

London Borough of Sutton

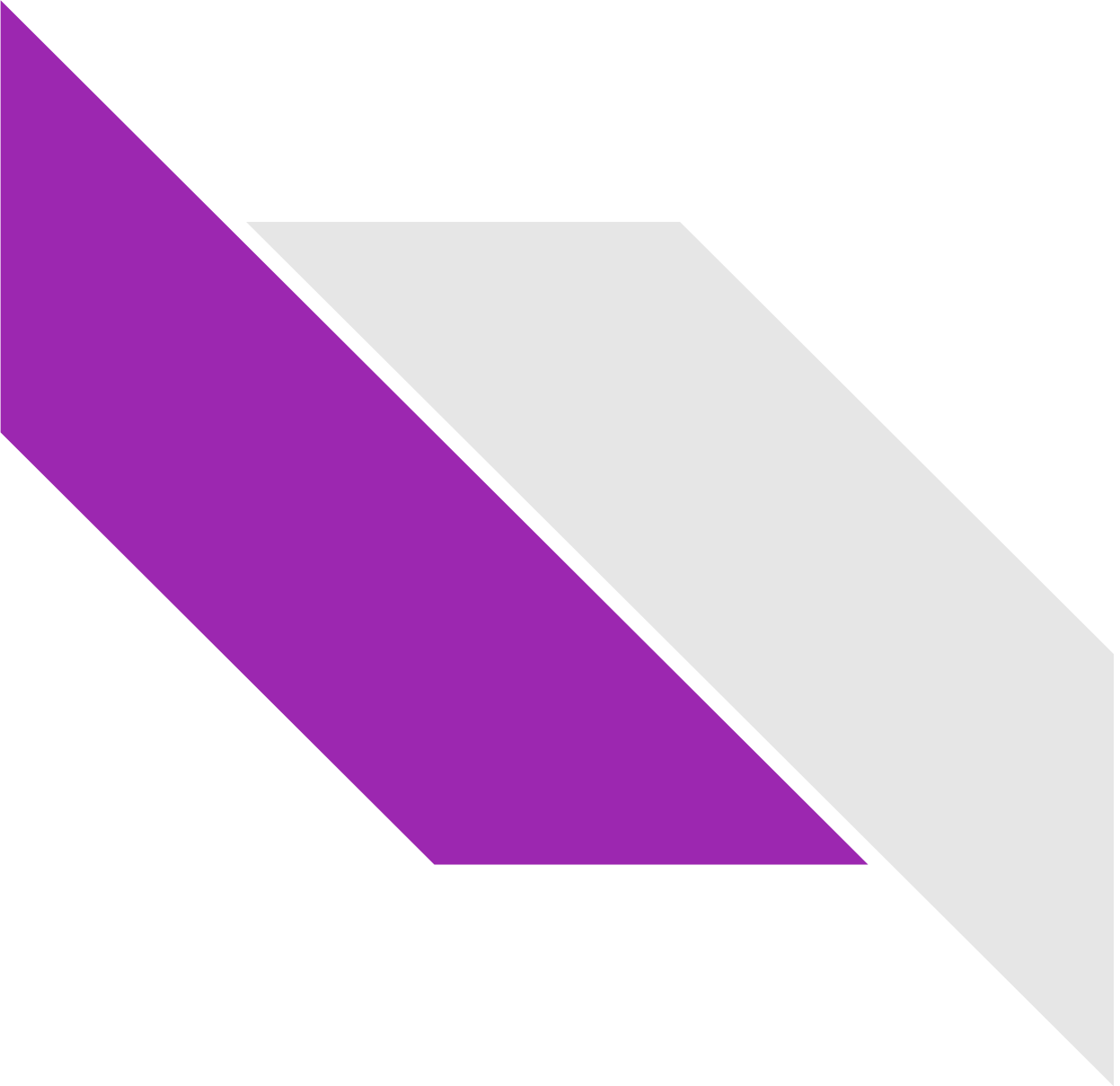
Holiday Activities and Food Programme

Annual Report

2024/2025



**Images of Sutton Council, Holiday Activities and Food Programme and the Department for Education Logos.*



Introduction

This report provides an overview of the London Borough of Sutton's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme for 2024/2025, funded by the Department for Education. The programme supported children and young people during school holidays with enriching activities and nutritious meals, contributing to healthier and more active lifestyles.

In 2024/2025, the HAF Programme expanded significantly in participation and scope, responding to economic pressures that increased food insecurity and reduced access to extracurricular activities. In partnership with local services, schools, and organisations, the programme offered a wide range of activities—from sports and arts to educational workshops and trips—designed to educate, engage, and inspire. Every participant also received balanced, nutritious meals.

The Department for Education allocated £652,060 in funding, enabling delivery of the Spring, Summer, and Winter programmes. Resources were carefully managed to ensure inclusivity and maximum impact for Sutton's children and families. Budget distribution is detailed in this report, with transparency and accountability prioritised throughout the year.

We are proud of the programme's growing popularity, improved standards, and broad support. In 2025–2026, we aim to build on these achievements by enhancing activities and expanding access. Our thanks go to all teams, partners, schools, and organisations who helped make HAF 2024/2025 a success.

Sutton HAF Team



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Background

The London Borough of Sutton is a diverse area with both urban and suburban environments. Despite its relatively affluent appearance, poverty and low-income households are common, impacting the well-being of many residents, particularly children and young people.

Like much of the UK, Sutton is still recovering from the pandemic and facing continued pressures from the cost of living crisis, with many families needing support. Sutton's child population (ages 0–17) is 48,463, with around 13% (6,399) living in low-income families¹. Approximately 6,760 children (16.3%) receive free school meals (FSM)², a figure that continues to grow.

The adjacent map highlights areas with higher levels of deprivation and FSM eligibility, based on 2023 data.

In this context, the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme has played a vital role, supporting the health and well-being of disadvantaged children across Sutton and focusing on areas most in need.

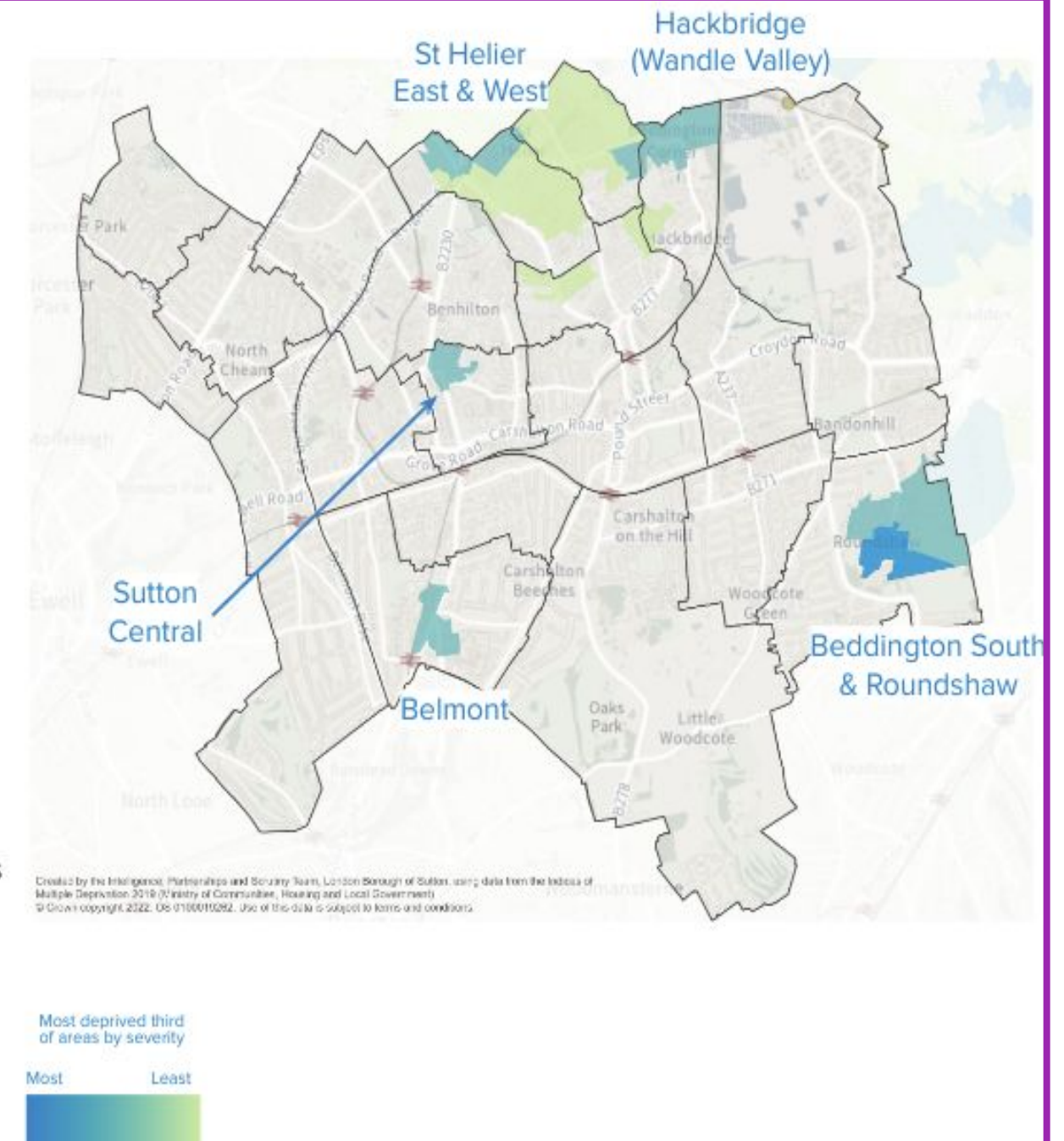
FSM eligibility numbers fluctuate with each school census, but the overall trend is rising. This ongoing increase underscores the continued need for programmes like HAF to support healthier holidays and connect families with key services.

