

# HAF

## Annual Report

2022- 2023



North  
Tyneside  
Council

# Contents

1. Foreword	3
2. Introduction and context	4
3. Highlights	5
4. Management of the programme	6
5. North Tyneside providers	7
6. Attendance, marketing and registration	8
8. Feedback from children and families	11
9. Food	12
10. Enriching activities	15
11. Physical activities	17
12. SEND	20
13. Secondary provision	22
14. 2023/24	23

# 1. Foreword

“North Tyneside’s HAF programme is a true celebration of the fantastic community spirit of the borough, and 2022 was another brilliant year of fun and educational activities for everyone involved.

From theatre lessons and sports events to cooking lessons and trips out to our beautiful coastline, there was something on offer for children and young people of all ages.

Almost 5,000 residents took part in the activities over the Christmas, Easter and summer holidays which were all available thanks to 44 brilliant organisations from our community and voluntary sector.

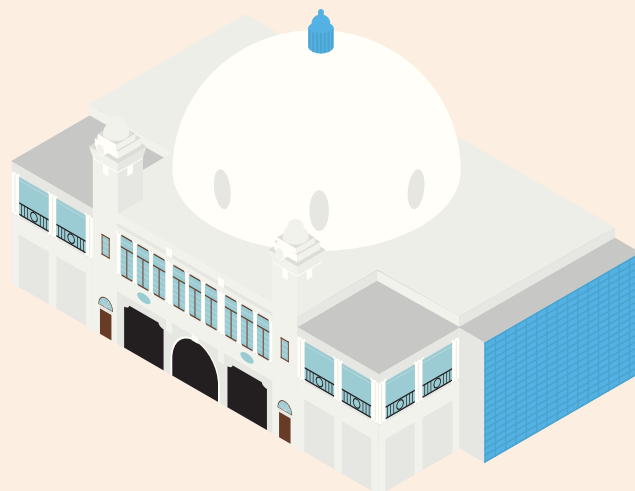
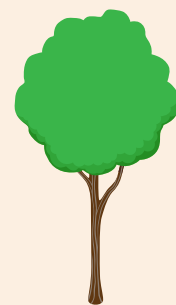
Throughout 2022 we saw nationally award-winning activities taking place, support from local supermarkets and businesses, new schemes opening in the borough and so much more.

The HAF programme gives children the opportunity to try new things, make more friends, learn new skills and most importantly, have fun. It’s helping families in our borough too, as the free activities come with a nutritional meal.

We know that many households in the borough are feeling the impact of the rising cost of living, and these free activities are just one part of a package of support we have to help our residents.

“I’m delighted that this report showcases the fantastic benefits that our HAF programme delivered in 2022-23 for our families and communities.”

**Cllr Peter Earley, Cabinet Member responsible for Supporting and Protecting Children**



## 2. Introduction and context

North Tyneside is a local authority in the North East of England. It is the third most densely populated of the North East's local authority areas. The local authority is made up of 20 wards and it neighbours Newcastle and Northumberland. Residents in the most deprived areas of North Tyneside have a lower life expectancy than residents in the least deprived areas, with men and women living 11.7 years less.

### The local landscape in North Tyneside

Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-2025 is our local plan to restore hope and confidence to our communities following the pandemic, by tackling inequalities and discrimination ensuring no one is left behind. The plan sets out clear themes to achieve the aims: a thriving, family friendly, secure and green North Tyneside.

Health inequalities existed previously but were amplified by the pandemic. The inequalities provided the basis of our Health and Wellbeing Strategy 'Equally Well: A Healthier, fairer future for North Tyneside 2021-2025'. The strategy sets out a clear plan for our local area, working across the local system and with our communities to mobilise solutions with evidence-based approaches to reflect local needs and assets.

The strategy is clear that multiple factors influence our health, including socio-economic factors, the physical environment, health behaviours and healthcare. Health inequalities can occur due to protected characteristics, socio-economic factors, geography, or other vulnerabilities too.

The Holiday Activity and Food programme helps with a healthy standard of living and aims to help address food insecurity. The programme is embedded within the ambitions of the Equally Well Strategy to address health inequalities at a local level, having a positive impact on children, young people and their families.



### 3. Highlights

- This year has seen some amazing achievements, where we have consistently improved standards and developed the programme. During 2022 we have improved the guidance and support we give to providers and have been exceptionally proud of the diverse range of enriching activities in North Tyneside. Our HAF program responds to local communities and takes full advantage of the local assets, including green and blue spaces, which are home to some of the best beaches in the country. Our local programme will continue to build and improve upon the achievements and learning from 2022, providing a framework of great practice for future planning.
- Some of the achievements this year have reflected and recognised the quality and standards of our HAF provision. This includes local inclusive theatre school True Colours being selected as regional champions and winning DfE choice award at the national HAF awards.
- During 2022 the work of our SEND Inclusion and Outreach Officer involved the development of an internal playscheme for children with complex needs. The scheme provided valuable respite for children and families during school holiday periods. The work of our Officer included developing the standards, reach and general engagement, increasing SEND participation across the whole programme.
- Co-producing activities with secondary aged young people supported a wider piece of work, promoting and developing our youth offer. This has improved provision for secondary aged young people who are harder to engage in the traditional HAF programme.



