

## Northumberland Holiday Provision Application Guidance 2025

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### 1. Overview of the Programme

#### 1.1 Aims of the Programme

Northumberland County Council is looking for providers in Northumberland who would like to apply for funding to deliver enriching activities to eligible young people during the school holidays (Easter/Summer/Winter) through the HAF programme. Branded in Northumberland as Northumberland Holiday Provision.

Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) is funding from the Department for Education, and we are now into our fourth year of delivery. The provision is for school aged children from reception to year 11 (inclusive) who receive benefits-related free school meals.

Benefits-related free school meals (FSM) are available to pupils if their parents are in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits, and have a claim verified by their school or local authority.

There are approximately 12,000 children in Northumberland who are in receipt of FSM, and we want to offer a high-quality localised provision across our County for children/young people and their families.

#### Aims of the HAF programme

As part of the HAF programme, children who attend this provision will:

- eat healthily over the school holidays
- be active during the school holidays
- take part in engaging and enriching activities which support the development of resilience, character and wellbeing along with their wider educational attainment
- be safe and not to be socially isolated
- have a greater knowledge of health and nutrition
- be more engaged with school and other local services

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

- develop their understanding of nutrition and food budgeting

- are signposted towards other information and support, for example, health, employment, and education

## 1.2 Who can apply to be a HAF provider

HAF funding is available to a wide network of organisations including community and voluntary organisations, registered charities, social enterprises, schools, private companies, and leisure/coaching providers operating in Northumberland.

We want to hear from all organisations who may be interested in applying for HAF funding. We can work with organisations to help them to meet the essential criteria. We can also connect providers to other providers within their area who may be able to offer support with delivery.

## 2. Quality Assurance

Quality is extremely important to us, especially as Northumberland's reputation as a flagship for delivery is now National. We have clear essential and desirable requirements to help providers ensure they have everything in place to deliver a high-quality offer, which aligns to the DfE policy and our Holiday Provision Quality Framework.

The essential criteria that we expect all providers to meet is as follows:

### Essential Criteria:

- Good quality hot food (unless on trips where packed lunches/cold lunch can be provided). Following the guidelines of the [school food standards](#).
- Amenities - Clean, Accessible & safe
- Safe indoor and outdoor spaces if applicable
- Qualified Staff (enhanced DBS checks for all paid staff over 16 and for volunteers over 18 years)
- Essential Training completed for staff and volunteers (further details in the training section)
- A programme of fun, exciting, multi activities on offer to include a daily offer of physical activity, art, and enrichment. This can include trips out locally to showcase our Northumberland.
- Partnership working (to enhance your offer and signpost as required)
- Young people involved in planning
- Working with Holiday Activities system (e-vouchers) to advertise places, manage bookings and report registers.
- Completed registers each day (on the holiday activities system) and monitoring returned at the end of each programme within 14 days of completion of project.
- Risk Assessments, Health and Safety procedures, appropriate insurance including Public Liability and safeguarding for yourselves and the partners you choose to work with.

- A buy-in to the County offer which will include us visiting to observe and capture brilliant, good practice and an agreement to be part any videos and/or photo's if possible. We want to shout about all our partners and the great work that they do.
- Inclusive for all children and young people
- To place regular updates, photos, and videos, tagging **@educationgovuk** and using the following hashtags: **#HAF2025 #NorthumberlandHAF (ensuring all children have photograph consent before posting)**
- Return of pre-supplied evaluation forms for participants and their parents/carers, on completion of provision.
- A primary focus to ensure all participants have the best holiday experience.

As well as essential criteria, we would like all providers to work towards our desirable criteria:

- Ofsted Registered
- Young Leaders – We have training for young leaders and opportunities for them to feel part of the big picture, so please do direct them to us if this is something they wish to do or get them involved with your own provision.
- Additional Training to enhance your offer
- Trips out to extend enrichment of provision
- Pathways of progression at the end of the holidays or a new creation of activities for the young people.
- Additional funding to enhance offer
- An opportunity for parents and residents to get involved and help the sustainability of future work in your area, building workforce and experiences for both young people and adults.
- Mixed economy model – offering paid for places for young people not eligible for HAF, utilising other [government schemes in relation to childcare](#).

We will also be visiting each activity/provision throughout the holiday period. As part of this we will be using our Quality Framework which feeds into the benchmark of our provision. We will also be using social media to monitor activity throughout the provision.

### 3. Reaching Eligible young people

We are introducing a centralised booking system for 2025, which has been produced by e-vouchers branded as Holiday Activities. All providers will be set up on to the system ahead of the holiday period going live. Schools will then be sending out voucher codes through the system to all eligible young people. Families will then use the code to book directly on to provision.

There is also a discretionary element of 15% for non HAF eligible places, providers and schools will be able to utilise this to any families who may benefit from attending HAF but are not eligible. Places must be agreed with Northumberland County Council in advance of adding the children to the system.