¹ <https://www.cognus.org.uk/about-us/sutton-statistics/>

² School Sp Census Data 2024 - Cognus

Areas facing higher levels of deprivation

- This map highlights the main areas in Sutton with higher levels of economic deprivation (IMD index)
- Hackbridge and St Helier have the highest populations of CYP compared to other wards (approx 14% of the the borough total population of CYP)
- Areas of deprivation largely correlate with FSM eligibility, with the exception of Wallington North and South where there are a few hotspots of FSM eligibility



****Image is a map of Sutton wards which highlights the highest areas of deprivation in the borough. These are: St Helier East and West, Hackbridge (Wandle Valley), Beddington South and Roundshaw, Sutton Central, and Belmont.***

Department for Education (DfE) - Holiday Activities and Food Programme Overview

Aims

Research shows school holidays can create pressure points for some families, resulting in a holiday experience gap. Children from low-income households are:

- 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 face social isolation

The HAF programme provides valuable benefits. Providers are encouraged to deliver high-quality experiences that ensure children:

- Receive healthy, nutritious meals
- Maintain physical activity
- Enjoy themselves, have fun, and make new friends
- Gain a better understanding of food, nutrition, and health
- Take part in activities that support development and well-being
- Feel safe and supported
- Access appropriate support services
- Return to school engaged and ready to learn

Families can also benefit when their needs are considered in programme planning. This may include:

- Opportunities to take part in sessions, such as cookery classes
- Being signposted to additional support, including health, employment, or education services

Core Offer

Each Local Authority is expected to offer at least 6 weeks of HAF provision to eligible children throughout the year. In Sutton we run the HAF programme in the Easter holidays (4 days), Summer holidays (4 days x 4 weeks), and Christmas holidays (4 days).

Each HAF session/day must be at least 4 hours long. This may be delivered flexibly where appropriate (e.g. when considering the needs of older children or children with SEN /additional needs) .

Programmes must be inclusive and for all.

Standards for holiday provision must meet the Department for Education's HAF framework of standards which ensure high quality provision is delivered. This entails:

1. Food Provision
2. Enriching activities
3. Physical activities
4. Nutritional Education and the promotion of healthy living/lifestyles
5. Signposting and referrals and supporting families
6. Policies and procedures are in place
7. Quality assurance is completed which ensures providers meet the programme standards.

DfE Funding

For 2024/2025, the London Borough of Sutton were awarded an original grant allocation of £652,060 to deliver the HAF programme across Sutton.

The allocation was dependent on the number of children who were eligible for benefits-related free school meals from the school census data.

100% of the original allocation was received upfront and the total spend based on actual expenditure was £652,060 for 2024/2025 HAF programmes.

It is important to note that Spring HAF 2025 programme delivery was funded through the 2025/2026 grant funding allocation by the Department for Education and therefore will be reported on in the Annual report for 2025/2026.

No additional funds were used to support the delivery of the 2024/2025 programmes.

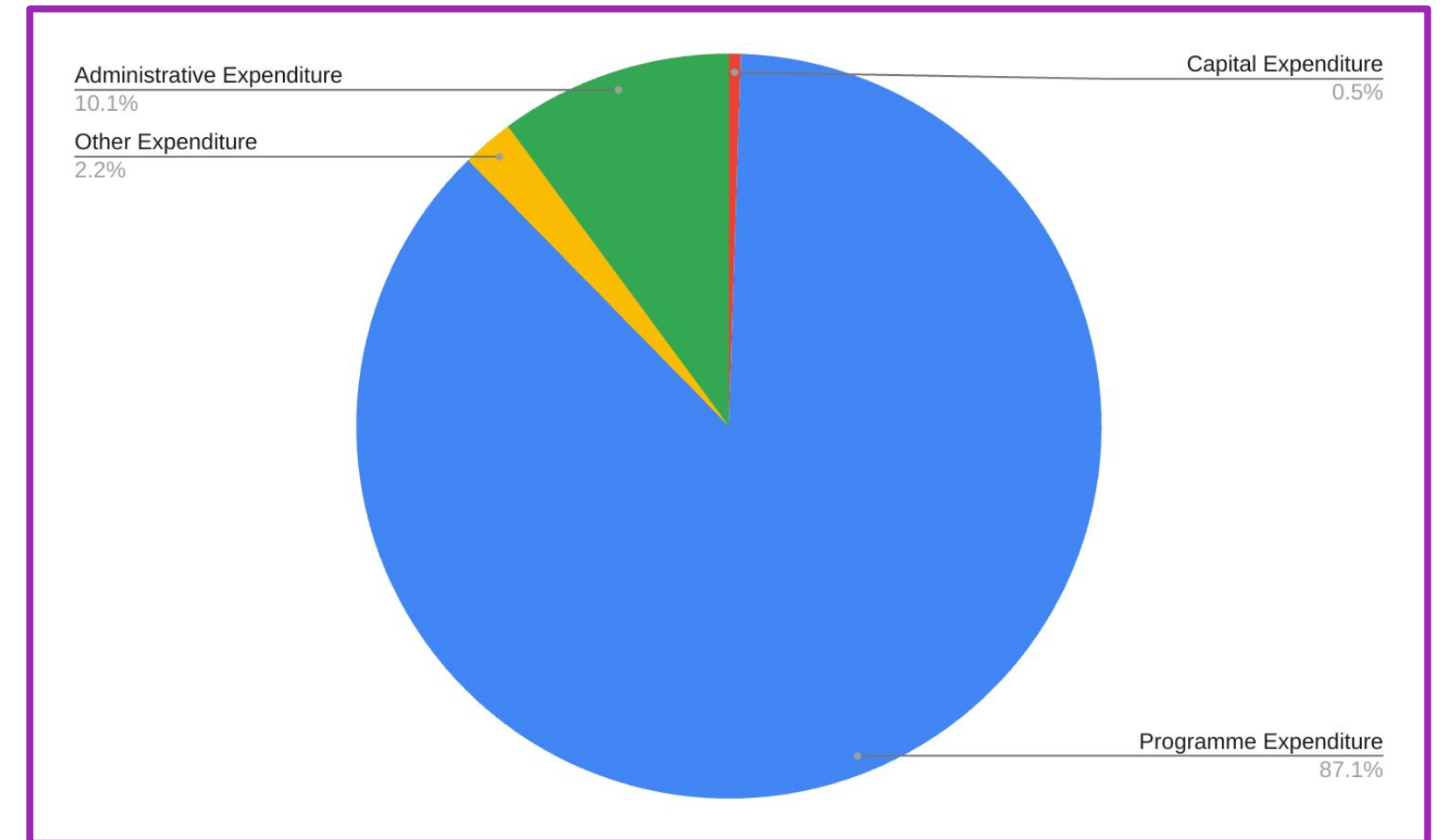
The following pie chart breaks down the total spend for the financial year 2024/2025.

