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# Leicestershire Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme Annual Report 2025



Department  
for Education



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# Background

The Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF) is a national programme that supports school age children and young people receiving free school meals (FSM). Each local authority receives funding from the Department for Education (DfE) to deliver the HAF programme which provides eligible children with free access to holiday activities and a meal during Easter, Summer, and Winter school holidays.

The aims of the programme are to offer a high-quality experience that will support children to:

- receive healthy and nutritious meals
- maintain a healthy level of physical activity
- be happy, have fun and meet new friends
- develop a greater understanding of food, nutrition and other health-related issues
- take part in fun and engaging activities that support their development
- feel safe and secure
- get access to the right support services
- return to school feeling engaged and ready to learn



# HAF Programme Governance and Management

A multi-agency steering group, chaired by Leicestershire Children and Family Services and including representation from Active Together and Public Health, provides strategic direction for the Leicestershire HAF Programme and reports into Leicestershire's Children and Families Partnership, which was a sub-group of Leicestershire's Health and Wellbeing Board in 2025.

The Leicestershire HAF programme is coordinated by staff from LCC Children and Family Services Department, with commissioned support from Active Together.

A dedicated HAF programme team oversees the implementation of the programme throughout the year in line with DfE HAF Programme Guidance. This includes commissioning activity, monitoring and reporting, quality assurance, provider support and communications.





# HAF Programme Funding and Expenditure

Leicestershire County Council was awarded a funding allocation of £1,650,590 for the financial year 2025/26, from the Department for Education (DfE), to deliver the Holiday Activities and Food programme across the County. This grant funding is calculated by DfE based on the numbers of children eligible for and in receipt of benefits-related free school meals in Leicestershire.

The funding is provided to cover:

- ➔ provision of free holiday places
- ➔ coordination of the programme locally.

The DfE recognises that there are administrative costs associated with setting up and running the holiday activities and food programme. As such, local authorities are able to use up to ten per cent of their total allocation to cover such costs.

<b>Department for Education HAF grant expenditure 2025/26</b>	
Face-to-face holiday club provision (funding to providers for delivery costs)	<b>£1,439,609.68</b>
Management and administration of the programme by the LA	<b>£165,059</b>
Other costs (including publicity and promotion, provider events, eligibility vouchers, quality assurance, data insight)	<b>£45,921.32</b>
<b>End of year total spend</b>	<b>£1,650,590</b>

