



Holiday Activity and Food Programme

2024 Service Specification for Prospective Delivery Partners



Contents

Holiday Activity and Food Programme Overview

Introduction to the Holiday Activity and Food Programme 2024

Grant Eligibility

Grant Application Process and Timeline

Grant Awards

Appendix 1: Croydon HAF Marking Criteria

Holiday Activity and Food Programme – Overview

On 27 October 2021, the government announced a 3 year funding settlement of over £200 million each year for the holiday activities and food (HAF) programme. 2024 is the third year of the Department for Education funding settlement. This follows the successful roll out of the programme across all areas of England in 2021.

The funding provided to Croydon Council requires the local authority to coordinate and provide free holiday provision, including healthy food and enriching activities. The holiday activities and food programme must be delivered during the Easter, Summer and Christmas holidays only.

The HAF programme funding is primarily for school aged children from reception to year 11 (inclusive) who receive benefits-related free school meals (FSM).

Benefits-related FSMs are available to pupils if their parents are in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits and have a claim verified by their school.

Please Note: Since September 2023, all children in London state-funded primary schools now receive a free school meal under the universal infant free school meals (UFSM) policy. Pupils who receive a free meal under UFSM must also be in receipt of benefits-related FSM to be able to access a place on the HAF programme.

Croydon Council will ensure all HAF providers deliver a high-quality experience that will result in children:

- receiving healthy and nutritious meals
- maintaining a healthy level of physical activity
- being happy, having fun and meeting new friends
- developing a greater understanding of food, nutrition and other health-related issues
- taking part in fun and engaging activities that support their development
- feeling safe and secure
- getting access to the right support services
- returning to school feeling engaged and ready to learn

Introduction to the Holiday Activity and Food Programme 2024 - Croydon

Croydon Council have been delivering the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme on behalf of the Department for Education in Croydon Since 2019. The Department for Education initially chose Croydon as a pilot LA for the programme, before a national roll out in 2021.

The HAF programme in Croydon provides grant funding to organisations able to deliver Holiday Activities and Food Programmes to children in Receipt of Benefits-Related Free School Meals.

Croydon Council has collaborated with Schools, Community groups, Faith-based organisations, Voluntary Service entities, and childcare services providers to deliver the HAF programme in previous years. This Service Specification lays out the details for 2024 which a prospective delivery partner for the HAF programme should be aware of it includes details on how to apply for the programme and outlines the subsequent steps necessary for participation.

For 2024 Croydon Council seek applications for delivery of provision at all holiday periods to be made by 23.59 06/02/2024. Successful applicants will be informed ahead of each respective holiday period, rather than being informed of the outcome for the whole year in one announcement.

Croydon Council will be focussing on the following areas for improvement during 2024 delivery. Applicants interested in delivering the programme should, therefore, ensure that applications highlight how they will address these particular areas through their own programme:

- Increased booking and attendance rates
- Programmes which avoid the stigmatisation of children
- Additional SEN Availability across Croydon
- High-quality venues which offer the best opportunities for all attendees

Croydon Council continue to want to work with the very best partner organisations in delivering the HAF programme, and welcome applications from both previous delivery partners, and potential new delivery partners. Details of how providers will be selected is given later in this service specification.

Holiday Activities and Food programme – Croydon

Croydon require all providers to deliver 4 days' worth of provision over the Easter and Christmas Holidays, and 16 days' worth of provision (over four weeks) to be delivered during the Summer. Provision must be for a minimum of four hours a day and meet the Programme Standards as stated below.

Applicants should note that Croydon Council are seeking applications for provision which will be delivered for four days only, during Easter 2024, and should select one of the following date patterns ONLY to deliver their programme.

