

# BRING IT ON BRUM 2021

An Impact and Embedded Process Evaluation  
of Birmingham's HAF Programme

January 2022

## Authors:

Professor Greta Defeyter,  
Professor Paul Stretesky,  
Dr Gillian Pepper, &  
Dr Jackie Shinwell



Northumbria  
University  
NEWCASTLE



Birmingham  
City Council

healthy living  
RESEARCH • TRAINING • EVALUATION

## Contents

Executive Summary .....	4
Acknowledgements .....	6
Chapter 1: Review of Existing literature on HAF and holiday clubs in the UK .....	6
1.1 The need for Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) .....	6
1.1.1 Background: .....	6
1.2 Household Food Insecurity and Dietary Intake.....	8
1.3 Holiday Hunger .....	9
1.4 Health and Wellbeing of Children and Parents.....	10
1.5 Poverty, Food Insecurity and Educational Attainment .....	10
1.6 Childcare .....	11
1.7 The benefits of HAF/Holiday Clubs .....	12
Chapter 2: HAF in Birmingham: Bring it on Brum Evaluation .....	18
2.1 Impact Evaluation .....	18
2.2 Process Evaluation .....	19
2.3 Overall Approach, Aims, Objectives and Research Questions .....	20
2.4 Aims and Objectives:.....	20
2.5 Research Questions: .....	21
2.6 Methods.....	21
2.7 Impact Evaluation .....	21
2.7.1 The Embedded Process Evaluation .....	22
2.7.2 Ethics.....	24
2.7.3 Methods.....	24
3. Chapter 3 Impact Evaluation Findings .....	28
3.1 Parent Survey.....	28
4. Chapter 4 Process Evaluation Findings .....	39
4.1 Qualitative Findings from interviews and focus groups.....	39
4.1.1 Theme 1: Need for Bring in on Brum (HAF) in Birmingham .....	39
4.1.2 Theme 2: Planning, implementation and delivery of Bring it on Brum.....	43
4.1.3 Theme 3: Food provision during summer 2021 .....	52
4.1.4 Theme 4: Future Provision of Food and Cooking and Nutrition Related Activities.....	62
4.1.5 Theme 5: Marketing.....	68
4.1.6 Theme 6: Perceived Benefits of Bring it on Brum .....	72
4.1.7 Theme 7: Recommendations regarding future delivery of Bring it on Brum.....	80
4.2 Post card Analysis .....	83
4.3 Menu Analysis.....	93
4.3.1 Future Recommendations to Improve Adherence to School Food Standards.....	94

4.4 Nutritional Education Delivered via Nutri Troops:.....	94
4.5 Holiday Club Leader Survey .....	95
4.5.1 Activities: .....	96
4.5.2 Nutritional Education Sessions. ....	97
4.5.3 Food & Meals Served: .....	97
4.5.4 Wasted Food:.....	99
5. Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Delivery .....	100
5.1 Infrastructure, processes, and systems .....	101
5.2 Meals .....	101
5.3 Activities and Nutritional Education .....	102
Appendix 1 Theory of change: Implementing HAF at a Local Authority Level.....	103
References .....	104

## Executive Summary

The Healthy Living Lab was commissioned by Birmingham City Council to evaluate Birmingham's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme, named 'Bring it on Brum'. This was the largest Local Authority HAF programme in England in 2021, and aimed to address holiday hunger, inactivity, social isolation, childcare needs, learning and school readiness among some of the most vulnerable children and young people in Birmingham.

Desktop analysis of management information showed a high demand and uptake of Bring it on Brum, with **243 providers having delivered 278 holiday clubs to 12,033 primary school children and 4,484 secondary school children, plus a further 15,483 non-eligible children**, in the most deprived neighbourhoods across Birmingham.

