

it's about me

Derbyshire's Holiday Activity and  
Food Programme

# DERBYSHIRE HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AND FOOD PROGRAMME

## IMPACT REPORT SUMMER 25



# IT'S ABOUT ME

Since 2021, It's About Me has improved the holiday experience of thousands of children and young people across Derbyshire by providing healthy meals, enriching activities and funded childcare places during the spring, summer and winter school holidays.

Research shows that the school holidays can be pressure points for some families. For some children, that can lead to a holiday experience gap.

Children from low-income households are:

- less likely to access organised out-of-school activities
- more likely to experience 'unhealthy holidays' in terms of nutrition and physical health
- more likely to experience social isolation





**It's About Me aims to ensure that participating children and young people:**



Are ready to return to school, college or to move on to work



Have access to safe, non-stigmatising local places to go for fun activities



Spend time with friends and have opportunities to be more active during the school holidays



Have increased awareness of healthy eating, healthy lifestyles and positive behaviours



Have parents and carers who are signposted to local family services



Eat more healthily over the school holidays



Take part in a wide range of engaging and enriching activities



Have the chance to carry on sports and physical activities beyond the holidays





**171**

**holiday clubs**  
provided a range of  
enriching activities  
across the county

**7,779**

**children and young  
people attended a  
holiday club**  
at no additional cost  
to their families

**77**

**organisations**  
took part in the  
It's About Me  
programme

**49,994**

**nutritious meals  
served**  
while providing fun,  
engaging nutritional  
education

**£1,395,031.70**

**Invested into local  
holiday clubs**  
guaranteeing funding  
for organisations  
during the holidays

**87%**

**Free School Meal  
Attendance**

**14%** SEND  
attendances

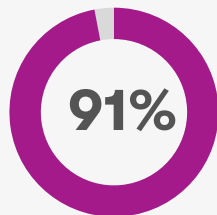
**724**

**children and young  
people to access remote  
activity**  
ensuring equal access for  
those unable to attend  
in-person holiday clubs

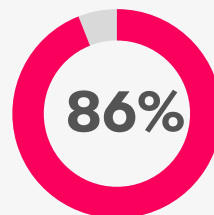
# SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

## CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

207 Responses



of children and young people rated their holiday club as 'Very Good' or 'Good' overall



of children and young people said their holiday club made them feel happy

## TESTIMONIALS

"I always have fun and the people running it are really nice"

"It's so fun and all of the teachers are nice. I would definitely come back!"

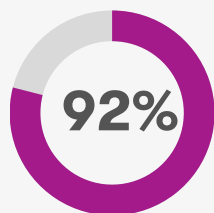
"There were a lot of good experiences and the teachers were lovely, I cannot wait for the school year to start"

"Found it very good because every lesson was fun and it gave you extra opportunities to make friends."

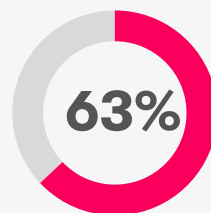
"It's very good. You can be healthy and have fun at the same time. You can make lots of friends."

"Everyone was really friendly and nice. The staff were kind and helpful. Food was really nice too- I liked that."

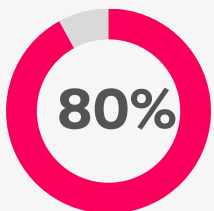
“Which of the following do feel you do you do at your holiday club?”



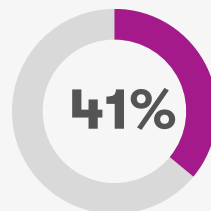
say they  
have fun  
and  
socialise



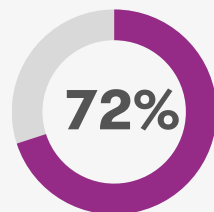
say they  
eat  
healthy,  
nutritious  
meals



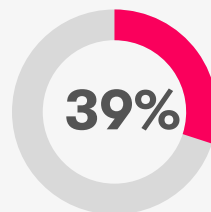
say they take  
part in sport,  
fitness and  
physical  
activity



say they  
increased their  
awareness of  
healthy eating,  
lifestyles &  
positive  
behaviours



say they try  
out new  
experiences

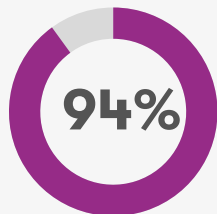


say they  
cook or  
make  
food

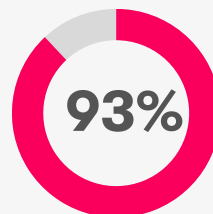
# SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

