

Knowsley's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) and SNAP Programme

ANNUAL REVIEW

April 2025 – March 2026



Knowsley HAF Providers 2025



Partnerships and Donations

Sainsbury's

Morrisons

MERSEYSIDE
Violence
Reduction
Partnership

Chartwells

NHS

ASDA

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Overview of Knowsley HAF PROGRAMME 2025

Across the 2025 HAF delivery year (Easter, Summer and Winter), Knowsley delivered a substantial programme supporting children and families through a combination of funded holiday provision, enrichment activities and targeted interventions. In total, approximately **£0.89 million of HAF funding** was invested, supplemented by an additional **£11,850 in external funding**, enabling the delivery of a wide-ranging offer across the borough.

This provision supported **around 6900 children and young people** through HAF-funded places across the year, with the highest engagement seen during the summer period. In total, approximately **23,721 places were attended**, demonstrating both the scale and reach of the programme across multiple providers and settings.

Key strategies throughout the year focused on **data-led planning and targeted inclusion**, ensuring that children eligible for free school meals – particularly those facing digital exclusion or additional needs – were effectively identified and engaged. There was a strong emphasis on **improving attendance and efficiency**, with enhanced booking systems, improved communication with families, and closer provider collaboration helping to reduce unfilled places and increase uptake.

Knowsley's HAF programme consistently prioritised **high-quality, enriching provision**, including **physical activity, creative arts, life skills and healthy food education**, alongside a growing focus on **nutrition and health**, highlighted by innovative initiatives such as the youth-led RECITE programme. Strong **partnership working** with schools, community organisations, health partners and local businesses, alongside significant volunteer contributions, further strengthened delivery and community reach. Overall, the year was characterised by a clear commitment to **continuous improvement**, with learning from each delivery period informing the next, resulting in a more efficient, inclusive and impactful HAF programme.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank all of those involved in delivering the 2025 HAF programme, particularly the providers who have worked tirelessly to ensure that the programme is and continues to be a success.



HAF Engagement and Expenditure

Face to Face provision including SEND specific provision	£811,151
Management and Administration	£52,000
Other Costs	£25,401

Q1 – Easter 2025

	Primary aged	Secondary aged
FSM-eligible / non-SEND	1096	252
FSM-eligible / SEND – in universal settings	257	53
FSM-eligible / SEND – in SEND Specialist provision	12	7
Non-FSM-eligible / non-SEND	171	72
Non-FSM-eligible / SEND – in universal provisions	38	14
Non-FSM-eligible / SEND – in SEND Specialist provision	11	5
TOTAL number of HAF – funded attendees	1585	403

Q2 – Summer 2025

	Primary aged	Secondary aged
FSM-eligible / non-SEND	2109	366
FSM-eligible / SEND – in universal settings	396	99
FSM-eligible / SEND – in SEND Specialist provision	162	10
Non-FSM-eligible / non-SEND	348	145
Non-FSM-eligible / SEND – in universal provisions	103	59
Non-FSM-eligible / SEND – in SEND Specialist provision	7	0
TOTAL number of HAF – funded attendees	3125	679

Q3 – Winter 2025

	Primary aged	Secondary aged
FSM-eligible / non-SEND	581	119
FSM-eligible / SEND – in universal settings	111	66
FSM-eligible / SEND – in SEND Specialist provision	54	0
Non-FSM-eligible / non-SEND	95	31
Non-FSM-eligible / SEND – in universal provisions	12	7
Non-FSM-eligible / SEND – in SEND Specialist provision	16	16
TOTAL number of HAF – funded attendees	869	239

Healthy Living and Learning

Nutrition education was embedded throughout the programme and delivered in a variety of engaging ways. Across all delivery periods, clubs incorporated:

- Cooking sessions, food preparation and practical food skills
- Interactive activities such as smoothie making, fruit tasting and themed meal activities
- Structured healthy eating education sessions led by providers and partners

In Winter 2025, this was further strengthened through the **RECITE nutrition programme**, an innovative, evidence-led approach supported by Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. This included youth-led delivery, where trained Youth Champions delivered nutrition sessions, ensuring content was **relatable and impactful** for participants.