Some examples may include:

- Children who are electively home educated or currently EOTAs
- Children assessed by the local authority as being in need, at risk or vulnerable
- Young carers
- Looked-after children or previously looked after children
- Children with an EHC (education, health and care) plan
- Children who have low attendance rates at school or who are at risk of exclusion
- Children living in areas of high deprivation or from low-income households who are not in receipt of free school meals
- Children in transition phases between nursery and primary school or primary and secondary school

#### 4. Application Process

##### 4.1 Support

Northumberland Holiday Provision is more than just the holiday periods, we want to work with providers throughout the year, to support them to upskill, capacity build, access funding and reach relevant support for families in Northumberland. Also, for providers to share best practice work amongst partners.

Support to do this is available through our community partners, Leading Link and Thriving Together. Who will also work with interested providers to meet all essential criteria to become a provider.

We also want to ensure the application process isn't a barrier to smaller groups or organisations applying to the provision. Leading Link and Thriving Together will work with providers throughout the application stage and can support if required.

Key dates (these may subject to change):

	Easter	Summer	Christmas
<b>Delivery dates</b>	12th April - 27th April 2025	19th July- 31st August 2025	19th December 2025 - 3rd January 2026
<b>Applications open</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	31 March 2025	30 September 2025
<b>Application close</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Friday 6 June 2025	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2025
<b>Application decision</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2025	Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	5 <sup>th</sup> November 2025

No applications after closing date will be accepted.

We may also have funding to deliver during additional holiday periods October/February. This will be communicated with providers throughout the year and through local channels such as the HAF provider mailing list, Thriving Together newsletter and Northumberland County Council's website.

##### 4.2 Application Form

Application forms will be live on the Northumberland Holiday Provision [link](#) on the Northumberland County Council website ahead of each holiday period. The application must be completed through the online form.

The panel will meet after the deadline of submissions to assess each application.

Once the application panel has met, you will receive your decision and your grant agreement. Once your grant agreement is signed and returned, we will then raise the PO number for your invoice.

Application forms can also be downloaded as a word document, before completing the online form. We may also require additional information during the application process and one of the team will contact you. This may be a member of the NCC team, Leading Link or Thriving Together.

## 5. Funding

### 5.1 Amount of Funding

Funding is paid at the maximum of £25 per head per day. £5 must be ring fenced for food. The funding will be paid once we have your signed grant agreement and invoice with your PO number included.

### 5.2 Payment Process

Once we have received your signed grant agreement, we will raise a purchase order number. Once this is approved, we will send it to you. Please then return your invoice, with your PO number included to – [accountspayable@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:accountspayable@northumberland.gov.uk)

### 5.2 FSM Weighting based on area

Provision will be weighted depending on the area rate of FSM eligible young people.

We may receive several applications within one area, which may impact the number of places we can fund within your provision. We may also reduce the number of funded places offered, based on the FSM rate within your area of delivery.

## 6. Training

We will be delivering fully funded training throughout the year for providers. These will include statutory training in terms of, Safeguarding and First Aid training. Additional training to help enhance provision on offer will be offered on an ad hoc basis.

Training dates will be advertised on the main Northumberland County Council, Northumberland Holiday Provision page and through the provider mailing list.

We encourage providers to continuously feedback any training needs, through the online form by clicking [here](#). This will help with future planning for training.

As well as face to face and online training, we will also have toolkits available for providers, which are currently in development for 2025. These have been developed based on feedback and requests from providers delivering HAF in Northumberland.

## **7. Monitoring and Evaluation**

### **7.1 Registers**

All providers are expected to complete the registration for their provision every day through the e-vouchers system. Full training will be provided on the system and support staff will be available throughout the holiday period and in advance for any additional queries.

### **7.2 Visits during your provision**

We will also be carrying out visits to activities throughout the holiday periods. As part of this we will be using our Holiday Provision Quality Framework to assess the provision on offer.

Provision may be visited by NCC, Leading Link or Thriving Together, this will be communicated with providers ahead of the visit.

### **7.3 HAF Attendee Feedback**

We encourage all providers to ask the young people and their families at the end of the provision to complete an attendee feedback form. This will allow you to plan for your next holiday period and look at what's working well within your provision. We can provide templates to you if required and in some holiday periods, we may ask you to ask additional questions based on information we require for our DfE return.

### **7.4 HAF Provider Feedback**

At the end of each provision, we will also send providers a feedback form to complete. This will help with our development and help to understand what's working well/ what some of the challenges may be for providers and provide information of any additional support you may need.

We also encourage all providers to continue to share directly with us, any good news, case studies, photographs and videos of your camps.

### **7.5 External Evaluation**

We want to continue to learn and develop Northumberland Holiday Provision and use the impact of the programme to help shape National Policy going forward. To support with this, we are working with Northumbria University to undertake an external evaluation of our programme. As part of this, there may be times of additional evaluation and feedback we request from providers.

All monitoring and evaluation also support us in our DfE post-holiday returns, which NCC complete at the end of each holiday period. It also supports with our Annual Report which is published in June.

### **7.6 Photographs and Videos**

It is important we continuously showcase our provision and the fantastic activities on offer for young people in Northumberland. We ask all providers to continuously update their photographs on social media (photo consent must be granted before posting) tagging #HAF2025

#NorthumberlandHAF

The hashtags are monitored by the DfE and we will also use the photographs for our annual report and publicity of the Northumberland Holiday Provision