**The table is a breakdown of the total annual expenditure and the pie chart representation percentage splits.*

**Programme Expenditure: All of the costs of providing free HAF places, including payments to providers and third parties for services provided.*

**Capital Expenditure: Equipment purchased to support the programme*

**Other Expenditure: Central Booking Platform, the HAF webpage, HAF family engagement and publicity, HAF taster event, and SEND upskilling training workshops for commissioned HAF providers.*



Expenditure Type	
Capital Expenditure	3,328.56
Programme Expenditure	568,245.82
Other Expenditure	14,588.62
Administrative Expenditure	65,897.00
Total	652,060.00

Commissioning & Procurement

In Summer 2023, the London Borough of Sutton introduced a flexible procurement framework for the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme, using a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS). This innovative approach created a more efficient, transparent, and competitive process for sourcing high-quality provision from a broad range of local and regional providers.

As part of the initial onboarding process, providers were required to complete qualifying questionnaires to assess their policies, safeguarding procedures, and overall suitability. Those who met the criteria were approved onto the DPS and invited to take part in a series of 'mini competitions'—a structured bidding process for individual programme periods.

Each mini competition required providers to submit detailed proposals outlining their planned activities, quality of provision, safeguarding practices, and pricing. These bids were scored independently by an evaluation panel against set quality and value-for-money criteria. Successful bids were ranked to ensure the best possible outcomes for children, young people, and families.

Mini competitions were conducted for the Winter 2023 and Spring 2024 HAF programmes, with further rounds launched for Summer 2024 and Winter 2024. This system allowed providers to bid for one or multiple delivery periods, supporting greater contract continuity, provider sustainability, and programme familiarity for participating families.

To ensure geographic and thematic coverage, the 2024 HAF mini competitions were divided into the following delivery Lots:

- Lot 1 – Sutton North Wards
- Lot 2 – Sutton South Wards
- Lot 3 – HAF+ Targeted Provision for 13–16-year-olds

A full list of commissioned providers for the 2024 HAF programme is available in the 'Provider List'.

Strategy and Steering Group

Sutton's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme in 2024/2025 was supported by a committed strategy and steering group, ensuring coordinated and effective delivery.

Role of the Steering Group

- Informing needs assessments to keep the programme responsive
- Providing input into commissioning to ensure high-quality, inclusive provision
- Identifying local assets to enhance delivery
- Aligning with wider council initiatives to maximise value
- Reviewing data and offering challenge to support continuous improvement

The group met three times in 2024, bringing together representatives from:

- London Borough of Sutton (LBS): Public Health, Commissioning (Health, Children's, Education), Education, Policy, Children's Services, Refugee Resettlement, Early Intervention, Children and Young People's Disability Team, Cultural Services, Leisure Services, Family Information Services
- Community Partners: Community and Youth Engagement Officers, Sutton Community Action

This multi-agency approach helped ensure the programme addressed local priorities and delivered measurable impact.

HAF Provider Network Forum

The HAF Provider Network Forum continued in 2024, offering a platform for commissioned providers to:

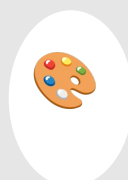
- Collaborate and support each other
- Share feedback with the HAF team to address issues and improve delivery
- Exchange learning and best practices to strengthen provision

Together, the steering group and provider forum provided strong governance and helped maintain the quality and reach of Sutton's HAF programme.

The HAF Offer

The Department for Education (DfE) provides grant funding to Local Authorities to provide a Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme during Spring (Easter), Summer and Winter (Christmas) school holidays for school aged children from reception to year 11 (inclusive) who receive benefits-related free school meals. Sutton Council uses this funding to commission a varied programme of holiday and food activities throughout the year, in line with the DfE Guidance.

The minimum standards for quality provision for the programme are:



Enriching Activities



Nutritious Food



Physical Activity



**Nutritional Education/Promoting
Healthier Behaviours and Lifestyles**



Signposting and Referrals

Marketing and communication

A robust marketing and communications plan for Sutton's HAF Programme is essential to maximise outreach, ensuring that every eligible family is aware of and can access provision.

The Sutton HAF Programme is communicated through a range of channels with the help of the LBS comms team:

- HAF Webpage www.suttoninformationhub.org.uk/pages/HAF
- Eligible families contacted directly and securely through our Central Booking platform 'HolidayActivities'
- Council Social media platforms (X, facebook, next door, instagram, Tiktok)
- Newsletters and bulletins (Sutton Scene, Education Bulletin, Ambitious for SEND, People Directorate newsletter, MIB, Sutton Parent Carer Forum, Sutton Care Hub)
- Digital billboards: Clear Channel across the borough
- Civic suite and library digital screens
- Schools: Head Teacher Meetings and direct emails
- Physical posters in high footfall locations such as parks, supermarkets, food banks, Citizens Advice Bureau, DWP Job Centre
- Partners: Through our strategy and steering groups and networks
- Local services and council teams (Contact centre, Family Information Service, Family Hubs, Libraries)

**Images of the three HAF 2024 programme advertisement posters.*



Reaching the Target Cohort

**Image of the Holiday Activities booking platform logo.*



Ahead of Summer HAF 2024, Sutton invested again the central booking platform 'HolidayActivities' to help manage the HAF Programme. The HolidayActivities e-vouchers platform was designed and built specifically to support effective HAF programmes, enabling local authorities, activity providers and eligible families to easily and securely engage their children in HAF activities.

By leveraging this digital solution, the platform efficiently distributes e-vouchers directly to our eligible families (on benefits-related free school meals), ensuring seamless access to our HAF programme.

This targeted approach not only reduced costs (compared to direct mail outs) with savings of 36%, but also helped increase the reach of the target cohort, reduced administrative time, and resource burdens, building closer relationship with schools and allowing the HAF team to focus more resources on delivering a quality programme and ensuring reliable data was being reporting to the Department for Education.

Parents

Easily access unique HAF vouchers, review activities in the local area and book sessions.

Sutton Council

Engage all eligible families and benefit from live eligibility data to ensure compliance reporting for the Department for Education.

Providers

A dedicated platform designed and built to best support the delivery of HAF provision.

Schools

Synchronisation of the eligible cohort, with schools assigning vouchers for eligible children.

Expanding the Reach to Vulnerable Groups

In line with Department for Education guidance, the London Borough of Sutton may use up to 15% of its Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) funding to offer free or subsidised holiday club places to children not in receipt of benefits-related free school meals, but who are identified as likely to benefit significantly from the programme.

While there is no fixed eligibility list, Sutton prioritises access to these discretionary places for children and young people deemed vulnerable, such as:

- Children who are Looked After
- Young Carers
- Refugees or newly arrived families
- Those facing exceptional hardship or social isolation

It is important to note that:

- These places are limited, not guaranteed, and allocated on a first-come, first-served basis
- They are offered for one delivery period at a time (e.g. Easter, Summer, or Winter)
- Interested families or professionals must contact the chosen provider directly to confirm availability and ensure individual needs can be supported

To manage this process effectively, the HAF team uses a referral form for professionals and providers. This helps:

- Capture relevant information about the child's circumstances and eligibility under the 15% discretionary criteria
- Monitor capacity across delivery periods and avoid oversubscription
- Inform strategic discussions with the HAF steering group, ensuring targeted outreach and identification of unmet need

The referral process is reviewed regularly in partnership with the strategy and steering group, to ensure equitable access and to support data-informed decisions about provision for vulnerable cohorts

1. Enriching Activities

Sutton HAF providers deliver a wide range of engaging and inclusive activities designed to inspire and support children's development. These include sports, arts and crafts, drama, cooking, educational workshops, day trips, and more. Children are encouraged to build friendships, discover new interests, enhance existing skills, and experience exciting 'firsts'—such as ice skating. These opportunities are central to ensuring a well-rounded and enjoyable holiday experience for all participants.

Targeted Offer - HAF+ for 13-16 Year Olds

Following the success of a 2023 pilot, the 2024 programme continued its HAF+ provision, specifically designed for young people aged 13–16. This targeted offer responds to nationally lower engagement among secondary-age pupils and was informed by Sutton HAF's own focus group work in early 2023.

HAF+ sessions were age-appropriate and interest-led, featuring activities such as sports workshops, filmmaking, drama improvisation, content creation, and DJ/podcasting workshops. This strand of the programme remains vital in shaping a relevant and engaging offer for older age groups.

To address traditionally lower participation during the Winter (Christmas) period, the programme also included activity packs containing enriching materials and nutritional education content, helping to extend the core offer and keep children meaningfully engaged over the holidays.



**Eight images of the various enriching activities children experienced during the HAF 2024 programme, such as...*

2. Physical Activities

Sutton's HAF Programme is committed to encouraging active lifestyles by ensuring all providers meet the physical activity standard, delivering at least 60 minutes of physical activity per session. Providers offered a diverse range of activities to suit different interests and fitness levels, including team sports, dance, fitness, boxing, martial arts, football, tennis, archery, Olympic-style games, cycling, and outdoor adventures.

