

Bromley’s Holiday Activities and Food Programme: Annual Report for 2023-2024

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Bromley's Holiday Activities and Food Programme: Annual Report 23.24

1. Programme Summary

The Holidays, Activities and Food programme in Bromley was offered during the Easter, Summer, and Christmas School Holidays in 2023; with 2 weeks of running over Easter, 6 weeks over the Summer and 9 days over the Winter holidays. The eligibility criteria included children and young people in receipt of benefit-related Free School Meals (FSM), as per the grant conditions. We were also able to utilise scope within the grant conditions and criteria to extend the support to other vulnerable groups.

Our programme allowed eligible children and young people to enjoy fun and enriching activities, enabling them to develop new skills, build confidence and meet new friends. Each session included at least one hour of physical activity, in addition to creative and educational tasks. Sessions also included learning about the nutritional aspect of food and healthy living, and every session included at least one filling and nutritious meal. A range of providers took part in the HAF programme at a variety of venues. We continued to improve and adapt the programme to ensure a holistic offer, which extends past the usual holiday club. We received fantastic feedback from our young people, parents, carers, and providers which continues to highlight the need for the support that HAF offers.

2. Programme Highlights

In 2023, the team focussed our attention on enriching our offer with a variety of new activities and opportunities for our young people and their families, with the aim to increase bookings and attendance throughout. We achieved this by forging exciting new partnerships with local organisations to put on new activities such as robotics and STEM, horticultural, outdoor survival skills and science workshops whilst also increasing our popular provision such as football and tennis sessions. This resulted in an overall increase in attendance levels and the number of unique children and young people, in comparison with our three programmes in 2022. Data analysis also shows that many new families attended.

To further enrich our programme and offer, we worked in partnership with several fantastic schemes in 2023 to educate and support our young people. Examples included the Young Responders programme funded and run by St John Ambulance who attended provision to run sessions on knife and street crime. They also run sessions on mental health first aid and basic first aid training. The team worked with a financial charity to offer tailored sessions to attendees based on age, to educate them on financial security. These were interactive sessions around how to save money for our younger cohort, and sessions about how to open a savings account and student finance for our older cohort. We also worked closely with local

organisations who could provide surplus food deliveries to those families who needed additional help with food throughout the holidays.

Furthermore, the team was able to increase our Special Educational Needs (SEN) offer to support the growing need for provision for this cohort of children and young people in Bromley, by working with new organisations and offering additional spaces where we could safely scale up places available. Adapting our provision with the aim to meet the growing needs of our local area within the grant conditions and criteria is a top priority for the Bromley HAF team.

3. Data Analysis

Below is a breakdown of the attendance data in Bromley, in the year 2023. A 'unique child' is recorded once, regardless of the number of times a child has attended provision over a holiday period. A 'place' is each available booking slot that a child may attend during the holiday period.

3.1 Unique Children

Easter:

<i>Primary</i>	833	80%
<i>Secondary</i>	214	20%
Total Number:	1047	100%
<i>SEND</i>	255	24%

Reach: The total number of FSM eligible young people in Bromley in 2023, between the eligible ages of 5-16 was 7,933. The Easter HAF programme reached 13% of FSM eligible children and young people during Easter 2023.

Summer:

Primary	1386	77%
Secondary	422	23%
Total Number:	1808	100%
SEND	250	14%

Reach: The total number of FSM eligible young people in Bromley in 2023, between the eligible ages of 5-16 was 7,933. The Summer HAF programme reached 23% of FSM eligible children and young people during Summer 2023.

Winter:

Primary	673	74%
Secondary	235	26%
Total Number:	908	100%
SEND	191	21%

Reach: The total number of FSM young people in Bromley in 2023, between the eligible ages of 5-16 was 7,933. The Winter HAF programme reached 12% of FSM children and young people during Winter 2023.

3.2 Places

HAF Places available in 2023	23,639
HAF Places available in 2022	23,234
Increase in spaces	405

4. Our Offer

4.1 Providers

Bromley worked with a total of 34 organisations in 2023 offering HAF provision, the majority of which ran provision during all three of the programmes. Many of these providers have been working in partnership with the local authority since the initiation of the programme in 2021. As a result of long-term partnerships, the team has built solid working relationships which supports the smooth running of the programme. In building great relationships with our providers and ensuring the process remains clearly communicated and set out in advance, the HAF programme continues to go from strength to strength in Bromley. Providers have established fantastic connections in their local communities and know their families extremely well which in turn means they best know their needs.

