

Grants to fund local coordination of free holiday activities and healthy food for disadvantaged children during 2019 summer holidays

Specification of requirements

December 2018

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## Overview

## Context

1. Early in 2018, the government announced a programme of work to explore how best to ensure more children from disadvantaged families benefit from enrichment activities and healthy meals during the school holidays.
2. The programme of work included a £2m grant fund awarded to organisations delivering free healthy food and activities to disadvantaged children in the 2018 summer holidays, and the local coordination of free holiday provision grant fund for the 2019 summer holidays, which is the subject of this invitation to bid.
3. The information we gain from our 2018 and 2019 programmes will provide us with valuable information about what works in supporting this emerging sector.

## Background

1. School holidays can be particular pressure points for some families because of increased costs (such as food and childcare) and reduced incomes (such as loss of a free school meal, reduced working hours etc.). There is a growing body of evidence of a holiday experience gap - with children from disadvantaged families less likely to access organised out-of-school activities[[1]](#footnote-1); more likely to experience ‘unhealthy holidays’ in terms of nutrition and physical health[[2]](#footnote-2); and more likely to experience social isolation[[3]](#footnote-3)[[4]](#footnote-4).
2. Free holiday clubs are a response to this issue and evidence suggests that they can have a positive impact on children and young people and that they work best when they provide consistent and easily accessible enrichment activities, for more than just breakfast or lunch, and when they involve children (and parents) in food preparation[[5]](#footnote-5).
3. There is huge variation in existing provision in terms of the frequency and duration of provision, and the food and activities on offer. Stakeholders in this area value this diversity in provision but told us that the sector could benefit from support to improve the quality of provision, especially in terms of:
   * partnership working with other stakeholders in order to improve targeting and referrals, and to help providers link up with food providers;
   * greater coordination across local areas to help raise awareness of what provision is available and to identify any gaps or ‘cold spots’; and
   * minimum standards or guidance.

## The Local Coordination of Free Holiday Provision Fund

1. We are now inviting organisations to bid for grant funding to take on the role of testing the coordination of free holiday provision (including healthy food and enriching activities) for disadvantaged children during the 2019 summer holidays in up to 9 upper-tier local authorities. Up to £9m is available in 2019-20 in this grant fund.
2. Organisations will have considerable flexibility and freedom as to how they deliver this project in local areas, provided they reach the aims and objectives set out in this document.
3. The aims of this grant programme are to develop a more efficient and joined-up approach to free holiday provision for disadvantaged children; and to ensure there is enough good quality free holiday provision to meet the demand from children eligible for free school meals (FSM)[[6]](#footnote-6) in the local authority during the 2019 summer holidays.
4. The objectives for the local coordinators will be to:
   * develop a local plan for provision in their area based on what they know about the supply and demand in their area;
   * award funding to holiday club providers (through the provision of grants) in order to ensure there is enough provision to meet demand and in order to support providers to improve the quality of their offer and to meet a new set of minimum standards (as set out in paragraph 25);
   * support these providers to meet the new minimum standards and to improve the quality of their provision;
   * promote and advertise provision, including working with local schools and other agencies to encourage the most disadvantaged to attend;
   * work with local services and agencies to ensure a joined-up and efficient approach (e.g. signposting, sharing resources). Bidders will need to consider how best to handle referrals to and from other agencies and services; and
   * develop sustainable approaches to meeting need (e.g. bringing in funding from other sources such as local businesses; sharing learning and good practice).
5. As a result of this, we want children (and where appropriate, their parents) who attend this provision:
   * to eat more healthily over the summer holidays;
   * to be more active over the summer holidays;
   * to take part in engaging and enriching activities which support the development of resilience, character and wellbeing and other skills;
   * to be safe and not to be socially isolated;
   * to have greater knowledge of health and nutrition; and
   * to be more engaged with school and other local services and to have greater knowledge and awareness of local free holiday provision.

## Coverage of the programme

1. We want to establish local coordinator projects in up to 9 local authority areas across England. We are not specifying which areas we want grant recipients to work in and are asking bidders to set out which area they want to work in, and why. Ideally we want to achieve a good spread of areas in terms of geography, LA structure and levels of deprivation (please see paragraphs 41-47 for more information on how we will manage this). Bidders are able to bid for funding to cover up to two local authorities and must complete a separate application form for each area.

