



Cheshire East

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Cheshire East COVID Holiday Activity Fund

Easter 2021



Title of Report:	Cheshire East Holiday Activity Fund Impact Report
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Executive Summary

The Holiday Activity Fund programme will run in the Easter, Summer and Christmas holidays 2021. The programme is a government scheme with the aim of providing support to vulnerable children in receipt of benefits-related free school meals. Cheshire East Borough Council received £881,340 funding in total.

To implement, Cheshire East Council approached primary and secondary schools, Council led groups and charity organisations in the Cheshire East area, to offer a holiday club service free of charge, to vulnerable/at risk children who receive Free School Meals (FSM). In order to qualify for the grant funding offered by the Council to cover the cost of the provision being offered, the providers have to provide detailed information on how they can offer provision that will give the children the opportunity to eat more healthily over the school holidays be more active during the school holidays and develop a greater knowledge of health and nutrition.

Easter Holiday Results:

- 92 providers completed an Expression of Interest (EOI)
- 22 providers applied for HAF funding
- 18 were successful
- 4 were unsuccessful
- 1 dropped out at a later date due to lack of take up by FSM children
- £64,708.89 was awarded to providers
- 463 FSM children attended HAF funded holiday club sessions over Easter.

Introduction

On 8 November 2020, the government announced that the holiday activities and food programme will be expanded across the whole of England in 2021. The programme has provided healthy food and enriching activities to disadvantaged children since 2018.

The programme will cover the Easter, Summer and Christmas holidays in 2021. This holiday provision is for children who receive benefits-related free school meals.

Local authorities were asked to ensure that the offer of free holiday club provision was made available for all children eligible for and in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) in their area, for the equivalent of at least 4 hours a day, 4 days a week, 6 weeks a year. This would cover 4 weeks in the summer and a week's worth of provision in each of the Easter and Christmas holidays in 2021.

The funding local authorities receive is to cover the:

- provision of free holiday places
- coordination of the programme locally.

As a result of this programme, the government wanted children who attend this provision to:

- eat more healthily over the school holidays
- be more 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.

They also wanted to ensure that the families who participated in this programme:

- developed their understanding of nutrition and food budgeting
- are signposted towards other information and support, for example, health, employment and education.

Cheshire East Council's Implementation

Planning and Mobilisation

Cheshire East's implementation began on 1st March 2021 and the last holiday period covered will be Christmas 2021, with expected final government reporting required before 31st March 2022.

The programme has 3 significant roll-out phases:

- Easter holidays 2 April 2021 to 16 April 2021
- Summer holidays 22 July 2021 to 31 August 2021
- Christmas holidays 20 December 2021 to 3 January 2022

Mapping of the areas of need took place first to establish the target groups. After this an expression of interest cycle commenced inviting providers to put themselves forward for the programme and application process. The application process took place between 11 March 2021 to 24 March 2021.

Mobilisation Period

11/03/2021 – Grant Applications Go Live

18/03/2021 – 26/03/2021 Rolling Assessment of Applications

24/03/2021 – Funding Round Closes

22/03/2021 – 29/03/2021 Grant Offer Letters will be provided to successful applicants

29/03/2021 – Grant Brochures will be provided to HAF Stakeholders

29/03/2021 – Grant Reporting Templates will be provided to successful Grant Applicants

01/04/2021 – Providers begin Easter Delivery

09/04/2021 – First 50% Easter Payment made upon successful Grant Application.

03/05/2021 – Easter Evaluation Return Date

14/05/2021 – Second 50% Easter Payment made upon return of Evaluation

Determining a successful application

Providers were asked to complete an application form to include:

- Details on how they identified a need in their area/setting
- How they would meet the key principles of the programme
- What the service would provide
- How many children they intended to target/accommodate
- Detailed breakdown of projected costs
- Sustainability of project post HAF funding

All completed applications were assessed using the above criteria to determine level of need and the providers ability to deliver a suitable programme in the key principle areas set out by the Government.

