

HAF Annual Report

Programme Delivery: 2025-2026

Staffordshire County Council



Foreword

The Staffordshire Holiday Activities and Food Programme continues to play an important role in supporting children, young people and families across our county during the school holidays.

In 2025-26, the programme delivered provision across Easter 2025, Summer 2025 and Winter 2025-26, offering children access to enriching activities, nutritious meals, physical activity, new experiences and trusted adults in safe and welcoming environments. Across Staffordshire's diverse communities, HAF has continued to provide much more than holiday activities. It has supported children's confidence, wellbeing, friendships, routines and sense of belonging.

This year, we have worked hard to strengthen the programme's reach, quality and inclusiveness. We have continued to develop our SEND and therapeutic provision, created clearer pathways for additional support, and worked with providers to build confidence in inclusive practice. We have also placed greater emphasis on engaging older children and teenagers, recognising that they need age-appropriate opportunities that feel relevant, purposeful and enjoyable.

Partnership has been central to our approach. Through shared commissioned work with Family Hubs, SPACE (Staffordshire Police) and the Youth Services, we have been able to broaden the programme's reach and connect HAF more closely with wider support for children, families and communities. We have also continued to work with schools, voluntary sector partners, providers, health colleagues, district and borough councils and local authority services to make the programme more accessible and responsive to local need.

The programme has also continued to mature operationally. Improved use of booking and attendance data has helped us understand where provision is working well, where take-up is lower, and where we need to focus future commissioning. Our quality assurance processes, provider support and safeguarding reporting have continued to develop, helping us maintain standards while supporting providers to improve.

Looking ahead, our focus will be on continuing to improve reach, inclusion, value for money and impact.

We would like to thank every provider, school, partner, colleague and volunteer who has contributed to the Staffordshire HAF programme this year. Their contribution to the success of HAF is incredible. Most importantly, we would like to recognise and thank the children, young people and families who have taken part and shared their positive and heartwarming experiences with us. Their feedback reminds us why this programme matters.



Introduction

Staffordshire County Council received £2,429,089 of funding from the Department for Education for the delivery of the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme. We supported children and young people across the county during Easter 2025, Summer 2025 and Winter 2025-26, providing access to enriching activities, nutritious food, physical activity, social connection and wider support for families.

Across the three delivery periods, Staffordshire commissioned a broad and inclusive programme of holiday provision through schools, voluntary and community sector organisations, sports providers, arts organisations, SEND specialists, youth organisations and private providers.

At a glance

- **10,131 combined unique attendances** across Easter 2025, Summer 2025 and Winter 2025-26
- **67,736 commissioned sessions** across the year
- **57,440 booked sessions**
- **54,401 attended sessions**
- **7,685 primary-aged attendees** and **2,446 secondary-aged attendees**
- **2,348 children with SEND** attended Staffordshire HAF provision, including **1,579 primary-aged** and **769 secondary-aged** children with SEND
- **100% of children who attended met either free school meal criteria or were referred by a professional using our vulnerability criteria**
- Provision delivered across universal, universal with SEND support, SEND specialist and professionally referred places
- Continued expansion of **SEND and therapeutic clubs**, increased engagement with young people, effective **quality assurance, data-led commissioning** and committed **partnership delivery**
- Shared commissioned places with **Family Hubs, SPACE (Staffordshire Police)** and the Youth Services.

Overview of the HAF Programme

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme is funded by the Department for Education (DfE) and supports children and young people who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals to access free holiday provision during the Easter, Summer and Winter school holidays. In Staffordshire, the programme provides children and young people with access to enriching activities, healthy food, physical activity and safe places to spend time during the holidays, while also creating opportunities for families to receive wider support through signposting, advice and professional referral pathways.

Staffordshire County Council commissions HAF provision across a large and diverse county, including urban, rural and semi-rural communities. HAF clubs are delivered by schools, voluntary and community sector organisations, sports and arts providers, SEND specialists, youth organisations and private providers.

Alongside free school meal HAF provision, Staffordshire also uses the flexibility within the grant to support children facing additional vulnerabilities through a professional referral pathway.

Children attending HAF through a professional referral may be;

- a looked after child
- a child in need
- a young carer
- or a child with emotional needs

During 2025-26, the programme continued to expand its engagement with children, young people and families, continually improve the quality and varied activities available and ensure clubs were inclusive and welcoming for children with additional needs.