Tuesday 2nd-Friday 5th April 2024

Monday 8th April – Thursday 11th April 2024

Tuesday 9th April – Friday 12th April 2024

During Summer 2024, Croydon Council are seeking applications for the programme to be delivered for four days per week across a four-week period. Clubs can choose to run from Monday – Thursday or Tuesday to Friday either between the 29th July and the 23rd August, or between the 5th and the 30th August. (All clubs running during this second window will be required to run from Tuesday-Friday during the last week, due to the August bank holiday).

For Christmas 2024, Clubs will be asked to deliver across four days of the holidays between the 23rd December and the 3rd January. Croydon Council are currently considering whether there will be a necessary requirement for remote provision to be offered during this time, and await further programme guidance from the Department for Education.

Healthy Food/Meals

Each Holiday Activity and Food Provider across Croydon must provide at least one main meal which meets the school food standards during each session. Croydon council have an expectation that **hot meals** will be provided throughout the programme, with cold food provided only as an exception.

All food must meet with food preparation regulations, taking into account allergies, dietary requirements, and religious and/or cultural requirements.

Enriching/Physical Activities

Holiday clubs must provide fun and enriching activities that provide children with opportunities to develop or consolidate skills or knowledge, to consolidate existing skills and knowledge, or to try out new experiences.

Holiday Clubs are required to deliver at least one hours' worth of Physical Activity per day, that meet the [Physical Activity Guidelines](#).

Enriching Activities should be available throughout programmes and must be age appropriate for children attending.

Nutritional Education

Holiday clubs must include nutritional education as a key component of their programme and be aimed at improving the knowledge and awareness of healthy eating for children. For example, this can be in the form of workshops, and could include activities such as getting children involved in food preparation and cooking, growing fruit and vegetables, and taste tests.

Signposting and Referrals

Holiday Activity and Food Providers must provide information, signposting or referrals to other services and support that would benefit the children who attend their provision and their families. Providers must also ensure that children and families are aware of the breadth of other Holiday Activity and Food programmes they could attend within Croydon.

Programme eligibility for children and young people

The HAF programme offers holiday places for those primarily in receipt of benefits related Free School Meals. A small percentage of places may also be made available to children not in receipt of Benefits-related free school meals, and this process is administered by the child's school.

Additionally, Croydon Council also encourage providers to make holiday provision available to children not eligible for free school meals, who can pay to attend. This might be through operating a HAF club as bespoke provision, or as part of already existing holiday provision in the area, with a likelihood of a mixed arrangement depending on the local supply and demand for provision.

Croydon Council have partnered with HolidayActivities to manage eligibility, take bookings, and provide attendance data on the programme. All providers are required to use HolidayActivities, which manages bookings on behalf of the programme, and ensures those who are eligible can access the offer. The use of the HolidayActivities platform to support providers has changed the administration requirements placed upon clubs and has centralised a key component of the programme.

SEN/Additional Needs

Croydon are looking to extend the array of offers in place for children across the borough who are delivering Holiday provision for children receiving Benefits-related Free school meals and have Additional Needs where it may not be appropriate for the child to attend a mainstream provision. Applications from organisations able to deliver specialist SEN provision are warmly welcomed.

The Council's expectation is that all applicants will be able to support children with low-medium levels of SEN and/or disability, and child should be considered on a case-by-case basis. It is understood that not all children will be suitable for some programmes, but every effort should be made to be inclusive wherever possible.

Where children require further support on a programme, small, additional SEND payments can be sought from the HAF programme to cover the cost of a 1-1 worker through the Additional Support Fund.

In addition, Croydon Council are seeking specific programmes across the borough who could cater for children with medium/high levels of Special Educational Needs. The Council recognise there is a greater cost attached with running this type of provision and would expect this to be focused entirely on catering for additional needs, with higher staffing ratios, use of appropriate accessible venues, and a tailored programme to suit those attending.

Grant Eligibility

Grant funding for the Holiday Activity and food programme is available to community and voluntary organisations, not-for-profit companies, registered charities, constituted organisations, social enterprises, schools, and private companies operating in Croydon.

