



**Dorset  
Council**

**2023-2024 HAF Annual Report**

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# Overview

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The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme is a government funded programme that aims to provide healthy food and enriching activities to children and young people aged 5 to 16 who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals. HAF is funded by the Department for Education. The programme has provided healthy food and enriching activities to eligible children since 2018 and has ensured that during the school holidays more children in Dorset have:



01 – Eaten healthily



02 – Been Active



03 – Taken part in engaging  
enriching activities



04 – Been safe and less  
socially isolated



05 – Developed a greater  
knowledge of health and  
nutrition



06 – Been more engaged with  
school

# HAF video

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## What they got up to:

Watch this video to see how our children and young people enjoyed all the activities this year and the impact it made to families.

Scan me to play





The programme includes the delivery of enriching activities and nutritious food during the Easter, Summer, and Christmas school holidays.

# In Dorset this has meant:

## Delivery

HAF providers delivered a variety of activities including sports, cultural, forest school/outdoor education and food nutrition across Dorset.

## Outcome

- Just over 25,000 hot nutritious meals were served across the year
- Activities took place across Dorset in all of the towns and some rural locations such as Sandford, Bere Regis and Corfe Mullen
- 2500 oral health kits were given out to children attending the programme in partnership with Public Health Dorset

## Funding summary

**£962,240**

from DFE

-£60,224 (6.3%)

Administration costs

**£250,000**

Covid Outbreak  
Management Fund

75

Providers  
took part

188

HAF events took  
place over 3  
holiday periods

>2k

Over 2000 eligible  
children took part  
in Summer 2023

## Funding

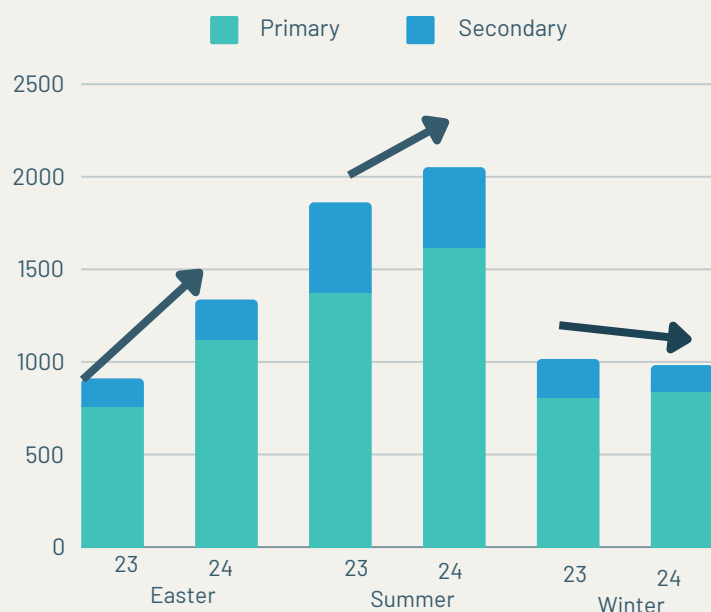
In 2023/24 Dorset Council received £962,240 from the DFE to support the HAF programme. This included £60,224 (6.3%) which was spent on administration costs. This funded 1 part time Programme Co-ordinator and 1 part-time Business Support Officer. An additional £250,000 was allocated from the Covid Outbreak Management Fund to support the programme.

## HAF Partners and Providers

We worked with the following organisations and partners to deliver the Dorset HAF programme in 2023/2024.