# HAF Programme Delivery 2025

## Overview

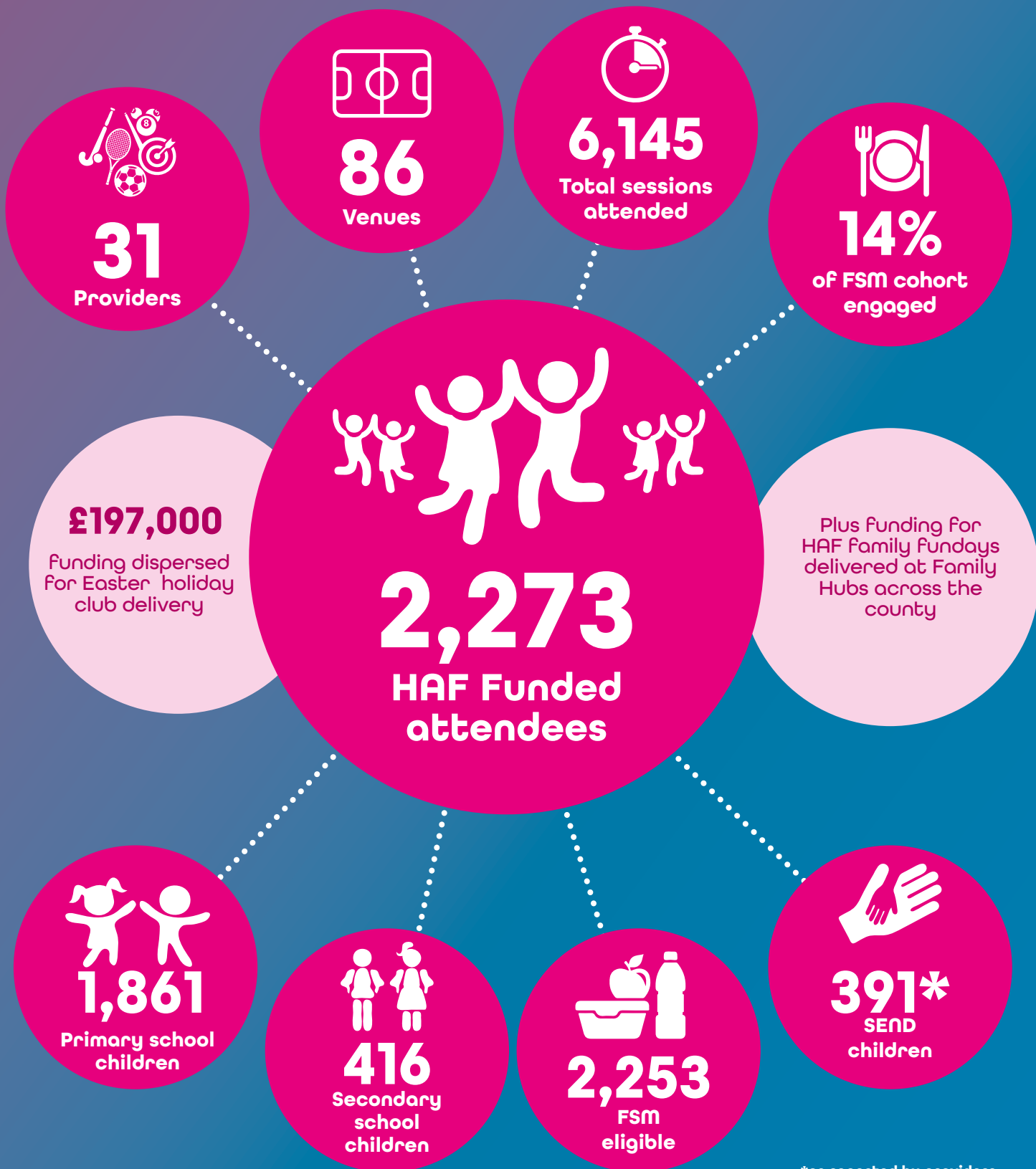
The number of HAF places available and attended during Easter and Summer increased compared with previous years. A smaller Winter programme was delivered, reflecting provider availability and levels of parental demand.

- Demand remains higher for primary-age places, although take-up among secondary-aged young people showed some growth.
- Successful social media campaigns helped raise awareness of the Leicestershire HAF programme. The continued use of e-vouchers as a direct communication tool also enabled us to inform eligible families about the programme and their child's eligibility, reaching more than 16,000 children each holiday period.
- Feedback from parents and children on the benefits of the HAF programme remained very positive.
- Providers gave positive feedback about the Leicestershire HAF programme model and the support they receive from the HAF team. However, some raised concerns about the financial challenges of delivering high-quality HAF provision in the context of rising venue, food and staffing costs.
- Annual quality assurance visits showed that the quality of provider delivery against the DfE HAF standards continues to improve year on year.
- The number of children with lower-level SEND and additional needs accessing HAF has continued to increase. Where required, providers were able to apply for additional funding to help meet the costs of inclusion support.



