

Big Norfolk Holiday Fun

Provider Guidance – Summer 2026

Introduction

We are delighted that you want to support the Big Norfolk Holiday Fun programme. This document provides all the information you need to apply to be a provider for 2026.

The Big Norfolk Holiday Fun (BNHF) programme is Norfolk County Council's name for the national Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme funded by the Department of Education, for children aged 5-16 years (aged 4 if in full time education) eligible for benefits-related free school meals. It is administered by Active Norfolk on behalf of the County Council.

Since 2021, BNHF has enabled over 19,500 children to participate in fun activities and eat good food during the 3 main school holiday periods (Easter, Summer and Christmas). The programme is very popular and we have 90% satisfaction from families. We also receive excellent feedback from providers – 100% agree they have improved their practices or offer by taking part.

The confirmation of a further three years of Government funding for the national HAF programme is fantastic news for Big Norfolk Holiday Fun and the families we support. This continued investment provides stability and confidence, allowing us to plan ahead, expand our reach, and deliver more enriching holiday activities, healthy meals, and supportive experiences for children across Norfolk. It reinforces the value of our work in the community and ensures that more young people can enjoy fun, safe, and nourishing holiday opportunities when they need them most.

Changes for 2026

We are committed to continuous improvement, listening to feedback and ensuring that we are providing the best value for money as a publicly funded programme. For 2026 we particularly want to:

- Extend our reach to more eligible children (% of FSM children booking onto sessions)
- Improve attendance (% of booked places attended)
- Minimise number of unbooked places
- Improve food provision
- Increase SEND and Youth provision

We have therefore made the following changes to the application process:

Low bookings	We reserve the right to discuss cutting sessions based on your pre-delivery booking numbers if they are too low. You will not be compensated for any session we decide to reduce. We will always endeavour to make this decision in a timely manner and in agreement with you.
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No shows	We will be implementing a no show policy that states future sessions will be cancelled is 3 sessions are unattended with no communication from families. We will be flexible in this approach to support families where non attendance was reasonable and will promote timely cancellations throughout the programme.
Overbooking	Where you have staffing ratio, venue space to accommodate it, and will be ordering food on the day, we will support overbooking at your venues. Please contact us to agree for this to be put into effect in the first instance.

Applying to be a HAF provider

- Please apply via the online form.
- If you need any assistance with your application please email BNHF@norfolk.gov.uk
- You will be required to submit your supporting documents as part of the application process.
- We endeavour to process applications as quickly as possible. New providers may be considered by a Funding Panel. Any clarifications or amendments required to your application will be communicated to you.
- Your application may be subject to a revised offer of funding. This will be agreed in writing (via email) before a Funding Agreement is issued.
- Acceptance of funding for one holiday period does not automatically guarantee funding for any future holiday periods. Contracts will only be extended after the BNHF agree the Quality Assurance visit and attendance to be acceptable.
- The following sections detail all the requirements for completing your application.

We look forward to receiving your application!

Safeguarding

The following are mandatory.

- You must have an up-to-date Safeguarding Policy.
- You must be a member of the NCSP Safer Programme.
- Not a member already? Apply [here](#). NB. On the BNHF Application Form, you are asked for the income of your organisation for us to pay your annual membership accurately on your behalf.
- Due to changes to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026. If your policy is due to be reviewed between **May 2026 and July 2026**, you must use **Safer Template 13**. If your policy is not due to be reviewed until after **September 2026** then you can continue to use **Template 12**.
- New providers must use Template 13
- You must submit your policy using the Safer Programme **template 12 or Template 13**. All sections on the template must be included, **do not remove sections** A template can be downloaded from the Resource Library or Spond.
- Your Designated Safeguarding Officer and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer must have completed Specific DSO training, **which is equivalent to level 3 safeguarding training** within the previous 3 years (2 years if EYP). If your DSOs do not have this level of training, a Designated Safeguarding Person course (DSP) is available via the Safer Programme, so please sign up immediately. To be eligible to book this course you must have completed Safer's Introduction to Safeguarding Children Course or an equivalent 3 year course. If you have not used your two free spaces provided in your Safer membership, these can be used for the DSP course. The DSP course can be booked [here](#).
- Your Designated Safeguarding Officer or Deputy must attend a provider briefing session on safeguarding specifically for delivering the BNHF programme. This is delivered online and dates will be offered if your application is successful. Failure to attend this briefing will prevent us extending your contract to the next holiday period.
- You must have an Online Safety Policy (which covers the usage of mobile phones, smart watches and any other devices and usage of the internet). This should be a separate policy, but also mentioned as a section within your Safeguarding Policy. a template from us or download from the Resource Library.
- You must have a Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers, which sets out the expectations for behaviour as this forms part of safer working practices. the template from us or download from the resource library.
- All staff and volunteers should be DBS checked.
- Please note the staffing ratios set out in the Finance section of this guidance. Failure to comply with these ratios will be considered as a safeguarding issue.