By embedding physical activity into every session, the programme supports children's physical and mental well-being, contributing to our aim of raising healthier, more active young people in Sutton.

A standout success in 2024 was our partnership with the transport team to launch a new Summer cycling club. Open to all ages and abilities, the club taught children to ride, while also providing practical workshops on bike maintenance—covering brake checks, tyre repair, and air pressure. We were especially proud to see beginners gain confidence and ride independently by the end of the programme.



**Seven images of the various physical activities children experienced during the HAF 2024 programme, such as parachute games, boxing, gymnastics, football, trampolining. .*

3. Food

Every HAF provider ensured children received a nutritious meal at each session—be it breakfast, lunch, or dinner—carefully planned to meet School Food Standards and deliver balanced nutrition. Meals featured a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables, proteins, and healthy snacks, often sourced through local food suppliers to keep food both wholesome and appealing.

Many providers made mealtimes interactive and enjoyable, incorporating taste tests and fun presentations to encourage children to try new foods. Some introduced global menus, inviting children to explore flavours from around the world, while others paired food with engaging activities like myth-busting games, fruit skewer making, DIY healthy lunches, and smoothie workshops—all aimed at building children’s confidence and knowledge around nutrition.

Outdoor sport providers adapted their offer by serving cold lunches in Summer, tailored to the needs of active, on-the-go participants.

This strong focus on healthy, enjoyable eating plays a vital role in tackling food insecurity and instilling lasting healthy habits in children and families.



** Four images of the healthy food children were provided during the HAF 2024 programme, such as hot meals with vegetables, salad, desert with fruit and Take and Make boxes*

4. Nutritional Education and the promotion of healthy living/lifestyles

Sutton's HAF Programme brought healthy living to life with a vibrant mix of fun, hands-on activities that inspired children to learn about nutrition in creative and memorable ways. From smoothie making and cooking classes to crafting fruit skewers and planting seeds to grow their own fruit and veg, children were immersed in exciting, practical experiences that made healthy choices enjoyable.

Nutrition was woven into sessions through interactive games like blind taste tests, quizzes, arts and crafts, and even friendly competitions—all designed to make learning about food fun and engaging. Some providers went the extra mile by creating take-home nutrition booklets, giving families a chance to continue the learning together.

Families were also signposted to additional resources via our HAF Webpage under 'Accessing Further Support,' ensuring access to wider tools and guidance. To complement in-club learning, the HAF team distributed activity packs featuring nutrition-themed workbooks, designed to extend the fun and learning into the home—turning mealtimes into opportunities for connection, creativity, and confidence.



*An multiple image grid showing a variety of food and activities from the 2024 HAF programme

5. Signposting and Referrals

Sutton's HAF Programme goes beyond holiday sessions—connecting families to vital local services and support. Our providers actively signpost children and families to a wide range of resources, from mental health and nutritional guidance to financial and practical support. With strong partnerships across health services, community groups, and local organisations, we ensure families are linked into the help they need, when they need it.

Through the HAF Webpage and direct engagement, providers guide families toward services like counselling, recipe kits, school uniform help, energy bill support, and warm spaces.

Key Highlights from 2024:

- Sent weekly signposting updates to providers to share with families
- Mental Health Workshops for CYP/HAF Winter 2024
- Distributed 500+ cost-of-living support leaflets
- Referred families to Bags of Taste for free meal kits and mentoring
- Promoted the school uniform exchange scheme
- Shared over 1,500 activity packs and trackers to keep children engaged
- Provided guidance on energy bill support and discounted water rate.
- Raised awareness of services like Sutton's CFCS, LADO, Family Hubs, Libraries, and Citizens Advice
- Promoted our 'Accessing Further Support' portal for a full range of help

Together, we're building a stronger, more informed network of support for Sutton's families—long after the school holidays end.



** Two images, one of the Together For Sutton logo and one of the distributed cost of living support leaflets.*

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)/ Additional Needs

Championing Inclusion: Supporting Children with SEND

Sutton's HAF Programme is built on a strong commitment to inclusion, ensuring children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can fully participate in enriching and enjoyable holiday experiences. In 2024/25, providers delivered a mix of inclusive and specialist sessions, meeting a range of needs from low-level support to complex requirements.

Where additional support—such as 1:1 staffing—was needed, funding was granted in consultation with the Children and Young People's Disability Team, ensuring safe and effective participation for all children.

To help providers better meet SEND needs, we invested capital funding into bespoke SEND kits, including sensory tents, therapeutic tools, ear defenders, and weighted blankets. These were widely praised by both families and providers.

In response to rising demand and undiagnosed needs, we introduced a tailored SEN training package to upskill providers in managing diverse needs more confidently and inclusively.

We also partnered with the CAMHS Education Wellbeing Service to deliver mental health workshops, helping providers support the emotional wellbeing of children with additional needs.

Regular feedback from families and providers helps us refine our approach, ensuring Sutton HAF remains a place where every child feels safe, supported, and included.



** Four images of the SEND equipment kit that was distributed to all providers to support children. This includes a black pop up tent that is wheelchair friendly, weighted blankets, a therapeutic wellbeing toolkit with cards and fidget toys included, and ear defenders.*

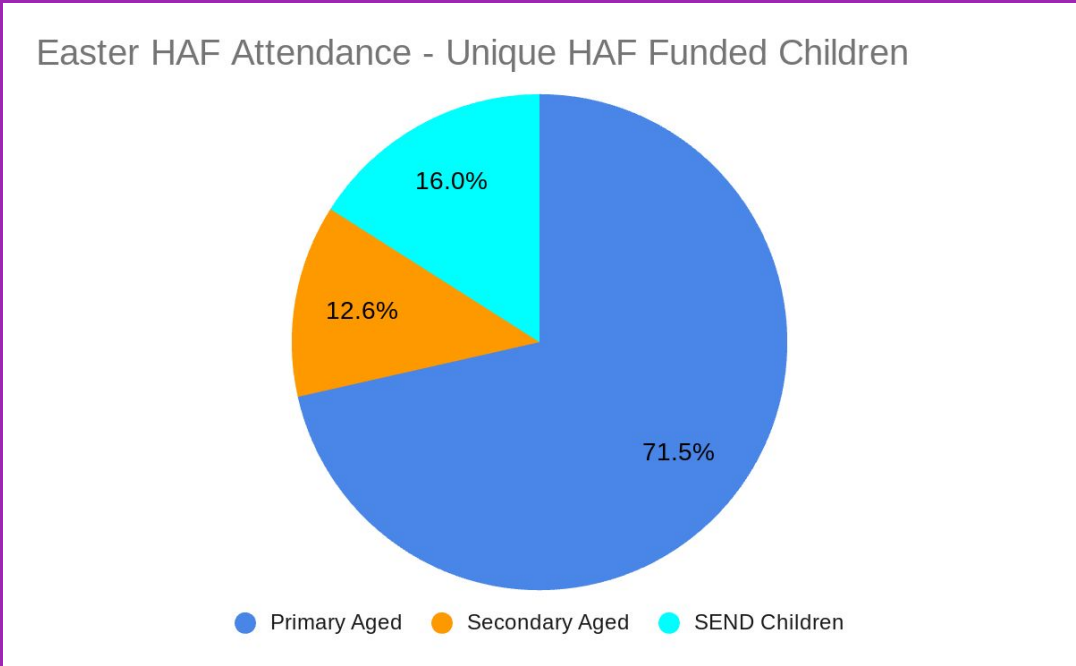
Easter 2024 HAF

Number of commissioned providers: 20
Number of locations: 25
Number of awarded places to commissioned providers: 3,838

With a notable increase in overall attendance, including a rise in children with SEND accessing HAF provision in 2024. A wide variety of activities were delivered, including multi-sports, martial arts, drama, arts and crafts, cooking, and more—ensuring something for every interest and ability. To maintain quality, we conducted five site visits for quality assurance. All providers met the DfE's HAF standards, with many offering diverse and engaging sessions. While some providers reached maximum capacity, others faced challenges in uptake, with some unable to fill places beyond their fixed costs. Despite this, the breadth and quality of activities across the programme remained strong.

The below table and pie charts provide an overview of our attendance data from our evaluation of the Easter HAF programme.