As part of the application process, and to confirm your eligibility to receive public money, you will be required to submit:

- Copy of Public Liability Insurance documentation
- Copy of Employer Liability Insurance documentation
- Safeguarding Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Health and Safety Policy including Food Handling Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Privacy Policy/GDPR policy

In addition, all successful applicants must submit the following risk assessments ahead of delivery

- Venue Risk Assessment
- Programme Risk Assessment

Croydon Council expect all provision to be supported by relevant and up to date policies and procedures that are adhered to by all staff who will be involved in the delivery of HAF provision. Our expectation is that all delivery staff are inducted and trained in accordance with the policies and procedures to ensure the highest of delivery standards, especially for safeguarding, DBS checks, health and safety and equal opportunities.

Applications that do not include the required supporting documents will not be considered. If any documentation submitted is deemed insufficient this may also result in an application not being considered.

Please note: if you are a Croydon maintained school or academy, you only need to submit the following supporting documents from the above checklist along with your funding application:

- *Programme Risk Assessment*
- *Food Handling Policy (if using alternative caterers to normal school provision)*

To receive HAF funding from Croydon Council, a project must:

- Take place mainly within the borough, and benefit children and young people who live or go to school within Croydon.
- Be inclusive and accessible to all children receiving benefits-related FSM and have regard to protected characteristics, including children with SEND.
- Be delivered for the equivalent of at least 4 hours a day, 4 days a week during Easter and Christmas, and for 4 weeks in the Summer 2024 holidays.

Grant HAF funding is public money. HAF funding will not support projects or activities that cannot evidence how they will meet the identified needs of the beneficiaries.

Furthermore, funding cannot be used for:

- Projects which are purely research or not focused on direct delivery.
- Costs of ongoing staff who are not working directly on the project – including salaries of permanent or fixed term staff.
- Costs incurred in putting the application together.
- VAT that you can recover.
- Loans or interest payments.
- Purchase of alcohol or illegal substances.

Grant Application Process and Timeline

There will be many organisations across Croydon wanting to deliver the HAF programme and it will not be possible to fund all applicants who apply. It is also imperative that Croydon Council ensure good geographical coverage of the holiday provision.

For the 2024 Holiday period providers will have the opportunity to apply for up to £7,500 at both Easter and Christmas 2024 delivery with £30,000 available deliver the programme at Summer 2024.

Submitting an application

To submit an application, all interested parties must complete the HAF grant funding application form.

Completed HAF Grant funding applications must be completed online, and submitted along with the required supporting documentation, which will need to be sent to:

HAFprogramme@croydon.gov.uk

by

23.59 on the 06th February 2024

During the application process you will be asked to provide the following detail setting out how you plan to deliver the programme:

- How your programme will deliver the HAF Programme Standards
- Total number of holiday spaces (no. of days x spaces per day)
- Programme dates, session lengths, and timing of sessions throughout the day
- Staffing details
- Confirmation that monitoring data will be collected
- How you will reach children and families on FSM to attend your programme

Organisations can only submit one application per holiday period. The only exception to this will be where an applicant can deliver specific SEND provision on the programme, in addition to a mainstream offer.

Whilst the council encourages providers to work together in the setup of their own programmes, applications from multiple organisations for the delivery of one camp are not currently sought.

Provisional HAF timeline

Activity	Date
Applications for 2024 open	17/01/2024
HAF information and Guidance Session	14.00 24/01/2024
Application Deadline	23.59 06/02/2024
Easter Decision communicated	Week beginning 19 th February 2024
Easter Provision	2 nd – 12 April 2024
Summer decision communicated	Week beginning 20 th May 2024
Summer Provision	29 th July – 30 th August 2024
Christmas decision communicated	Week beginning 21 st October 2024
Christmas Provision	23 rd December 2024 – 3 rd January 2025

Grant Awards

Following a successful grant application, Croydon Council will issue a conditional offer letter and Grant Agreement for prospective providers to sign and return. This will set out the terms and conditions and service specification for which funding has been awarded.

