

# FAQs for Parents

and guardians of children



## What is the HAF programme?

The holiday activities and food (HAF) programme provides support to children from low-income families during school holiday periods.

In Hertfordshire HAF is known as the HAPpy: Holiday Activity Programme.

## When does the programme run?

The HAPpy programme runs in the three main school holiday periods – Spring (Easter), Summer and Winter (Christmas).

## How long do camps last?

Camps last a minimum of 4 hours. Some camps run for just one day, others for multiple days.

## What kind of activities will my child do?

All camps need to offer an element of physical activity, enrichment and provide a hot meal.

## What is the aim of the HAF programme?

The aim of HAF is to support children from low-income families during school holidays by providing:

- **Healthy meals** – ensuring children who normally receive free school meals still get nutritious food outside term time.
- **Enriching activities** – such as sports, arts, trips, and learning sessions that promote physical and mental wellbeing.
- **Social opportunities** – helping children stay engaged, make friends, and avoid isolation during breaks.
- **Support for families** – including advice on nutrition, budgeting, and accessing local services.

## Who is eligible?

School age children from **Reception to Year 11** who are in receipt of **benefits related free school meals (BR-FSM)**.

## My child is in Key Stage 1 and gets free school meals – are they eligible?

All children (regardless of family income/ benefits) receive Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) in Key Stage 1 - **this does not count**.

Infant pupils who receive a free meal under UIFSM must also meet the eligibility for benefits related free school meals to be able to access a place on the HAF programme. Infants who register successfully for benefits related free school meals will also bring additional government funding to their school via the **Pupil Premium** for disadvantaged pupils.

## Does a child who has diagnosed SEND, an EHCP or an additional needs support plan, automatically qualify for the programme?

The automatic qualification for the HAF programme is children in receipt of benefits related free school meals. If a child has an EHCP or SEND but is **not in receipt of benefits related free school meals**, then they would **not automatically qualify**. Please refer to the last point of this document for information on non-eligible access to the Hertfordshire HAPpy programme.

## How do eligible families receive information about the programme?

If your child meets the eligibility criteria for HAPpy (receiving Benefits Related -FSM), you will **receive email messages from [HAPpycamps@herts.ac.uk](mailto:HAPpycamps@herts.ac.uk)** with a unique booking code and details of how to register your child and book. These messages are sent weekly in the run up to each holiday period.

## How do I register my child?

**For summer 2026 there is a new HAPpy Booking system.**

In the email with your unique booking code, there is a link to the new [HAPpy Booking system](#). You will need to create a 'parent' account' and **add your dependent children with their unique booking code(s)** before bookings open.

**Link:** <https://hertfordshire.zipporah.co.uk/Events.HAF.Live/>

## How do I book activities?

In the email with your unique booking code, there is a link to the new [HAPpy Booking system](#). When bookings open, you will be able to search and book activities via this page.

**Link:** <https://hertfordshire.zipporah.co.uk/Events.HAF.Live/>

## Can I register my child's details when I book an activity?

**Short answer – NO**

With the new HAPpy Booking system, **you must register the details of your child/ children before you start to book a HAPpy Camp**. You will need their unique HAPpy Booking code to register a child.

## When should I register my child's details?

We recommend **you do this immediately when you get the child's unique booking code**. This will save time when bookings open and allow us to help you in good time if there is any difficulty.

## Can my child attend more than one camp?

A child can attend as many days as you wish **however they cannot attend more than one camp per day**.

## Our preferred activity is fully booked – what can we do?

Popular activities can be full booked quite quickly. Please use the waiting list function on the booking page to register your interest in the activity. If a place becomes available, you will be notified and will have the opportunity to book.

## My child's school isn't hosting a HAPpy camp; can we attend other camps nearby?

The unique booking code can be used to book any HAPpy camps which are suitable for the age and needs of your child/young person.

## What if I haven't been sent any information?

You should look out for your booking code emails from [HAPpyCamps@herts.ac.uk](mailto:HAPpyCamps@herts.ac.uk) up to 5 weeks before the holidays start. If you don't receive the emails you will need to contact [HAPpyCamps@herts.ac.uk](mailto:HAPpyCamps@herts.ac.uk)

We will ask you for personal details in order to confirm your child's eligibility. Eligibility checks can take up to 2 working days.

## How will I know/remember what camps/dates I have booked?

You will receive a confirmation email from [HAPpyCamps@herts.ac.uk](mailto:HAPpyCamps@herts.ac.uk) any time you book or cancel an activity. This email will contain details of the booking you made you have made or cancelled.

To get started, you will create an account on the new [HAPpy Booking system](#) and register each of your children using their unique HAPpy Booking Code. You can login to your account on the HAPpy Booking system at any time to see and manage your bookings in 'View a Child's Booking History'.

### **I no longer want my booking, but I know someone else who could benefit from it, can they take my place?**

Yes – you can cancel any bookings before the date they are due to take place. Cancelling allows someone on the waiting list to be notified and allows them to book an available space.

### **How do I cancel my booking?**

You will receive a Booking confirmation email from [HAPpyCamps@herts.ac.uk](mailto:HAPpyCamps@herts.ac.uk) any time you book an activity. In this email there will be a link to the HAPpy Booking system where you can cancel the booking.

Alternatively, you can login directly to your account on the [HAPpy Booking system](#) at any time to see and manage your current bookings.

### **Can I attend a camp in Hertfordshire if my child attends school outside of the county?**

If you live in Hertfordshire but your child accesses education outside of Herts, you will not automatically receive the booking information. Government funded HAF activities take place across England. If your child is eligible, you will receive information about HAF activities in the local authority where your child attends school.

If your child attends school outside the county but would benefit from attending a Hertfordshire camp, please refer to the last point of this document for information on non-eligible access to the Hertfordshire HAPpy programme.

### **My child has complex SEND needs - can they attend any camp?**

Several organisations run camps for children with more complex SEND needs. When booking online, you can find the names of these camps are prefixed with 'SEND' or 'SEN'.

Please read the camp description carefully to consider if the environment will be suitable for your child's needs. If you are unsure, camp organisers welcome discussion with parents before a booking is made. You should detail your child's needs fully on their booking form. This will help organisers of the camps to manage any adjustments that may be needed to make sure your child has a positive experience.

### **My child's SEND needs are low - can they attend any camp?**

Yes - Please read the camp description carefully to consider if the environment will be suitable for your child's needs. If you are unsure, camp organisers welcome discussion with parents before a booking is made.

When booking online, make sure you detail your child's needs fully on their booking form. This will help providers of the camps to manage any adjustments that may be needed to make sure your child has a positive experience.

### **My children don't automatically qualify, is there a way for them to access the programme?**

There are limited opportunities for a child who doesn't meet the eligibility criteria (attending school in Hertfordshire and receiving benefits related free school meals) to access the HAPpy programme. Places are allocated by referral on a case-by-case basis. Applications may be considered from but not limited to include children who are vulnerable or in need, looked-after, on child protection or support plans, with SEND, or supported by family services.

Only a professional working with the child/family can make a referral. We do not accept referral requests from a parent or guardian. Please contact the HSP Team via [haf@herts.ac.uk](mailto:haf@herts.ac.uk) to discuss submitting a referral.

### **Further information**

In Hertfordshire, the HAF programme is coordinated on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council by the Herts Sport & Physical Activity Partnership (HSP).

Please visit our website for more information about HAPpy Camps <https://sportinherts.org.uk/happy>

If you have a question about HAPpy Camps, please email: [HAPpyCamps@herts.ac.uk](mailto:HAPpyCamps@herts.ac.uk) or Telephone 01707 284 229