Implementation

After the decision process was completed, outcome letters were sent to all providers detailing if they had been successful in securing funding for their clubs and how much funding they would receive. The providers were then able to begin preparations for roll out of their holiday activities.

A brochure was developed by the HAF team and this was publicised around the council service areas and distributed to schools and settings in the Cheshire East area. A publication was entered into the Schools Bulletin which is a weekly update on events that is distributed around all education settings in CE. A webpage was established with links to the online brochure and further information regarding the HAF and what it has to offer.

A 50% grant payment was made to all successful providers around 9 April 2021 and a further 50% payment would be made once completed evaluations were received after the clubs had ran over the Easter holidays.

Check ins were made by the HAF team at the end of the first week to gauge the uptake of FSM children and if the clubs were running successfully. The overall feedback received at the end of the first week was positive.

Impacts of the Cheshire East Holiday Activity Fund

Summary of Impacts

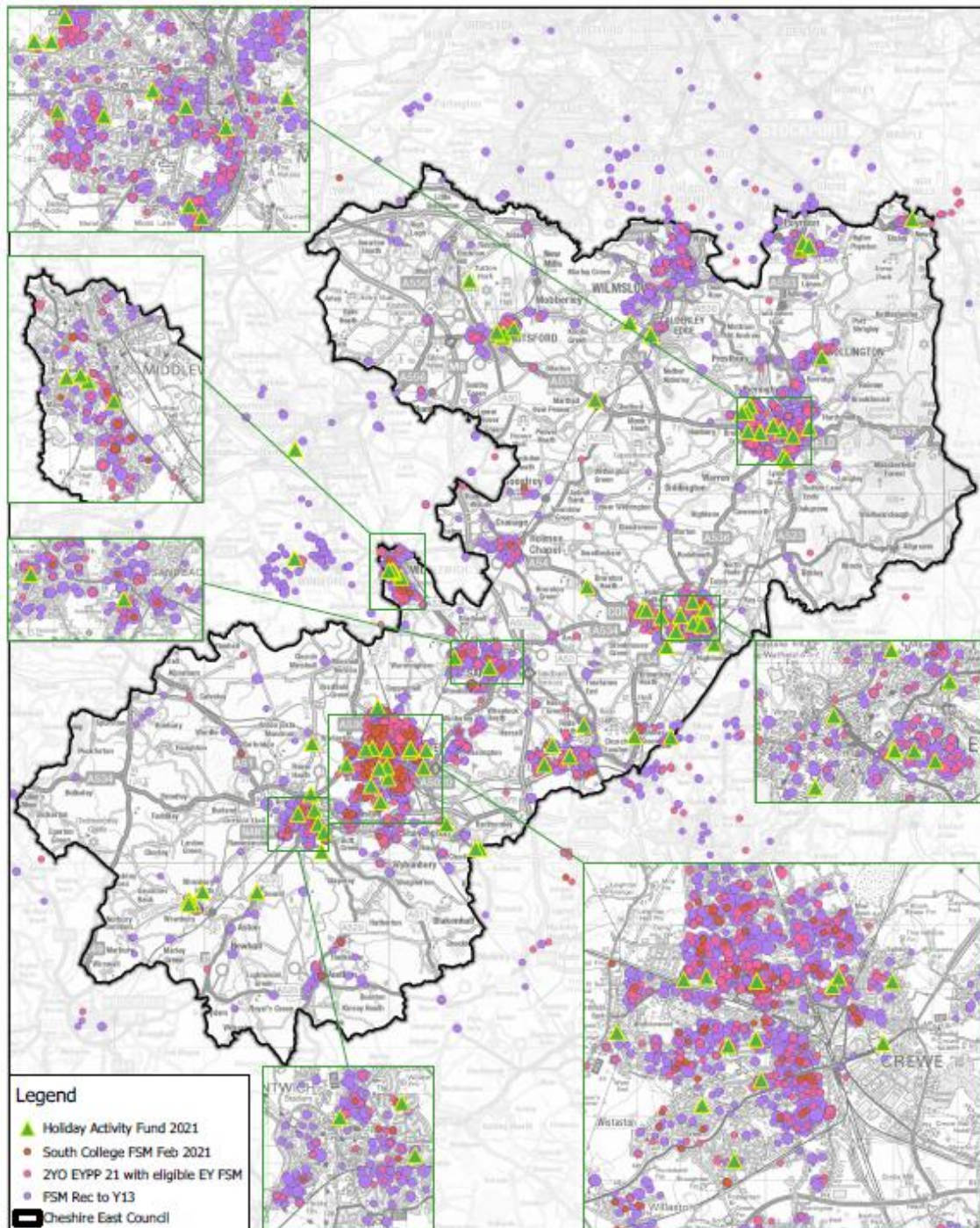
The impacts of the Cheshire East HAF can be viewed in appendix A. 463 children eligible for FSM attended the clubs, providing them with an opportunity to access a healthy daily meal and snacks, take part in enriching and engaging activities with peers and improve mental