## Coverage of provision

1. One of the aims of the local coordinators will be to ensure that all school-age children eligible for free school meals in an area are able to access free holiday provision. A major part of the grant recipient’s role will be to award grants to holiday club providers to ensure that all FSM-eligible children in the area can access provision should they want to and we envisage that this should constitute the vast majority of the bid’s total cost. However, we acknowledge that not all FSM-eligible children will take up the offer and ask bidders to reflect this in their costings.
2. We are using free school meal eligibility as a proxy for disadvantage. Data on free school meal eligibility by area are available [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2018).
3. We know that provision for children in rural areas can be a particular issue and also that providers can struggle to cater for children with additional needs, such as those with SEND. We want the local coordinators to ensure that provision is inclusive and accessible to all FSM-eligible children in the LA.
4. We also want to maximise the benefits to children by enabling them to access a good “dose” of provision in terms of frequency and duration. Ideally we would want local coordinators to fund provision which can offer, as a minimum, 4 hours of provision a day, for 4 days a week and for 4 weeks of the holiday. However, we understand that this may be aspirational for some holiday club providers and therefore we will consider bids which want to award funding to holiday club providers who cannot meet this level of provision, as long as overall, eligible children can access provision for this frequency and duration (i.e. not every club has to deliver the 4:4:4 but eligible children should be able to access this amount of provision).
5. Our vision is for an accessible and inclusive offer of provision for all school-age FSM-eligible children in the funded areas and bidders should set out what they want to achieve in their area in terms of aspiring to this comprehensive offer.
6. We would encourage bidders to ensure that the providers they work with encourage engagement with parents and carers.

## Funding provision

1. We will expect bidders to give clear details on which holiday club providers in their chosen area they will want to award funding to, and what the funding will go towards. We also advise that bidders consider including an unallocated amount of funding to ensure they can also support new providers, or other providers that they are not already known to the bidder, but justification for this amount must be provided in the bid.
2. We acknowledge that there are varied models of provision. Some clubs are open to children from all backgrounds, some cater for specific groups; some are free for all, and some charge non-disadvantaged children to attend. We are keen to encourage this range of provision, and we also encourage bidders to look at innovative approaches to meeting need (for example, working with for-profit holiday club providers to offer free places to disadvantaged children).
3. Bidders have significant flexibility to design and deliver their projects within our broad framework. Grant recipients can therefore choose to award money to a range of providers, as long as they meet the minimum standards set out below and as long as the provision is free for children eligible for free school meals.
4. Funding for providers could be used for a variety of things but we would expect it to fall into two broad categories:
   * Funding to support a comprehensive, inclusive and accessible offer (e.g. setting up new provision where needed, paying for additional staff to expand existing provision or to meet additional needs etc.)
   * Funding to support quality improvement (e.g. money to bring in activity providers such as sports coaches; money to establish partnerships with catering organisations; or money to buy catering equipment (please see paragraph 32 for more information on capital expenditure).

## Minimum standards for holiday provision

1. One of the objectives of the local coordinators will be to improve the quality of provision in their area, and in support of this we are setting some high-level minimum standards that provision will need to meet in order to receive funding through this grant fund.
2. We acknowledge that because the sector is relatively new that it may be difficult for all providers to meet all of these minimum standards from the outset. In order to build capacity and capability in the system we are keen that local coordinators support these providers during the period leading up to the summer holidays in order that they can meet the minimum standards. In support of this local coordinators will be able to award funding to providers that don’t meet the minimum standards at the start of the grant period as long as they put a specific plan in place to ensure that the minimum standards are met before the start of the summer holiday.
3. The minimum standards that we expect for 2019 providers are:
   * **Food**: clubs must provide at least one meal a day (breakfast, lunch or tea) and **all** food provided at the club (including snacks) must meet the [school food standards](http://www.schoolfoodplan.com/actions/school-food-standards/).
   * **Nutritional education**: clubs must include an element of nutritional education each day aimed at improving children’s knowledge and awareness of healthy eating. 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, and taste tests.
   * **Enriching activities**: clubs must provide fun and enriching activities that provide children with opportunities to develop new skills or knowledge, to consolidate existing skills and knowledge, or to try out new experiences. This could include physical activities such as football, table tennis, cricket etc.; creative activities such as putting on a play, junk modelling, drumming workshops; or experiences such as a nature walk, visiting a city farm etc. Bidders should set out how they can support providers to deliver a rich and varied mix of fun and enriching activities which are age-appropriate. We welcome bids that have also considered how they might encourage the continued use of fine motor skills over the summer.
   * **Physical activities**: clubs must provide activities which meet the [Physical Activity guidelines](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/213739/dh_128144.pdf) on a daily basis[[7]](#footnote-7).
   * **Policies and procedures[[8]](#footnote-8)**: clubs must be able to demonstrate and explain their safeguarding arrangements and have relevant and appropriate policies and procedures in place in relation to:
     + Safeguarding
     + Health and safety
     + Insurance
     + Accessibility and inclusiveness

Where appropriate, clubs must also be compliant with Ofsted requirements when working with children.

