



Hertfordshire's
Holiday Activity Programme



Hertfordshire HAF Winter 23 Case Study

Especially good SEND provision

Background & Opportunity

We know that many parents, carers, and guardians struggle to find the right SEND provision for their child. With low income as a factor in the mix, this becomes an even greater challenge. Yet, appropriate provision is not only critical for the children's well-being but can often be a vital source of respite for parents.

[Read more on the next page.](#)



Department
for Education



Hertfordshire
Community
Foundation



Approach & Impact

Hertfordshire's Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF), known locally as HAPpy continually looks to champion and learn from best-practice provision. Below is one of the outstanding examples of SEND provision from Saracens Sport Foundation.

“Naturally due to the demographic that we work with we encountered several challenges that prompted us to adapt our camp slightly. Some participants showed a preference for quieter, individual sports like curling and boccia over team sports due to discomfort with team dynamics and noisiness. Because of this, we decided to offer a diverse range of both team and individual sports in separate rooms with the support of our staff to cater to different needs.

Other challenges emerged with participants finding traditional sports like athletics overwhelming, resulting in disruptive behaviour...This prompted us to introduce alternative activities. A specific case involved a non-verbal participant with autism spectrum disorder, initially displaying distress through physical actions. Through 1:1 support and staff rotation, we discovered his fascination for curtains and cushions. Creating a designated 'comfy corner' allowed him to freely cover himself with a curtain, transforming his camp experience from distress on day one to entering camp calmly on day two.

The impact of the [HAF] programme on our organisation has allowed us to expand our projects and foster growth in different ways. The disability area within Saracens Foundation was previously limited to term-time provisions only. The programme has enabled us to extend our provision and create a new project providing crucial support to more participants in the community...[it also offers] parents a respite.

The [HAPpy] programme [also] plays a role in upskilling our staff through online training and hands-on experience for volunteers and aspiring coaches too, creating opportunities for their professional development. At [the Winter 23] camp we offered one of our past participants from the camp a work experience opportunity.



Going forward

Herts Sport & Physical Activity Partnership plans to ramp up awareness-raising marketing and communications around HAPpy's SEND offer to ensure that as many places as possible are taken up. We will also be continuing to offer robust training to support SEND provision and developing video guides for parents to encourage them to disclose as much useful information as possible. Together this will help SEND providers offer a truly tailored experience.

Top tip for providers

Although as a HAF coordinator, we're keen to hear about positive experiences around our SEND-specific camps it's equally important to tell us when things aren't going as well, so we can identify the areas where we can offer help if you need it. We have a supportive team and a strong network who can work with you on challenges.

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