360 Degree Sports Coaching Dorset Ltd	MNEF - Mini Ballers
Activate Management	Museum Of East Dorset
Activate Performing Arts	MW Tennis Services
Active Dorset	MYTIME Young Carers
Adventure 4 All	North Dorset Locality Team
Andrew Simpson Foundation	Pavilion in the Park
Artsreach	Personal Best
Artz+ Sportz+	Pesspa Education and Play
B Sharp	Poole Forest School
Bank of Dreams and Nightmares	Premier Education
Bridport Leisure Centre	Primary Sports and Education Ltd
Bridport Youth & Community Centre	Prime time Kids Club
Champion Premier Skill Ltd	Pro Coaching
Chapelhay Community Playgarden Association	Purbeck Sports Centre
Chesil Locality Team	Purbeck Youth & Community Foundation
Computer Explorers	Ripple Rebels
Coombe House	Riversmeet
Cumulus Outdoors	Saints Southwest
Dorchester Arts	Samurai Kickboxing
Dorchester Cricket Club	Sandmartins Activity Club CIO
Dorchester Tennis and Squash Club	Sherborne School (Leisure) Limited
Dorchester Town Council	Shining Stars
Dorchester Youth and Community Centre	Sports Explorers
Dorset Council Cultural Services - Walford Mill	ST Nicholas Church
Dorset Skills and Learning	Stars Holiday Club
Dorset Wild Ones	Streetlight
DTCA Group Ltd	SupaStrikers Bridport
Educamp Ltd.	Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust (Swanage Youth Club)
Eolas + CIC	Swanage and Herston Football Club
Explorer Childcare Group	The Magdalen Environmental Trust
Friendly Food Club	The Official Test Centre
Gillingham Youth Club	TREADS
Globe Fit Ltd	Verwood Hub
Guggleton Farm	Wessex Wilderness Skills CIC
Z & S Linked Ltd	Weymouth Outdoor Education Centre
Houseworks Dorset CIC	Weymouth and Portland Adventure
Lets Get Loud	

# Statistics and trends



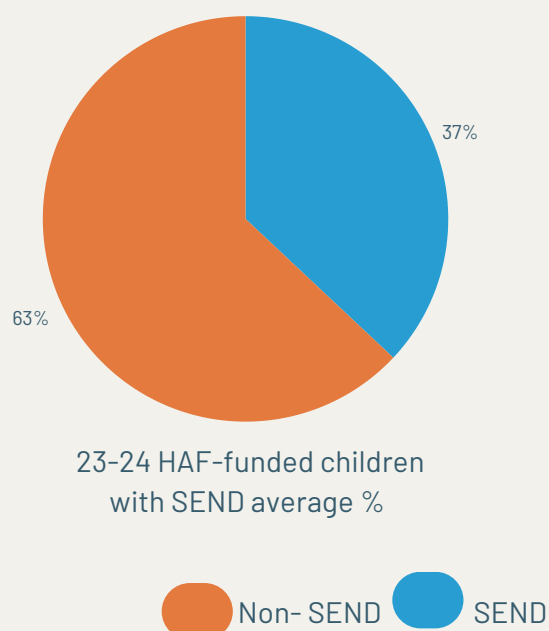
## 2022/2023 vs 2023/2024

During easter and summer, the number of eligible children participating in the programme increased year on year however there was a small decrease in numbers during the winter holiday period.

There is a significantly higher number of primary aged children accessing the programme compared to secondary aged. This is largely due to the need for childcare for the younger aged cohort and their willingness to attend holiday club type activity.

## Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

There is a significant proportion of children with special educational needs and disabilities who are also eligible for free school meals. It is essential that we continue to ensure providers are inclusive in their approach and support them to do this through access to additional funding and training opportunities.