Key developments included:

- continued use of the **EEQU** software platform as the county's HAF booking and monitoring system, with improved reporting and attendance analysis;
 - further expansion of **SEND and therapeutic places**, including additional specialist clubs and a funded pathway for 1:1 support where required;
 - targeted promotion to increase engagement with young people, including more visual marketing and a stronger delivery of clubs which provided more skills-based and age-appropriate activities;
 - pro-active monitoring of bookings, attendance, cancellations to increase take-up and improve value for money;
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- increased partnership working with **Family Hubs, Wraparound Childcare providers, Targeted Services, Virtual School, SPACE (Staffordshire Police)** and other local authority and community partners;
- continued improvement of **quality assurance processes**, new provider onboarding, safeguarding reporting and provider support networks and processes
- expansion to a suite of HAF policies and procedures to ensure consistent best practice.
- provider consultation on proposed changes for September 2026.

Across Easter 2025, Summer 2025 and Winter 2025-26, Staffordshire commissioned a wide range of holiday activities including sport, forest school, performing arts, STEM, coding, horse riding, mindfulness, outdoor adventure, creative arts, bushcraft, animal therapy, youth activities and SEND-specific provision. All commissioned providers provided children with a nutritious meal and all delivered provision in line with HAF framework standards and Staffordshire's local expectations around safeguarding, inclusion and quality.

Funding and Reach

Headline reach across the year

Across the three delivery periods, Staffordshire provided places for the following:

- Easter 2025: 3,067 unique children
- Summer 2025: 4,828 unique children
- Winter 2025-26: 2,236 unique children

This equates to a combined total of **10,131 unique attendances** across the three holiday periods. As in previous years, some children attended in more than one holiday period, so this figure represents the combined unique attendance totals reported for each delivery period.

Primary and secondary participation

Across the three delivery periods, Staffordshire supported:



- 7,685 primary-aged attendees
- 2,446 secondary-aged attendees

This means that, of all HAF-funded attendees recorded across the year:

- 75.9% were primary-aged
- 24.1% were secondary-aged

Breakdown by holiday period:

- Easter 2025: 2,378 primary-aged attendees / 689 secondary-aged attendees
- Summer 2025: 3,549 primary-aged attendees / 1,279 secondary-aged attendees
- Winter 2025-26: 1,758 primary-aged attendees / 478 secondary-aged attendees

SEND and additional needs

The programme continued to support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) both through mainstream provision and through SEND specialist clubs. Across Easter 2025, Summer 2025 and Winter 2025-26:

- 2,348 children with SEND
- 1,579 primary-aged
- 769 secondary-aged

This total includes children with SEND attending mainstream HAF settings with reasonable adjustments and support, alongside children attending SEND specialist provision.

Overall spend

Staffordshire County Council received **£2,429,089** in Department for Education HAF funding for the 2025-26 programme.

Reported spend across the year was:

- £2,093,485 on face-to-face holiday club provision
 - £86,242 on SEND specific provision
 - £5,054 on publicity and communications
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- £222,393 on management and administration
- £21,915 on other programme costs

This demonstrates that the majority of HAF funding continued to be directed into front-line holiday provision for children and young people.

Administration

Management and administration costs totalled **£222,393** across the reporting year. This represented **10.9%** of the total HAF grant allocation.

Management and administration costs covered programme management, commissioning, quality assurance, provider support, data analysis, communications, booking system oversight and general administration of the programme.

Annual Delivery Data

Delivery period	Providers	Commissioned sessions	Booked sessions	Attended sessions	Unique children	Primary-aged attendees	Secondary-aged attendees
Easter 2025	49	13,244	10,231	9,398	3,067	2,378	689
Summer 2025	58	45,777	40,083	38,513	4,828	3,549	1,279
Winter 2025–26	44	8,715	7,126	6,490	2,236	1,758	478
Total	151	67,736	57,440	54,401	10,131	7,685	2,446

Note: the unique children figure is the combined total of unique children reported for each delivery period. Some children may have attended in more than one holiday period.

SEND attendance across the year

Delivery period	Primary SEND attendees	Secondary SEND attendees	Total SEND attendees
Easter 2025	462	225	687
Summer 2025	738	379	1,117
Winter 2025–26	379	165	544
Total	1,579	769	2,348

Our Details

Local Authority: Staffordshire County Council

Programme: Staffordshire Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme

Staffordshire delivers HAF across a large county footprint with significant variation in population density, levels of deprivation, transport access and local provider markets. This creates both opportunity and challenge: the programme must be sufficiently flexible to support urban centres, market towns and rural communities, while maintaining quality, value for money and equitable access.