health and wellbeing. Educational materials were provided to parents to develop their understanding of nutrition and food budgeting.

Delivery of HAF programme by area

Setting	Expected no. of Attendees	Actual no. of Attendees	Overall attendance	Sessions Clubs ran
St Marys RC Crewe	30	30	54	85
Cheshire Buddies	34	17	63	11
Sports Coaching Group	60	42	42	20
Havannah	30	24	24	5
RCSAT	26	2 – 26 booked on	69 +67 on report	2
Rodeheath	10	7	7	4
Nantwich Primary	20	16	150	5
Scholar Green	31	Between 15-21 daily	21	9
AMAT	60	40	52	36
Premier Education	20	24	25	6
Leighton Academy	20	34	112	152
CeCP	280	131	344	85
Outdoor Fun Forest	15	16	16	4
CE Youth Service	20	20	20	10 - 2 virtual
CE Children's Centres	40	39	118	8 virtual

Mapping of areas of need and HAF programme



Holiday Activity Fund 2021

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Feedback from providers/attendees

Setting Name	Activities delivered	Feedback received
St Mary's RC Crewe	<p>Making smoothies Rock painting Easter egg hunt Decorating cupcakes Making rainbow blowers Parachute games Archery Giant outdoor games</p>	<p>100% of parents said that their child felt happy and safe at SMART Club 100% of parents rated the behaviour at SMART Club as "very good" Quotes from parent voice questionnaires: "Very organised and my kids feel very happy to attend" "Staff do a fab job entertaining the children and looking after them" "He enjoys interacting with friends as he's not been able to due to lockdowns"</p> <p>Pupil Voice questionnaires completed: 100% of pupils rated holiday club as "very good" 100% of pupils said that they feel happy and safe at SMART Club Quotes from pupil voice questionnaires: "I enjoy the activities because you get to do fun stuff" Favourite activity = Archery. Year 6 "I love football, painting and playing pool" Year 4 "I love everything, staff, meals and toys" Year 6 "I like making friends because I feel lonely" Favourite activity = Parachute. Year 4 Favourite activity - rock painting. Year 2 "I had a good time. I like cooking". Year 1</p>
Cheshire Buddies	<p>During the park sessions (held on sat, Tue, Thurs and sat) the children played football and basketball at Sandbach park for 2hrs. They were also involved in an egg hunt and games at the park (tag) and on the play equipment.</p>	<p>"I love coming to Cheshire buddies and I have made friends with the other children, if I hadn't heard about buddies I would be sitting at home just watching the TV with no friends to talk to it means a lot to me."</p> <p>"The kids have absolutely loved coming to the sessions in the park over easter, they've made plenty of friends."</p> <p>"M has loved being at the park. He has made friends. He would just be sat in the house on his tab."</p> <p>"L really enjoys coming to Easter club, it's amazing to see him outside and willing to go to the club. We struggle to get L outside due to his disabilities. He has friends, which he has never had before. What you have done for L is wonderful, I have seen my son smile and giggle, something he has not done for a very long time."</p> <p>"A wouldn't go anywhere if he didn't go out with Buddies apart from spending time with his 6 yr. old nephew, he has no friends locally that he can spend time with, and he's not socially where other 15 Yr. olds are at so Buddies is his life."</p> <p>"M really enjoyed the sessions. He particularly liked yesterday as he saw his school friends which hasn't been</p>