## 4. Management of the programme

### North Tyneside model

North Tyneside's HAF programme is branded locally as the ease INTO programme. The ease INTO programme is coordinated by the Social Inclusion Team in North Tyneside. The team is made up of a Social Inclusion Manager, Social Inclusion Officers, one SEND Outreach and Inclusion Officer, and two Assistants. The team is also responsible for other social inclusion related projects and has been in place since September 2021. Prior to this, the funding sat with the Participation, Advocacy and Engagement team and was managed primarily by two Officers.

**The funding is allocated with the support of a grant panel. Decisions are made based on:**

- whether the application meets HAF standards including healthy food, nutritional education, physical activities and enriching activities
- whether the activities are needed in the area of application, for example, if multiple applications are received for one geographical area, exceeding the level of need in that area
- whether the provider has previously met targets, for example, around attendance levels and evaluation, the panel looks back at previous delivery periods when making decisions
- whether the application comes within North Tyneside's finance guidelines of £18 – £24 per head per day, to maximise value for money

Since 2021, competition for funding increased steadily at each holiday period. In summer 2021, every provider was successful for the full amount applied for. At Easter 2022, £214,774.40 worth of applications were received, but the available budget was £120,134.25. The budget for 4x4 delivery in summer 2022 was £335,509.14, but £561,006.73 worth of applications were received. For this reason, the panel had to become increasingly strict in decision making.

In response to this challenge, by Christmas 2022, the HAF team implemented some clearer guidance for providers around the maximum amount each provider could apply for.

The guidance for providers and the online application process can be found here:

<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/1658/information-providers>

As a result, the process for allocating funding at Christmas 2022 was significantly easier. The amount applied for was £110,876.80 and the amount available for 4x4 delivery was £105,628. It has been noted that summer costs reflect the highest level of need and we will use this to further forward plan summer periods.

## 5. North Tyneside providers

The ease INTO programme in North Tyneside has seen a huge range of activities made available to children and young people across the borough. This is thanks to the diverse group of organisations who deliver excellent quality activities, from traditional sports and arts and crafts, to surfing, rockpooling, forest schools and more.

Throughout 2022, North Tyneside Council funded 44 organisations in total to deliver activities, 18 of those providers delivered at every holiday period in 2022.

North Tyneside has a strong Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and the Authority has been able to work with VODA (Voluntary Organisation Development Agency) to make the process easier for smaller VCS organisations. This has allowed the Authority to build stronger relationships and partnerships with the borough's VCS organisations, who know their communities well. 20 of the providers in 2022 were charities, ten were CIC's, two were schools and 12 were private sector.

A full list of all the organisations involved in HAF 2022-2023 can be found in Appendix A.



# 6. Attendance, marketing and registration

## Attendance

North Tyneside Council received £810,390 to deliver the HAF programme in the 2022/23 financial year. By Christmas 2022, there were 7,897 children and young people eligible for income-related free school meals. North Tyneside allows providers to apply for a maximum of £24 per head, per day of funding to deliver the programme, which maximises the number of children who can be reached. However, it is not possible to reach every child who is eligible for the programme at each holiday period.

The targets set for 2022 were:

**Easter – 1,225**

**Summer – 2,000**

**Christmas – 960**

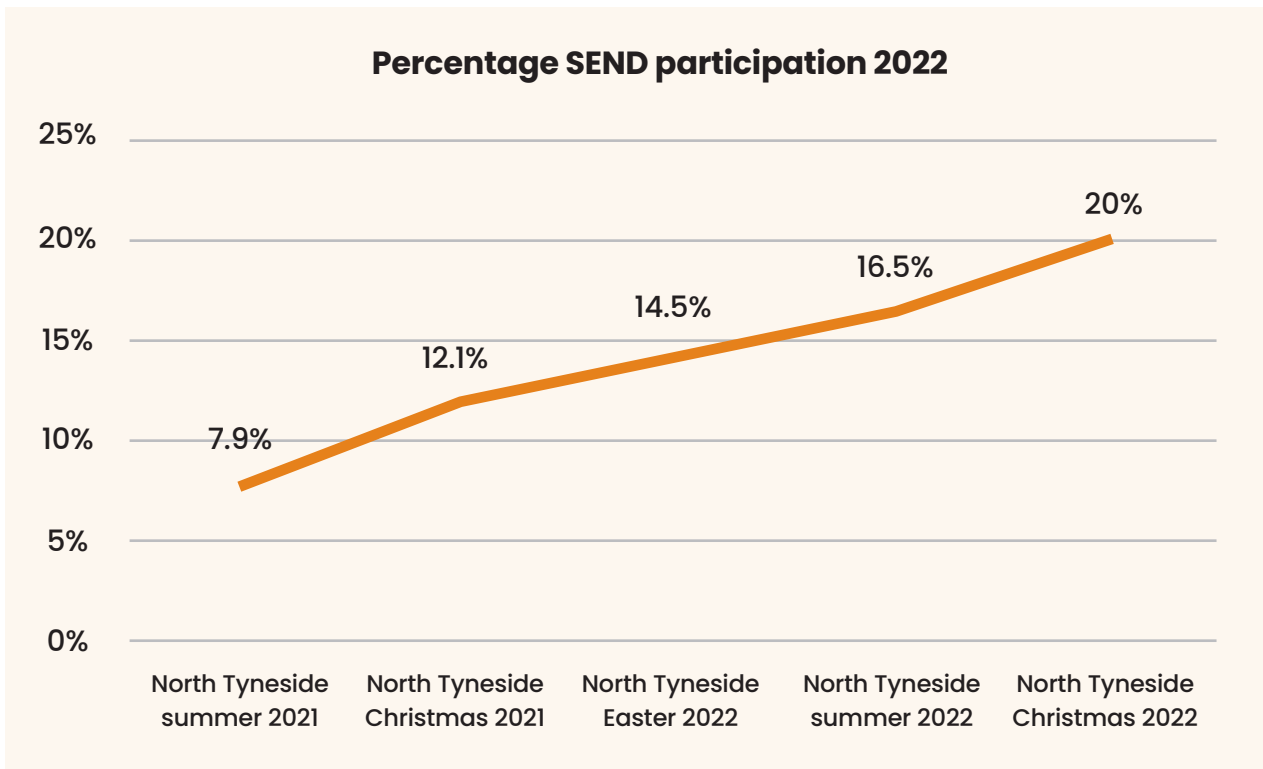
The actual attendance figures can be seen below:

**Easter – 1,390**

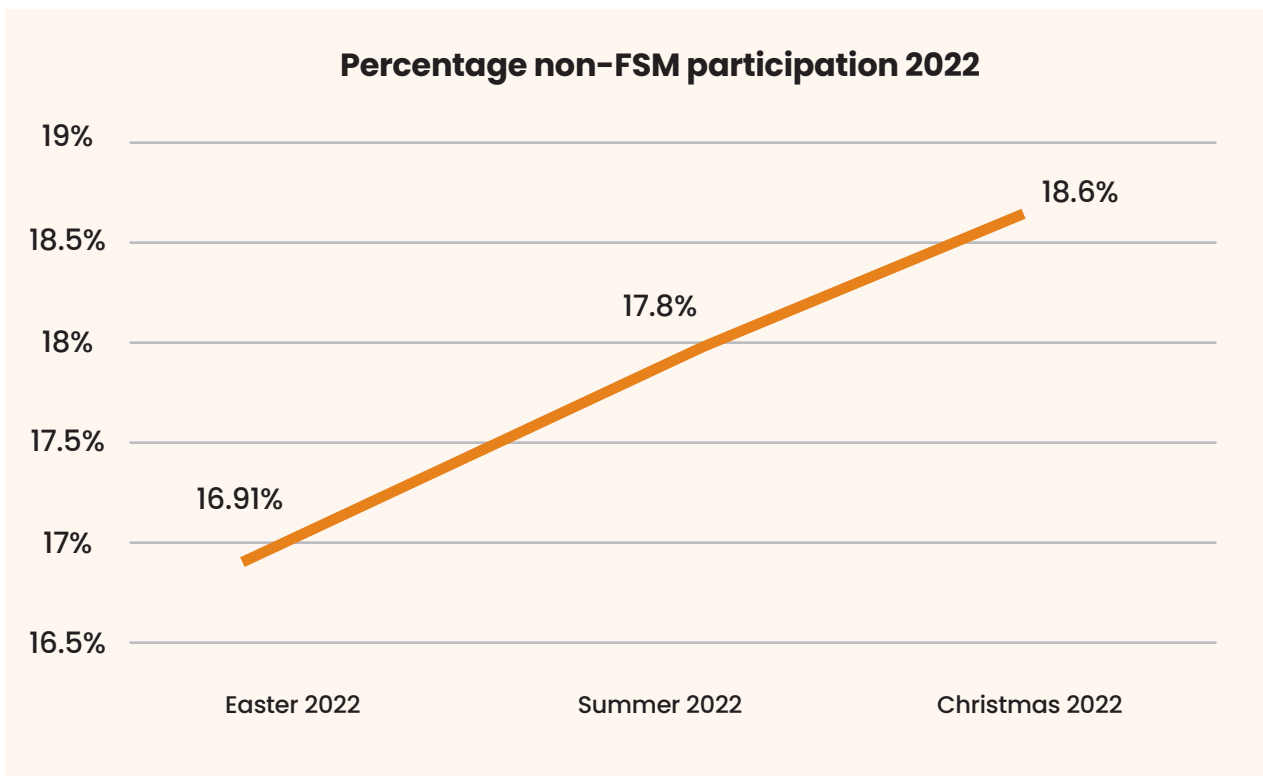
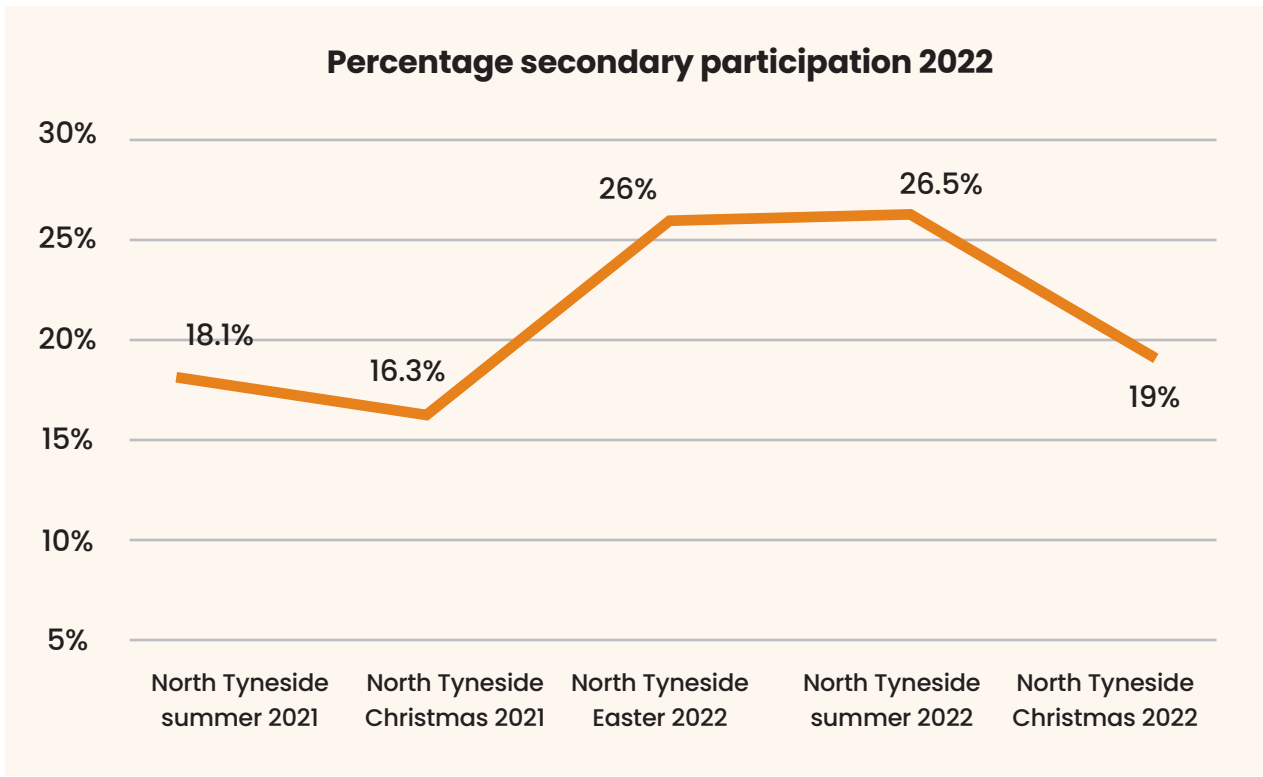
**Summer – 2,241**