The programme is delivered through a grant funding process, quality assurance, direct partnership work and data-led programme monitoring. The programme is supported by an early help partnership governance board, including representatives from the local authority, VCSE sector, health, DWP, police, borough and district partners and Family Hubs.

The county uses **EEQU** as its booking and information management system and draws on free school meal eligibility data and social care / professional referral information to support eligibility checks and monitoring. Eligibility checking is undertaken in advance of delivery, with **100% of children eligibility-checked** before accessing funded provision.

Highlights

Scale of delivery

Across Easter 2025, Summer 2025 and Winter 2025-26, Staffordshire commissioned a substantial countywide HAF offer:

- **Easter 2025:** 49 providers, 13,244 commissioned sessions, 10,231 booked sessions, 9,398 attended sessions and 3,067 unique children participating
- **Summer 2025:** 58 providers, 45,777 commissioned sessions, 42,487 booked sessions, 38,513 attended sessions and 4,828 unique children participating
- **Winter 2025-26:** 44 providers, 8,715 commissioned sessions, 7,126 booked sessions, 6,490 attended sessions and 2,236 unique children participating

Across the year, Staffordshire continued to receive more provider applications than could be funded within the available grant, reflecting a growing provider

market. This has required careful moderation and commissioning decisions to balance reach, quality, sufficiency, inclusion and value for money.

Grant award decisions used the following rationale to determine the amount of funding awarded to each provider.:

Commissioning decisions and funding allocation are routinely based on the following criteria:

- Number of Providers tendered for each programme
- FSM Eligibility per district
- FSM take-up per district
- Provider performance during previous equivalent programme based on funded attendance % and places awarded during previous programme
- Sufficiency of provision in district (avoiding saturation wherever possible)
- Funding availability for each programme
- Caveat for additional places which may be requested as part of variation agreement based on booking performance (funds ringfenced for this)
- New providers offered a reasonable number of places to allow them to establish themselves amongst the HAF Programme with the view to growing the market in future programmes
- Acknowledging larger providers and balancing their offer against smaller SME's and private providers

A stronger and more inclusive SEND offer

A key priority for 2025-26 was strengthening the SEND offer. During the year Staffordshire:

- extended SEND specialist and therapeutic provision;
- continued to embed SEND places within universal provision;
- increased market engagement to attract SEND providers in areas of low or no provision;
- developed a pathway for 1:1 support funding to enable more children with additional needs to access HAF safely and successfully;
- supported providers with inclusion expectations, guidance and training.

Across the year, **2,348 children with SEND** attended Staffordshire HAF provision, including **1,579 primary-aged** and **769 secondary-aged** attendees.

Teen engagement and age-appropriate provision

Staffordshire continued to prioritise engagement with older children and teenagers by:

- increasing the visibility of teen-focused marketing materials;
- commissioning more skills-based and youth-style provision;
- supporting providers to develop activities that appeal to older children, including outdoor challenge, leadership, sport, creative and technical activities;
- using existing partnerships and community outreach to improve access and increase awareness to older age groups.

Stronger programme systems and quality assurance

Throughout the year Staffordshire continued to strengthen programme infrastructure. This included:

- refining the provider application and moderation process to align with the updated HAF guidance, support childcare sufficiency, and long term sustainability of holiday provision across Staffordshire.
- creating an online portal for providers to report concerns, complaints and safeguarding incidents in real time;
- strengthening QA processes using provider and local authority feedback;
- requiring providers to hold and share key policies, including safeguarding, health and safety, insurance and Equality Inclusion and Diversity documentation;
- monitoring bookings, cancellations and attendance more closely and intervening where provision was underperforming.

Partnerships that strengthened delivery

In 2025-26, Staffordshire continued to build HAF as part of a wider local family support system. Examples included:

- provider training delivered with **Wraparound Childcare** and **Virtual School** colleagues;
- HAF delivery and outreach linked with **Family Hubs**;
- targeted youth outreach in partnership with **SPACE / Staffordshire Police**;
- shared commissioned work linked to **Youth Services** and wider local support services



- steering group and governance input from health, DWP, VCSE, borough and district partners, police and council services.