We worked with a variety of organisations from charities to voluntary groups and limited partnership companies to offer a comprehensive offer and variety of activities to support all age groups, which were geographically spread across the borough. Each of our providers also operated from an array of locations, to ensure accessibility for all our families such as churches, schools, youth centres and community hubs.

Following a gap analysis and a targeted procurement exercise, we were pleased to bring on new providers at the beginning of 2023. We saw real impact in our feedback from families in being able to offer different types of provision to the usual sports and exercise focus.

Our providers performed to our expected standards across 2023, in addition to expanding and improving their provision based on key learnings after each

programme. The HAF team's planning and feedback meetings with providers have proven instrumental in ensuring the overall standards and communication is to our standard throughout the holiday periods.

4.2 Geographical spread

Through data analysis, The HAF Team mapped out the key areas of focus throughout the borough via the Bromley wards: St Mary Cray, St Pauls Cray, Crystal Palace, Anerley, Mottingham, and Orpington.

Whilst Bromley has pockets of deprivation across the area of a generally affluent borough, it is necessary for a successful programme to ensure an even spread of provision is available across the local area. Please see appendix A and B for a visual representation of the number of FSM eligible children and young and provision available across the local area during 2023.

4.3 Activities

This year, we offered an exciting variety of activities and opportunities for HAF attendees, examples of which are below:

- **Sports:** We worked with several sports organisations and clubs, including local football clubs, who organised football sessions and training, including a meet and greet day with local players to inspire attendees. A local tennis and boxing organisation as well as rugby and basketball sessions.
- **Arts and Theatre:** We collaborated with fantastic musical arts companies to put on dance and theatre sessions, based around introducing young people to the arts and building their confidence to try new activities. Additionally, we were able to offer sessions based solely on arts and crafts where attendees could learn skills such as pottery making, sewing, and drawing. We worked with a film school to offer young people the opportunity to learn how to create, film and present a short film, led by industry professionals.
- **STEM:** The team is pleased to have sourced organisations capable of delivering a range of robotics, coding, technical and science-based workshops. Robotics and coding sessions were popular, and these sessions were booked up very quickly. Our science workshops focussed on learning and understanding the body which were fun and interactive.
- **Nature:** We partnered with an organisation whose aim was to teach children invaluable life skills, such as foraging and fire starting. The key theme of the programme was to connect children and young people back with nature and spark the feeling of adventure in a safe environment. The team also linked in with local forest schools to enhance existing provision where possible.

4.4 Food

In 2023, we estimate to have provided over 23,000 meals, which were healthy, filling, and enjoyable. Our providers went above and beyond the requirements when it

came to food, with additional snacks, cooked meals, and food parcels for families to take home. We had providers who established their own food bank pantries for those parents who wished to discreetly pick up some essentials during pick up and others that have linked with local supermarkets to hand out surplus food to those who need it. Providers reported an increase in children and young people requesting second and third helpings of food, in addition to parents and carers requesting more support to tackle food insecurity every year since programme commencement.

The local authority continues to work in close partnership with public health colleagues and the food safety team to support providers in meeting the programme requirement of food provision and nutritional education. We have an established and formal process for our providers and any food catering organisations they work with to sign up to Bromley's Food Safety Team. We meet with the Food Safety Team prior to each programme to run through our upcoming food provision, venues, and organisations. The Food Safety Team review the organisations and arrange food safety inspections where required. In 2023, all our providers that cooked the meals on site received either a 4- or 5-star food hygiene rating.

4.5 Nutritional Education

Our providers continued to seek unique and entertaining ways to implement Nutritional Education to our children, young people, and their families and we were impressed by how our new providers incorporate this into some of the more unique activities we offered. Providers put on educational talks with parents and carers, coffee afternoons, and involved local communities in building relationships with our families. Nutritional Education sessions were delivered by PE coaches and qualified nutritionists.

Educational learning was linked with cultural and national days throughout the year and furthermore, trips to local garden centres, horticultural societies and allotments supported their understanding of where our food comes from. Blindfolded taste testing, smoothie making, and cooking were methods utilised to develop attendees understanding of different tastes and food groups and made the educational aspect more interesting. Our providers encourage HAF attendees to cook and make food to teach them life skills as well as give them an understanding of how with a few ingredients you can create a nutritious and filling meal.