1. Bidders must also set out how they will ensure that the providers they award grant funding to adhere to these minimum standards.

## Funding and eligibility

## Available funding

1. Up to £9m is available in 2019-20 in the local coordination of free holiday provision grant fund and we aim to fund nine local coordinator projects within this funding envelope. The level of funding provided to each project will vary according to the scale and scope of proposals.

## Eligibility to apply

1. We invite bids from all types of organisations (for example local authorities, charities and other third sector organisations, and holiday club providers) provided they can demonstrate the ability to coordinate provision at this scale. We also welcome consortium bids, as long as a lead organisation is identified (see section 1 in the application form).
2. Existing holiday club providers are eligible to apply but will be asked in the application form how they intend to deal with any potential conflict of interest arising from their dual role of commissioner and provider.
3. Where the bid does not involve the local authority (either as lead bidder, or as a partner in the bid) we would encourage bidders to include proposals for how they will engage the local authority.
4. To be eligible for grant funding through this fund, applicants must be able to demonstrate that:

* the bid is for work delivered within England;
* the whole bid is made on a not for profit basis; and
* the bid will directly impact children eligible for and claiming free school meals.

1. Bids can include money for reasonable capital expenditure, as long as this does not exceed 2% of the total cost of the bid. Any prospective capital expenditure needs to be fully outlined and itemised with approximations of cost in the bid. This will allow us to examine the implications of the capital expenditure as part of our diligence checks. Bidders should note that capital expenditure is classed as:
   * Individual assets worth over £2,500
   * Grouped assets, that is assets of a similar nature that are purchased at the same time, which cost £2,500 or more overall
   * Bulked assets, for example a bulk purchase of equipment where the value of the individual item is below the set value, which cost £2,500 or more overall.
2. Grants will not be paid to any organisation that does not pass our reasonable financial due diligence checks. These will include solvency checks and no grant is likely to be paid if it comprises more than 50% of an organisation’s annual turnover. Bidders that have demonstrated they satisfactorily meet the assessment criteria will be required to provide additional financial information to support the due diligence checks. The Department will contact relevant organisations, regarding next steps, after an initial evaluation of bids. For information, these next steps may involve our requiring bidders to provide information through the Supplier Registration Service. The portal can be found [here](https://supplierregistration.cabinetoffice.gov.uk). A potential grant recipient will pass if all risk ratings are green. A potential grant recipient will fail if any risk ratings are red. If a potential grant recipient has an amber rating DfE shall determine (at its sole discretion) whether any additional assurance needs to be provided. Unless additional assurance is provided, the bid will be rejected and removed from the process.

# Management information and evaluation

1. In order to derive maximum learning from the funded activity, and in order to best meet the Department’s policy objectives for this funding, the Department for Education will gather a range of management information from the grant recipients and from the clubs they fund. At the end of the funding period we will therefore expect grant recipients to report on pupil-level attendance at each session for each club funded through this grant. The Department will require the name, date of birth, school attended and home postcode for all pupils attending each session so that these attendance data can be matched to the National Pupil Database. This should all be collected in adherence to GDPR.
2. Bidders should set out clearly how they intend to monitor their provision’s outcomes, for example, by gathering views of parents and children at the start and end of the programme or encouraging the use of food diaries. The grant funding cannot be used by grant recipients to pay for their own evaluation, but the department will commission an independent evaluation of the programme and expect bidders to cooperate with our evaluator by providing any information the DfE commissions the evaluator to collect.