## PARENTS & GUARDIANS

147 Responses



of parents & guardians rated their holiday club as 'Very Good' or 'Good' overall



of parents & guardians would recommend their local holiday club to other families

## TESTIMONIALS

"My child has SEN and can't attend a typical holiday club, the only club that is suitable for him is a forest school, with plenty of open space."

"My child had a really good time said the games were good and the staff were kind and helpful."

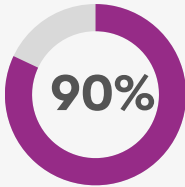
"Best one they have been to. One girl is 11, one girl is 7, they loved all the different activities, had so much fun and all activities suited both ages. They both want to go back again due to how much they enjoyed the day."

"This resource is one of a kind, as my child cannot attend a mainstream holiday club. I am so glad we found it."

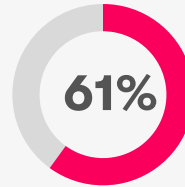
"My children have met other children of different ages with different interests which is so valuable to them. They also love the activities the club put on and the staff that work there. I know that my children are well looked after and genuinely enjoy the time they spend with insight."

"More than very good. The volunteers are absolutely amazing with the children. They go above and beyond in all aspects. We as a family are so, so grateful for everything each and every one of them do."

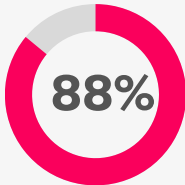
## “Which of the following do feel your children do at their holiday club?”



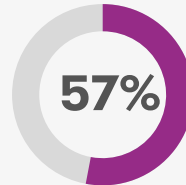
say they  
have fun  
and  
socialise



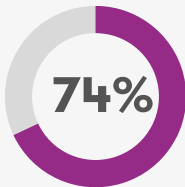
say they  
develop  
their skills &  
knowledge



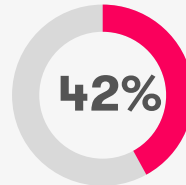
say they take  
part in sport,  
fitness and  
physical  
activity



say they  
eat  
healthy,  
nutritious  
meals



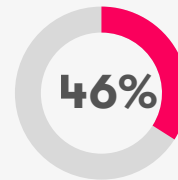
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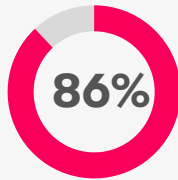
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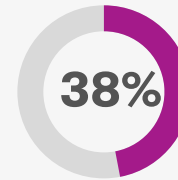
## What are the biggest benefits the holiday club has for you as parent or guardian?



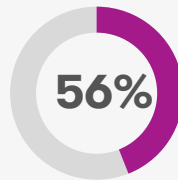
Providing  
affordable  
childcare



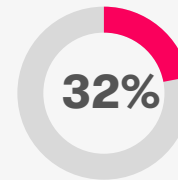
Keeping your  
children  
entertained



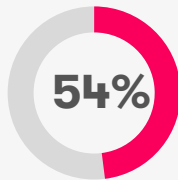
Supporting  
your mental  
health and  
wellbeing



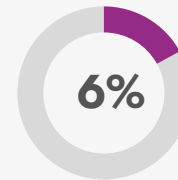
Keeping  
your  
children in  
a routine



Providing  
support for  
a child with  
SEND



Reducing  
general  
costs during  
the holidays



Signposting to  
information  
and support,  
such as health  
services,  
employment

# SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

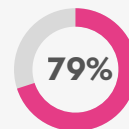
## HOLIDAY CLUB PROVIDERS

14 Responses

What benefits has It's About Me had on the children and young people?