		<p>possible for some time. M liked doing the forest school activities at lower moss Woods, they made a fire.”</p> <p>“I love Cheshire buddies and the range of activities on offer, M just loves attending and it makes a massive impact on his self-confidence and social skills. He would come full time if he could!”</p> <p>Sibling – “N has loved coming to the club. It has helped her to come out of her shell that bit more and to build her social skills. It has also given her the respite that she needs away from the demanding home environment, it has given her the chance to be a ‘normal’ child for a couple of hours a week rather than having to see and deal with things that are unique for our family.”</p> <p>“S says she loves coming to club and meeting new people. She has made lots of new friends, she says she enjoys all the different activities which she would not be able to do if we were just out as a family. It gets her out and about and she has fun and looks forward to each session and the extra art and crafts and competitions, she can do, such as pottery bowls.”</p> <p>“F&J greatly benefit from attending buddies. It gives them time away from caring responsibilities to just be children, make friends and participate in activities that would not normally be possible.”</p> <p>“E is so grateful to be added to the group. She enjoys the time away from her siblings and has made some new friends, she is so happy to have found Cheshire buddies, we are very grateful as a family for all that you offer.”</p>
Sports Coaching Group	<p>Netball</p> <p>Football</p> <p>Tennis</p> <p>Rugby Easter</p> <p>Egg Hunts</p> <p>Easter arts and crafts</p> <p>Fencing and Archery</p> <p>Mini Olympics and Boccia competitions</p>	<p>Children have given us lots of positive feedback to all the activities we have put on for them. Some children have requested to come back for additional days from having a positive experience the first time around. Social interaction with other kids has been another major positive point from both staff running the course but also from the children that have made new friends over the duration of the course.</p>
Havannah week 1 (CeCP)	<p>Activity club</p> <p>Easter Egg hunt</p> <p>Spring walk</p> <p>Garden games</p> <p>Forest school club</p>	<p>Feedback from the children included:</p> <p>“It’s been fun being outside with friends and learning new games.”</p> <p>“I liked it, but wish we could do this more regularly.”</p> <p>“I wasn’t very good at making a fire at first, but I did it in the end!”</p> <p>“I’ve missed having fun and being with friends.”</p> <p>“I enjoyed learning new things and building dens in the woods.”</p> <p>“Cooking in the wood and the woodland hunt was the best bit.”</p>
RCSAT	Multi Sports	No feedback provided

	Football Dodgeball bench ball archery nerf wars mini games etc	
Rode Heath All Stars Club	Woodwork Easter Baking wooden bird feeders colouring junk modelling team games football and cricket.	No feedback provided
Nantwich Primary	Football Basketball Cricket Hockey Tennis Fencing Drama Music	We have received positive verbal feedback from children and parents. Positive comments related to the range of activities, staff and enjoyment of the days.
Scholar Green	T-shirt dying Junk Modelling Planting/growing veg Campfire Baking Gymnastics Arts and Crafts	The children have really enjoyed coming to the Den (Easter Holiday Club) and have asked to come more often. They have enjoyed junk modelling, tie dying and the baking day they have done. All children have eaten the meals we have provided and had access to drinks and fruit during the day.
AMAT	making bird boxes cooking classes various sporting activities art and design activities drama 1st aid healthy eating wellbeing circus skills & team building.	The feedback from all the children and their parents / carers was very positive. As it was from the staff who ran or supervised the sessions.
Premier Education	Sporting activities such as: archery, football, dodgeball, cricket, multi-skill games, nerf battles, hockey, athletics etc. Wellbeing sessions where children were educated on healthy diets and how to look after their bodies.	Feedback from two parents – “Thanks to all the staff, I know my boys have loved their days with you, I hope it runs through other half terms” and “My two have loved it and it's been great having it on the school grounds. I hope you offer more in the future as we always need support in the holidays”.
Leighton Academy	Baking science experiments gardening drama vintage games den building football/ball games rounders	Feedback had not been provided at the time of writing this report. This has been requested and will affect their summer application.
CeCP	Trampolining coaching	“It was good to try something new.”