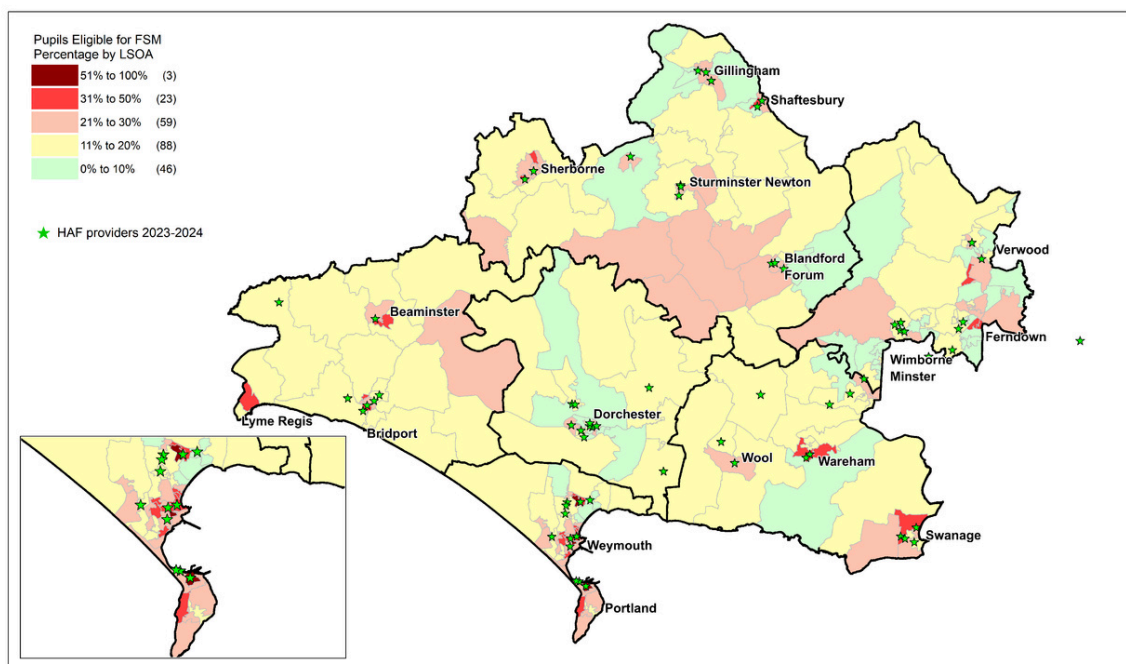


## Overview

The programme is growing in popularity and the number of sessions attended each holiday period is also increasing. Feedback from families suggest that the participants enjoy their time at the provision and return attendances are good.

# 18%

Growth of total users  
compared to 2022/2023



**School Census Map - All Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM); percentage of all pupils by LSOA**

Source: School Census, January 2024

THIS MAP IS NOT DEFINITIVE AND HAS NO LEGAL STATUS

Ref:

Date: 27/06/2024

Cent X: -273,693

Cent Y: 6,584,139



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& 2014, © Getmapping Plc and Bluesky International  
Limited (2017 onwards)

# Demographics

Dorset covers a wide geographic area which makes delivering a viable HAF programme challenging. We have focussed our provision around 10 key areas where there are large numbers of eligible children –

- Beaminstor
- Dorchester
- Ferndown
- Portland
- Shaftesbury
- Sherborne
- Sturminster Newton
- Swanage
- Wareham
- Weymouth

However provision in areas such as Lyme Regis is low and we will work towards engaging more providers in this area. We will also explore transport options for families living in very rural parts of the county, enabling them to travel to their nearest town where provision is available. We will also work with providers to increase capacity to ensure that where demand is high and there are waiting lists for places, these can be accommodated.



# Steering group

To support the delivery of the programme and ensure that the right partners continue to be engaged with and supportive of the programme we set up a steering group with representatives from the following teams and organisations:

- Locality Teams
- Education
- Culture, Leisure, and Outdoor Education Services
- Public Health Dorset
- Communications
- Early Years
- Dorset Parent Carer Council
- NHS Dorset
- Youth Voice
- Active Dorset







# 40%

Over 40% of Dorset children who are eligible for free school meals also have a special educational need or disability (SEND). This means that our providers must be inclusive in their approach to delivering activities. We helped providers do this by offering free training and ringfencing funding so that providers are able to employ additional support staff as required on a demand basis. We also engaged with three Short Breaks providers to offer additional specialised activities for children with more complex needs across the county.

