

Holiday Activities and Food Programme 2021

Overview

On 8th November 2020, the government announced that the holiday activities and food programme will be expanded across the whole of England in 2021. The programme has provided healthy food and enriching activities to disadvantaged children since 2018.

The programme will cover the Easter, summer, and Christmas holidays in 2021 and will be available to children in every local authority in England.

Background

School holidays can be particular pressure points for some families because of increased costs (such as food and childcare) and reduced incomes. For some children that 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

Who the programme is for?

This holiday provision is for children who receive benefits-related free school meals.

Local authorities are asked to ensure that the offer of free holiday club provision is available for all children eligible for and in receipt of free school meals in their area. This does not mean they are all required to attend as the provision is *voluntary*.

The free holiday club places must be targeted at children who are eligible for and receiving benefits-related free school meals.



@ACTIVE_FUSION



@ACTIVEFUSION



@AF_ACTIVEFUSION

Other children and families with need

Local Authority will consider requests to use up to 15% of programme funding to provide places for children who are considered by the local authority as vulnerable or in need of this provision. This may include, for example:

- children assessed as being in need
- looked-after children
- children with an EHC plan (education, health and care)
- children assessed as otherwise vulnerable
- children living in areas of high deprivation

You must be able to demonstrate that you are:

- offering the programme comprehensively across the full geographical area
- fully meeting demand from free school meal eligible children in the area

Aims of the programme

As a result of this programme, 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

We also want to ensure that the families who participate in this programme:

- develop their understanding of nutrition and food budgeting
- are signposted towards other information and support, for example, health, employment and education

What is involved

Local authorities are encouraged to work with a wide range of partners in the delivery of this programme.



@ACTIVE_FUSION



@ACTIVEFUSION



@AF_ACTIVEFUSION

Coordination of local programmes

The role of coordinating this holiday provision involves:

- mapping the holiday provision in your area in order to ensure that holiday provision exists and is supporting the areas of greatest need
- establishing a steering group to support implementation and delivery that should include representatives from a wide range of local bodies, including:
 - local police and other uniform services
 - local public health officials
 - school leaders
 - youth services
 - social services
 - charities and the voluntary sector
- drawing in wider support to enhance the local programme, for example bringing in funding from other sources such as philanthropists, sponsors, food providers as well as supermarkets and local businesses
- developing a local plan for provision in your area, based on what you know about local supply and demand
- ensuring that sufficient, adequate provision is available across your area for children with SEND or additional needs
- safeguarding requirements
- meals that meet school food standards
- supporting all providers to improve the quality of their provision
- working with families to reduce dependency by providing nutritional education for children and educating families around purchasing and preparing healthy meals on a sustainable basis
- promoting and advertising provision, including working with local schools and other agencies to encourage the most at need children to attend
- working with other local services or agencies to ensure a joined-up and efficient approach, for example, signposting and sharing resources
- building local partnerships and sharing learning and good practice among local partners

Some areas will already have well-developed models for coordinating holiday provision and may not need to take all of these steps.

Funding



@ACTIVE_FUSION



@ACTIVEFUSION



@AF_ACTIVEFUSION

Local authorities will receive grant funding to deliver the holiday activities and food programme in their area.

Grant funding is informed by the:

- numbers of children eligible for and in receipt of free school meals in your area
- overall levels of participation experienced in our previous programmes from 2018 to 2020

What the funding covers

The funding local authorities receive is to cover the:

- provision of free holiday places
- coordination of the programme locally

The aim of the programme is to make free places available to children eligible for and in receipt of free school meals for the equivalent of at least 4 hours a day, 4 days a week, 6 weeks a year.

This would cover 4 weeks in the summer and a week's worth of provision in each of the Easter and Christmas holidays in 2021.

Local authorities and their providers will have flexibility about how they deliver this level of provision to best serve the needs of children and families in their area. There will also be flexibility in how the programme can be delivered to older children.

Payments and reporting

Local authorities will be responsible for gathering management information from the providers and clubs they fund about the children and families they are supporting. Following each holiday period (Easter, summer and Christmas) local authorities will be asked to report on their activity over the holiday period.

The requirements for local authorities are set out in the grant determination letter which monitors performance at a high level.

Local authorities can set other performance indicators to measure their own performance or that of partners.

Data collection

The reports will include data on children attending clubs in each local authority area.

All of the data and information collected by the holiday clubs and providers should all be collected in strict adherence to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Evaluation

An evaluation will be undertaken this year to evaluate the impact the programme has had and will focus on delivery across the summer.

This will be undertaken by a national provider and will be subject to a tendering process.

All local authorities are obliged to cooperate with the evaluation of the holiday activities and food programme.

Standards for holiday provision

One of the key elements of the role of a holiday activities and food programme coordinator will be to:

- improve the quality of provision across the local area
- ensure that providers are supported to meet the high-level standards

Programme coordinators will be able to award funding to providers that don't meet the standards at the start of the grant period as long as they put a specific plan in place to ensure that the standards are met before the start of the holidays.

All providers who are funded through the holiday activities and food programme will need to meet the framework of standards.

Framework of standards

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 majority of food served by providers will be hot. However, there will be occasions when this is not possible and a cold alternative may be used.



@ACTIVE_FUSION



@ACTIVEFUSION



@AF_ACTIVEFUSION

All food provided as part of the programme must:

- comply with regulations on food preparation:
- take into account allergies and dietary requirements
- take into account any religious or cultural requirements for food

Enriching 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

This could include:

- physical activities, for example, football, 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

Local authorities should set out how they can support providers to deliver a rich and varied mix of fun and enriching activities that are age appropriate.

Physical activities

Holiday clubs must provide activities that meet the physical activity guidelines on a daily basis.

Nutritional education

Providers must include an element of nutritional education each day aimed at improving the knowledge and awareness of healthy eating for children. These do not need to be formal learning activities and could for example include activities such as:

- getting children involved in food preparation and cooking
- growing fruit and vegetables
- taste tests

Food education for families and carers

Providers must include at least weekly training and advice sessions for parents, carers or other family members. These should provide advice on how to source, prepare and cook nutritious and low-cost food.



@ACTIVE_FUSION



@ACTIVEFUSION



@AF_ACTIVEFUSION

Policies and procedures

Holiday clubs must be able to demonstrate and explain their safeguarding arrangements. They must have relevant and appropriate policies and procedures for:

- safeguarding
- health and safety
- insurance

Accessibility and inclusiveness

Where appropriate, holiday clubs must also be compliant with the Ofsted requirements for working with children.