Children and families' feedback

Feedback from children, young people and families during 2025-26 was overwhelmingly positive and highlighted the value of HAF as more than a holiday club offer. Families described HAF as a trusted source of childcare, a safe place for children to build confidence and friendships, and an important source of routine, support and respite during school holidays.

Feedback themes from families

Across the year, common themes in feedback included:

- children enjoying a wide range of activities and trying new experiences;
- improved confidence, social skills and willingness to attend group provision;
- appreciation for the warmth, consistency and care shown by providers;
- relief from financial pressure through access to free places, meals and activities;
- strong appreciation from families of children with SEND, who often struggle to find provision that feels safe and appropriate.

Examples of family feedback included:

"Thank you for allowing my children to attend Furry Friends, you truly are a lifeline. We have never found a club where we have felt comfortable leaving them due to their additional needs, but all your staff are amazing, and we can't wait for the next club."

"I chose Bee Active for my daughter as I trust them... they get to know you and your children on a personal level and truly care."

"My child joined the HAF programme and it's made such a difference to him and his confidence. Finally, he has a safe place out of school to meet new people, make new friends and experience new things."



Professional referral pathway and family engagement

The professional referral route continued to support families whose children were not in receipt of benefits-related free school meals, but who met Staffordshire's locally agreed 15% criteria. This included children who were looked after or previously looked after, young carers, children supported by social workers or early help, children at risk of exclusion or low attendance, and children experiencing other forms of vulnerability.

Total referrals for the 2025/26 HAF Programme:

- **646** referrals were approved in total.
- **207** at Easter
- **370** in Summer
- **69** in Winter

Booking rates:

- Winter: **65.21%** of referred children booked places (45 out of 69). This is higher than Winter 2024's 55%.
- Easter: **67.1%** booked places (139 out of 207).
- Summer: **69.1%** booked places (255 out of 369).

Professional referrals were made by schools, social workers, early help practitioners, family support workers, children's home leads, SENCOs and other practitioners. This demonstrates that HAF continues to be valued by frontline services as a meaningful support offer for vulnerable children and families.



Category	Roles Included	Number of Referrals	Percentage of overall referrals
Education - School Staff	Headteachers, Deputy Heads, Teachers, SENCOs, DSLs, Teaching Staff, School Administrators, Pastoral Leads, Attendance Leads	241	37.31%
Children's Social Care & Social Workers	Social Workers, Senior Social Workers, Team Managers, Practice Educators, ASYE roles, Social Work Leads	150	23.22%
Early Help, Family Support & Youth Services	Family Practitioners, Family Support Workers, Early Help Workers, Youth Workers, Parenting Support, Participation & Engagement	105	16.25%
Health & Mental Health Services	Health Visitors, School Nurses, CAMHS Practitioners, Therapists, Educational Psychologists, Mental Health Practitioners	45	6.97%
Safeguarding & Specialist Services	Safeguarding Leads, Exploitation Teams, Adoption Support, Disability Teams, Contextual Safeguarding, Specialist Practitioners	40	6.19%
Local Authority, Commissioning & Business Support	Commissioning Officers, Business Support, Administrators, Service Managers, Strategic Leads, Local Authority Officers	45	6.97%
Voluntary, Community & Faith Sector	YMCA, Barnardo's, community organisations, faith organisations, independent support providers	20	3.10%

Food

Providing children and young people with a nutritious meal remained a core expectation of Staffordshire's HAF programme in 2025-26. All commissioned providers provided food in line with HAF guidance and the programme's quality standards, and food formed part of the county's quality assurance and monitoring arrangements.

Across the year, providers offered a broad range of food provision, including hot meals, cold lunches, healthy snacks and meals tailored to specific settings or age groups. Provision included hot meals for children attending sports and activity clubs, shared meals and baking sessions in SEND and community settings, and healthy snacks and drinks to support active sessions and longer days.

Food was often integrated into the wider ethos of the provision rather than treated as a standalone requirement. Providers used mealtimes as opportunities for children to socialise, practise independence, try new foods and discuss healthy eating.

Winter quality assurance returns indicated strong performance against food standards, with clubs rated largely good or excellent in healthy food provision and healthy eating awareness.

Nutritional Education and the promotion of healthy living/lifestyles

The Staffordshire HAF programme aims not only to provide food but to help children and families develop positive attitudes towards food, healthy lifestyles and wellbeing. Nutritional education was delivered through both formal and informal approaches across the county.