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	<p>football coaching dance workshop sports day baking Easter egg hunt arts & crafts day Forest School days nutrition & effects on the body, healthy eating circus skills archery scoot skills multi-sports garden games spring walk hockey woodwork PE/RE/Maths games colour runs.</p>	<p>"It was so nice being with my friends again." "The colour run was amazing - I've never had so much fun in the holidays." "Can we do this in every school holiday?".</p> <p>A parent commented that their child has autism and it was good that they were given time and support to be involved.</p> <p>Another parent commented that their child has never got involved with holiday clubs but after the first day couldn't wait to go back for day 2.</p>
Cheshire East – Youth Support Centres	<p>online sessions – scavenger hunt & Task Master session bingo pool competitions quiz willow weaving playing instruments making seed bombs arts and crafts games bird box making kite making Bush Craft Making a fire</p>	<p>"We have had so much fun." "I haven't been anywhere since the start of lockdown." "Please slow the time down." "Lighting the fire, making Jenga out of wood, it was amazing, lots of fun."</p>
Cheshire East – Children's Centres	<p>Cooking Parks Easter Sports Day Egg hunt Jack and the Beanstalk activities Teddy Bear picnic Messy play/seed planting</p>	<p>"Had a good day. Everything was prepared perfectly for kids and parents. Staff and their engagement with kids was awesome!!!!!"</p> <p>"My two sons had a great time, the two women from the children's centre were great and we had lots of fun."</p> <p>"The activity session was well organised it was a shame that there were only 2 children that turned up."</p> <p>"We had a really great time thank you for having us and we loved the goodie bags we had and the packed lunch."</p> <p>1 family with a 4 & 9-year-old really enjoyed it. Mum commented that she doesn't usually attend these activities but felt it would be good as the children haven't accessed anything through lockdown. She felt it was good for her 4-year old's confidence taking part. The 9-year-old told us "it was the best day ever! He really enjoyed the session"</p> <p>A family text to say "I really enjoyed it today and so did the kids. P is so tired now thank god!"</p>

		Other families all commented that they really enjoyed the activities and the children were all pleased with their goodie bags and sandwich box.
Outdoor Fun Forest	Plant in vegetables Den building Campfire cooking Bug Hotel making	The Outdoor-Fun team received very good feedback from both parents and children. One child saying he felt refreshed to be outdoors playing with his new friends. All the children were happy to return for more sessions and parents were happy with fact that the children were "Outside being active".

Conclusion

In conclusion, the HAF funding has had a great impact to FSM children in the CE area so far. The grant enabled 463 children to access a free holiday provision over the Easter period, enabling them to engage with peers and access enriching activities in a stimulating environment. Where children had become socially isolated due to Covid restrictions, these children were able to access this provision, which has helped with social interaction, mental health and wellbeing as well as offering both parents/carers respite.

The main geographical areas where the need was identified were, Macclesfield, Crewe, Nantwich and Congleton, although clubs were offered in other areas such as Sandbach, Alsager and Middlewich.

The Summer stage of the HAF programme has been started. Initial mapping of areas of need has been undertaken and a EOI round was undertaken between 15th April 7th May. So far 93 providers have registered their interest and this includes the 22 who participated in the Easter round. Overall the feedback received from, providers, parents and children who participated and benefitted from the HAF Easter roll out has been positive and all are keen to take part again in the Summer.

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