There was clear evidence that Bring it on Brum delivered a range of positive outcomes for children, parents/carers, and local communities. **Children attending 31-100 hours of Bring it on Brum (48%), and children attending more than 100 hours of Bring it on Brum (92%) were more likely to engage in 60 minutes of Moderate to Vigorous Physical Activity (MVPA) for at least 4 days each week across the summer holiday compared to children who did not attend Bring it on Brum (36%).** There was also a strong, positive correlation between the level of Bring it on Brum attendance and children's engagement in MVPA, showing that as children's attendance increased so did children's engagement in MVPA. Analysis of the qualitative data collected in children's focus groups supported the content analysis of children's postcards, showing that Bring it on Brum provided children with multiple opportunities to participate in a range of physical activities and enrichment activities that would not have normally been available to them during the school holiday. Children also reported that holiday club attendance was fun, provided them with opportunities to socialise with friends, and enjoyed the novelty of receiving individual packed lunches. Holiday club leaders found the delivery of physical activities and enrichment activities (e.g arts and crafts, day trips) easy to deliver and reported high levels of participation. The qualitative data from parents, children and holiday club staff specifically mentioned the provision of days out to the theatre, amusement parks etc, that would not have been possible for many children to attend without Bring it on Brum.

The parent survey analysis provided further support of the positive impact of Bring it on Brum. Firstly, **mean household food security was significantly better (by 0.4 points,  $p=0.03$ ) for households with children attending Bring it on Brum compared to non-attendees.** It was particularly noteworthy that **Bring it on Brum attendance significantly improved household food security in households living in disadvantaged communities, not eligible for means-tested Free School Meals**, suggesting that the Street Games approach supported many more children from going hungry. Parents in Birmingham also reported difficulties in accessing affordable childcare, and whilst accessing affordable childcare remained challenging for parents, this difficulty decreased as children's engagement in Bring it on Brum increased ( $r=0.08$ ,  $p = 0.07$ ). Also, parents whose children attended Bring it on Brum self-

reported significantly less stress compared to parents whose children attended no holiday club ( $t(434) = 2.9, p = 0.04$ ). Parents perceived their children to be safer whilst attending a Bring it on Brum (80%) compared to their local neighbourhood (51%). Likewise, 74% of parents thought that Bring it on Brum kept children from participating in anti-social behaviour, and 76% thought that Bring it on Brum clubs supported children's wellbeing (76%), confidence (76%), supported school readiness (63%), and were enjoyable (85%). Overall parental satisfaction was high with 95% of parents reporting that they were very likely to send their children to Bring it on Brum in 2022.

The findings on the nutritional outcomes were mixed. **Analysis of 167 food menus showed that median adherence to School Food Standards was 70%, with only four menus analysed meeting all School Food Standards.** The Holiday club leader survey rated in-house food provision as better than meals provided centrally by a catering company hired by Birmingham City Council. The parent survey showed that 62% of parents rated the food served at clubs as being nutritious, and 60% of parents thought that the food provided adhered to food and dietary requirements. Despite different views on the quality of meals, with children being the most vocal about the food provided, **71% of clubs reported no or low food wastage.** The parent survey showed evidence that clubs did not consistently deliver nutritional education on a daily basis, with only **30% of parents reporting that holiday clubs provided opportunities for their children to be involved in hands on food activities and only 25% reporting that clubs improved children's knowledge and confidence to prepare food.** Where nutritional education was delivered, either face-to-face or online, children reported high levels of enjoyment and learning.

The club leader survey showed that despite Covid, 90% of delivery organisations were either very prepared or somewhat prepared to deliver Bring it on Brum. The range of children clubs targeted is particularly pleasing with 32% clubs specifically targeting 'looked after children', 30% of clubs targeting children with an Education, Health and Care plan, and 35% of children assessed as being in need. **All clubs surveyed planned to deliver Bring it on Brum in 2022.** The qualitative data from holiday club leaders found that clubs were quick to adapt to the challenging context to deliver Bring it on Brum, especially in relation to coronavirus. Club leaders welcomed the new relationships and partnerships formed with other organisations as a direct result of participating in Bring it on Brum, and they were particularly pleased to either re-establish, or establish new, relationships with parents and children in their local communities.

## Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the StreetGames team who graciously hosted us at their facilities and helped to facilitate access to holiday clubs. We were inspired by your caring and purpose. We also thank the holiday club leaders who allowed us access to their clubs during a very busy time of year. We know it often meant that you had to go to bed a bit later in the evening to meet all of your daily club obligations. We would also like to thank the holiday club staff, parents, carers, children and young people for giving us their valuable time during a hectic and busy time of year, especially during the Covid-19 Pandemic. We particularly enjoyed our time learning about your lives and experiences. Finally, we would like to thank Birmingham City Council and StreetGames for supporting our evaluation in a way that allowed us to conduct our work in an independent atmosphere. Without your support this evaluation would simply not have been possible. Finally, we would like to thank our Northumbria University internship students Rob Oxley, Saffy Roach, Charlotte Bell and Hanna Retallick who helped code hours of transcripts, menus and survey data.

## Chapter 1: Review of Existing literature on HAF and holiday clubs in the UK

Chapter 1 will present a collation of peer-reviewed articles and the 'grey' literature on the implementation and impact of the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme with reference to the wider context under which HAF currently operates. The review will begin by providing contextual information in relation to poverty in the UK and examine the need for HAF. This review will then explore the current literature on the implementation and delivery of holiday clubs in deprived communities across the UK and conclude by discussing peer-reviewed studies on the impact of HAF/holiday club attendance for children, their families, and communities.

### 1.1 The need for Holiday Activities and Food (HAF)

#### 1.1.1 Background:

In the UK, approximately 4.3 million children are living in poverty. Evidence published by the Food Foundation (2017) suggests that the UK leads all of Europe (by a significant margin) when it comes to childhood hunger (see also (Lambie-Mumford & Sims, 2018)). Nearly one in ten UK children face severe food insecurity, a term that is often used technically and summarised numerically to measure the availability and accessibility of adequate food, which is more than double the rate in most other European countries such as Italy, Portugal, Greece, Slovenia, Spain, Hungary and Latvia (The Food Foundation, 2017, p. 4). Furthermore, the level of food insecurity in the UK has also worsened in recent years, particularly following the outbreak of COVID in 2019 (Loopstra, 2020; Loopstra et al., 2019), with 41% of children eligible for free school meals (FSM) experiencing some level of food insecurity during the coronavirus pandemic lockdown (Goudie & McIntyre, 2021). Children have also experienced disruption to their education and social environment with numerous reports showing an increase in poor dietary habits, poor mental health and wellbeing and a reduction in physical activity (Bates et al., 2020; Brooks et al., 2020; Defeyter et al., 2020; James et al., 2021; Van Lancker & Parolin, 2020). There is emerging evidence that suggests that inequality has widened even further as a result of the Covid pandemic, with the financial situation of almost 4.7 million households deteriorating (Collard et al., 2021) and modelling data suggesting that the position of many households is going to deteriorate even further in 2022.

Within the context of UK childhood hunger, the problem of “holiday hunger” has recently gained attention among politicians, the media and the public. The phrase holiday hunger has been used extensively by the British media (e.g., “Holiday hunger should be the shame of this government and it isn’t”-*The Guardian* (Foster, 2018); “They hadn’t eaten all day: food banks tackle holiday hunger – *The Guardian* (Perraudin, 2018) “Emma Thompson: my fight to end Easter holiday hunger for 4m British schoolchildren”- *The Times* (Griffiths, 2019); “Nearly four in five teachers say holiday hunger is failing to improve” –*Independent* (Osborne, 2018); “School holiday hunger: Parents 'living on cereal', says MP”- *The BBC* (2019). Despite the widespread use of this term, it is not always clear what it means. In our book, titled “Holiday hunger in the UK”, we define holiday hunger “as a situation that occurs when economically disadvantaged households with school-aged children experience food insecurity during the school holidays (Long et al., 2022)