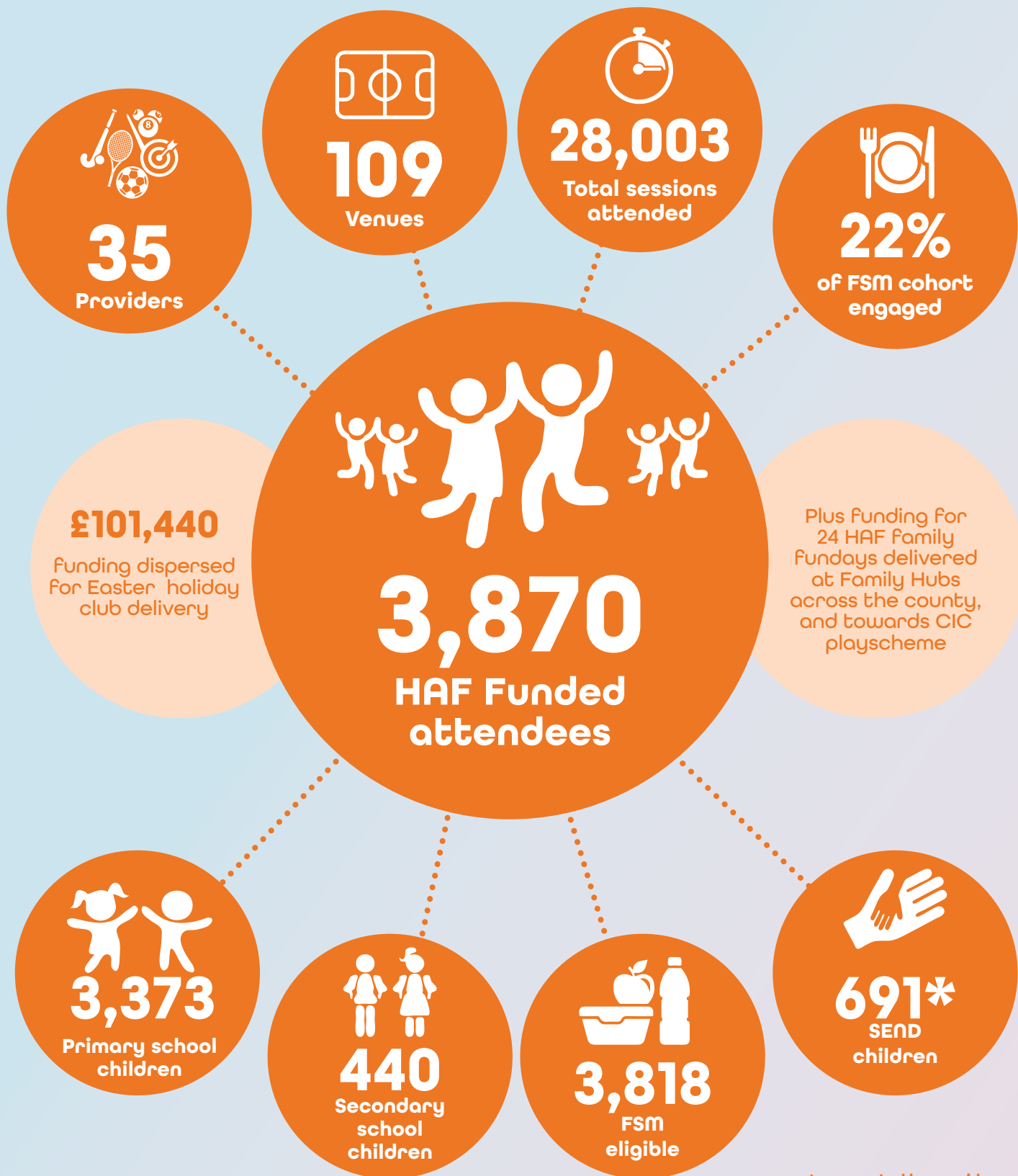
# 2025 delivery data

## Easter HAF 2025



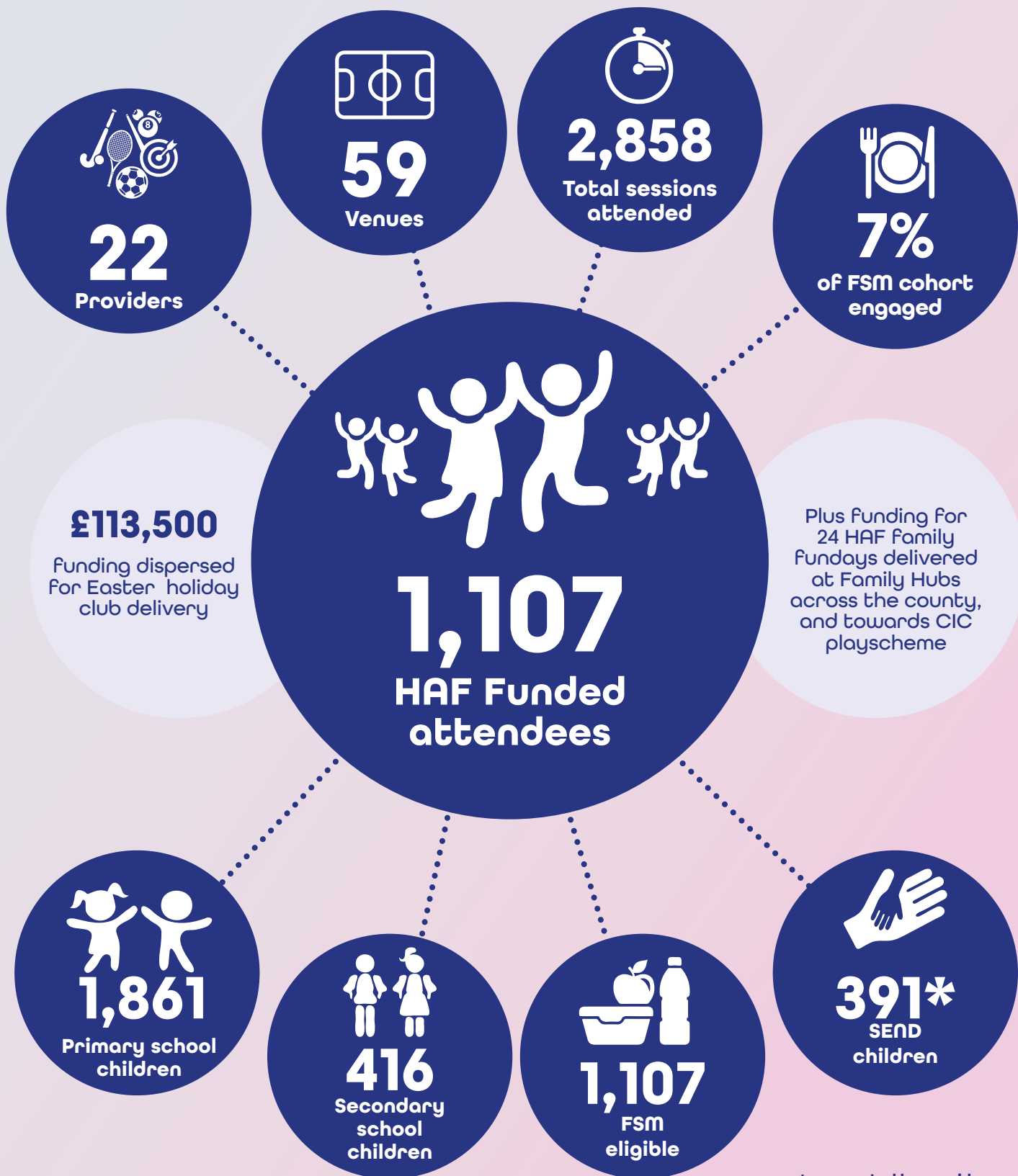
\*as reported by providers

# Summer HAF 2025



\*as reported by providers

# Winter HAF 2025



\*as reported by providers

# Voice of children and families

Examples of feedback from children and young people on what they enjoyed most about their HAF club

**“All of it!  
Baking and  
colouring  
and playing  
outside.”**

“If I wasn't  
here I would  
be at home  
on my phone  
bored”

**“I like all of the  
food, rainbow  
wraps and pasta  
bake are my  
favourite”**



“I like coming  
here because  
my friend comes  
here and we can  
play together.”



“I love the arts  
and crafts. I made  
a robot puppet the  
other day and it has  
been the best thing  
I've made.”

**“I love  
everything  
about this camp,  
especially the  
football and  
dodgeball.”**

“We are trying  
to join in every  
activity to get star  
of the day as we  
get a certificate,  
a medal and a  
sweet.”



“I get to  
try new  
things I've  
never done  
before.”

“The  
coaches  
know us  
and talk  
to us”

“I am able to  
make new  
friends and also  
meet up with  
school friends  
who do not live  
in my village”

## Examples of Feedback from Parents/Carers on the benefits of HAF

**“V loves this club as she doesn't like to be out of school so helps her to meet new friends. She enjoys crafts and sports activities so this is perfect place for her to be. She met a couple new friends this week and even wants to try arrange a playdate. She likes the staff to as they help her and are very friendly too.”**



**“HAF has been really useful for me as it has allowed me to give my son what he wants without having to sacrifice bills or buying food for him.”**

**“My children have really loved the football camps, the staff are always welcoming and friendly especially to the children. The camps are really well organised so i know my children are safe and secure there. They choose what activities they want to participate in, the camps have really helped through the holidays, not only financially but getting the children away from their phones and technology.”**



**“My daughter absolutely loves going to this club she always comes home a happy little girl who has had an amazing day and is so excited to share what she has been doing and showing us her new skills she has been taught.”**

**“A brilliant club my son enjoyed it very much and learned about healthy eating so much he changed his diet choices at home.”**