**Christmas – 1,290**

As well as monitoring overall numbers of individuals accessing the programme, the below charts show the percentage of attendance amongst different groups.







## Marketing and registration

The HAF programme is branded locally as the ease INTO programme. This links the programme to easecards which are used to access libraries and leisure centres and the INTO stands for Inclusive North Tyneside Opportunities. The logos used to brand the programme at each holiday period can be seen below:



HAF activities in North Tyneside in 2022 / 23 have been marketed in the following ways:

- a. directly to schools who are asked to send information to eligible families, this is usually done via email with flyers attached
- b. Facebook, through the Participation facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/NTparticipation>
- c. from summer 2022 onwards, a newsletter which goes directly to parents / carers who have agreed to be contacted, this mailing list currently stands at 785 contacts
- d. the ease INTO web pages: <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/1553/book-ease-activities>
- e. providers also promote their activities directly to families in their areas through flyers, schools and social media

Through a regular parent / carer survey which was sent at each holiday period throughout 2022 - 2023, parents / carers have been asked how they found out about the activity they attended. The results have been fairly consistent at each holiday period, with word of mouth, Facebook and school the most popular ways in which parents / carers heard about HAF.

Parents and carers have also been asked at each holiday period whether they have attended a HAF activity previously. At Easter 2022, 50% said they had, by Christmas 2022, 70% said they had attended previously. This demonstrates that each holiday period has seen an increase in the number of children re-attending. This is a positive indication that activities are attracting families back, whilst also bringing in new children each holiday period.

## 7. Feedback from children and families

At each holiday period since summer 2021, participants have been sent a survey to complete. The questions have been tweaked slightly at times, but they have generally sought feedback on:

- the registration and booking process
- how participants found out about activities
- the quality of activities
- the quality of food and nutritional education
- the broader benefits (feeling connected to the community, making friends, being healthier during the holiday period)

Feedback has been sought from parents / carers, young people and children in separate surveys. Throughout 2022, there were 2,056 survey responses. The results from these surveys are used throughout this report.