Provision was consistently rated highly for healthy food provision and awareness of healthy eating, demonstrating a **strong focus on education as well as provision of meals**. Families were engaged in nutrition support through both formal and informal approaches. Cooking demonstrations and nutrition sessions were delivered by partners such as Chartwells chefs and NHS teams, often involving families directly.

Providers offered continued guidance, reassurance and informal advice to parents, signposting to wider support services, including food support and healthy lifestyle resources. **A strong community-based delivery** enabled family engagement and relationship-building, particularly for vulnerable households.

Programmes also supported families more broadly, including provision of food support and essential items where needed, helping reinforce messages around **nutrition and food security**.

Evidence suggests that children and families have developed a **better understanding of nutrition and healthy eating** through the HAF programme. Children gained practical skills such as preparing healthy meals and making informed food choices. Nutrition education activities improved **knowledge of balanced diets and healthier options**.

The RECITE programme introduced **evidence-based learning**, strengthening understanding in a measurable way.

Activities such as cooking, meal preparation and family engagement contributed to greater awareness of **cost-effective, healthy food choices**.

There is clear evidence that attitudes toward food and nutrition improved over the course of the programme. Children became **more willing to try new foods** in a supportive, pressure-free environment. Children also showed **increased confidence, independence and interest in healthy eating** were observed. Parents reported positive changes at home, including improved eating habits, routines and engagement with food.

Programmes helped children associate food with **enjoyment, learning and social interaction**, rather than obligation. Feedback and case studies also highlight wider benefits, **including improved wellbeing, confidence and family stability**, linked in part to food security and positive mealtime experiences.



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Provision of Food

Healthy food provision meeting School Food Standards was a core requirement and consistently achieved across clubs. Most of the provision was rated “good” or “excellent” for both **healthy food provision and awareness of healthy eating**, confirming that children were regularly receiving nutritious meals alongside their activities. In addition, food was not only provided but embedded into the programme through **educational and interactive food-based activities**, reinforcing healthy habits.

The programme benefited from **strong partnerships to enhance food quality and availability**, including:

- **Supermarkets (Morrisons, Asda, Sainsbury’s, Home Bargains)** providing food donations, discounted supplies and additional items
- **Chartwells chefs and NHS teams**, delivering cooking sessions, demonstrations and nutrition education
- **Community and cultural partners**, supporting wider programme experiences linked to food and wellbeing

These partnerships significantly strengthened both **the nutritional value of meals and the learning opportunities linked to food**, ensuring a more holistic offer. Feedback across the reports shows that **children responded very positively to the food provided**:

- Food activities such as **smoothie making, fruit tasting and cooking sessions** increased engagement and enjoyment

- Children were encouraged to **try new foods in a pressure-free environment**, leading to increased confidence and willingness to engage with healthier options
- Case studies highlight that children:
 - Explored new foods and developed healthier habits
 - Demonstrated improved confidence and independence around food
 - Parents also reported **improved eating behaviours and positive changes at home**, including better routines and willingness to try new meals

The introduction of initiatives such as the **RECITE nutrition programme**, co-designed and delivered with young people, further enhanced engagement by making food education **relatable, youth-led and impactful**.

Overall, the HAF programme successfully ensured that children received daily nutritious meals, delivered through a high-quality, standards-led approach. This was strengthened by effective multi-agency partnerships, and children’s attitudes toward food were overwhelmingly positive, with increased engagement, confidence and healthier behaviours evident across the year.