Free School Meals Population (Eligible Cohort on benefits-related FSM)	6,645
Primary Aged Children	666
Secondary Aged Children	117
Total Unique HAF Funded Children	783

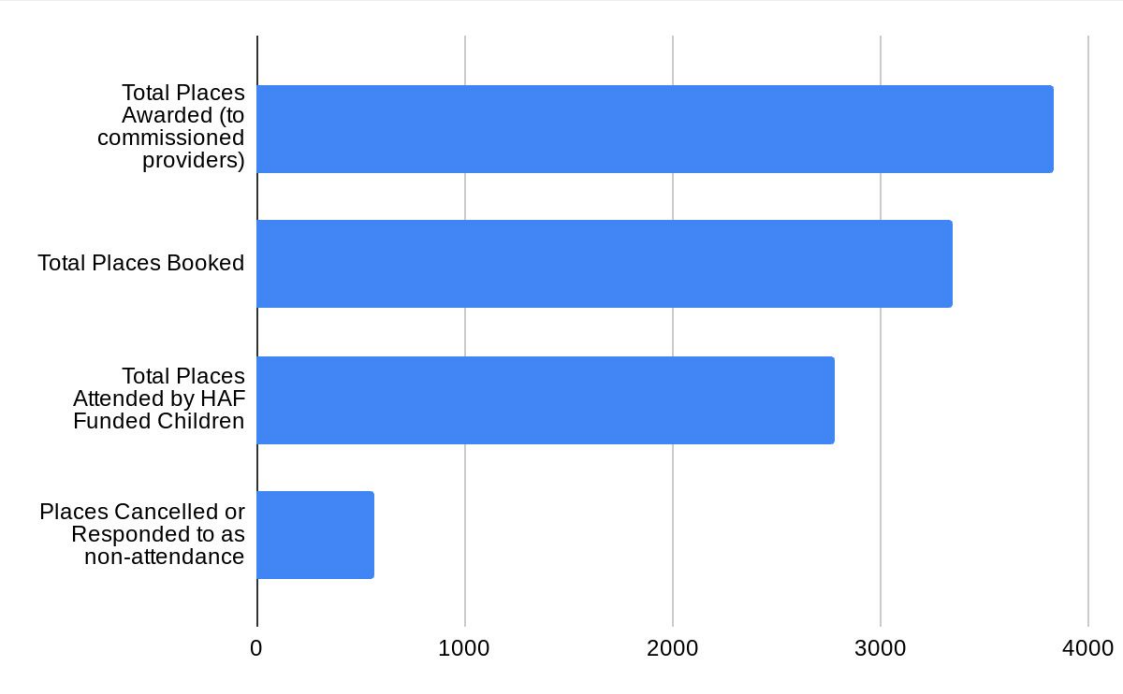


** A piechart highlighting the Easter HAF 2024 unique attendance with 16% were SEND children, 12.6% were secondary aged children and 71.5% were primary aged children.*

*Image of children doing arts a crafts.



Easter HAF 2024 - Attended Places



**A graph highlighting the Easter HAF 2024 attendance with 3,838 places commissioned and 2,780 placed attended.*

Successes

- Our most notable event was our pre Easter family fun event day in the park. This was a brilliant opportunity for publicising, signposting and promoting our programme. Over 2,000 individuals attended.
- As longer contracts were in place, we were able to start our marketing and engagement earlier.
- LBS also offered commissioned providers a chance to upskill through offering free tailored SEND in-person training on identifying and unpicking challenging behaviours.
- All providers complied with our booking system which was a success. This means that our data and monitoring is more accurate and reliable for reporting.
- Our 13+ provision is popular with providers who are motivated to deliver practical workshops for teenagers.
- Support from schools continued to grow.

Challenges

- 21 providers were initially awarded contracts for Spring. However, this was reduced to 20 following the withdrawal of a provider due to unforeseen challenges in securing a venue. Notably, this provider specialised in SEND provision, which was a regrettable loss to the programme.
- A small number of providers withdrew from the programme within two weeks of the start date, impacting delivery plans. Additionally, some providers were unable to fulfil their full contractual obligations, requiring close contract management and support.
- While several providers reached full capacity and requested additional places, a few experienced low uptake—filling less than 30% of their allocated places—resulting in challenges covering fixed costs.



Easter 2024 Spend

The below table provides a breakdown of the actual spend for the Easter HAF 2024 programme. No other funding (beyond the grant) was used to deliver the programme.

Spend Category by the Department For Education	Actual Spend
Face-to-face holiday club provision (including provider costs, holiday club staff, venue costs, activity costs, food/meal costs and other costs directly associated with the provision of free holiday club places directly funded through the HAF programme).	£105,956.97
SEND Specific provisions.	£6,202
Remote holiday club provision	0
Publicising the scheme to eligible families and other communications	£80
Capital expenditure (e.g., catering or sports equipment for clubs)	0
Management and administration of the programme by the LA	£21,965.67
Other costs (e.g., translations, transport, provider staff training, booking systems etc.)	£3,390.87
Total Spend	£137,595.45

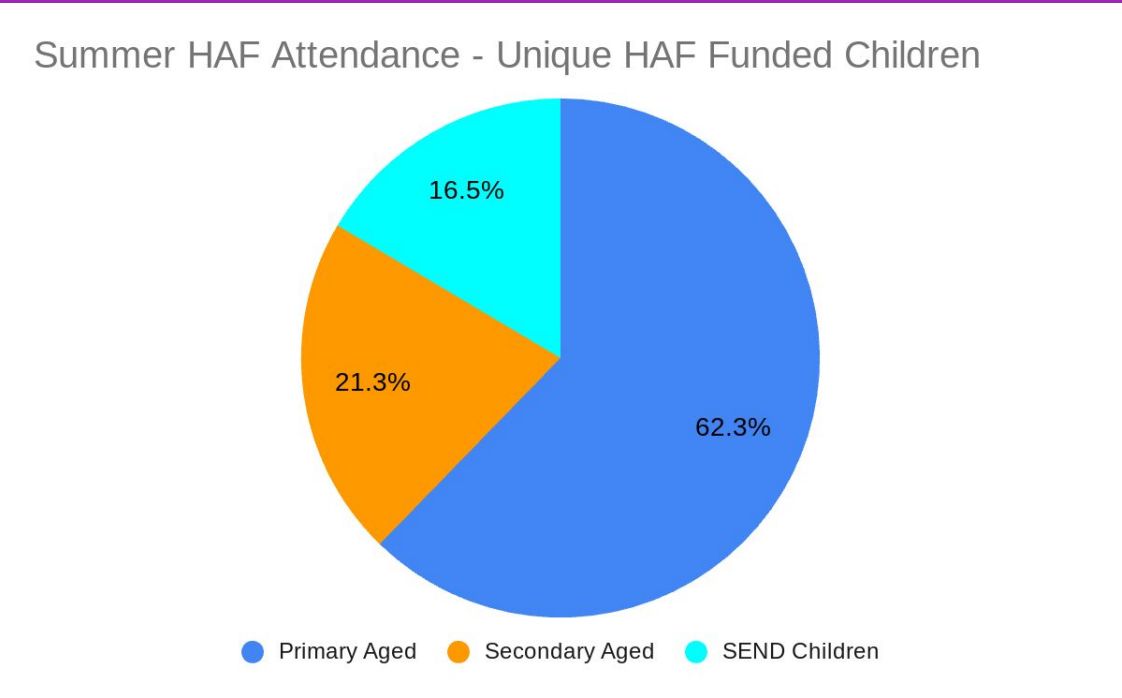
Summer 2024 HAF

Number of commissioned providers: 20
Number of locations: 31
Number of awarded places to commissioned providers: 12,208

A wide range of activities were delivered during Summer HAF, including multi-sports, cycling, arts and crafts, coding, drama, and day trips. We also continued the targeted provision for 13–16 year olds, offering engaging workshops in podcasting, filmmaking, content creation, and DJing. Summer 2024 attendance increased by 36% (unique HAF-funded children) compared to Easter 2024, supported by improved data accuracy thanks to full provider compliance with the booking platform and verification by its support team. All providers were visited for quality assurance, and HAF standards were met. While some sessions reached full capacity, others experienced varied uptake.

The below table and pie chart provide an overview of our attendance data from our evaluation of the Summer HAF programme.