Following an unsuccessful application, Croydon Council will inform applicants at the earliest opportunity. Croydon Council anticipates funding many organisations across the borough and, therefore, formal feedback may not be possible for all unsuccessful applications.

There is no appeals process for unsuccessful applications, though you can make a complaint via the council's formal complaints procedure if you believe due practice has not been followed.

Payments / Terms

Grants will be paid based on an 80-20 split per holiday. The grant payment schedule for each successful organisation will be:

Payment One – Up Front Payment

- Payment date: (upon receipt of a signed agreement along with an up-to-date risk assessment)
- Value: 80% of the grant total

Payment Two

- Payment date: (upon satisfactory project completion and timely submission of completed programme monitoring/evaluation report and completed programme budget monitoring spreadsheet along with evidence of expenditure)
- Value: 20% of the grant total

Any unspent funding will have to be returned to Croydon Council. The second payment may be adjusted based on bookings achieved and/or to take into account any underspend. If the underspend exceeds the second grant payment, Croydon Council will require the return of the funds.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Providers will need to complete a programme evaluation which will include confirmation of how grant funds were spent and outcomes achieved. Croydon Council reserve the right to request invoices or receipts to evidence that HAF funding has been spent for the purposes intended. For the same reason, Croydon Council reserve the right to audit project delivery in relation to funds spent.

Information required may include, but is not limited to:

- Outcomes/records of activities (organisations will be asked to evidence how delivery has met the minimum programme standards)
- Participants' feedback
- Parental feedback
- Case studies and photographs of activities (where possible, and relevant approval has been sought)
- Completed HAF Programme Budget Monitoring Spreadsheet
- A breakdown of any unspent grant funding

Croydon Council carry out robust monitoring of provision, with regular visits to providers. All providers must be available for a visit when requested.

All data and information collected by providers should be collected in strict adherence to GDPR.

Appendix 1: Croydon HAF Marking Criteria

All applications will be judged against the following criteria:

Does the project meet the following HAF standards:

- Daily healthy (preferably hot) food offer for children that meets the school food standards - School food standards: resources for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Enriching activities that allow for children to have new experiences and develop new skills, have fun and socialise.
- Daily physical activities that meet the physical activity guidelines for children of at least one hour per day of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity - Physical activity guidelines for children and young people - NHS (www.nhs.uk)
- Nutritional education for children aimed at improving the knowledge and awareness of healthy eating for children. These do not need to be formal learning activities and could for example include activities such as: getting children involved in food preparation and cooking, growing fruit and vegetables, taste tests, discussing food and nutrition or including food and nutrition in other activities
- HAF providers should be able to provide information, signposting or referrals to other services and support that would benefit families. This could include sessions provided by partner agencies around employment, training, family support, health, financial advice etc

Price

Price will be calculated on a 'per child per day' basis with the total grant requested divided by the number of total places offered by the applicant. While value for money is an important consideration, it is recognised that some providers will incur higher costs to ensure quality food and activity can be provided. For 2024 full marks will be awarded to all applicants within the top 25% most competitively priced submissions when ranked against cost per child per day.

For those outside the 25% most competitively priced programmes the following calculation will apply:

$$\frac{\text{Top 25\% price per child per day of all submitted applications.}}{\text{Applicants submitted price per child per day.}} \times 30\%$$

Applicants that quote a price per child per day which is more than 50% above the mean average from all applications received will not be considered.

Each applicant will be required to submit a financial breakdown in the form of estimated costs to demonstrate how the grant is to be spent as part of the application process. The cost per child per day figure will account for 30% of the overall score (as demonstrated in table below).