Enrichment Activities

The HAF programme delivered a **broad and diverse range of enrichment activities** designed to support children and young people's physical, social and emotional development, while also providing **opportunities to learn new skills and try new experiences**. Across the year, activities included:

- **Sports and physical activities** (e.g. fitness games, daily mile, movement sessions)
- **Outdoor and nature-based learning** (e.g. forest school activities)
- **Creative arts and cultural experiences** (e.g. crafts, food art, theatre trips including partnerships with Shakespeare North Playhouse)
- **Cooking and food-based activities** linked to healthy eating
- **Practical life skills sessions** (e.g. cooking, communication, wellbeing, managing money)
- **STEM and educational activities** delivered across multiple clubs
- **Youth work and social development sessions**, including confidence and relationship-building activities

Provision was consistently rated highly for **enriching activities, inclusiveness and physical activity**, demonstrating the quality and breadth of the offer. The programme also focussed on provision of **holistic development**, supporting physical health, creativity, social skills and wellbeing as well as addressing **inequalities in access to enrichment opportunities**, particularly for FSM-eligible children. We aimed to encourage **healthy lifestyles** through physical activity and nutrition and support **social interaction and confidence-building**, particularly for children who may be isolated.

Activities were also shaped by **feedback from children, families and providers**, and informed by data from previous delivery periods to ensure they met local needs and demand. The programme created meaningful opportunities for children to **learn and practise new skills**, such as **cooking, teamwork, communication and problem-solving**. Children engaged in **structured yet varied activities over multiple sessions**, helping consolidate learning. We were pleased to learn that some children tried **completely new experiences**, such as horse riding, theatre visits and outdoor learning, which many had never accessed before. Providers also reported that children-built confidence through **progressive participation**, moving from observation to active involvement. This was particularly notable where children accessed **inclusive environments**, with tailored support for SEND children (e.g. sensory spaces, adapted activities).

Case studies highlight that children who were initially hesitant or disengaged were able to **gradually build confidence and participate independently**, demonstrating clear skill progression. The reported impact of enrichment activities was significant and wide-ranging. Providers and parents reported **increased confidence and self-esteem**, particularly among children trying new activities. Children also improved **social skills, friendships and communication**, reducing isolation whilst developing practical and transferable life skills. Children also experienced enhanced **emotional wellbeing**, with children feeling **safe, supported and engaged**.

Parents also reported **noticeable changes at home**, including increased confidence, improved behaviour and greater willingness to try new activities.

Knowsley is proud that the programme delivered a **high-quality, varied enrichment offer** that was intentionally designed to **broaden horizons, build skills and improve wellbeing**. By combining consistent participation with new and engaging experiences, children and young people were supported to **develop, grow and gain confidence**, resulting in lasting positive impacts on their skills, attitudes and overall development.

Parents also reported noticeable changes at home, including increased confidence, improved behaviour and greater willingness to try new activities.



Physical Activities

Knowsley HAF programme incorporated a wide and inclusive range of physical activities throughout the year, ensuring all children and young people had opportunities to **be active, build confidence and enjoy movement in a supportive environment**. Across the programme, activities included:

- Structured sports and games (team sports, fitness activities, group challenges)
- Daily physical activity sessions, including initiatives such as the daily mile and movement-based games
- Outdoor and nature-based activities, including forest school and exploratory play
- Dance, movement and sensory play, particularly within inclusive and SEND provision
- Equine and alternative activities (e.g. horse riding and care), offering unique physical experiences

Physical activity provision was **consistently rated highly** across all delivery periods, with most clubs assessed as “good” or “excellent”, demonstrating strong quality and consistency. Physical activity was a core focus of the programme to **promote healthy lifestyles and tackle inactivity**, particularly during school holidays. Sessions supported physical and mental wellbeing, including **reducing anxiety and improving mood**. Social interaction, teamwork and confidence-building was consistently encouraged. The offer provided **accessible opportunities for children who may not otherwise engage in sports or structured activity**, and this complimented the programme’s nutrition and healthy living focus.

The mix of structured and informal activities ensured that provision could meet different interests, abilities and confidence levels, increasing overall participation and enjoyment. The programme placed **strong emphasis on engagement and inclusivity**, offering a **broad variety of activities** and allowing children to choose what interested them most. Children could observe before joining in, supporting confidence-building.