4.6 Matched funding

Many of our providers were able to get matched funding from organisations to extend HAF spaces more widely to other vulnerable groups outside of programme eligibility criteria. This supported many additional children and young people and their families throughout the year.

5. HAF Grant Award Panel and Steering Group

Bromley's Steering Group comprises of senior leaders across the Children, Education and Families division in Bromley, providing scrutiny and challenge to the

HAF teams' grant award process and planning of the overall programme. The Director of Education, Assistant Director of Children's Social Care, Director of Finance for Children's Services and the HAF Programme Strategic Lead (Head of Educational Effectiveness) form our Steering Group.

Our grant award process includes a decision-making panel with key colleagues across the Council to provide input, scrutiny, and challenge to potential providers based on providers scores. The alignment with our programme offers and aims for the children and young people taking part is clearly set out at this scrutiny panel and include colleagues from SEN, Commissioning, Procurement, Public Health, and Finance.

The HAF team is rolling out an additional forum in which parent/carers, children and young people, voluntary sector colleagues, and providers are invited to come together to feedback and review the programme in the 2024-25 academic year. The HAF team continues to consider ways to develop future programmes, and feedback from families and providers are welcome to support our continuous improvement journey to supplement our existing offer.

6. Communications and Marketing

In Bromley, we have developed a forward-thinking approach and strategy to ensure that our schools are on board with the promotion of the HAF programme throughout the build up to each holiday period, to signpost the programme. Schools have been a key part of our communications plan and success in promotion and we view them as key stakeholders who can support us in signposting to the eligible cohort of families – information in which they also hold.

Our communications plan includes various avenues to promote and market the HAF Programme across Bromley prior to and during the holiday period, which include utilising posters, flyers, social media platforms, digital billboards in Bromley high street, letters and in-person promotion. As well as working with our Bromley schools, we also work with a range of stakeholders to promote the programme widely, such as our Childrens Centre, Libraries, Social care colleagues and Youth centres.

7. Feedback

In 2023, we utilised an array of methods to gather and review feedback from parents/carers, children and young people, providers, and key stakeholders in the borough to ensure our programme aligns with the need. We used online feedback forms, face to face group and 1:1 feedback sessions, written questionnaires, and quality assurance visits to collate qualitative and quantitative data which will inform our decision making in the year 2024.

Please see Appendix C to view a sample of quotes from parents, carers and our children and young people which we gathered. This feedback highlights the need for

this programme and the real impact it has on our families lives. We aim to offer a holistic offer, which means we go above the programme requirements to support the families who attend our provision, and we believe this is reflected in the feedback we receive.

8. Budget Review

Our 2023-24 allocated budget, as per the Grant Determination letter was **£828,680**. Below is a breakdown of spend:

Face-to-face holiday club provision:	
Easter 2023:	£186,453.00
Summer 2023:	£447,487.20
Winter 2023:	£111,871.80
Management and Administration of the programme:	
	£82,868
Total Programme Cost:	
	£828,680

9. Reflections

Increased spaces

In 2023, we increased the number of HAF spaces on offer and will continue to do so within the boundaries of the Grant Funding Criteria and Conditions to reach as many eligible families as possible; this will be achieved by forging new relationships with providers and ensuring best value of money of the activities on offer.

Enrichment of provision

In 2023, we enriched our provision with new activities and free country-wide relevant schemes. We will continue to offer as much support to our families in the year 2024-25 and utilise feedback and data analysis to monitor the needs of the cohort and adapt the programme accordingly.