# 8. Food

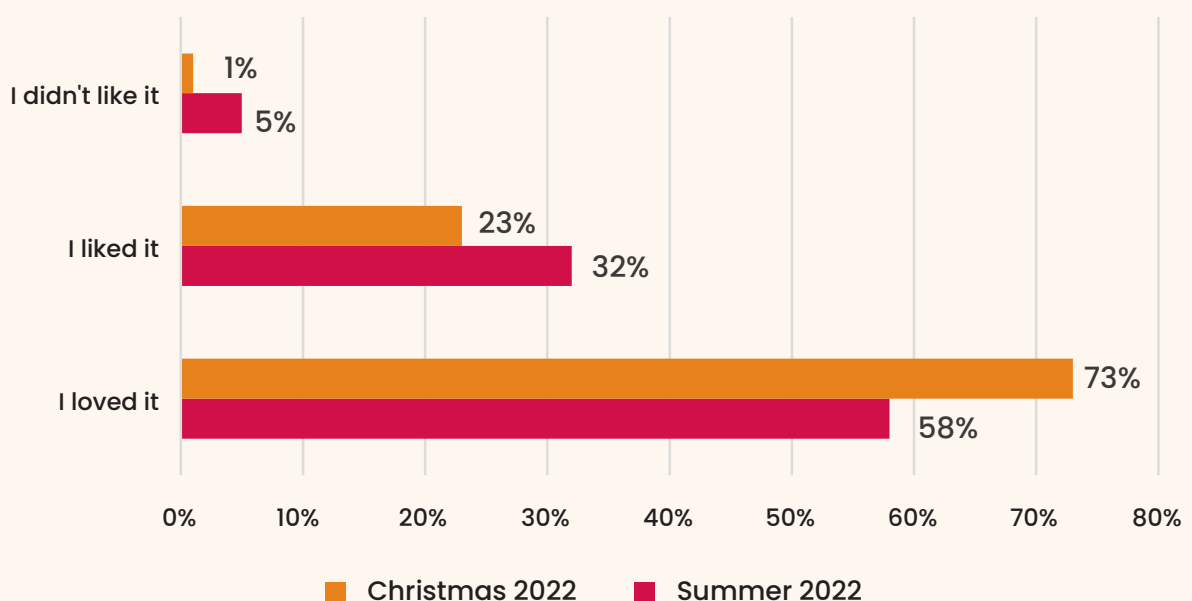
Providers in North Tyneside are expected to provide at least one nutritious meal a day for children at their activities. Many providers choose to offer more than one meal a day, and often include healthy snacks and breakfast options.

Providers are asked to reflect on their programmes after every holiday period, which has provided insight into how they are meeting HAF standards for food provision and education. Some of the most popular menu items at HAF provision include pasta pots, wraps, healthy pizzas, sandwiches, fruit and yogurts. Pasta salad, wraps and pizza have proved to be effective recipes for involving children, as they can select their own ingredients which makes them more likely to try new things.

Views have been sought from children about the quality of food provision:



### How much did you enjoy the food? (Children)



These results demonstrate that food quality has been consistently good throughout 2022 - 2023. The children's survey asks children how many pieces of fruit and veg they ate a day. In summer 2022, 50% of children who filled out a survey said that they had eaten four or five pieces of fruit or veg. On this basis, if those children attended their clubs every day they were available, they would have eaten approximately 12,784 pieces of fruit or veg over the summer holidays.

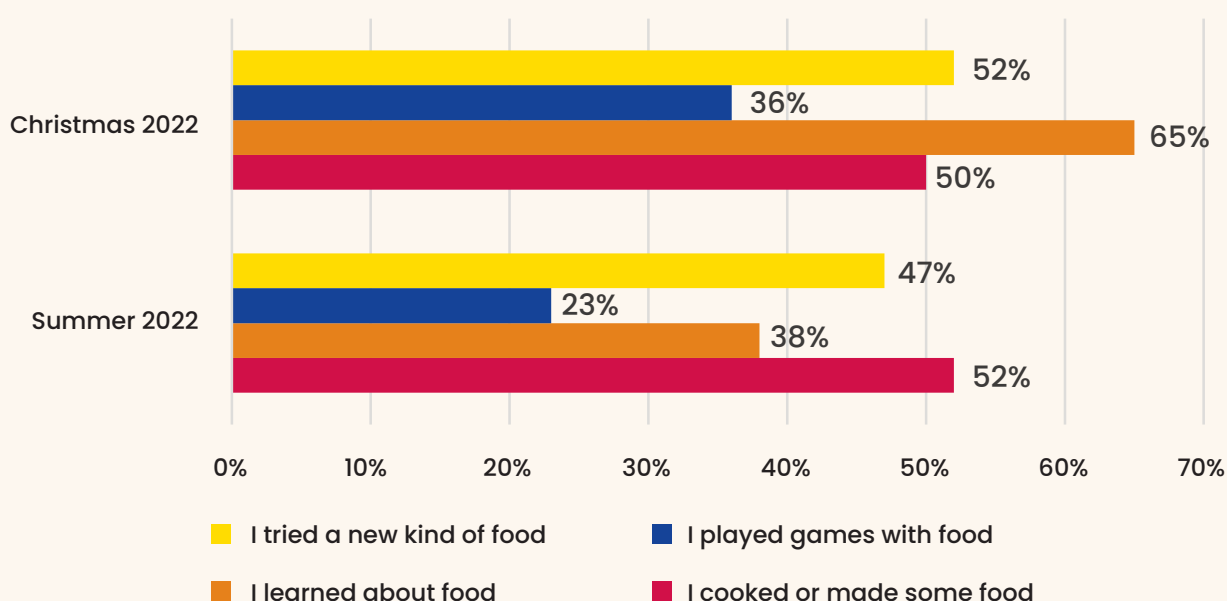
Providers are supplied with a directory of local caterers who can support them. Lack of kitchen access or staff without a food hygiene qualification has proven to be a barrier for some providers. The directory includes HAF providers themselves, who have formed their own partnerships to deliver high quality food provision. For example, there are two providers at the coast who support each other's provision. One provider delivers cooking activities and the other focusses on tennis.