Reporting a safeguarding concern:

- You should follow your organisations safeguarding procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns.
- All providers will receive access to CPOMs and training on how to submit concerns.
- All safeguarding concerns should be reported via the CPOMS system at the earliest opportunity – **but no later than 1 working day after the incident occurred** - to allow Active Norfolk Safeguarding Team to support where appropriate

- all new providers will receive log ins and training to submit concerns.

Health and Safety

- You must have First Aid trained adults available during delivery.
- You must have a Health and Safety Policy.
- You must have a Risk Assessment:
 - It must not be generic or cover more than one site/venue
 - It must reflect the actual risks for delivering your activities
 - It should include any risks associated with feeding the children, particularly if this is outside your usual offer
 - If your offer includes a trip, you must risk assess the journey
 - You may want to consider your contingency plan if you unexpectedly fall below your staffing ratio
 - If you need to create a risk assessment please use this [template](#) (other formats are acceptable if you already have a risk assessment)
- You must have a Public Liability Insurance of a minimum of £5m, ideally £10m. You will need to send us a copy of the certificate. It must be in date for the delivery period.
- Anyone cooking or serving food must have a Level 2 Food and Hygiene Certificate, even if you are only distributing snacks and drinks. If you do not have certification, free online training is available – please email BNHF@norfolk.gov.uk with the name and contact email for the staff requiring training.
- You must have an Inclusivity and Accessibility Policy. The BNHF programme is an inclusive programme with an above average proportion of Special Educational Needs children attending. It is essential you have the staff, venue, training and acknowledgement that there may be differentiations required to accommodate the children attending.
- We expect that all bookings stating that a child has SEND will be contacted by the provider to discuss their needs and ensure you are happy and able to accommodate them, and the activity will suit them.

Ofsted

- You do not need to be Ofsted registered to be a BNHF provider.

Food and Nutritional Education

- Food and nutritional education are key elements of the programme which you are funded to deliver. They should be integral to your timetabling and ideally embedded in the activities.
- Please consider carefully whether you can adequately offer food and nutritional educational activities before deciding whether to apply.
- For some children receiving Free School Meals, holiday hunger can be a real issue and we do not accept repetitive or heavily processed options as suitable food. Food should ideally be hot or offer a warm drink in cold weather and offer a variety of options daily. Children may need to be encouraged to try new foods – and their parents/carers are encouraged to let them.

- Children are asked to be physically active for at least one hour in a four hour session and many will be active for longer, so it is essential they are eating enough to sustain their energy level and stay healthy.
- Your food costs can include healthy snacks and drinks.
- Under the terms of the Funding Agreement, you must not differentiate your offer between funded and non-funded children – this includes food. Please ensure the food offer for funded children is also open to paid for places. This is most easily managed by ensuring the food offer are offered to paying places, albeit for a fee.
- All packed lunches must meet the [School Food Standards](#). To ensure the programme is meeting all required food and sustainability elements set by the DfE we will be looking for providers to seek local food offers that can be ordered on the day, reducing food wastage and delivery costs.
- If you are buying in your meals, only food businesses rates 3 stars or above OR awaiting a rating is acceptable.
 - Check how it is listed [here](#)
 - To find out more about food registration, please see [here](#).
- All food provided on the HAF programme must:
 - Comply with regulations on food preparation
 - Take into account allergies and dietary requirements (see the allergy guidance for schools)
 - Take into account any religious or cultural requirements for food.
- The only acceptable exceptions to the above are for specific dietary, physical, or neurodiversity requirements.
- The nutritional education should be embedded in your offer where possible. For example, ensure the food type and quality being offered matches the healthy foods your talk about. You may offer tasking or cooking as activities.
- Where children can plan or prepare the food there is less waste and will combine both the food and educational elements most readily.