Examples of nutritional education and healthy living activities included:

- cooking and baking sessions;
- tasting activities and food exploration;
- discussions about healthy meals, hydration and balanced diets;
- shared mealtimes where staff modelled positive attitudes to food;
- practical sessions linked to mindfulness, movement, wellbeing and self-care.

Several providers also engaged families through conversations at drop-off and pick-up, signposting to wider services, and practical advice about routines, food and support available locally.

Healthy living within Staffordshire's HAF programme was broader than nutrition alone. Across the year, providers supported children to:

- be physically active every day;
- spend time outdoors and in nature;
- learn skills linked to emotional regulation and mindfulness;
- build routines around movement, healthy eating and social interaction;
- access safe spaces, warm environments and supportive adults during school holidays.

Enriching Activities

One of the strengths of Staffordshire's HAF programme in 2025-26 was the breadth of enrichment on offer. Providers were encouraged to deliver activities that were enjoyable, age-appropriate, inclusive and capable of broadening children's experiences beyond the school day.

Across the three delivery periods, children accessed a very wide range of activities including:

- arts, crafts, music and performance;



- dance, drama, acrobatics and musical theatre;
- forest school, den building, nature walks and bushcraft;
- coding, robotics, drone piloting, virtual reality and STEM;
- horse riding, animal therapy and equine sessions;
- mindfulness, wellbeing and sensory activities;
- festive activities, trips, theatre experiences and family events.

Staffordshire's HAF programme is designed to offer more than childcare. It aims to give children and young people access to enriching, enjoyable and developmental experiences that support wellbeing, confidence and aspiration. This is particularly important for children who may face barriers to participation because of poverty, disability, rural isolation or family stress.

Physical Activities

Physical activity remained a central part of Staffordshire's HAF programme and was embedded across both mainstream and specialist provision. Providers were expected to offer children regular opportunities to move, play and be active in ways that were enjoyable and inclusive.

Across 2025-26, physical activities included:

- football, dodgeball, basketball, tennis, cricket and multi-sports;
- trampolining, obstacle courses and team games;
- horse riding and outdoor pursuits;
- forest school and nature-based activity;
- dance, acrobatics and movement;
- climbing, high ropes and adventure-based outdoor education.

Staffordshire sought to commission not only traditional sports but also activities that would appeal to children with different interests, confidence levels and support needs. Providers were supported to make physical activity inclusive through adapting games and activities, using smaller groups, offering sensory breaks and commissioning specialist providers where mainstream settings would not be suitable.



Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)

Section 8 - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

SEND remained one of Staffordshire's most significant strategic priorities in 2025-26. The county continued to increase both specialist provision and inclusive practice within mainstream clubs, recognising that children with SEND often face disproportionate barriers to accessing holiday activities.

Staffordshire's SEND offer in 2025-26 included:

- **SEND specialist clubs** delivered by experienced providers;
- **universal provision with SEND attendance**, where children attended mainstream HAF settings with reasonable adjustments and support;
- therapeutic, sensory, outdoor and relationship-based provision tailored to children with autism, ADHD, SEMH needs, anxiety and complex needs;
- a pathway for **1:1 support funding** to increase access where additional support was required.

During the year Staffordshire took several steps to strengthen inclusion:

- extended SEND and therapeutic provision;
- increased market engagement in areas where SEND provision was limited;
- required providers to hold Equality Diversity and inclusion to evidence inclusive practice;
- refined QA processes to improve assessment of accessibility and inclusiveness;
- worked with providers on training and support, including relational and restorative practice, trauma-informed approaches and understanding behaviour.

SEND attendance

Across the 2025-26 reporting year, **2,348 children with SEND accessed Staffordshire HAF provision**, including **1,579 primary-aged** and **769 secondary-aged** attendees. This total includes children with SEND attending universal HAF settings with reasonable adjustments and support, alongside children attending SEND specialist provision.



Delivery period	Primary SEND attendees	Secondary SEND attendees	Total SEND attendees
Easter 2025	462	225	687
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Total	1,579	769	2,348

Marketing and Communication

A major focus for Staffordshire in 2025-26 was strengthening communication with families, schools, providers and local partners so that more eligible children knew about the programme and were able to book provision.