Morrisons has supported a number of HAF providers too, especially over the summer period, with free or discounted food. We work with a local supplier, Barry's Eggs and Veg, who offer vouchers for families accessing some of our central or one-off events.

All providers are expected to deliver nutritional education as part of the programme. Providers have been supported to do this through training sessions on healthy eating and food education, as well as a bank of resources online with ideas for games, activities, recipes and education.

Throughout 2022, there were three providers whose programmes focused specifically on cooking and food education. For 2023, there have been applications from a further two organisations with a food focus. These activities have proven very popular with parents / carers and children. The results of the children's survey demonstrate that food education has become a crucial element of the programme.

### Did you learn about food? (Children)



**Some of the comments on the parent / carer and young person surveys have highlighted the impact of this:**

- 'This really changes how my son thinks about healthy choices for food more than anything else we have tried'
- 'After attending the club, my child has started to talk about how much he likes healthy food. He tried food he's never tried before'
- 'I love choosing ingredients and cooking our meals together'
- 'I loved trying to cook new foods'

Most of the comments about food mentioned cooking or trying new foods. This demonstrates that being actively involved with food preparation is a highlight of the programme for children and families. Providers are encouraged to involve children in making food wherever possible, which is preferable to more paper-based nutritional education activities.



Parents / carers and other family members have been involved in nutritional education sessions where possible. Most providers do this by sending children home with recipe cards or information booklets, sometimes with ingredients included. A small number of providers have invited parents / carers along to cooking sessions. One provider has parents attend for the entirety of the programme, which presented opportunities to engage with the whole family.

The HAF team has provided nutritional advice for families directly, by creating two family recipe books which are available on the ease INTO web pages. The weekly summer newsletter also featured recipe ideas, which went to 566 parents / carers.

## 9. Enriching activities

Providers are encouraged to offer a range of enriching activities as part of their programmes. They have access to a 'central offer' directory which gives information about activities they could incorporate into their programme, some of which are funded centrally by the HAF team. Some examples of enriching activities throughout 2022 included:

- museum trips
- drama activities
- forest school
- library bus
- visits from the police and fire departments
- african drumming
- farm visits
- fishing in Northumberland
- days out to the beach



In addition to promoting enriching activities to providers, the HAF team arrange a number of family offers that parents / carers can book onto directly and attend as a one-off activity. Although this isn't a 4x4 offer, parents / carers have fed back that these opportunities are highly valued as it allows them to try something new and spend time with their children.

Survey results from 2022 reveal that the benefits of the HAF programme are not limited to health benefits for children but include much broader impacts on the child and their family. Comments on the Easter 2022 survey indicated impacts such as improved confidence and making friends, for example one young person said, 'I get overwhelmed easily, but I made friends and they were very kind'.

Additional questions were added to the survey in summer and Christmas 2022 to measure specific benefits. The results demonstrate clearly that HAF has helped children to:

- build confidence
- socialise more
- learn new skills
- have fun
- exercise more
- less screen time
- feel safe
- learn about healthy eating



The benefits to parents / carers were also measured, and show that the programme supports them too:

- need less childcare
- be less stressed
- find out about other services
- worry less about providing lunch
- spend more time with other family members
- save money



Comments on the open-text survey questions add context to these results:

- 'It's really fun and I get to learn new skills'
- 'My son loved it, he lacks confidence but this really has helped bring him out of his shell'
- 'As a single mum on a budget this service has enabled me to spend quality time with my child knowing that she has had fun'.