# Assessment criteria

1. We will evaluate all bids received against the assessment criteria detailed below to ensure a fair process. The application form includes further detail of the scoring criteria we will use.
2. We will have a two-stage assessment process. During stage 1 we will shortlist bids based on the eligibility criteria set out in paragraphs 31-33 of this specification, the grounds for refusal (Annex D of the application form), and the summary of the proposal (section 2 of the application form).
3. This will be a pass/fail assessment and in order to pass stage 1 the application:
   * must meet all the eligibility criteria;
   * must answer no to all of the grounds for refusal listed in Annex D; and
   * must not score less than 50% of the total marks available for the summary section of the application form.
4. Any bid which does not pass each of these three points above will be excluded from the process.
5. Applicants who pass the stage 1 criteria will enter stage 2, at which point we will assess the detail of the bids in sections 3-6 of the application form (we will not include the summary in stage 2 of the assessment). Details of what is expected and the possible scores available are provided in the table below. Details of the 0-5 scoring matrix are provided in the application form.

Stage 1

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **The strongest bids will:** | **Maximum possible marks and % of total score** |
| Summary  (assessed in Stage 1 only) | * Demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the chosen local authority and the need for local coordination of free holiday provision for disadvantaged children; * Target the specific aims, objectives and outcomes of the fund as outlined in paragraphs 9-11 of the specification; * Present a clear and well-developed delivery plan that responds to the defined aims and objectives of the local coordinators, which is realistically achievable within the timeframe of the funding envelope; * Demonstrate a proven track record of working in partnership with local services and organisations in the local authority of choice to support disadvantaged children and their families; and * Provide a clear breakdown of the costs and represents good value for money | 25 (5 marks for each question)  100% of total score |

Stage 2

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **The strongest bids will:** | **Maximum possible marks and % of total score** |
| Your approach | * Demonstrates sufficient knowledge of the chosen local authority and the need for local coordination of free holiday provision for disadvantaged children; * Target the specific aims, objectives and outcomes outlined in the specification and provide evidence and a theory of change to demonstrate how the proposed activities are expected to meet the aims of the local coordinators and lead to the outcomes for children (and families) as outlined in paragraphs 9-11. * Aspire to a comprehensive, inclusive and accessible but realistic offer for all FSM-eligible pupils. * Describe how you will monitor the impact of the approach and provide DfE with the required Management Information * Show how you will ensure that all providers meet the minimum standards set by the Department | 25 (5 marks for each question)  31% of total score |
| Capacity to deliver | * Demonstrate a proven track record of working in partnership with local services and organisations in the local authority of choice to support disadvantaged children and their families; * Present a clear and well-developed proposal and delivery plan that responds to the defined aims and objectives of the local coordinators, which is realistically achievable within the timeframe of the funding envelope * Demonstrate that there is robust leadership and good quality governance and partnership arrangements in place to manage the project; * Demonstrate a sensible and proportionate approach to risk management and, where appropriate, sets out sensible plans for dealing with any potential conflicts of interest. | 20 (5 marks for each question)  25% of total score |
| Sustainability | * Describes how their approach will lead to a more sustainable and joined-up approach to this issue in the area * Demonstrate how they will share learning and best practice within the local authority and beyond | 10 (5 marks for each question)  13% of total score |
| Value for money | * Provide a clear breakdown of the project costs in the financial template. * Set out how the funding will be used to deliver value for money against the objectives of the grant programme. * Explain how these costs have been derived and the assumptions on which they have been based. * Describe how value for money will be ensured within the proposed costings, including how you will ensure value for money from the grants you award to providers. * Limit the spend on activity which is restricted under Government efficiency controls. | 25 (5 marks for each question)  31% of total score |
| **Total**  (excluding Summary which is assessed at stage 1 only) | | **80 marks** |

1. In order to achieve the best possible learning, and in order to best meet the Department’s policy objectives for this funding, the Department for Education reserves the right to select applications that offer an appropriate variety of approach, geographical spread, and levels of FSM-eligibility and rurality.
2. We intend to fund 9 projects overall including 1 project from each of the following regions: East Midlands, East of England, London, North East, Yorkshire and the Humber, North West, West Midlands, South West and South East.
3. We will take the highest ranking bid from each region and put these into a ranked list. From this list we will look to fund the 4 bids with the highest scores overall.
4. We will prioritise the following criteria alongside bidders’ scores in selecting bids for the remaining 5 regions:
   * At least one project overall should come from each LA FSM quartile[[9]](#footnote-9);
   * At least 5 bids overall should be based in LAs in the top 2 FSM quartiles (top 25% and top 50% i.e. more deprived); and
   * At least one bid overall should be based in a county council LA and at least 4 overall should be based in the other LA types (London Boroughs, Unitary Authorities or Metropolitan Boroughs).
5. We reserve the right to exclude any bid that scores less than 50% of the total mark on any section of the application form (sections 3-6).
6. If a region does not have any bids which meet the above criteria we will consider funding multiple bids in a single region instead.
7. Please see the accompanying spreadsheet for details on each of these quota for each LA.