## Outcomes for children

2023-24



**10%**

Have a greater knowledge of health and nutrition



**14%**

have been eating healthier



**56%**

Felt less socially isolated



**62%**

Made new friends



**38%**

Settled back into school better



**48%**

Learnt new things

# Feedback from children and parents

We conducted a customer experience survey after the Summer holidays. We hoped to gain some useful information on the benefits of the HAF programme to the families that took part. We found out that:

- 56 % of parents said that their children felt less socially isolated over the summer holidays, this was an increase from 38% in 2022/2023
- 48% said that their children had learnt new things by attending the HAF programme, an increase from 26% in 2022/2023
- There was also a slight increase in the percentage of children who had said they had started to eat more healthily and thought they were more knowledgeable about food and healthier eating





## Online information

80%

Of families read about HAF online using their mobile phones.

highlighting the need to ensure that webpages must be easy to navigate and mobile friendly.

53k

Page views on the help and kindness listings page in 2023-24

<https://www.helpandkindness.co.uk/summer-in-dorset-2024>



## Our Goals for 2024/2025

The 2023 – 2024 delivery of HAF was a great success however we are always keen to make it even better. Next year we will focus on the following areas of improvement

- Increase numbers taking part (particularly secondary age) by 10%
- Improve the SEND offer, introducing a support level banding for providers and providing training to ensure that all providers are delivering support to children with mild to moderate needs
- Develop new partnerships with food retailers to enhance the programme
- Research and develop a mechanism to measure the impact of HAF, in particular school attendance and children's health and wellbeing



# Our 2024-25 Action Plan

## 1

Increase numbers taking part (particularly secondary age) by 10%  
Action:

- Continue to work in partnership with established youth forums/ networks to find out what activities young people would like to take part in during the school holidays
- Work with youth centres to try to increase the number of HAF funded participants accessing their provision
- Encourage at least 5 more providers to offer HAF activity to teenagers
- Establish relationships with Housing Association community development workers to explore how HAF can work alongside existing provision for teenagers

## 2

Improve the SEND offer, introducing a support level banding for providers and providing training to ensure that ALL providers are delivering support to children with mild to moderate needs

- Ensure that all providers identify the level of support they can offer in their listing on the Help and Kindness website
- Commission 'Streetgames' to deliver virtual training to all HAF providers focusing on inclusive provision
- Work in partnership with Short Breaks providers to increase the number of specialised HAF places across the county

## 3

Develop new partnerships with food retailers to enhance the programme

- Encourage providers to establish relationships with their local supermarkets to request free food items to give to the children who attend their provision
- Make stronger links with local food banks to ensure that HAF families are aware of their services and know how to access them.

## 4

Research and develop a mechanism to measure the impact of HAF, in particular school attendance and children's health and wellbeing

- Explore and examine research already carried out by other local authorities that has measured the impact of the HAF programme in their area
- Continue to collect qualitative data from families who have participated in the programme
- Work with our education partners to determine how attendance at HAF has influenced school attendance





## Quotes from parents

"We are so very grateful for this service. Our son has severe learning difficulties and he has thoroughly enjoyed a number of activities. It has also acted as respite care for us and made the summer holidays more enjoyable for all of us. Thank you so much. "

"I'm worried about the children near water and so I booked them into a paddling boarding week to overcome this! It was brilliant and they loved it!! Thankyou "

"Both my children attended HAF at Purbeck Sports Centre, I have 1 child with additional needs age 9 who I think benefited greatly from attending, he struggles with making friends and socialising and I can't thank them enough for being understanding and supporting him. My daughter who is 8 also attended and she loved the freedom of mixing with older girls making new friends and giving her confidence away from me. Thank you "

"My son enjoyed the football, and the pond dipping at Lorton Meadows. Also we completed the summer reading challenge 😊 lots of lovely things were put on thank you! "

# Case Studies



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## Ukrainian young woman discovers passion for tennis through HAF programme

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In the first year of the HAF programme (2021) Yana, a refugee from Ukraine was booked by her mum onto some holiday sessions with Dorchester Tennis club.