# 10. Physical activities

Physical activity is one of the areas of HAF that providers in North Tyneside are most confident about. At Easter, providers rated themselves 4.86 out of 5 on average for physical activities and at summer, 4.7. Providers are aware of the expectations around physical activity, as this is part of quality assurance and encourages providers to consider inclusivity. There has been a wide range of physical activities throughout 2022, including:

- traditional sports such as football, netball, tennis and rugby
- games, such as dodgeball, nerf battles and hide and seek
- swimming
- surfing
- dance
- gymnastics
- ice skating
- junior gym access
- family gym sessions

Many of North Tyneside's providers have a specific sport focus. Throughout 2022, we have worked with:

- eight multi-sport camps
- two football clubs
- one family gym
- one rugby club
- one tennis club



The borough has a number of assets which all providers have been encouraged to take advantage of. In particular, the coast, with two popular surf schools. Providers have been encouraged to take groups surfing and lessons have been offered to family groups. In summer 2022, 336 children and young people took part in a surfing lesson, which was a particular highlight for many young people. One parent emailed directly to feedback about the surfing lesson which was offered to their family:

**'I just want to say a huge thank you. The whole surfing experience was absolutely fantastic yesterday, the staff were all brilliant, and the coaches were fab! Even though surfing is right on our doorstep, it's not something I'd ever book myself onto because I simply couldn't afford to do it. Yesterday was a massive treat and it was so good being able to experience it with both of my children'.**



This is an example of the impact HAF can have, giving children and families experiences that they would otherwise miss out on due to cost. Surfing has been a focus for HAF in the Easter and summer programmes for this reason. Working with the two surf schools in the borough has helped ensure children and young people can continue surfing beyond the holiday period. Both surf schools agreed to work with providers who deliver after-school clubs during term time.

The borough has excellent leisure facilities which the HAF programme has been able to take advantage of. Initially, in the first year of funding, HAF was used to offer free spaces on pre-existing leisure activities, such as swimming pool and climbing sessions. Parents / carers had to confirm their eligibility for HAF when booking over the phone at a leisure centre. This offer had mixed results, with relatively low attendance on these activities. As such, in 2022, a few different approaches were trialled. At Easter, a specific swimming improvement camp was available, in response to a drop in swimming attainment noted by schools. In the mornings, young people took part in swimming lessons and in the afternoons, they went on visits to the coast, lighthouse, rock pooling and sea life centre.

Another successful leisure offer has been junior gym access for 14 – 16 year olds. This was launched during the summer and was extremely popular, with 206 requests received within a few days. The offer was repeated at Christmas 2022 and was similarly popular. 17 parents / carers responded to a survey after Christmas to feedback about the impacts of this opportunity. The feedback showed that young people were accessing the gym frequently, with 11 going two to five times a week and four going once a week. One parent reported that their child attended every day. 94.1% of these parents reported that the gym access had built their child's confidence. One parent said: 'Excellent offer my daughter loved it and we are going tonight to sign her up to the yearly membership if it is affordable.'

To ensure that the junior gym offer included healthy food, parents were sent a gift card for Barry's Eggs and Veg, a local fresh food supplier, alongside a recipe pack.

Given the success of this offer and the high level of engagement from some of the young people involved, funding was accessed from public health to offer a year long pass to the young people who had most regularly accessed the gym. This is another example of successful partnership working and longer term impacts as a result of HAF funding.

At Christmas, the team worked with a number of local businesses to offer additional sessions to families. These included ice skating, Inflata Nation and roller disco. The Inflata Nation offer was SEND specific, with exclusive access to the venue for children with SEND and their families. This enabled children with SEND to be physically active in a safe environment. Parents have fed back that SEND specific events allow them to enjoy activities 'with no judgement from others'.

At each holiday period, parents / carers were asked if their child had been more active than they would otherwise have been during the holidays. At Easter 2022, 96% agreed that their child had been more active, in the summer, 95% agreed and at Christmas 94% agreed.



## 11. SEND

Provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) has been a priority for HAF in North Tyneside. We identified at an early stage that there was a high level of demand for activities suitable for children with SEND and as such, have used the 15% flexibility to particularly focus on offering SEND provision. A SEND Outreach and Inclusion Officer was recruited in 2022 to work with existing providers to improve their SEND offer and to develop an in-house playscheme, targeted to children with the most complex needs.

As a result of this work, the proportion of HAF participants with identified SEND needs has increased at every holiday period. This shows that the programme has become increasingly accessible and inclusive for children with SEND. What the increase in participation does not demonstrate, however, is the level and complexity of need of participants with SEND, which varies massively. We found that although there were many providers who could support children with SEND, there were fewer providers who could support children with complex needs who required a 1:1 staff member.

After Easter 2022, a parent / carer feedback meeting was held, where parents / carers fed back that they had experienced the frustration of contacting multiple providers and finding that their child's needs could not be accommodated. They felt that it would be better if the information about each activity was more transparent and clear about the type of SEND need which could be accommodated.

**As a result of this feedback, before summer 2022 the team developed a key to help parents find the right type of provision for their child. Providers are now asked to identify whether they are:**

- SEND friendly – has SEND awareness and is able to adapt and tailor activities
- SEND friendly with 1:1 available – has SEND awareness and is able to adapt and tailor activities, there are limited places for 1:1 support, exclusive of personal care
- SEND specific – solely for children and young people with SEND, no 1:1 support available but parent / carer / support workers welcome
- SEND specific with 1:1 available – solely for children and young people with SEND with limited places for 1:1 support
- Not suitable



**The majority of providers now identify as 'SEND friendly'.  
Throughout 2022 we have worked with:**

- one provider who is SEND friendly with 1:1
- four providers who are SEND specific
- two providers who are SEND specific with 1:1

Due to the high level of demand for provision with 1:1 support available and lack of organisations in the borough who could deliver this, the team's SEND Outreach and Inclusion Officer developed an in-house playscheme, which ran in the summer and Christmas holidays in 2022. The summer programme ran for 12 days with 10 children and young people accessing. The Christmas programme ran for four days, with 15 children and young people accessing. All of the children accessing this playscheme had complex needs and required 1:1 support. The SEND Outreach and Inclusion Officer worked closely with colleagues in the children's disability team within the council to identify children who most needed this provision.