Your provision

Please note the following when telling us about your planned provision:

- Funded Place = A place funded by the Big Norfolk Holiday Fun programme
Paid Place = A place funded by the participating child's family
A blended offer = both paid and funded places available.
- The age group must be Reception age to Year 11 inclusive. You do not have to deliver to all these ages.
- Groups with smaller age ranges are preferable. We are keen to support engaging activities for 14-16 year olds where possible, as there is often a limited offer for this age group.
- The funding is to deliver on the key areas of the programme, however if your usual offer does not include one or more of those areas please explain in your application how you will meet them. For example:
 - If you usually do film making, you could team up with another organisation to deliver the physical activity;
 - You could budget and hire specialist resource to deliver the nutritional education for you.

- If you are a returning provider, please include any new activities on your risk assessment.
- Sessions must include nutritional education, a minimum of 1 hour of physical activity, enriching activities, a meal (including snacks for longer provisions) and include at least one of the following; STEM skills, life skills, preparation for higher education or certification or qualification.
- If you are having problems identifying a venue we may be able to assist you.
- It is essential your location, start and end time and dates for delivery are accurate. You must notify us if these change. Failure to disclose changes may prevent us extending your contract.

Finance

- The BNHF has a higher than average number of SEND children attending and therefore we have set the staffing ratio at a level that may be higher than you usually have. Funding is available to enable higher staffing ratios on the programme.
 - At least 1 per 10 attendees
 - At least 1 per 8 attendees for 8 year olds or younger
 - Minimum of 2 staff regardless of the number of attendees
 - Early Years providers must abide by Ofsted guidance.
 - Staff must be over 18 years of age
- We work with [Step Teachers Agency](#) to support staffing requirements. NB. Providers will need to correspond with the agency to utilise their bank staff.
- You will not be required to submit a full financial breakdown in your application. You will be required to submit a cost per place. We may be in touch to request a full financial breakdown if we feel your cost per place does not align with the session you deliver.
- A session is a minimum of 4 hours per day. We understand that this may be too long for some activities or SEND children. If you want to offer a shorter session, please discuss with us before you apply.
- Your advertised funded places should cost no more than your paid places.
- You must inform us of any changes that will affect the costs we have agreed. This includes staffing, venue or change of dates/times. Failure to do so may result in us not extending your contract.
- New providers will be offered a more limited number of places, to demonstrate they are able to fill them. Existing providers will be offered funded places based on the attendance and retention of their previous bookings.
- Additional places may be agreed for both new and existing providers if demand is high once booking opens.
- We wish to run an inclusive programme and this may mean providers organising transport or additional 1 to 1 support for some children. Please check whether a child is already on the list for either by emailing BNHF@norfolk.gov.uk. If not then apply via [Awarded Place form](#).
- 15% of funding is for children who would benefit the programme although they are not in receipt of Free School Meals. This place must be made via a professional referral. Please use [Awarded Place form](#) to apply on behalf of a family/child.

The funding covers:	The funding does not cover:
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Food, including snacks and drinks for the funded children ✓ Staffing; including admin time for data collection, form filling, and marketing BNHF to schools ✓ Venue hire ✓ Marketing (see Marketing section for further details) ✓ Enrichment activity items such as for craft or cookery ✓ 1 to 1 staffing and transport costs for the funded children – only with prior agreement with the BNHF team ✓ Safer Programme membership* ✓ Level 2 Hygiene training, on request ✓ Regular drop in events with free training opportunities, networking, and funding updates ✓ Transport as part of organised trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Transport costs for staff or volunteers ✗ Food, drinks or snacks for staff or any other supporting adults (e.g. at family events) ✗ Safeguarding training/other associated staff training costs ✗ Generic items for your business not directly and exclusively for the delivery of the BNHF programme, e.g. if you run a football club, we will not pay for new footballs.
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*NOTE: We will pay SAFER directly unless a provider has already paid their annual subscription in which case it will be part of their funding.

Grants under the Subsidy Control Act 2022

- We need to know much funding you have previously received in grant payments. These are deemed to be subsidies from any Public Bodies. We require figures for the current and previous 2 financial years (2025-26, 2024-25, 2023-24).
- Do not include any HAF payments as we have this information already.

Payment methods:

- Most providers have a purchase order raised to enable payments. Please include your PO number on your invoice to avoid delays in payment.
- If you are a new provider or need to update your payment details you must request and complete an ESI form (Electronic Supplier Information) and return via email to BNHF@norfolk.gov.uk
- If you are an NCC service team then payments are made via internal journal to the appropriate cost centre.
- For Early Years providers we work with the EY finance team to pay providers.
- You can claim an optional advance payment. Providers are able to claim up to 50% of costs prior to delivery.
- The final payment will be made on receipt of your completed Provider Survey and final attendance data. Attendance data is required by the DfE, so must be completed by the deadline. Failure to do so may result in your contract not being extended.
- Email the invoice to BNHF@norfolk.gov.uk NOT invoices@norfolk.gov.uk. It is your contractual responsibility to ensure that this is sent in correctly.
- Please include the contact details of the person who sends the invoices so they can be sent the Standard Terms and Conditions and correct invoicing procedure.