Free School Meals Population (Eligible Cohort on benefits-related FSM)	6,543
Primary Aged Children	794
Secondary Aged Children	271
Total Unique HAF Funded Children	1,065

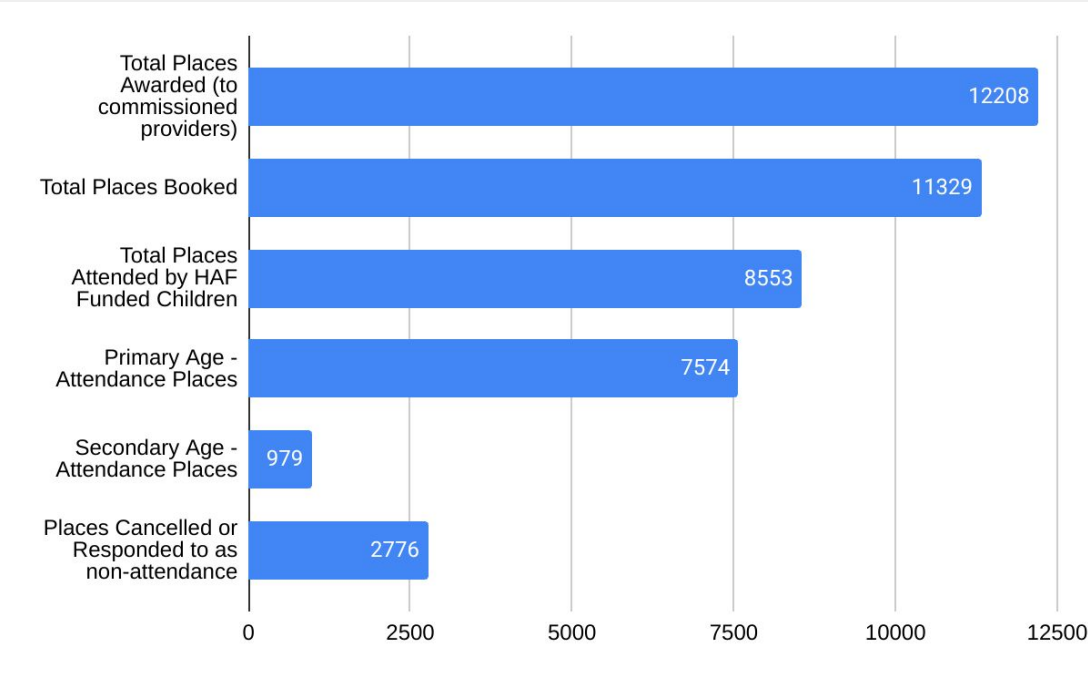


** A piechart highlighting the Summer HAF 2024 unique attendance with 16.5% were SEND children, 21.3% were secondary aged children and 62.2% were primary aged children.*

**Image of children playing football*



Summer HAF 2024 - Places Overview



**A chart highlighting the Summer HAF 2024 attendance with 12,208 places commissioned and 8,553 placed attended.*

Summer 2024 HAF Fun Day

Got 60 Seconds? Watch this video of what we got up to over Summer HAF 2024!



Successes

- Our Summer Festival/Family Fun Day attracted 3,000+ attendees, promoting the programme, gathering feedback, and engaging young event producers from Sutton.
- Summer HAF attendance rose notably, supported by creative outreach—banners, leaflets at 32+ high-footfall sites, and weekly social media updates.
- Additional SEND training was delivered to providers, focusing on managing challenging behaviours, responding to post-programme feedback.
- Provider compliance with our booking system improved monitoring, data accuracy, and efficiency. Providers praised the programme's professionalism and delivery.
- All QA visits were completed successfully, with providers meeting HAF standards. Issues were resolved promptly through strong contract management and support.

Challenges

- Securing appropriate support staff for children with SEND or additional needs, such as 1:1 support, remained a challenge during delivery.
- The growing demand for SEND-inclusive provision has highlighted a gap in the availability of specialist providers able to deliver within the HAF framework.
- Occasionally, providers face difficulties in fully preparing for a child's needs when information is not clearly communicated in advance. This can impact the quality of the support offered at the start of delivery.
- Additionally, supporting providers who required further guidance—due to missed deadlines or quality assurance concerns—has required significant time and resources to ensure delivery consistently meets the expected HAF standards.



Summer 2024 Spend

The below table provides a breakdown of the actual spend for the Summer HAF 2024 programme. No other funding (beyond the grant) was used to deliver the programme.

Spend Category by the Department For Education	Actual Spend
Face-to-face holiday club provision (including provider costs, holiday club staff, venue costs, activity costs, food/meal costs and other costs directly associated with the provision of free holiday club places directly funded through the HAF programme).	£351,407.26
SEND Specific provisions.	£18,225.80
Remote holiday club provision	0
Publicising the scheme to eligible families and other communications	£200
Capital expenditure (e.g., catering or sports equipment for clubs)	0
Management and administration of the programme by the LA	£21,965.67
Other costs (e.g., translations, transport, provider staff training, booking systems etc.)	£3,613.50
Total Spend	£395,412.23

Christmas 2024 HAF

**Image of children making slime*

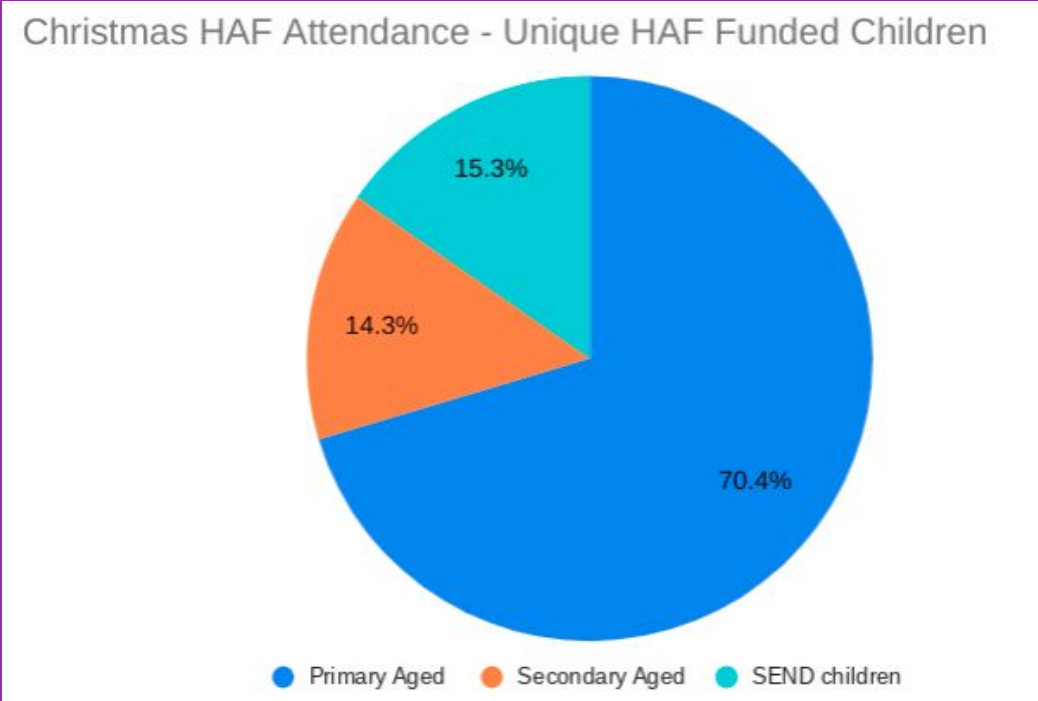


Number of commissioned providers: 14
Number of locations: 24
Number of awarded places to commissioned providers: 2,026

Winter HAF delivered a wide variety of engaging activities, including multi-sports, drama, arts and crafts, STEM sessions, theatre, and seasonal trips. Although attendance and the number of unique children were lower than the previous year—an outcome we anticipated due to the winter season—the programme remained impactful. Our exclusive 13–16 provision continued to develop successfully, offering targeted workshops focused on life skills such as sports coaching, physical literacy, filmmaking, drama, and content creation. To maintain high-quality delivery, we carried out six quality assurance visits. We also partnered with Take and Make to distribute recipe kits to 19 clubs, enhancing the nutritional learning element of the programme.