Activities were adapted for children with SEND, and this included sensory friendly environments, additional staff support and flexible delivery approaches. Providers created **safe, non-competitive environments**, particularly for children less confident in sport. They instead incorporated fun, play-based approaches, rather than purely structured sport. Providers also focused on **positive relationships and encouragement**, helping children feel safe to try new activities.

Activities such as horse riding and outdoor learning provided memorable, first-time experiences that significantly boosted confidence and enthusiasm. Inclusive provision enabled children with additional needs to participate in physical activity in ways that suited them, improving both engagement and wellbeing. Feedback highlighted **improved physical activity levels, enjoyment and positive behaviour changes**.

Even where activities were not traditionally sport-focused (e.g. youth sessions for social development), they still contributed to **overall wellbeing, engagement and connection**, demonstrating a **flexible and child-centred approach**.



There were several notable successes across the programme. Children who were initially reluctant or disengaged progressed to active participation, including joining group activities for the first time.

Overall, the programme successfully delivered a diverse, inclusive and engaging physical activity offer, designed to meet the needs of all children and young people. By combining structured sport, creative movement and unique experiences, the programme not only increased activity levels but also supported confidence, wellbeing and long-term positive attitudes toward physical activity.

Special Education Needs & Disabilities

The HAF programme delivered a comprehensive and inclusive offer for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), combining both mainstream inclusive provision and bespoke specialist support to ensure all children could participate meaningfully. Provision for children with SEND was delivered through inclusive universal

settings, where children with additional needs attended alongside peers and with appropriate support, as well as dedicated SEND specialist provision, designed specifically for children requiring higher levels of support.

At Knowsley, SEND provision was carefully structured to ensure access to adapted activities and environments, appropriate staff-to-child ratios and safe and supportive settings tailored to individual needs.

CASE STUDY 1

A non-verbal autistic child who typically struggled during school holidays was able to settle into sessions, engage in sensory play, physical activities and food-based sessions, and even begin interacting with peers. By the end of the programme, they were independently engaging and visibly more relaxed, with parents reporting a significant improvement in family wellbeing.

CASE STUDY 2

A child with autism and sensory needs was supported through the use of ear defenders, quiet spaces and tailored support during a theatre trip, enabling them to enjoy a new cultural experience and engage confidently with performers.

Adapted physical and enrichment activities, ensuring all children could participate

Sensory-friendly environments and activities, supporting children with autism and sensory sensitivities

Use of visual aids, structured routines and calm spaces to reduce anxiety and support engagement

Strong partnerships with schools, community organisations and health services

Inclusive delivery models, supported by training, feedback and collaboration

Embedding accessibility and inclusiveness as core performance areas, consistently rated highly across provision

Ensures flexibility, allowing children to engage at their own pace

100% compliance on HAF framework standards, including safeguarding, health and safety and inclusivity

The Knowsley SEND Offer for HAF

Overall, the programme provided a strong, inclusive and high-quality SEND offer, combining universal inclusion with specialist provision. Through robust quality assurance, tailored support and committed partnerships, providers were able to meet a wide range of needs effectively. The impact was significant, with children demonstrating increased confidence, improved wellbeing, greater independence and meaningful engagement in activities, alongside providing vital support to families.

Marketing and Communication

- Use of an online booking system (Wonde/HolidayActivities) to centralise information and enable easy access to activities
- Distribution of voucher codes via schools, ensuring FSM-eligible families were directly targeted and able to book provision
- Ongoing communication between providers and families, including messaging updates and reminders to support attendance
- Face-to-face engagement at sessions, enabling providers to build relationships and offer advice, reassurance and signposting
- Provider-led promotion through local networks and community engagement
- Ongoing collaboration to identify children most in need, including those experiencing digital exclusion or other barriers
- Strengthening links with schools, improving the programme's ability to deliver targeted outreach and increase uptake
- Regular engagement, support meetings and pre-delivery sessions with providers, ensuring clarity on expectations and requirements
- Sharing of guidance, training and best practice, particularly around booking systems, inclusivity and delivery standards
- Extending communication to a broad range of stakeholders, including community organisations, voluntary sector groups and local partners, Health partners (e.g. NHS teams) and food providers, cultural organisations and activity providers
- Identifying and targeting digitally excluded families, with support from schools and providers
- Strengthening marketing and communication messages, informed by previous delivery learning
- School-led promotion (primary channel for reaching eligible families)
- Booking platform visibility and communications
- Identification and referral of FSM-eligible pupils, including those who may not have previously accessed HAF