Creating a safe space for young people



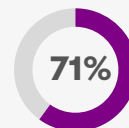
Helping to develop greater understanding of food, nutrition and other health related issues



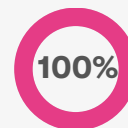
Increase socialisation



Providing engaging activities that support their development and well-being



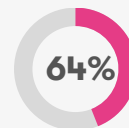
Connecting young people and their families with support services



Maintaining physical activity levels



Providing healthy and nutritious meals



Preparing young people for their return to school

## TESTIMONIALS

“The programme really helps us be able to offer accessible sessions for children in our area during the holiday period. Parents have commented how helpful our sessions are for keeping their children in a routine and being able to send them to an affordable club”

“We would not be able to run a holiday programme without the funding.”

“It enables us to provide the holiday club for children who wouldn't ordinarily be able to access the activities that we have available.”

“The programme allows us to provide enrichment opportunities for young people”

# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**We have continued to build sustainable provision across the county and through the It's About Me programme.**

# 33

**learners  
accessed  
training**

Holiday club leaders and volunteers can access training and learning opportunities to support their delivery of It's About Me.

The training offered adheres to the programme standards and expectations outlined within the DfE Grant Determination Letter and is based on a training needs assessment completed by the providers.

During this period, the following courses were delivered and accessed:

- Safeguarding
- Understanding Behaviour that may Challenge
- Ace's and TIPS
- Risk Assessment
- SEND and Inclusion
- School Food Standards
- Level 3 First Aid
- Youth Mental Health First Aid





# CASE STUDIES

# LEARN TO PLAY, PLAY TO LEARN

## IMAGINATION GAMING

Imagination Gaming has been delivering HAF in various regions since its inception in 2021, with activities that are inclusive for all children aged 5 to 16 years, regardless of ability and designed to be both educational and engaging, appealing to local schools and families alike.

Activities are designed to challenge and entertain children in a non-pressurised environment, supporting social and curriculum skills development.

*“Our approach embodies our motto: ‘Learn to Play, Play to Learn,’ with sessions that are mainly tabletop but also include games requiring mild physical activity and motor skills.” Imagination Gaming*

As with all our school and community work, we are highly attuned to SEND requirements. We have a specific range of games suitable for children with autism and ADHD, ensuring everyone can participate and enjoy.

*“I was particularly nervous this summer holiday because my daughter is going through some challenges with an ASD diagnosis, which caught us all by surprise. She really enjoyed the activities, and it was great for me as it meant I wasn’t spending the whole summer juggling and panicking about whether I was doing enough.” Parent*



Sessions are tabletop-based but are not static—children are engaged in activities that involve speed and movement, so they’re active without being as physically demanding as sports like football.

The programme offers a safe and supportive environment where children with diverse abilities, including those with SEND, can participate fully and enjoy meaningful activities.

*“Families appreciate the opportunity for their children to be mentally stimulated during school breaks, often reporting improved well-being and reduced holiday boredom. The wider community benefits include strengthened relationships with local community libraries and increased local networks.*

*The funding from HAF has also enabled us to increase our staffing levels and the programme has given us the opportunity to connect with schools during term-time ” Nicola Gray, Imagination Gaming*



# BUILDING CONFIDENCE COMMUNITY AND CONNECTION

## PEAK EDUCATION AND SPORT

Peak Education and Sport provide a range of educational and sport services for young people in South Yorkshire and Derbyshire, which are tailored to support students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), pupil premium (PP) or child looked after status (CLA), in both the primary and secondary school settings.

In Summer 2025, Peak Education and Sport offered 7 days of holiday clubs which included a wide range of physical activity such as football, basketball, rounders, golf and rock climbing to Nerf battles, dodgeball, boccia, handball, orienteering and more!

The children and young people also learned about healthy eating, exploring the hidden sugars in everyday foods and also took part in baking sessions. To increase the range of activities, participants also got creative with positive art and celebrated each other's achievements along the way.

**"Our HAF programme was so much more than just a set of activities — it became a place where young people could come together, feel included and truly belong. We welcomed 25 young people, aged 5-14, from diverse backgrounds. It was inspiring to see friendships blossom, confidence grow, and a real sense of community shine through."** Lee Coddington, Founder of Peak Education and Sport

**"The summer camps have been brilliant for my two daughters, aged 7 and 11. They have really enjoyed it and have looked forward to going each day, they made new friends and learnt new skills while having lots of fun."**  
**Parent**

For Peak Education and Sport, taking part in the It's About Me programme has been 'transformational', enabling them to grow to a team of four and expand the activities they could offer as part of their holiday club.