Staffordshire promoted HAF through a combination of:

- the EEQU booking platform and associated HAF listings;
- Staffordshire County Council communications and newsroom content;
- social media, including Facebook and TikTok;
- printed posters and postcards shared with schools, Family Hubs, partners and providers;
- provider communications and case study content;
- direct communication through professionals using the referral pathway.
- Attendance at headteachers networks, social care team meetings, pastoral and safeguarding lead team meetings, countywide engagement and promotion events, VCSE network meetings

Throughout the year, the marketing approach increasingly focused on the “fun” element of HAF, reflecting the language children themselves used about the programme. Seasonal campaigns used the phrase “HAF fun this Easter / Summer / Christmas” to make the offer feel appealing and accessible to families. Social media activity generated **138,170 views, 89,709 reach, and 2,383 clicks and plays**, alongside **134 shares and 50 positive reactions**.

The team also invested in more visual and teen-friendly marketing, recognising that older children and young people are less likely to engage with generic holiday club messaging. This included the development of teen-specific posters and more age-appropriate promotional content.

Partnerships / Use of Resources

Partnership working remained central to Staffordshire's HAF model in 2025-26. The programme was delivered not as a standalone holiday offer, but as part of a wider system of support for children, young people and families.

Strategic and operational partners

Staffordshire worked with a wide range of partners across the year, including:

- Family Hubs
- Wraparound Childcare
- Virtual School
- Targeted Services
- SPACE / Staffordshire Police
- Youth Services
- DWP
- Integrated Care Board / health partners
- borough and district councils
- schools and colleges
- VCSE organisations and youth providers

These partnerships contributed in different ways, including provider training, direct delivery, outreach, promotion, local intelligence, governance, family engagement and broader strategic alignment.

Governance and steering arrangements

The HAF steering group included representation from Staffordshire County Council, VCSE partners, health, DWP, police and local partners. This governance structure supports strategic oversight of the programme and helps align HAF with wider county priorities around inclusion, family support, attendance, poverty and community wellbeing.

Shared commissioned work and use of resources

Staffordshire did **not receive external match funding into the HAF grant** in 2025-26. However, the local authority contributed to **shared commissioned work** with **Family Hubs, SPACE / Staffordshire Police** and the **Youth Services** to strengthen outreach, targeted support and local engagement.



Staffordshire also continued to use existing community spaces, schools, sports settings, youth facilities and rural outdoor centres to deliver HAF, helping to maximise value for money and ensure local accessibility. The programme made use of local authority spaces, school sites, community venues, provider-owned facilities and rural outdoor centres such as **Laches Wood** and **Standon Bowers**.

Key Reflections/ Forward Plans

Growing demand continues to outstrip budget

Across Easter 2025, Summer 2025 and Winter 2025-26, Staffordshire received grant applications from providers that exceeded the available HAF budget. This demonstrates a strong and a maturing provider market, but it also means difficult commissioning decisions continue to be required. As the programme develops, commissioning will continue to require a transparent and effective rationale for grant awards and decision making based on:

- District FSM eligibility
- District take up
- District sufficiency to avoid saturation
- Inclusion
- Quality Assurance of provision
- Value for money

Attendance management matters as much as place creation

A key learning point from 2025-26 is that the success of HAF cannot be measured solely by the number of places commissioned. Bookings, cancellations, conversion rates and actual attendance are equally important indicators of value and impact. Staffordshire therefore increased its focus on:

- daily booking monitoring;
- support for under-booked providers;
- consolidation or merging of clubs with low numbers;
- offering additional places to clubs with high demand;
- adjusting second payments where commissioned places did not convert to attendance.

This has strengthened financial responsibilities and maximised the budget available and provided a more efficient, performance-managed commissioning model.

SEND sufficiency and inclusion remain central priorities

The programme made significant progress in extending SEND and therapeutic provision and improving inclusive practice, but demand for SEND provision remains high and the market is still uneven across the county. There is more work to do to increase specialist provision in areas of low supply, continue building provider confidence in inclusion within universal settings, and ensure families can access appropriate provision without long travel times.

Teen engagement needs sustained attention

Older children and teenagers remain a strategic priority. While Staffordshire improved its teen marketing and began to commission more skills-based and youth-oriented provision, secondary and teen engagement still requires sustained development. This will continue to be a focus in 2026-27.

Rural access and market shaping continue to matter

Staffordshire's geography creates particular challenges around transport, rural access and provider coverage. The programme will continue to develop approaches that improve access in rural communities, including targeted market engagement and partnership working, while also encouraging a broader range of providers to enter the market where this can be done safely and sustainably.