The HAF programme adopted a multi-channel, targeted communication and engagement strategy to effectively reach families, schools, providers and wider stakeholders, ensuring strong awareness, accessibility and participation across the borough.

Communication with families was delivered through a combination of digital platforms, direct referral routes and community-based engagement.

Overall, the HAF programme delivered a coordinated, multi-channel communication and marketing approach, combining digital systems, school partnerships and community engagement.

This ensured that families were well-informed, providers were supported, and new audiences were successfully reached, contributing to a more inclusive and effective programme.



List of providers for each delivery period

Easter 2025

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Swanside | • Apollo Active – Whsiton and Cronton | • HIYA |
| • L14 | • ForHousing | • Activate |
| • Halewood Youth In Community | • Shakespeare North | • TDCA |
| • Centre 63 | • TowerHill | • Karma in the Community |
| • Sports Alive | • KABS – Pool Kings | • Explore – Halewood North |
| • Merseyside Youth Association | • KABS – Northwood | • Explore – St Micheals |
| • Apollo Active – Halewood 4-11 | • KABS – Southdene | • Altru Drama |
| • Apollo Active – Halewood 11-16 | • KABS – Towerhill | • Moving Senses (SEN) |
| • Apollo Active – Halewood SEN | • KABS – Parkbrow | |
| • Apollo Active – Prescott and Bowring | • VIBE | |

Summer 2025

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| • Sports Alive | • Apollo Active – Prescott 4-11 | • Activate Body and Mind Community Activities CIC – Blacklow |
| • Aerial Gymnastics | • Apollo Active – Whiston 4-11 | • Activate Body and Mind Community Activities CIC – St aidens |
| • Flourish and Succeed | • L14 Community | • Shakespeare North Playhouse |
| • Halewood Youth in Community | • Centre 63 | • Karma In The Community and Mind Mastery Community Limited |
| • Whiston Tae Kwon Do | • Altru Drama CIC | • Active Sports Group |
| • KABS – Northwood | • Halewood Town Council | • Vibe UK |
| • Parkbrow School | • TDCA | • ForHousing |
| • KABS – Pool Kings | • Huyton Initiative 4 Youth Activities | • Kirkby C of E School |
| • KABS – Southdene | • Swanside community centre | • Tower Hill Community Hub |
| • KABS – Towerhill | • East Liverpool Riding for the Disabled East Liverpool RDA (SEN) | • Moving Senses |
| • Merseyside Youth Association | • Explore Partnership CIC | • Malvern Primary |
| • Stalkers Gym CIC | • Explore Partnership CIC | |
| • Apollo Active – Halewood 4-11 | | |
| • Apollo Active – Halewood 11-16 | | |
| • Apollo Active – Halewood SEND | | |

Winter 2025

- KABS – Northwood
- Parkbrow School
- KABS – Pool Kings
- KABS – Southdene
- Stalkers Gym CIC
- Apollo Active – Halewood 4-16
- Apollo Active – Halewood SEND
- Apollo Active – Prescot 4-11
- Apollo Active – Whiston 4-11
- L14 Community
- Centre 63
- TDCA
- East Liverpool Riding for the Disabled East Liverpool RDA (SEN)
- Explore Partnership CIC
- Activate Body and Mind Community Activities CIC – Blacklow brow (5-11)
- Activate Body and Mind Community Activities CIC – Huyton ABC 11-16
- Shakespeare North Playhouse
- Mind Mastery
- Vibe UK
- Safari Kids
- Tower Hill Community Hub
- Moving Senses (SEND)



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