She said it was just what she needed at the time: "When I arrived in the UK I didn't know anybody but I made friends through these sessions. It really helped me to settle in." The coaches soon spotted that Yana had real potential and encouraged her to join the tennis club, waiving the usual termly fees. This made all the difference. As Yana explains, "I had played tennis before but I really progressed once I got involved with the club." When Yana's mum started a job she was able to pay for one-to-one tennis lessons and Yana continued to improve.

Last year she was offered the opportunity to compete abroad with the club. Yana said, "We competed in Holland and Belgium. It was so much fun to travel there with my friends. I have some incredible memories." Fast forward to the Christmas holidays of 2023 and Yana is busy assisting with sports sessions at Sunninghill School, Dorchester. All the children present have booked through HAF. They have finished their lunch and are enjoying some down-time playing on the school's playground. Yana is chatting to the group and clearly has a great rapport with the children. Coach Michael Willemse says, "She's a great help and an inspiration to the children. We're really proud of what she has achieved."



# Case Studies

## Testimonial from a parent

Now my daughter is 8 we can book on the HAF outdoor sports events and we have booked on lots of them over the Easter holiday: Miniballers, WOEC, Andrew Simpson and Adventure 4 All.

My daughter has ADHD and ASD and has been unable to attend school for 18 months. She loves being outdoors and being active so these sessions are fantastic for her. Today she clicked straight away with the instructor and this being a small group has been very good for her. They called me to ask how they could best support her and she looks relaxed and happy. She struggles to socialise and has anxiety around eating with others. She's in the cafe eating lunch with the group now and I will be interested to see if she has eaten anything, it's a good sign that she has joined in. We walk to all the activities. It took an hour and ten minutes to get here today from our home. We don't mind walking as it suits my daughter to be on the move and she will be able to process the experience on the walk back. I always get in early and book directly with the HAF providers. They do advertise the sessions but I think HAF could do more general publicity through the schools as I don't think it's so well known now as it was at the start. I can't fault this programme. It has done so much for my daughters confidence and it means she can get outside and do the kind of activities she loves to do.

During 2023 The Friendly Food club delivered 45 cooking and healthier eating sessions to 21 Dorset HAF providers. Locations included Weymouth, Portland, North Dorset, Swanage, and Ferndown. They also delivered training workshops to 48 HAF providers, suggesting ideas and activities on how to deliver the healthy food and nutrition part of the programme. The following resources were also given out :

## THE FRIENDLY FOOD CLUB

- Eat the Rainbow [booklets](#)
- Eat the rainbow [placemats](#)
- 500 Healthy eating stickers

During these sessions 1391 children and young people between the ages of 5 and 16 years participated.

The HAF sessions include fruit and vegetable identification, sensory exploration, vegetable preparation, healthy eating messages and basic cooking. With the older groups they also communicated budgeting messages. All the sessions led towards the children and young people creating their own hot lunch.

# Feedback from children

"I really enjoyed the chopping"

"I enjoyed working as a team to make our lunch. It meant that us older kids could help the younger ones"

"I have never cut up a pepper before"

"I was really worried about my younger brother using a knife, but after they showed us how to use it safely I felt much happier."

"I want to add grated carrot to my scrambled eggs next time I make it"

"I am copying my grandma's recipe. She would be really proud!"

"I don't like tomatoes but I liked my curry"

"I tried lots of vegetables I hadn't eaten before"

"I didn't know that onions grew under the ground"

"I loved smelling the spices"

"I think this is fab"

"I really look forward to the Friendly Food Club coming to see us"

"I've told my mum to be better at using a knife to chop vegetables"

"I don't like peppers but I love this"

"I'm going to ask my dad if we can make this at home"

# Acknowledgements

The HAF programme team would like to thank all of our children, parents, providers and colleagues who helped make the 2023 programme a huge success.