

Holiday Activities and Food Programme 2026

Application Guidance for prospective Holiday Club providers.

Introduction

Our aim is to continue supporting our families across South Ribble through the provision of a wide variety of HAF Holiday Clubs throughout the school holidays.

It has been highlighted that children and young people who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and other identified vulnerabilities may be less likely to have access to nutritious meals, organised activities, and social inclusion.

The Council is looking for Providers who can deliver structured, consistent, and easy access to enriching activities that includes access to a nutritious meal for children and young people who attend the Holiday Club.

The intended outcomes for the children and young people who attend the Holiday Club are to:

- 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 well-being
- feeling safe and secure
- getting access to the right support services
- returning to school feeling engaged and ready to learn

Families can also benefit, when HAF providers include their needs in planning and delivering their programme. This could be through:

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

For more information about the HAF programme outcomes please refer to the DfE programme standards:

[Holiday activities and food programme 2026 to 2027 - GOV.UK](#)

This guidance has been recently updated. Please ensure you read it carefully to ensure you can comply with the application requirements.

What we are looking for:

Funded activities should take place between Monday 30 March to Thursday 2 April, and Tuesday 7 April to Friday 10 April 2026. All sessions must cover at least four hours per day for all ages. If you would like to offer paid-for places within your provision, the activities and food must be the same for all attendees. No child should be easily identified as being on a funded place.

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 the [school food standards](#). All providers must read the [allergy guidance for schools](#) for more information, resources and guidance.

Activities and venues should be accessible and inclusive for all, however if you are providing SEND specific activities, you should ensure that your organisation has access to the appropriate training and equipment to be able to support those attending.

HAF providers should be able to offer information, signposting or referrals to other services and support, that would benefit the children who attend their provision and their families.

Other services and support could include:

- South Ribble's Social Prescribing team
- Local food banks or community shops
- Citizens Advice
- School nurses, dentists, or other healthcare practitioners
- Family support services or children's services
- Housing support officers
- Jobcentre Plus
- Organisations providing financial education
- Early years and childcare, including help to pay for childcare (for example, [Tax-Free Childcare](#))
- Free breakfast clubs

There are many ways that providers can meet this element of the programme, for example, through trained and knowledgeable staff engaging with families during drop-off and pick-up times.

We know that many HAF providers have worked to provide weekly training and advice sessions for parents, carers or other family members. We encourage providers who want to do so to continue to offer those sessions.

Enrichment activities

All HAF-funded provision must provide fun and enriching activities that allow children to:

- develop new skills or knowledge
- consolidate existing skills and knowledge

- try out new experiences
- have fun and socialise

This could include but is not limited to:

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

We expect all HAF providers to provide a balanced programme. For providers whose primary focus is set around a specific activity or sport, we expect them to ensure that children attending their provision benefit from a holistic and varied experience.

Physical activities

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

In line with those guidelines, we expect:

- all children and young people participating in the HAF programme should engage in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity for an average of at least 60 minutes per day
- children and young people participating in the HAF programme should engage in a variety of types and intensities of physical activity to develop movement skills, muscular fitness, and bone strength
- children and young people should aim to minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary, and when physically possible should break up long periods of not moving with at least light physical activity

Meeting the physical activity requirement does not have to be in the form of a structured and focussed physical activity session, but might include active travel, free play and sports.

Increasing awareness of healthy eating, healthy lifestyles, and positive behaviours

We expect providers to incorporate helping children to understand more about the benefits of healthy eating and nutrition into their programme. These do not need to be formal learning activities. This could include:

- getting children involved in food preparation and cooking
- growing fruit and vegetables
- taste tests
- discussing food and healthy eating during mealtimes
- including food and nutrition in other activities

Offering positive learning and development through HAF activities creates stigma free opportunities to support children and young people in learning about healthy lifestyles and

exercise. This could cover, for example, the use of vapes, cigarettes, drugs, and how this can lead to issues including:

- economic
- social
- personal safety
- exploitation
- criminality

If you would like to offer one off events as a part of funded activities, please ensure that these are detailed in your application form and include any additional funding you may require to hold the event.

Policies and procedures

There are a wide variety of organisations and individuals involved in the delivery of the holiday, activities and food programme including:

- schools
- colleges
- nurseries
- private providers
- charities
- youth clubs
- community groups

All organisations delivering the HAF programme must be able to demonstrate that they have in place relevant and appropriate policies and procedures for:

- safeguarding, including the recruitment of staff and volunteers
- food safety
- health and safety
- relevant insurance policies
- accessibility and inclusiveness
- record keeping

Volunteers and DBS checking

We know that in some settings, volunteers can play an important role in the delivery of holiday clubs.

Under no circumstances should a volunteer in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

For some of the voluntary staff involved in the delivery of the holiday, activities and food programme in holiday clubs, this work will be done regularly and considered to be regulated activity. This means they will be subject to an enhanced DBS check with barred list information.