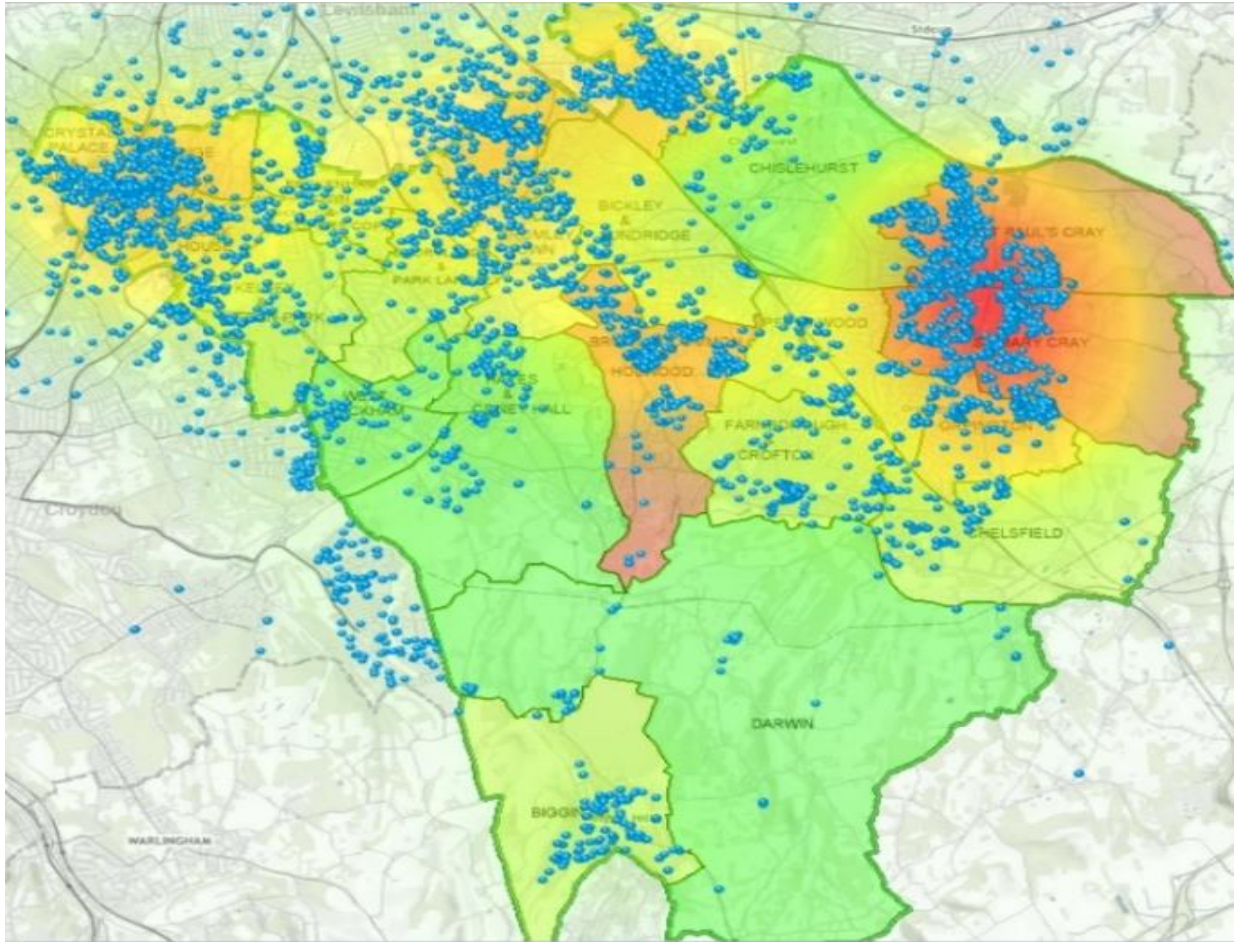
Demand

Each year we have seen an increase in the number of eligible families which we estimate will grow further over the coming years. We will continue to find ways to meet the over-growing demand.