**“As a single parent with two children, HAF benefits both myself and more importantly the children.”**

**“HAF ensured my daughter had something to do regardless of my finances.”**



Please click on the links below to hear feedback on HAF 2025 from children and HAF providers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFUy-0VCOu4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PaSgQyeEN9s>

Please click on the links below to see HAF 2025 in action

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/cuSONgU-deE>

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/yfXts8VLtqI>

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/wR-7g81Roc4>

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/nsnkLNHjpOk>



# Quality of Provision

The Council works collaboratively with our providers to offer the very best HAF provision for Leicestershire's children and young people. Providers wishing to deliver HAF in Leicestershire are required to submit a tender application to join the Leicestershire HAF supplier framework. This process includes successfully evidencing that they are able to meet HAF programme delivery requirements and passing due diligence checks.

The HAF implementation team work closely with our HAF providers to help them to deliver high quality programmes that meet HAF standards and a robust monitoring framework has been put in place to ensure that all HAF provision in Leicestershire is of a good quality.

Each provider receives at least one annual quality assurance visit to observe and assess their delivery against each of the DfE HAF standards:

- providing healthy meals
- providing fun and enriching activities that help children develop new skills and try new experiences
- providing physical activities that help children to stay active
- providing activities that help improve children and their families' understanding of healthy eating, lifestyles and behaviours
- offering information, signposting or referrals to other services that would benefit children and their families
- suitable policies and procedures in place, including safeguarding



Providers are given a rating for each standard, from very poor to excellent, in line with HAF guidance. The implementation team produce a report of the visit, providing feedback on what is going well and making recommendations for areas of improvement. Providers are then asked to submit an improvement plan identifying how recommendations will be actioned, and these are followed up by the HAF team.

An annual contract management meeting is held with each provider to review their performance against their HAF contract. This meeting offers an opportunity for the provider and our HAF team to discuss previous delivery, celebrate successes, identify good practice and to agree any actions needed for improvement.

# Additional Support For Providers

Provider network events were held in the run-up to Easter, Summer and Winter delivery to share good practice and offer further support on areas highlighted through QA visits, including marketing and promotion and inclusive practice.



## Provider Resource Hub

An online resource hub is also available for providers to access activity ideas, information, resources, tools, videos and links relating to the HAF standards.

## Communications

Communications activity focused on promoting the HAF offer to eligible families and on encouraging new providers to apply to deliver HAF in Leicestershire. The approaches used this year included:

- Council HAF Webpage and social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Nextdoor)
- Active Together webpage and social media
- Headteacher briefings
- Primary Times articles
- Early Years e blasts
- Leicestershire Matters articles
- Local papers
- District Council media channels
- Briefings to partners and stakeholders

We utilised videos and images from previous delivery periods and undertook more filming over Easter and summer 2025 to help build up a library of images and videos for us to use for future marketing campaigns.



# Next steps for 2026

Feedback from children, families, providers and the DfE has helped us to identify the following areas for improvement.

Our focus for the year will be to:

- ➔ Introduce and embed a HAF eligibility checking and booking solution that supports DfE reporting requirements and simplifies booking processes for families and providers
- ➔ Continue working with our providers to maximise take-up and attendance of HAF funded places
- ➔ Continue working with our providers to improve quality of provision across all HAF standards – aiming to see all providers rated good and above at quality assurance visits
- ➔ Continue working with our providers to promote inclusive practice, by building the understanding and confidence of delivery staff
- ➔ Explore opportunities for aligning HAF and DfE School Age Childcare programme activity and funding to maximise benefits



# HAF providers 2025

We would like to take the opportunity to say a big thank you to all our HAF holiday club providers:

Activate Management

Aimstrong Sport

Beaver Childcare

Birch wood School

ClubsComplete Ltd

Clubzone CZ Ltd

Coalville Can

Discovery Schools Trust

EMPWR Sport

Everyone Active

Fusion Lifestyle

Football & Fitness

Fusion Lifestyle

Green Towers Hinckley

Club for Young People

Inspire Youth Collective CiC

JM Football Academy

Kidspace

KisP CiC

Leicester Tigers Foundation

Leicester Riders Foundation

LIFE Multi Academy Trust

Little Gems

MACCA Sports

ME Sports In The Community

Megastrikers

Metcalf Multisports Ltd

Molly's Gift

Marlene Reid Centre

Community Action

ProActive Community Endeavours

Redmile Primary School

Ridgeway Primary School

SFK Multisports

Super Star Sport Midlands Limited

Tayplay Activity Camps

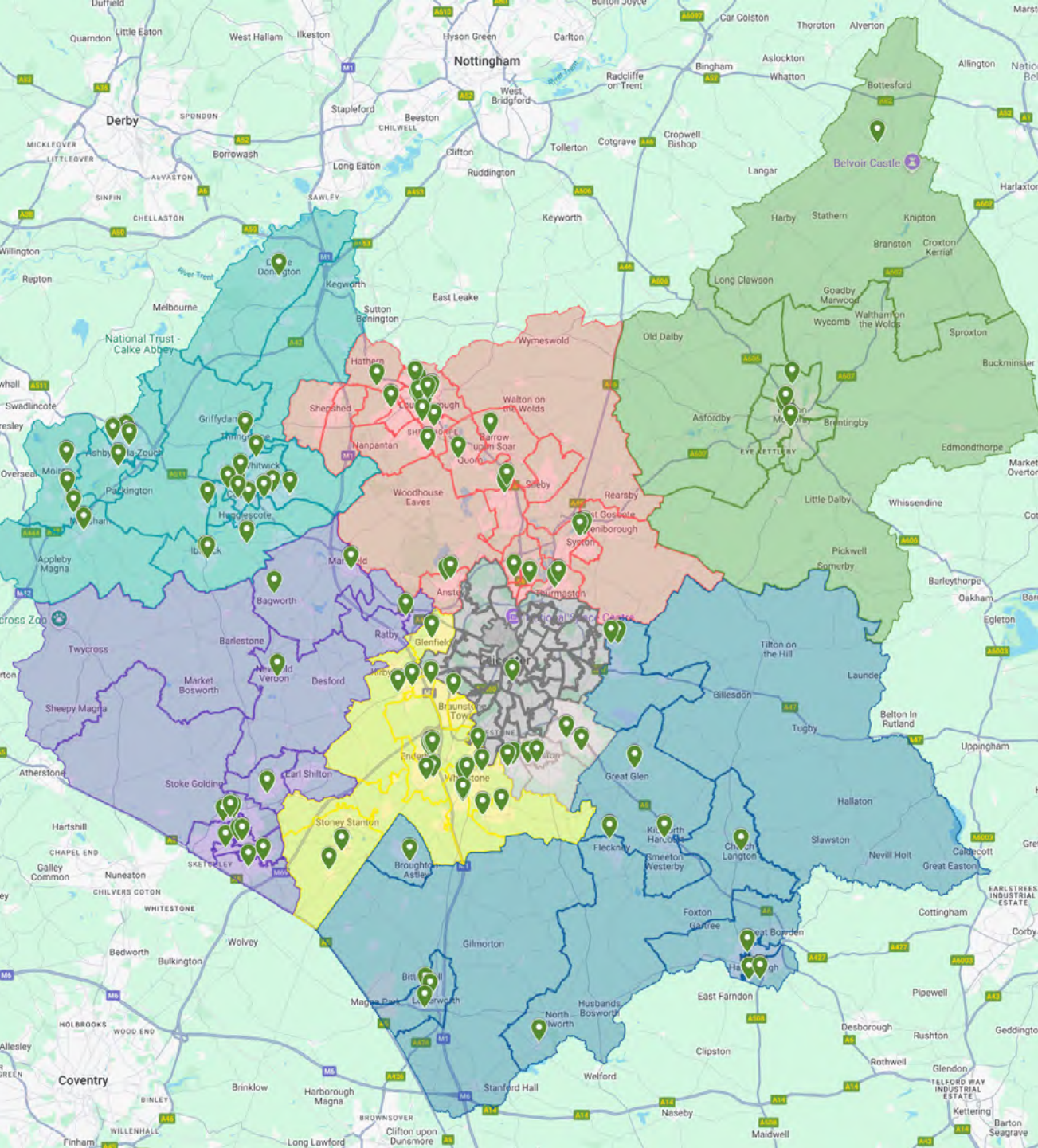
TB Sport

The Hub Educational Services CiC

The Melton Learning Hub

The Richard Moore Sports CiC

# Delivery locations 2025



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