

<h1>BRIEFING</h1>	TO:	Improving Lives Select Commission
	DATE:	21 September 2021
	LEAD OFFICER:	David McWilliams Assistant Director, Early Help & Business Support CYPS Tel: 01709 254160
	TITLE:	Holiday Activities & Food Programme (HAF) Easter and Summer 2021 update

1. Background	
1.1	<p>Purpose of the DfE Holiday Activities Fund Grant</p> <p>The purpose of the grant is for local authorities to make free places at holiday clubs available in the Easter, Summer, and Christmas school holidays in 2021. This will be made available to children in the local authority area who are eligible for and receive benefits-related free school meals.</p>
1.2	<p>Confirmed Grant allocation: 8 February 2021</p> <p>2020/21 - £120,740 2021/22 - £1,079,930</p>
1.3	<p>Programme Structure: (Expectations)</p> <p>Free places at Holiday Clubs for children who are eligible for Free School Meals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 week at Easter 2021 • 4 weeks at Summer 2021 • 1 week at Christmas 2021 • Each week = 4 days • Each day = 4 hours
1.4	<p>Minimum Standards:</p> <p>The providers of HAF are required to meet DfE programme standards (set out in published guidance) and need to meet the following core aims and objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy meals: holiday clubs must provide at least one healthy meal a day and must meet the School Food Standards throughout the day. • Enriching activities: holiday clubs must provide fun and enriching activities

	<p>that provide children with opportunities to develop or consolidate skills or knowledge, to consolidate existing skills and knowledge. Clubs must also provide physical activities which meet the Physical Activity Guidelines daily.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutritional education: holiday clubs must improve children’s knowledge and awareness of healthy eating and offer advice and training to parents on how to source, prepare and cook nutritious and low-cost food. • Signposting and referrals: clubs must be able to provide information, signposting or referrals to other services and support that would benefit the children who attend their provision and their families. • Policies and procedures: clubs must be able to demonstrate and explain their safeguarding arrangements and have relevant and appropriate policies and procedures in place in relation to safeguarding, health and safety, insurance, accessibility and inclusiveness. Where appropriate, clubs must also be compliant with the Ofsted requirements for working with children.
<p>1.5</p>	<p>Aims and Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is optional for eligible children to attend • Provision should be available to all eligible children • DfE do not expect all eligible children to participate • There is flexibility in the model that the 4 days for Easter could be 2 days each week, or that an equivalent number of hours at Summer could be spread over a longer period.
<p>1.6</p>	<p>Funding:</p> <p>We have recruited a Band E Business Support and a Band I Outreach and Engagement Senior Practitioner to support the planning, co-ordination, and delivery of the programme.</p> <p>This is well within the 10% limit allowed for coordination and management.</p> <p>90% of the fund must be spent on holiday club places for FSM children.</p> <p>Funding can be used to support a comprehensive, inclusive, and accessible offer. e.g. setting up new provision where needed, paying for additional staff to expand existing provision or to meet additional needs.</p> <p>Funding can also be used to support quality improvement, for example, money to bring in activity providers such as sports coaches or money to establish partnerships with catering organisations.</p> <p>Capital expenditure is allowed but should be limited to 2% of overall programme expenditure.</p> <p>Capital expenditure is classed as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Individual assets worth over £2,500 b. Grouped assets, that is assets of a similar nature that are purchased at the same time, which cost £2,500 or more overall c. Bulked assets, for example a bulk purchase of equipment where the value of the individual item is below the set value, which cost £2,500 or more overall.

2	Key Issues
2.1	Impact of COVID 19: The Department of Education acknowledges the impact of Covid on the delivery of the HAF programme in 2021. In some cases, face-to-face delivery of holiday clubs was not possible and remote delivery of the programme may, in some circumstances, be more practical.
2.2	If the Council cannot hold face-to-face holiday clubs because of COVID-19, the Authority can operate flexibly to ensure that eligible children still receive support.
2.3	Covid restrictions meant the Easter programme had to be delivered remotely via an activity and food box for eligible families. This was produced with support from the school meals service and included a mixture of fresh produce and ambient foods needed to cook 5 healthy school meal standard meals. The box also included activities and supporting on-line materials with specific age focus and encompassing, physical activity, nutrition (on-line cookery lessons) and arts, crafts and culture content.
2.4	During Easter we also collaborated with the organisation 64million artists, who are supporting the council with the 2025 Young People's Capital of Culture initiative.
3. Key Actions and Timelines	
3.1	Other vulnerable children: If the authority can demonstrate it is offering the programme comprehensively across the geographical area and meeting demand from eligible FSM children, then up to 15% of funding can be used to provide places for other vulnerable children e.g. LAC, EHCP. (We must seek written approval from DfE to do this). RMBC gained permission to include the following vulnerable cohorts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looked After Children • Asylum Seekers • Electively Home Educated
3.2	Publicity / Promotion: CYPS Communications have produced a HAF Communications Strategy. All publicity must include the DfE logo.
3.3	All schools and voluntary and community sector partners have received regular briefings on the programme.
3.4	Governance: The Assistant Director, Early Help, Family Engagement & Business Support Chairs a Council Executive Group. (Every three weeks) and the Early Help Outreach & Engagement Coordinator (North) chairs a multi-agency partnership steering group. (Every two weeks) to ensure compliance with national reporting requirements.
3.5	Reporting and Payments timeline:

Report Date	Payment Date	Progress
19 February 2021 Deadline for planning for Easter submission	March 2021 – the full 20/21 allocation (£120,740)	Completed ahead of schedule
14 May 2021 – reporting on Easter and Planning for Summer	June 2021 – up to 50% of the 2021/22 allocation (£539,965)	Completed ahead of schedule
15 October 2021 – reporting on Summer and planning for Christmas	November 2021 – up to 30% of 2021/22 allocation (£323,979)	On Track
29 January 2022 – reporting on Christmas, plus final whole project report and certificate of expenditure	February 2022 – up to 20% of the 2021/22 allocation (£215,986)	Not Yet Started
3.6	<p>Finance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We can spend up to the maximum amount of the allocated grant but must not overspend. The payments will take account of expenditure already made or committed, along with proposed future activity, as indicated in the reports. If the Authority has not spent and does not plan to spend its maximum allocation, the Department will reduce the overall payment to the Authority to reflect the actual expenditure The Authority’s nominated responsible officer must confirm at the end of each financial year that the funding has been properly expended. <p>There is no target % of eligible children expected to attend. At the DfE network meeting held on 10 February 2021 it was communicated that the DfE does not anticipate ‘clawback.’</p>	
3.7	The Spend for the Easter programme was £51,000 excluding staffing and management costs.	
3.8	The expected spend for summer is approximately £450,000 excluding staffing and management costs.	
4	The Easter Programme	
4.1	The Council’s programme ran very effectively, despite the tight timescales and Covid restrictions in place, we managed to engage over 2,600 families.	
4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of packs delivered: 2621 Number in specialist education provision: 156 Number Elective Home Education: 76 Number of Volunteers: 28 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Early Help/EHE/Vol Co Staff: 42 • Number of School Meals Staff: 49
4.3	As part of our approach to be inclusive, and ensure the opportunity was accessible for hard-to-reach families we developed effective communications through our Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS partners) and Schools.
4.4	Our packs, recipes and activities were designed to be flexible and inclusive, so children and young people of all ages and abilities could join in and enjoy the project.
4.5	156 children and young people who access a specialist educational setting were part of our Easter programme.
4.6	<p>Our online offer was delivered through the Early Help Facebook pages, this was specifically targeted to our Free School Meals and Elective Home Educated cohorts, but also to our families on Early Help and Social Care caseloads. The HAF online programme formed the basis of our universal Early Help Outreach offer to all children, young people, and families.</p> <p>From 27 March to 11 April 2021 there were 2 activities posted on-line each day. Activities were posted across the 3 Early Help Facebook pages.</p> <p>At (09/09/21) the total number of views of all HAF Activity posts was over 19,000. This is approximately 200 views per activity per day.</p>
4.7	The late announcement of the continuation of the Covid Winter Support Grant caused some confusion for families about whether the Food and Activity pack would replace the FSM vouchers they had received in previous holidays. However, Rotherham decided that this was a separate project and was focussed on health, nutrition, food education, physical and enriching activity, and would therefore be available in addition to the vouchers. This helped the project to run much more smoothly and support the children and families in a holistic way.
4.8	<p>The partnership working across the council was outstanding, with significant input from a variety of council departments including Business Support, Procurement, IT, Education, Early Help, Neighbourhoods, and the School Meals Service. All worked collaboratively and at speed to deliver the programme, and this has been carried forward into the Summer phase.</p> <p>Of particular note was the involvement of 28 'Rotherham Hero Volunteers' who played an invaluable role in supporting with the pack deliveries and were a positive addition to the team. The Volunteer Coordinators worked very closely with the Project Manager and this is something we developed further during the Summer delivery.</p>
4.9	<p><i>"Just a quick note to say thank you for the food boxes and activity packs delivered yesterday. So, kind to go out of your way to have them sent, two happy kids with the frisbee's and planning their lunches. Thank you"</i></p> <p><i>"Thank you for including the elective home educated children and families"</i></p> <p><i>"Just wanted to say thank you for the food and activity parcels, the girls are really happy. Thanks."</i></p> <p><i>"Thank you so much. Thank you very much for the activity packs too, the children have</i></p>