10. Appendices

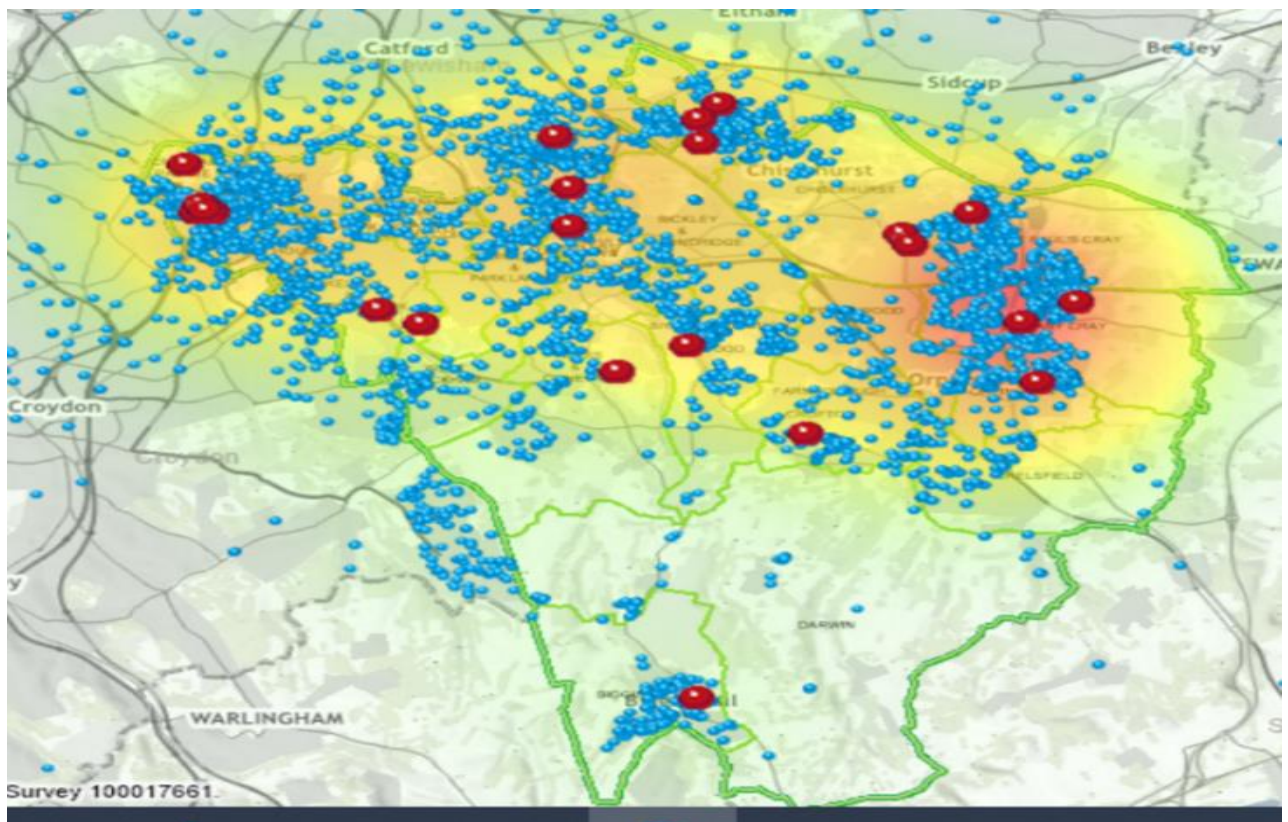
Appendix A

Appendix A is reference to the number of Free School Meal eligible children and young people in the Bromley Borough in 2023, represented via blue dots.



Appendix B

Appendix B is reference to the even spread of provision during Bromley's summer HAF programme, where HAF provision is referenced via red dots.



Appendix C

Appendix C is a small sample of the feedback the team received from parents, carers and children and young people who attended HAF provision in 2023.

Children and young people:

- “I have done so many fun activities and amazing stuff and I can’t wait to come back again!”
- “I have got stronger and fitter from the activities I have done this week and now I can throw further.”
- “I like to come and be able to have fun and choose what I eat every day. I love the craft things the most, I made a t-shirt and a water bottle.”
- “The coaches are so nice and easy to get to know, I have really enjoyed this camp and have loved the different activities we have gotten to do each day.”
- “I had so much fun and made so many friends that I didn’t have before. I am so happy when I come to this camp”.

Parents/Carers:

- “This programme has allowed my children to be children and play and socialise as they should, away from the stresses of home.”
- “HAF has been a lifeline for me and my children this Easter, I am so grateful for this support.”
- “I am grateful for this amazing programme, thank you for everything you do for our children and how you support us parents. This allows me to work while the programme is on. Long live the programme!
- “This summer my children have been well fed with freshly cooked meals due to this programme and have had the chance to meet new friends and be children again. This is such a benefit to the community”.
- “I would like to thank the team for taking good care of my son. It’s not easy putting trust in people, however they made me feel safe. 10/10 programme”
- “Please know that this programme and those involved have made the borough of Bromley an even sweeter place to live.”
- The food is delicious the children inform me, the best food. The children come home with a full belly and a big smile of satisfaction on their faces. This really supports us all in these tough times”.