SEND/Additional Needs

Applicants delivering specialist provision for children with SEND/Additional needs where over 85% of places are for children with medium-high level of need (where children hold an EHC plan) will be grouped separately from mainstream providers based on the higher cost needed to accommodate this cohort (see information below). These applications will be evaluated against one another to encourage good value for money in the service being offered.

All applicants are expected to cater for children with Additional needs.

Applicants will receive a score based on their approach to SEND, and the plans put in place to cater for those with additional needs throughout their delivery.

The Council have ringfenced funding to go towards SEND provision during 2024.

Croydon Council recognise the shortage of providers available to deliver specialist SEND provision, and in this circumstance only, will accept a second application from an applicant who plans to deliver mainstream provision on the HAF scheme at the same time.

Outreach/Promotion

Applicants must demonstrate how they will appropriately reach out and promote the HAF programme to the correct cohort. Croydon Council will be looking for providers who have links with local schools/groups which support families where there will be a high number of children receiving FSM. Croydon Council are keen to understand how you will promote the programme to these families and ensure that those attending your provision are eligible for the programme. Demonstrating previous experience would be advantageous. A score around outreach and promotion will also take into consideration the numbers of places an applicant intends to run, with a more detailed plan required for those organisations looking to deliver for higher numbers of children.

References

All providers require a reference for the delivery of the programme in 2024. Previous Delivery Partners (who have delivered a programme since or including Summer 2022) in Croydon will receive a reference score from the Local Authority. Where the organisation has not delivered the HAF programme before in Croydon, a reference from another Local Authority should be given. If the provider has not delivered HAF before, a reference from a professional external evaluator of other programmes run by the organisation in relation to children's work/food provision will be sought.

Croydon Council continue to seek provision where OFSTED registration has taken place, which will further support the reference process.

When evaluating references, the council will be looking for ability to deliver the programme, registered organisation status and knowledge/previous delivery of the HAF programme. This will include, for example, ability to reach target numbers, venue suitability, and programme quality.

Community Value

Providers should inform Croydon Council of the value of their programme to their local community; specifically, the added value that your programme will bring, and how this will support attendees. There will be a focus on how providers are able to deliver a programme which meets the local need and shows there is a good understanding of their community, which offers opportunity for sustainability in the programme beyond the holiday period, and the lifespan of the Holiday Activity and Food Programme.

Alongside the council's own evaluation of local need, when evaluating community value, Croydon Council will be looking for applicants' understanding of the community (at ward level) they will deliver in, and how individual provision is tailored to meet 'need' in that specific area.

Marking Process

Applicants must ensure they answer each question on the application form. Failure to do so will result in the application not being considered.

Applications will be assessed against a fair and transparent scoring procedure by an internal team at Croydon Council (The Evaluation Panel).

The Evaluation Panel will meet to discuss individual bids and make recommendations for award based on the published specification. The Evaluation Panel decisions will be moderated by colleagues within the council, via a randomly selected sample of applications.

Price	Weighting: 30%
HAF Programme Standards	Weighting: 25%
References	Weighting: 20%
Community Value, Outreach, and Promotion	Weighting: 15%
SEND/Additional needs provision	Weighting: 10%

Questions and method statements will be evaluated as per the following:

Score	Reasoning
5	Excellent
4	Good
3	Acceptable
2	Poor
1	Very Poor
0	No score Possible

Each applicant will be required to score a minimum of 3 per service specific / method statement question, otherwise the council may reject the application.

Implementation and approvals

Croydon Council intend to offer funding to give the widest coverage of the service during the Summer and Christmas holiday period. Those meeting the minimum quality and price requirements and projects that fall within the available funding available will be put forward for recommendation to deliver the programme.

There is a limited amount of funding within the grant allowance. Should the bid values exceed the total grant available, providers with the highest scores will be prioritised to ensure the programme remains in budget. The following five applicants not automatically funded will then be informed of an unsuccessful application but invited to a waiting list should any provider not be able to deliver the programme at the award stage. All other applicants will be informed of an unsuccessful application.