	<p><i>enjoyed them.”</i></p> <p><i>“Just wanted to say thank you! Can't wait for our lil ones to see their pack, it will make their day, really appreciate it and also just to comment and say how lovely the gentleman was that delivered around Dinnington this morning such a polite happy chap, so thank you for his hard work too delivering these especially on this hot day too, (...) so to all that's involved in these for the children of the community a big thank you once again”</i></p> <p><i>“Just wanted to say a big thank you. Everything in will be gladly used.”</i></p> <p><i>“My friend has just sent a picture of hers and it looks amazing. We are so, so grateful, in the 16yrs I've home-schooled we've never had anything like this before. Well done Rotherham Council!”</i></p> <p><i>“I've just had my healthy food parcel delivered & I just want to send a message to say thank you. I hugely, hugely appreciate your help & support & it definitely takes a little financial pressure off this holiday. You guys are doing amazing, thank you very much. Stay safe.”</i></p> <p><i>“Thank u for my food/activity box, I love it”</i></p>
<p>5</p>	<p>The Summer Programme</p>
<p>5.1</p>	<p>For the summer a wide variety of reputable providers were engaged to match the areas with greatest demand and to ensure provision was accessible to all FSM children. We worked with providers to expand provision into identified gaps ensuring good coverage and accessibility. We worked with 22 providers who ran 30 programmes.</p>
<p>5.2</p>	<p>In addition to the official HAF programme (as detailed at Appendix 1), we worked closely with the providers below to achieve an expanded, coordinated programme across the borough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastwood Village Primary School • Newman School (delivered by Nexus MAT) • Hilltop School (delivered by Nexus MAT) • Ferham Primary School • Herringthorpe Junior School • Wales High School • Canklow Woods Primary School • East Dene Primary school (Delivered by Hope Church) • Coleridge Primary School (Delivered by Hope Church) • Thurcroft Infant School (Delivered by Live and Learn Sports) • Badsley Moor Primary School • Dinnington Primary School • Whiston Worrygoose Primary School (Working with Crowden Outdoor Education Centre) • Catcliffe Primary School (Working with Crowden Outdoor Education Centre) <p>Rotherham Wah Hong Chinese Association ran a small programme for their members and Endeavour Adventurous Activities offered targeted support for eligible young people.</p>

5.3	<p>All eligible children were issued with a URN (Unique Reference Number) to share with the open access providers to confirm eligibility for a free place.</p> <p>Those pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) were sent their URN via schools, whilst children who are Electively Home Educated (EHE) were written to directly and Looked After Children (LAC) and Asylum Seekers were given their URN via their appropriate workers.</p>
5.4	<p>Across the borough the HAF holiday clubs provided a variety of different opportunities for children and young people. These have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports – indoor and outdoor • Arts and Crafts • Dance • Drama and Lion King Production • Pottery • Gardening and grow your own veg • Crown Green Bowling • Travelling Zoo • Adventurous Activities • Football • Swimming • Themed weeks e.g., David Walliams (Books brought to life), Olympics, Circus, Romans • Fashion Show • BMX biking
5.6	<p>We created approximately 1,200 free places per day of the programme for eligible children. Some providers provided affordable paid for places in addition to the HAF.</p>
5.7	<p>We worked in close partnership with the school meals service and the Rotherham Heroes to ensure all children attending a holiday club received a school meal standard meal. This included both hot and cold meals. School meals service were able to open kitchens in participating schools and cook their meals on site. They also offered a collection service for some of our external providers. These meals were collected daily by the Rotherham Heroes volunteers and delivered to the Holiday Club sites.</p> <p>30 volunteers supported the delivery of meals across the Summer.</p>
5.8	<p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Parents:</p> <p>‘I hope this kind of programme can continue to happen as it has helped us out no end.’ (Badsley Primary).</p> <p>‘It’s nice to see our children able to mix again.’ (United Multicultural Centre)</p> <p>‘My children haven’t stopped talking about the outdoor adventures.’ (Dinnington Primary)</p> <p>Children:</p>

	<p>‘During the school holidays I conquered one of my fears.’ (Individual was cared of heights, and completed a zip-wire) (Dinnington Primary).</p> <p>‘We would never have done this at home’ (Rotherham BMX)</p> <p>‘Shall we show you how to say hello in our own languages’ Said when meeting HAF coordinator. (United Multicultural Centre)</p> <p>‘It’s so nice to eat food I have grown myself’ (Herringthorpe Junior School)</p>
5.9	<p>Department for Education (DfE) Visit to Rotherham</p> <p>On 11 August 2021, Matthew Chappell, and Kemi Ogunsakin from the DfE visited the Rotherham HAF programme and were shown round the borough by David McWilliams, Amy Woodhead, and Laura Downing. They met 3 providers, spoke to children, volunteers, and staff, and had a school meal lunch. The DfE delegates were highly complementary of Rotherham’s programme and the wide variety of activities we had on offer.</p>
6	The Christmas Programme
6.1	<p>The small grants process is already live for the Christmas programme and 5 applications have been received to date.</p> <p>The final closing date for this is 22 October 2021. Plans are in place to support new providers to join the HAF delivery, as well our current successful providers.</p>
7. Recommendations	
7.1	That members of the Improving Lives Select Commission note and comment on the report.

Appendix 1: HAF Summer Programme

Appendix 2: HAF Activity Pack