Data is becoming a more powerful improvement tool

The development of EEQU reporting and the team's use of attendance and school-level engagement data has created better visibility of who is and is not accessing HAF. This is already helping Staffordshire to identify schools and districts with lower conversion rates, understand patterns of under-booking or cancellation, target communication with schools, district partners and outreach more effectively.

Plans for 2026-27

Looking ahead, Staffordshire intends to continue strengthening the programme by:

- reviewing the HAF grant model, including payment structures, price caps, ratios and the 15% criteria where appropriate;
- increasing SEND and therapeutic provision in areas of need;
- further developing the teen and secondary offer;
- improving targeted communications to families and schools;
- increasing work with Family Hubs, Wraparound, Short Breaks and other strategic partners;



- exploring mentoring and partnership models that could enable smaller community organisations to enter the HAF market safely;
- continuing to refine QA, safeguarding reporting and provider support processes

Any other information

Staffordshire's HAF programme continues to evolve as both a holiday offer and a wider early help intervention. While the core purpose of HAF remains to provide children with enriching activities, healthy food and physical activity during school holidays, the programme in Staffordshire increasingly also acts as a bridge to wider family support.

The professional referral route, Family Hub links, SEND pathways, youth outreach, provider training and growing use of attendance data all demonstrate a shift towards a more strategic, targeted and integrated model of holiday provision. The programme is also helping the local authority to learn more about where vulnerable children and families can be reached, what types of provision are most effective, and where local systems need to do more to address barriers to participation.

In 2025-26, Staffordshire's HAF programme has continued to offer children safe spaces, trusted adults, food, fun and meaningful experiences across the county. The next stage of the programme will be to build on this foundation by improving reach, deepening inclusion, strengthening the provider market and making every HAF place count.

From April 2026 Staffordshire HAF has been working in partnership with the DWP Crisis Resilience Fund to promote engagement from families who were previously in receipt of education food vouchers. This will be a positive partnership for both programmes as we hope more eligible children will engage with HAF and less families on low income will require Crisis payment support in school holidays.

Our Providers

**Active Future
Wolverhampton**



adv4nce group



ASM Sports UK LTD



Bee Active Ltd



Breathing Space CIC



Burton Albion Community Trust



Burton Unity



Caudwell Children



Challenge Academy



Communities Supporting Families



Community Together CIC



Computer Xplorers



Creative Vibes



Crystal Academy: Aerial Arts & Dance CIC



Dizzy Heights



Dollymixtures Day Nursery



Educating Kids Outdoors Ltd



Enjoying Creativity Outdoors CIC



Entrust



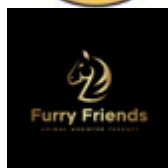
Everyone Active - East Staffs



Fulfen Primary School



Furry Friends Therapy CIC



Gartmore Riding School



Gather the Community



Genius Tuition



Greenwood Growth CIC



Jam Coding



JG Tennis Coaching Ltd



Jump 2 It



Knutton St Marys



Koala Klubs1 Ltd



Liberty Jamboree



Lichfield Community Sports



Lingotot Staffordshire



Little Athletes



Little Sprouts Forest School



LWM services



Meadow Care Farm CIC



MHR Sports Services



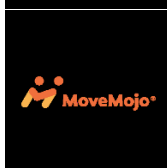
Midlands Psychology CIC



MiniMe Mindfulness - Staffordshire and Derbyshire



Move mojo



MPWR



New Vic Theatre



**Next Thing Education
Camps Ltd**



Phantom Art School



Pier 52



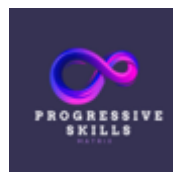
Pilot IMS



Premier Education



**Progressive Skills Matrix
Ltd**



Progressive Sports



Sport 4 Kids



Sporting Communities



Sports Coaching Group



**Sportscool
Wolverhampton**



Stafford Sports Academy



**Staffordshire Clubs for
Young People**



**The Creation Station
Newcastle-under-Lyme**



Time 4 Sport UK Ltd



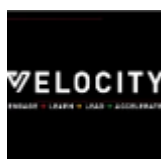
**Transform Communities
Staffordshire CIC**



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**Velocity Training
Academy Ltd**



Vision For All



Vysions Youth Service