# The application process

## How to apply

1. The bid round will be open from 7 December 2018 and will close at 23:59 on 7 February 2019. Key dates and deadlines for the application process are set out in the table below.

| **Milestones** | **Dates** |
| --- | --- |
| Bid round opens | 7 December 2018 |
| Bid round closes | 7 February 2019 |
| Department for Education to contact prospective bidders for clarification or additional information if required | 7 February to mid-March |
| Assessment of applications | 7 February to mid-March |
| Decisions on applications announced | w/c 25 March |
| Grant agreements in place | w/c 15 April |
| Target for initial payments to successful bidders | 30 May |
| Final payments of grants distributed to successful bidders upon completion of all aspects of work | 31 October 2019 |

1. Bidders should make themselves available during the assessment period for follow-up discussions with the Department for Education where we will seek clarifications on your application should this be deemed necessary.
2. From the end of March 2019, the successful bidders should make themselves available in order to be able to work quickly with the Department to finalise the grant offer letter.
3. Successful bidders should expect to begin preparations for their projects, including initial work with our evaluators, from April 2019.

## Application form

1. Applications should be succinct and must be within the word limit provided for each section of the form.
2. Please email a single PDF version of your completed application form to [HAF2019.PILOT@education.gov.uk](mailto:HAF2019.PILOT@education.gov.uk) by 23:59pm on 7 February 2019.
3. The organisation name of the lead bidder and the words “HAF 2019 Application” should be included in the email ‘subject’ field when submitting your application.
4. Once submitted, applicants will receive an email response confirming the application has been received.

# Next steps

## Terms and conditions of grant funding

1. Before submitting an application, applicants should ensure they have read and understood the [Department for Education grant funding agreement terms and conditions](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/grant-funding-agreement-terms-and-conditions). In applying for the local coordination of free holiday provision fund, applicants will be agreeing to the Department for Education grant funding agreement terms and conditions.
2. In the event of an application being successful, the applicant will be required to sign a grant offer letter. This will set out the specific grant conditions, monitoring arrangements and payment details.

## Contact details

1. If applicants have any queries, they should contact the Department via the HAF 2019 Pilot mailbox ([HAF2019.PILOT@education.gov.uk](mailto:HAF2019.PILOT@education.gov.uk)), prior to submitting an application form. We endeavour to respond to all queries within 3 working days.
2. We will inform applicants, via email, of the outcome of their bid, after the assessment process is complete. We expect this to be towards the middle of March 2019. We will be able to offer feedback on unsuccessful bids, on request.

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1. The Sutton Trust, 2014. Extra-curricular Inequality Research Brief; Cullinane and Montacute, 2017. Life Lessons: Improving essential life skills for young people, The Sutton Trust [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Kellogg’s, 2015; Mann, S., Wade., M., Sandercock, G., and Beedie, C. (2017). *The impact of summer holidays and school deprivation index upon cardiorespiratory levels in primary school children.* Presented at European College of Sports Science, Essen, Germany [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Gill and Sharma, 2004. *Food poverty in the school holidays,* Barnardos [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Kellogg's Foundation, 2015. *Isolation and Hunger: the reality of the school holidays for struggling famil*, *s,* s.l.: Kellogg's;

   Gill and Sharma, 2004. *Food poverty in the school holidays,* Barnardos [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Evans, J. 2018, *Holiday Activities and Food: Literature Review,* Internal report to DfE, unpublished. A summary report will be published in 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. More information on free school meal eligibility is available [here](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/700139/Free_school_meals_guidance_Apr18.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The current guidelines state that children should engage in moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity for at least 60 minutes a day. We understand that these guidelines will be revised in 2019. We will discuss any necessary changes to the minimum standards resulting from this with successful bidders. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Where required, clubs must register with Ofsted, and we would expect local coordinators to advise and support clubs with this. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Each local authority will fall into one of the following free school meals quartiles, based on the percentage of children receiving FSM in that area: top 25% (most deprived); top 50%; bottom 50%; bottom 25% (least deprived). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)