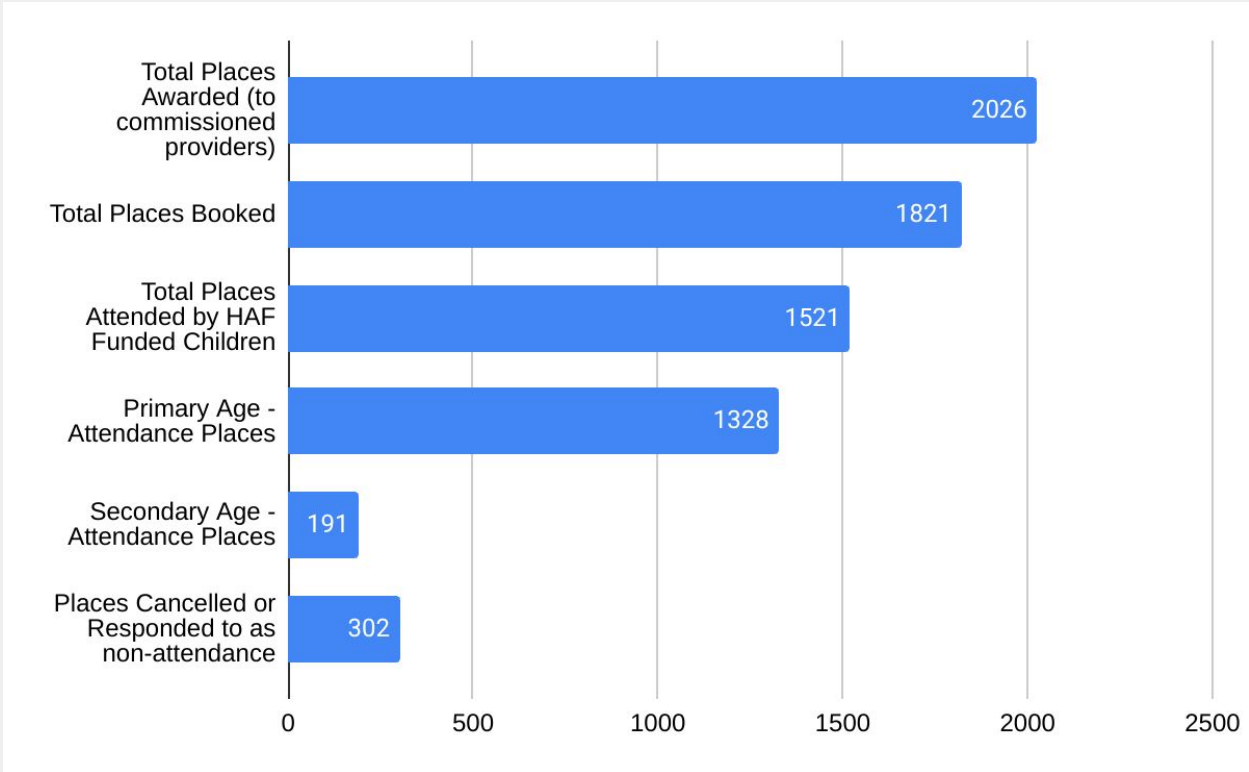
The below table and pie chart provide an overview of our attendance data from our evaluation of the Christmas HAF programme.

Free School Meals Population (Eligible Cohort on benefits-related FSM)	6,599
Primary Aged Children	389
Secondary Aged Children	141
Total Unique HAF Funded Children	530



** A piechart highlighting the Winter HAF 2023 unique attendance with 15.3% were SEND children, 14.3% were secondary aged children and 70.4% were primary aged children.*

Christmas HAF 2024 - Places Overview



**A chart highlighting the Winter HAF 2023 attendance with 2,026 places commissioned and 1,521 placed attended.*

Successes

- Partnered with Take and Make to deliver recipe kits to 19 clubs during Winter HAF. These hands-on boxes supported food education by encouraging families to cook nutritious meals together, extending learning beyond the session.
- Improved SEND Application Process: Streamlined the referral process for children with SEND/additional needs, enabling quicker placement decisions and improved access. This helped ensure timely allocation of 1:1 support where required, enhancing the inclusivity of our provision.
- Robust Quality Assurance: Completed six in-person QA visits across Winter HAF clubs to monitor delivery standards. Feedback was used to identify strengths, address issues proactively, and ensure all providers met DfE HAF expectations.
- Continued to build trusted partnerships with HAF providers through regular communication, training opportunities, and a dedicated network forum. This collaborative approach strengthened programme delivery, encouraged peer support, and enhanced overall quality and consistency across provision.

Challenges

- Some providers experienced difficulties with non-attendance where parents/carers did not communicate cancellations, despite multiple attempts to follow up. This made it challenging to manage resources and fill available places effectively.
- While voucher redemption rates were lower than anticipated, the conversion from bookings to actual attendance was strong, indicating that once booked, families were highly likely to attend.
- Coordinating delivery dates over the festive period presented logistical challenges. To support providers, greater flexibility was offered across the two-week window to accommodate operational constraints.
- Several venues were unavailable due to holiday closures, impacting delivery options.
- Fewer providers were available during the Christmas period, partly due to staff taking annual leave, which resulted in fewer clubs operating and reduced overall programme capacity.



Winter 2024 Spend

The below table provides a breakdown of the actual spend for the Winter HAF 2024 programme. No other funding (beyond the grant) was used to deliver the programme.

Spend Category by the Department For Education	Actual Spend
Face-to-face holiday club provision (including provider costs, holiday club staff, venue costs, activity costs, food/meal costs and other costs directly associated with the provision of free holiday club places directly funded through the HAF programme).	£81,242.84
SEND Specific provisions.	£5,211
Remote holiday club provision	0
Publicising the scheme to eligible families and other communications	£590
Capital expenditure (e.g., catering or sports equipment for clubs)	£3,328.56
Management and administration of the programme by the LA	£21,965.67
Other costs (e.g., translations, transport, provider staff training, booking systems etc.)	£6,714.25
Total Spend	£119,052.32

Enhancing Communication and Engagement for the Sutton HAF Programme in 2024

One of our key challenges throughout the 2024 programme was improving communication and family engagement to raise awareness of the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme—ultimately driving higher attendance and a stronger understanding of its benefits.

To address this, LBS invested in innovative strategies to elevate the presence and accessibility of the Sutton HAF programme, including:

- Partnering with community engagement specialists Beyond The Box to deliver pre-Easter and pre-Summer Family HAF Days.
- Targeted outreach to ensure all eligible families in Sutton were informed and encouraged to take part, boosting programme uptake.
- Installing branded banners in key play parks across the borough to increase visibility.
- Introducing HAF taster events, allowing families to sample different types of provision and find the best fit for their children.
- Addressing barriers such as digital exclusion by diversifying communication channels and using accessible media.
- Collecting meaningful feedback from families and young people to inform and shape future delivery.

These efforts have helped build stronger connections with our community and improved access to the programme for families across Sutton.

Parental - Feedback

"Friendly staff, well organised activities and inclusive of all children's needs and abilities."

Thank you so much for all your hard work and patience with M, he is loving camp and packing his bag the night before ready to come back."

"The staff patience with my daughter was amazing, the knowledge of autism and pda showed! Without this place my daughter would have not been accepted anywhere else!

They made her feel accepted.
Best holiday club we have ever used.

"The activities allowed both my children to engage positively with their peers. Both are extremely shy but with the encouragement of the team working at the kids pace, both were made comfortable to participate and thoroughly enjoyed every activity.

The staff are brilliant and really make the children welcome.
Hats off to you guys!
See you next time!

Having space to be himself have fun in a positive environment

Accessible,
inclusive and
friendly

My son had such a ball!
He said he wants to
come back next time!!

"The children really enjoyed every bit of the camp experience. Even in the winter they still want to come to your camp and play football which is a big surprise for me.
Thank you for organising an amazing camp."

My 8 year old daughter loves coming to camp during the school holidays. This is the only camp that we have found which she thoroughly enjoys.

" My child had an incredible time at the summer camp, and it made a huge difference for our family. Not only did they have a blast playing football and learning new skills, but knowing they were getting a hot meal each day was a real relief for us.

With the cost of living increasing, it's not always easy to provide consistent hot meals at home, and this camp really helped take some pressure off during the holidays. My child loved the food and always looked forward to lunchtime, telling us about the meals and snacks they enjoyed with the other kids. The camp provided such a safe and happy space for them, and we're so grateful for the support. We'll definitely be signing up again next time!"

My daughter absolutely loved a certain staff member A. With my child's additional needs it was vital that staff were patient and understanding. Straight away this staff member made E feel apart of the group and included.

They made new friends close to home it gave them some sense of self during the holidays where they can go be themselves away from home life , gets them out gives them routine they have thoroughly enjoyed it and are excited for the rest of the days they have there , they like the food provided for lunches , it's not a too longer day but it's just enough to keep them busy and happy



Commissioned Providers - feedback

I have been doing HAF for years now since it started. The booking platform was great - this was the first time we had used it. It's really helpful and easy to navigate. The support the HAF Sutton Council team provided through meetings, emails and information was a lot but all very beneficial, professional and organised. It feels like we have to be organised to ensure the provision is to a high standard across the Borough, which is to be expected and great! We loved the gifts you provided us to give to the children and we really enjoy offering fun active camps for our community that we know a lot of the parents couldn't afford if we had to charge them, so THANK YOU!