- By agreeing to become a BNHF provider you understand that you are using Public Funding and must send all your receipts within 10 working days and if and when requested by Active Norfolk and/or Norfolk County Council.
- As a responsible Local Authority, NCC has a duty to ensure the appropriate use of Public Funding and we will monitor and audit costs to ensure the HAF programme funding is spent correctly.

Managing your bookings

- **Low bookings:** We reserve the right to discuss reducing sessions based on your pre-delivery booking numbers if they are too low. You may not be compensated for any session we decide to reduce. We will always endeavour to make this decision in a timely manner and in agreement with you.
- **No Shows:** We will support you if you decide to cancel bookings due to repeated no shows. Please inform us of any persistent 'no shows' as we may take further action against their other bookings.
- **Overbooking:** Where you have staffing ratio and venue space to accommodate it and are ordering food on the day Please contact us in the first instance.
- **Future offers:** Your attendance and retention figures will directly affect the offer for funding we make on your next application.

Additional information

- We want to understand what will make you a good HAF provider, particularly if you are applying for the first time.
- Please outline what you already do and for which ages and abilities.
- Please tell us how you plan to maximise attendance. This may include:
 - Having a waiting list
 - calling/texting/emailing reminders to parents/carers
 - promotional advertising

Give as much detail as possible. If you use social media, which platforms and how many followers do you have? Do you have links to any local schools?

- If you are an existing provider, what improvements have you planned? How will you implement the recommendations from your Quality Assurance visit?
- We encourage sustainable practices wherever possible. This may include for example: recycling plastics, paper, and food; reducing food waste; encouraging walking/wheeling to and from your activity.
- FLOURISH is our shared ambition and commitment across all organisations and agencies in Norfolk. BNHF providers should be aware of the FLOURISH scheme and how the elements of FLOURISH are represented in their offer/delivery. Organisations may make a Flourish Pledge to further show their support of the scheme. To find out more please see here: [FLOURISH](#)

Marketing

- Outline how you will promote your activities including with schools.
- Provide copy to be used in the Catalogue description (printable version of all bookable BNHF activities collated by district).

- Please ensure your activity description is as detailed as possible to enable families with SEND children to assess whether your offer is suitable.
- We want to minimise the number of “no shows” – booking where the child does not turn up and you are not told until it is too late. The target cohort for the programme may be more difficult to engage with than you are used to. We encourage you to:
 - keep a waiting list
 - overbook places if possible and in keeping with staff ratios
 - call in the morning or the night before to remind parents/carers.
 - Make follow-up phone call to families if children do not attend.

Marketing guidance:

- All marketing materials must feature the BNHF logo, and of equal size to your organisation’s logo.
- ‘Active Norfolk’ and ‘Norfolk County Council’ logos are available to use at your discretion. Logos must be clear and readable. You will be given access once you have signed your contract.
- All marketing materials must make it clear that the BNHF programme is free is parents/carers claim means tested free school meals for their children.
- If you have a blended offer, you must promote BNHF places as well as your paid places.
- For accessibility:
 - Please use a minimum of font size 12 and ensure all bulk text is either white on dark backgrounds or black/navy on pale backgrounds.
 - Use clear, plain English.
- Use messaging/imagery that conveys wider wellbeing benefits of participation in BNHF, i.e. fun activities, making friends, building confidence.
- Use images of children of the age your offer is aimed at.
- Use local communication channels to promote the scheme, e.g. village/parish newsletters, local notice boards, local Facebook groups, community organisations.
- Apply for our free printed marketing resources (flyers, venue banners, posters). Access to order will be given once you have signed your contract.
- Speak to schools local to your venue and ask them to promote the scheme.
- We know you already have strong connections with many of the families we are trying to reach, and trust your expertise in engaging with them. We wish to avoid terms such as ‘vulnerable’ or ‘deprivation’ as these may be perceived as stigmatising. Instead, please opt for words such as ‘active’, ‘creative’, ‘nutrition’, ‘support, and ‘connect’.