Feedback from parents has shown that this provision was invaluable. One parent said, 'This break is what's holding us together even though it's only four hours it means a lot to be able to have some space'. Another said, 'I'm so grateful that he's had the opportunity to attend the sessions and the fact that he's so happy to get in the taxi on a morning and at home time just means that he's really enjoyed Riverside'.

## 12. Secondary aged provision

As is the case for many local authorities, engaging secondary aged young people in the programme has proven difficult. The percentage of participants in secondary education has been much lower at every holiday period than the proportion of participants in primary education.

**The most successful secondary offers in North Tyneside, in terms of numbers of participants, have been:**

- junior gym access offered to 14 – 16 year olds
- activities in the park, including pizza van, roller sports and graffiti art

There was an increase in the proportion of secondary participants at Easter 2022 to 26%. This can be attributed to the introduction of the junior gym offer. The decrease to 19% at Christmas 2022 compared to the two previous holiday periods can be attributed to the park provision not running during this programme. The key learning points from 2022 are:

- offers which teenagers can attend independently or with friends are more popular
- offers which are more informal and less structured are more popular
- new providers who do not have existing relationships with a group of young people are less likely to achieve high attendance at their activities

In response to the lower numbers of secondary aged young people participating in the programme, a member of the team worked with a group of young commissioners at one of the borough's high schools ahead of Christmas to co-produce a programme of activities. 15 young people were identified and sessions took place once per week over eight weeks. These sessions included activities such as mapping where they do and don't like to go in the borough, what activities they feel would be suitable for teenagers and meeting a local councillor to talk about the youth offer in their area.

The young people planned activities for the Christmas holidays which included Dungeons and Dragons, escape rooms and a roller disco. Overall, 45 young people attended these various activities. Feedback from parents demonstrated the impact of these activities:

- 'My son really enjoyed the escape rooms. He is struggling with his emotional health and this got him out of the house and meeting new people'
- 'My son went to the activity without me, he enjoyed working towards setting the activity up and taking part with his friends'
- 'My daughter had such an amazing time, for the price it cost I could not afford to take her myself so I can't thank you enough for giving her a wonderful day out'

The member of staff who worked with the young commissioners group has now started a new role focusing specifically on youth provision in the borough, including but not limited to HAF.

# 13. 2023/24

**2022 has been a successful year of HAF delivery, with positive impacts for children and their families. Looking ahead to 2023/24, the areas of focus will be:**

- helping eligible families to register on the new online booking system
- expanding the programme using other sources of funding
- building on the excellent quality of provision

## **Booking system**

In advance of Easter 2023, a new online booking system was launched, which was developed in-house, for all HAF activities. The system checks the eligibility of children when their parents register their details. If they are eligible, they are automatically approved and if not, they enter a waiting list. This has identified further work to do before summer to promote the programme to eligible families. The booking system has enabled the team to map postcodes to schools and plan outreach sessions to help families register in areas where there is currently low take-up.

## **Expanding the programme**

One of the key challenges of delivering HAF in 2022 - 2023 was targeting the programme towards FSM-eligible children. Providers and parents / carers have consistently fed back that the programme criteria excludes families who are experiencing in-work poverty and are not eligible for free school meals. Although the 15% funding flexibility does allow the programme to reach some other vulnerable children, there are many more children who could benefit than the funding allows.

Many of our providers are well established in their communities and are therefore best placed to identify children who could most benefit from the 15%. Examples providers have shared of the impact of this include:

- 'This gave us the opportunity to support some of our working low income families that are also struggling'
- 'For parents that fall marginally outside the FSM barrier, the impact of this offer has been significant'
- 'We enabled children to take part in activities that families on low income would not otherwise be able to experience'

This evidence, gathered as a result of launching the booking system, has enabled the HAF team to approach other funders and bring additional sources of funding to the summer programme.

## Improving quality

We will continue to build on the quality of enriching activities in North Tyneside. Each year the HAF programme runs has allowed further embedding of additional opportunities within the programme. For example, this summer, providers will have the opportunity to work with:

- Bikeability
- summer reading challenge
- trips to the Centre for Life
- surfing
- a pilot of a programme called 'Relax Kids' which offers seven sessions focussed on mindfulness and calming techniques

**The team is continuing to work on central offers available to families:**

- offering free swims all summer for HAF eligible children
- junior gym access
- an event for National Play Day which will focus on giving children tools for play
- activities exclusive to children with SEND and their families
- surfing
- Centre for Life