We really appreciate all of the support Sutton have given us for our provision.

We believe our physical and enriching activities went really well this Easter, we created a range of Easter specific arts and crafts activities such as rabbit hats, painting rocks to look like easter eggs, easter face painting, plate animals and bouncy bunnies. The children loved making these designs and were proud to take them home with them at the end of the day.

Sutton have always been very efficient with their communication and provide clear guidance with regards to every step of the haf programme. I appreciate the advice I have been given and the compassion shown regarding personal issues I have gone through

Good offer of activities across the borough for children and the fun days.

The whole process for running a HAF programme with Sutton Council is made very simple and the team are great at being on hand for any help or advice

"Support was available when needed and the booking platform was easy to use."

The team at Sutton Council are very supportive and knowledgeable, enabling us to run a safe camp for the children

Responsive and adaptive to situations

Good communication and support

As a new provider, we got plenty of positive feedback about our provision and thankfully, it was down to our quality. We were very happy with this and also aimed to develop a relationship with the parents and families in the hopes that we would be back for Winter!

"Good support from council with meetings and updates and being kept in the loop of developments and local offers and Friday emails."

Our attendance were above our expectation. The engagement with 13-16 proved to be very successful with some of young people now on a pathway to gain further training and qualification in sports.

Good communication, great resources distributed during Winter which were re-used for Spring, and an easy booking platform.

The booking platform was easier this time around as we have learnt how to navigate it.

Key Operational Learnings from the 2024/2025 HAF Programme

The 2024/2025 programme highlighted several important lessons that will shape future delivery:

- **Strengthening Provider Readiness:** Some providers faced challenges meeting contractual and operational expectations, especially when onboarding timelines were tight. This reinforced the value of early planning, clear expectations, and ongoing support to ensure consistent quality across all delivery partners.
- **Balancing Capacity and Demand:** While some sessions were oversubscribed, others experienced low uptake. This highlighted the need for improved demand analysis, flexible place allocation, and targeted promotion to better match provision with local need.
- **Enhancing SEND Inclusion:** Rising demand from children with SEND highlighted the need to expand the pool of SEND-capable providers and improve access to specialist support. Clearer pre-programme communication with families is also essential to help providers plan appropriate care from the outset.
- **Improving Communication with Families:** Non-attendance without notice posed challenges for managing resources and staffing. Strengthening family engagement and setting clear expectations around cancellations will be key to minimising disruption and maximising place usage.
- **Provider Support & Quality Assurance:** Some providers required more intensive guidance to meet programme standards. Earlier training, clearer processes, and consistent quality assurance will support more effective and confident delivery.
- **Seasonal Delivery Considerations:** Programme delivery during holiday periods presented logistical difficulties due to venue closures and reduced staff availability. Offering greater flexibility and planning further in advance will help mitigate these seasonal challenges.

These insights will inform our strategic planning for 2025/2026, helping to build a more resilient, inclusive, and efficient programme that better meets the needs of families and providers alike.

Sutton HAF: Strategic Priorities for 2025/2026

Sutton is building on the success of previous programmes with ambitious and inclusive plans for 2025/2026, aligned with the Department for Education's funding for the current year. As we await confirmation of funding for 2026/2027, our focus is on delivering maximum impact, strengthening delivery partners, and ensuring long-term value through capacity building—particularly around SEND inclusion as attendance from children with SEND continues to rise across the borough.

Our strategic priorities for 2025/2026 include:

- **Extending provider contracts** to improve continuity, encourage investment in quality provision, and support long-term planning.
- **Strengthening marketing and engagement**, with a focus on reaching underrepresented groups, particularly secondary-aged children and young people.
- **Introducing new and diverse enrichment activities** guided by feedback, interests, and the evolving needs of our families and young people.
- **Expanding targeted provision for ages 13–16**, addressing a critical gap in holiday support for older youth.
- **Improving accessibility and inclusivity**, with dedicated efforts to upskill providers in SEND-inclusive practice and ensure all children feel welcome and supported.
- **Using inclusive language** to better reflect the diversity of our communities—referring to 'Spring' and 'Winter' rather than religious holiday terms to broaden engagement.
- **Fostering stronger collaboration** with schools, partners, local organisations, and the voluntary sector to create a joined-up and responsive offer.
- **Enhancing school engagement**, supporting more schools to confidently and independently deliver HAF provision.
- **Evaluating local competition and costs** to ensure we achieve the best value for money while maintaining high-quality provision.
- **Implementing robust systems for data, feedback, and evaluation** to continuously adapt and improve delivery and inform future planning.

These initiatives are designed to ensure HAF remains relevant, impactful, and inclusive—regardless of future funding decisions—while leaving a lasting positive legacy for families across Sutton.

2024/2025 Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme – Sutton Summary

The 2024/2025 HAF Programme in Sutton continued to support the well-being of children from low-income families through enriching activities, structure, and nutritious meals during school holidays.

Participation grew, especially among children with SEND. Feedback highlighted the value of supportive staff and inclusive environments that helped children feel welcome and confident.

We continued to use our central booking system and Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS), both of which improved efficiency and provider engagement. Targeted provision for 13–16 year olds also continued to expand.

Some operational challenges remained, including provider readiness, staffing, and fluctuating attendance. These reinforced the need for early planning, clear communication, and greater support for inclusive delivery.

Improving family communication is a priority to reduce non-attendance and make better use of resources.

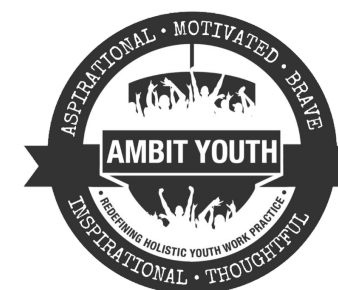
Families consistently shared that HAF gave their children routine, joy, and a sense of belonging. Sutton remains committed to strengthening the programme and ensuring all children have access to safe, inclusive, and fulfilling holiday experiences.

** Logo images of the HAF 2023 programme providers and partners.*

Thank you

We extend our gratitude to all of our providers, services, internal teams, partners, and schools who have contributed to the success of the Sutton HAF Programme in 2024/2025. Your dedication, collaboration, and support have been instrumental in enriching the lives of countless children and families in our community. Together, we have provided not only nutritious meals and engaging activities but also a nurturing and inclusive environment where every child can thrive.

To our commissioned providers, thank you for your commitment and hard work, which has made this year truly exceptional. We look forward to continuing this journey together and building an even stronger programme in the years to come.



Progressive Martial Arts
Mixed Martial Arts for Kids



Provider List for FY 2024/2025

Easter 2024	Summer 2024	Christmas 2024
1st Verse Education	1st Verse Education	APF Activity
AMBIT Youth Ltd	AMBIT Youth Ltd	AMBIT Youth Ltd
Come and Play Childcare Ltd	APF Activity Camp	BB Soccer
Dramabuds	Come and Play Childcare Ltd	Dramabuds
Globe Fit	Dramabuds	Globe Fit
Junior Adventures Group	Globe Fit	Junior Adventures Group
Leo Academy Trust	BB Soccer	Mensahedusport Limited
MKB Academy	Junior Adventure Group	Pure Futsal Academy
Mensahedusport Limited	Mensahedusport Limited	Riverside Community Association Limited
Our Parks Ltd	MKB Academy	Sean McInnes Sports Coaching
Pure Futsal Academy	Pure Futsal Academy	Supreme Education LTD
Riverside Community Association Limited	Riverside Community Association Limited	The Science of Sound
Sport Works	Sean McInnes Sports Coaching	TechyTots
Sean McInnes Sports Coaching	Supreme Education LTD	Internal provider - LBS The Grange PlayCentre
Supreme Education	Leo Academy Trust	
The Science of Sound	Tollo Academy	
Talent Aquisition Group	The Science of Sound	
Tollo Academy	TechyTots	
TechyTots	Internal provider - LBS The Grange PlayCentre	
Internal provider -LBS The Grange PlayCentre	Internal provider - LBS Sutton Summer of Cycling	

If you have any further questions please contact
Sutton's HAF team by emailing
holidayactivityprogramme@sutton.gov.uk

Visit our dedicated HAF webpage for more information
on our HAF programme -

www.suttoninformationhub.org.uk/pages/HAF

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