Social media:

- Photos/videos are a great way for families to see all the fun their children are having and new families can see the support available to them.
- Please use the hashtag #BigNorfolkHolidayFun and #HAF2025 on any posts
- Always tag @Active Norfolk and @Norfolk County Council so that we can share your content.
- Follow our Active Norfolk and Every Move social media pages and share relevant posts.
- You MUST have completed filming/photography permission forms before sharing any photos/videos.
- To comply with data protection and safeguarding legislation, if you are asked to remove any image or film of a child, you must do so immediately.

Booking system

- All activities must be listed and booked on the Eequ booking system.
- The system will allow activities to be visible to parents prior to bookings opening, allowing families to plan sessions in advance.
- Parents will be able to register their interest in specific activities prior to bookings opening to create an email list for providers. Providers will then have the opportunity to email families who have registered interest to notify them when bookings open.
- Bookings launch will be automated, and all activities will be listed at the same time. Families will have access to waiting lists, improved booking and cancellation process, and child accounts.
- The system will include automatic eligibility checking and allow live booking figures for all providers and venues in addition to completing all data reporting, all bookings must be taking via Eequ.

Quality Assurance visits

- We are obliged under our Funding Agreement with the DfE to conduct a Quality Assurance visit during delivery. This does not need to be pre-arranged and therefore can be unannounced.
- Your QA visitor may be an Active Norfolk or Norfolk County Council colleague and will be DBS checked.
- We will visit at least once a year. If we find anything that needs rectifying, we will let you know immediately, usually during the visit. You will have time to make any agreed changes and a further visit will be made in the same delivery period. If we believe that the agreed changes have not been made, we will agree a more structured Improvement Plan. Failure to comply may prevent you from continuing as a BNHF provider.
- If for any reason you change a venue, date or time of delivery or cancel a session you MUST inform us immediately (BNHF@norfolk.gov.uk) to avoid missing a QA visit. Failure to do so may prevent your contract being extended.
- Feedback from your visit including possible recommendations will be sent to you after your visit. You can refer to the recommendations if you reapply, explaining what changes you have made.
- We expect all registers to be completed at the start of the session and for these to be available to the QA visitor.

Further support and information

For further advice and support

- Please email the BNHF team on BNHF@norfolk.gov.uk
- Attend monthly provider drop-ins and online training. You will be invited once you have a Funding Agreement in place. 100% of providers agreed our training was useful so please send someone from your team when you receive the invitations.
- Attend face-to-face provider forum after each holiday period, which offers an opportunity for feedback, network, and maybe pick up one of our Provider Awards!
- Support and information can also be gained from:
 - **Momentum:** Support for all voluntary Norfolk organisations working with young people

- **Adult Learning:** A great range of free introductory training to help get you feeling confident you have the skills to apply. For funding information on courses click: [here](#)
- **Safeguarding Partnership:** To give you all the help and training you need to keep you up to date on the latest Safeguarding Regulations and support.
- Safer Programme: An excellent low cost option to get training and help from Norfolk County Council's Safeguarding Team [NSCB Safer Programme \(norfolkscb.org\)](#) <https://www.facebook.com/groups/saferprogrammenorfolk/>

Application checklist:

- ✓ Membership of Safer Programme
- ✓ Public Liability Insurance in date for the delivery period of the application
- ✓ Health and Safety Policy
- ✓ Safeguarding Policy - using the Safer Programme Template (where appropriate)
- ✓ Names and contact details of your Safeguarding DSO, DSO Deputy and Safeguard Lead if applicable
- ✓ Name and contact details of the person who handles your invoicing if not yourself
- ✓ Inclusivity/EDI Policy
- ✓ Risk Assessments - for each activity/venue if you have more than one you will be working in
- ✓ Online Safety Policy
- ✓ Level 2 Food and Hygiene Certificates for anyone handling food during delivery
- ✓ The complete name and address of your chosen food Provider
- ✓ Costs broken down into Staffing; Food; Venue Hire; Marketing and Other
- ✓ Then final % of the overall cost requested for funding as an amount.
- ✓ A session plan/timetable that considers all three of the provision elements: an hour of activity; good food- ideally hot; and nutritional education/ helping the Children and their Families to think about healthy eating choices.
- ✓ Your typical menu options
- ✓ A Marketing Plan to get the Children to come to your activity
- ✓ A short write up of your activity we can use in our catalogue
- ✓ Confirmed venue/s with their full address
- ✓ Your understanding of FLOURISH and how it is met through your offer; you do not need to have a FLOURISH pledge to be a Provider. For more information on FLOURISH or to make your FLOURISH pledge, please see [HERE](#)