Peak Education Sport collaborated with local café, S21 Café, to provide the food for their holiday club, turning the programme into a community team effort — something bigger than any one organisation.

**"The range of activities has been great. They have done something different every day, they loved playing rounders, dodgeball and baking. Lunch was even included."** Parent

**"The news that HAF funding will continue for the next three years has filled us with excitement and possibility. With the fantastic support of StreetGames, this opens the door for Peak Education & Sport to scale up, reach even more families, and continue to grow as a force for good in the community."** Lee Coddington, Founder of Peak Education and Sport



# REDUCING ISOLATION AND CREATING RESPITE FOR FAMILIES WITH SEND

## BAILEY BEARS

Initially launched in 2021 to tackle the increase in social isolation caused by the COVID-19 lockdown, Bailey Bears Sensory Den, Ashbourne, offers children's play sessions, family support and childcare for children, young people and parents with SEND.

**"Many of the children and young people who attend Bailey Bears would be unable to attend a holiday club because of their care needs. We have bridged the social isolation gap that parents and carers feel with a child with complex needs. We have helped families maintain an income during the school holiday and reduced exhaustion in parents and carers by providing much-needed respite." Bailey Bears**

Bailey Bears also support the siblings of children and young people with SEND through their holiday club, by taking part in wider enrichment opportunities available through the It's About Me programme, such as the activity days at external providers, giving them space to have fun and make connections with other children and young people who are in a similar position.

**"The funding this year, particularly the Go Ape offer, has enabled our young carers (this is the siblings of a child that has severe needs or a child whose parents have complex needs) to have a well-deserved day out, fun and meet new friends with whom they can form support networks." Bailey Bears**



# HOW BOLSOVER'S HOLIDAY CLUBS SPARK HEALTHY HABITS

## BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Bolsover has a high number of low-income households, with many children and young people eligible for benefits-related free school meals.

The It's About Me programme in Bolsover is a regular event in the local community, and, over the past 5 years, has developed good relationships with many families and their children. Their position in the community has provided valuable insight into the needs of local families and young people.

**“Feedback from the children tells us that they enjoy the activities and our new food offer is a big hit with them. Families come along and also join in with the activities.”**  
**Bolsover District Council**

The holiday programme is seen as a safe and welcoming place for children and young people to spend time, participate in activities which promote their physical and mental health, as well as enjoy healthy and nutritious food.

Sessions offer a variety of sports and physical activities as well as other enrichment activities, including arts & crafts, crazy golf and a healthy eating workshop, including a healthy lunchbox relay and food preparation. In 2023, Bolsover District Council experienced challenges in encouraging children to not only consume white bread sandwiches, as opposed to healthier alternatives.

Therefore, to try and encourage changes in eating habits, staff presented participants with a wide range of alternative breads for them to try, such as pittas, naans, wraps, and sourdough to name a few, which were all well received.

Further development in 2024 saw Bolsover District Council roll out their 'buffet' style approach to lunchtime, encouraging children and young people to prepare, present and make their own choices when selecting their lunches. The children also cleaned and tidied away after each session.

For 2025, Bolsover District Council committed to embedding the Hakuna Fruitata project as part of their Easter holiday club. The young people were encouraged to participate in food preparation, cutting and chopping fruit and vegetables, increasing their exposure to different foods and tastes.

**“Hakuna Fruitata has broadened our food offer, given staff additional skills and resources to use with the children and enhanced our holiday club provision. This summer we purchased an air fryer and offered children the option to make their own toasties, pizza wraps and pitta pizzas.”**  
**Bolsover District Council**

By giving children and young people choices in what they choose, they are given the opportunity to practice what they have learnt whilst still under the guidance of the holiday club team.

**“The Hakuna Fruitata programme helped us to creatively address some of the healthy eating challenges we had experienced within the club. It has broadened our food offer and given staff additional skills and resources to use with the children and enhanced our holiday offer.”**  
**Bolsover District Council**

WITH THANKS TO



FIND OUT MORE

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