ensure that the right partners continue to be engaged with and are supportive of the programme.

The Hillingdon HAF strategic delivery board included representatives from:

- Children's Services
- Youth Services
- Youth Justice Service
- Adolescent Development Service

What's next for our HAF Programme

We are working towards increasing the partnerships we have with organisations and activity providers to further develop and widen our programme of activities and improve our SEN specific offer.

We aim to increase the engagement of children in the secondary age group 11 to 16 years. To achieve this, we will strengthen our links with secondary schools in the borough, and work with young people to get their input on the activities we fund to ensure we are catering for their needs.

Finally, we want to make it easier for families to find out about the HAF programmes, so we will increase our HAF Champions aiming to

A total of £108,807 was spent on the administration of the programme during the year, which includes admin support staff and a HAF coordinator to develop and manage the programme.

Finally, £10,507 was used to fund additional staffing and one-to-one support for children with SEN, access to training for HAF providers and marketing the programme.

- Child and Family Development Service
- SEND team
- Public Health
- Voluntary sector
- Communications team
- Business Performance team
- Finance

The board met regularly throughout the year to support the programme and provide strategic direction for the implementation and delivery of Hillingdon's HAF Programme.

have a key member of staff in each school that can signpost families and provide advice on accessing HAF, update our webpage and strengthen our communications strategy.

We look forward to offering another exciting year of activities in 2024!

Our delivery partners for 2023/24

- Aktiva Camps Ltd
- Alam Brothers and Co Film Skool
- Be Active Sports & Clubs
- Beck Theatre
- BM Youth Partnership
- C-Change West London
- Community Connex
- Compass Collective
- Cricket for All
- Ealing Trailfinders Foundation
- Football & Fitness Training Ltd
- Fresh Arts C.I.C
- Full Court Connections
- Get Active Sports
- Hillingdon Autistic Care and Support (HACS)
- Hedgewood School
- Jam Coding London NW
- Junior Adventures Group
- Hillingdon Council – Adolescent Development Service
- Hillingdon Council – Children’s Centres
- LEARN Hillingdon
- London Taekwondo Falcons Ltd
- Music Action International
- Our Parks Ltd
- Pro Touch SA CIC
- Primary Sporting Development (PSD)
- QPR in the Community Trust
- Queensmead School
- RC Vision CIC
- SKIPZ
- Sports Plus Scheme
- Super Star Sport
- The Canoe Sports Trust
- The Cycle Coach
- The Eden Academy Trust
- Universal Youth Service
- Way 2 Work
- West Drayton Kids Club (WDKC in partnership with Southlands Arts Centre)
- Wealdstone FC (2000) Ltd