There may be a very small number of volunteers who do not regularly carry out this role, and so it may not be considered as regulated activity. This means they may not be required to have an enhanced DBS check.

The guidance on [regulated activity in relation to children](#) contains definitions of what we mean by regular and regulated activity.

To provide reassurance to parents, families and carers, we strongly recommend that all volunteers who are involved in the delivery of the holiday, activities and food programme in holiday clubs should have an [enhanced DBS check](#) (which, where applicable, should include children's barred list information).

We do not recommend holiday clubs using volunteers that are not DBS checked, but if this occurs, it is the responsibility of the local authority to ensure that volunteers are not at any point left alone and unsupervised with children in holiday clubs.

Working with the secondary school age range

We know from previous years that providing a HAF programme that is appealing and has high engagement levels with the secondary school age range can be challenging. Provision for this age range will often look different to that aimed at the primary age range.

There should be flexibility in the programme you offer to older children with careful consideration being given to a different model of food and activity provision. This could include considering the location of provision, such as, pop up parks or urban areas.

Some areas have reported a reduction in anti-social behaviour around those areas with a focussed HAF provision. Others have reported increases to the levels of assurance among parents and families that their children and young people are safe and secure when attending a HAF programme.

We are aware that hosting activities for the secondary school age range can incur more costs as you may need to adapt your activities.

How we will fund you

Funding is allocated to delivery partners to reflect the number of spaces offered. However, payment is made based on the number of spaces attended.

The grant we provide will be paid in two instalments, 50% of your 'allocation' prior to the delivery period and 50% after attendance records and case studies have been submitted based on spaces attended.

Example:

50% place cost multiplied by number of places agreed, paid in advance
50% place cost multiplied by number of places attended, paid post delivery

e.g. 100 places made available at £10 per place, achieving 80 attendances.
100 places x £5 = £500 paid in advance
80 places attended x £5 = £400 paid post delivery
Total paid = £900

In our aim to provide enriching activity to as many benefits related to FSM children and young people as possible, we offer a higher rate of funding to support the inclusion of SEND specific provision. This is typically an activity that requires considerable additional resources such as additional adult support and specialist equipment. For SEND-specific activity, please ensure this is clearly highlighted in your application form.

What you can use the funding for

The HAF funding can be used towards:

- Staff time for admin and programme delivery management
- Resources and materials
- Venue hire
- Food provision
- Marketing and publicity
- Parental and community engagement activities e.g. outreach workshops / assemblies /shows
- Enriching activity

Please provide a detailed breakdown of how you plan to spend your HAF funding in your application.

Submitting an application

All prospective Holiday Club Providers must detail if there are any SEND-specific provision. All Holiday Club Providers must be open to following the Equality Act 2010, ensuring that no child or young person are open to discrimination through the exclusion of Holiday Club activities without making reasonable adjustments where possible.

All applicants must submit their interest via the dedicated web page.

Required documentation

Along with the application form, the following supporting documentation is required:

- Public Liability Insurance (minimum cover £5 million)
- Employers Liability Insurance (minimum cover £10 million)
- Safer Recruitment or other relevant policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Uncollected Child procedure
- Missing Child procedure
- Health and Safety Policy
- GDPR or Data Protection Policy
- Risk Assessments – for both your activities and each venue
- Transporting of children and young people policy (if doing a trip or leaving the venue site (if applicable))
- First Aid certificates (these should have been delivered in-person, unless it is refresher training, at Level 2. If you hold a Paediatric First Aid qualification, some of this should have taken place in person.)
- Food hygiene certificate (Level 2 or above) and evidence of robust food safety protocols.
- Details for your external caterer (where you will not be providing food internally)
- Proof of Ofsted registration (where appropriate).

Application Decisions and Next Steps

Once the closing date for applications has been reached, a Panel will review all applications made. For those who are successful, you will be contacted and sent a copy of a grant agreement to be signed and returned.

It is possible that your organisation may not be granted the full allocation of spaces/funding applied for but is offered an amended allocation of spaces/funding. In this event, we will discuss this with you to ensure you are fully aware of the reasoning for this.

Funds awarded may be subject to conditions which must be satisfied before payment is made. The applicant must indicate acceptance of such conditions when any offer of a grant is made.

Attendance Monitoring & Evaluation

All successful Holiday Club Providers will have access to Lancashire County Council's chosen 3rd party booking system, HolidayActivities, to accurately record attendance daily. In

the event of technical difficulties, Holiday Club Providers are encouraged to alert the Community Wellbeing & Activities Officer who will refer to any issues to HolidayActivities for resolution.

It is expected that all Holiday Club Providers will cascade information from training sessions or briefings hosted by South Ribble Borough Council to those in their organisations who will be facilitating HAF provisions.

Questions or Queries

If you have any questions or queries, please contact HAF@southribble.gov.uk and we will do our best to support you in making your application.