Holiday clubs, managed by local organisations, are a response to holiday hunger in the UK (Mann et al., 2018). In 2017, the All-Party-Parliamentary Group on School Food asked the Healthy Living Lab to map holiday provision across the UK to gain an understanding of what was being done about holiday hunger at the local level. The researchers found hundreds of holiday clubs had been established across England and many existed to provide support to children living in disadvantaged areas (Mann et al., 2018). Until recently, holiday clubs were largely viewed as spaces for feeding children during the summer (Mann et al., 2018). Emerging research shows, however, that these clubs offer communities a means to organise and provide a variety of material goods, services and information to children, caregivers, parents, volunteers, and staff (Stretesky, Defeyter, Long, Sattar, et al., 2020).

Research shows that holiday clubs provide children with a safe place to be physically active during the summer (Mann, 2019; Shinwell, 2019; Shinwell et al., 2021). Holiday clubs may prepare pupils for return to school, aid parents with childcare so that they can continue to work in paid employment during the school holidays, increase the wellbeing of children and parents and provide communities with the opportunity of improving dietary intake (Crilley, 2021; Defeyter et al., 2015a, 2019; Holley & Mason, 2019; Long, Stretesky, et al., 2020; Mann et al., 2020; Morgan, McConnon, et al., 2019a; Shinwell, 2019; Shinwell et al., 2021; Stretesky, Defeyter, Long, Ritchie, et al., 2020; Stretesky, Defeyter, Long, Sattar, et al., 2020). Holiday clubs have even been found to signpost parents to resources and other community services, such as healthcare, financial services, and housing advice (Long et al., 2022; Mann, 2019; Shinwell, 2019; Stretesky, Defeyter, Long, Sattar, et al., 2020). In short, it is clear that holiday clubs do more than simply feed children.

More recently, the Department for Education (DfE) recognised the need for holiday provision to provide children with access to activities and nutritious food and funded several pilot Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) projects, commencing in 2018. This involved local authorities recruiting community organisations to deliver free, healthy food and activities for children during the school summer holidays. Following an evaluation of a number of HAF pilot projects, the DfE announced an expansion of the HAF programme across all 151 higher-tier Local Authorities in England in 2021, at a cost of approximately £220M p.a. (Department for Education, 2021a). The four main aims of HAF are 1) to improve the nutrition of children who are eligible for benefits-related FSM, in the holidays, 2) To increase healthy behaviours (e.g., participation in physical and enriching activities), 3) To improve school readiness, and 4) To improve parent’s confidence and behaviour around purchasing and preparing healthy meals on a sustainable basis (Department for Education, 2021a). The HAF programme is free for children who receive benefits-related free school meals. Whereas any children not eligible for and in receipt of means-tested free school meals can also attend but they should pay to do so, or their places paid for by alternative funding. Local authorities can either

coordinate their local HAF programme themselves or work with another organisation to coordinate the provision on their behalf (Department for Education, 2021a). Notably, HAF 2021 was larger in terms of funding and scope to prior HAF programmes and included some new programme outcomes; including engaging families in nutritional education, budgeting, providing better referral systems to other services, and offering increased flexibility in the funding terms for Local Authorities to provide HAF for a week during the Easter and Christmas holidays.

## 1.2 Household Food Insecurity and Dietary Intake

In the UK the terms “food insecurity”, “food poverty” and “hunger” are often used interchangeably to describe those who meet the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations definition of food insecurity, defined as: “the inability to acquire or consume an adequate quality or sufficient quantity of food in socially acceptable ways, or the uncertainty that one will be able to do so” (FAO, 2015, p. 53). The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) further categorises food insecurity as mild, moderate or severe (FAO, 2015). Those suffering mild food insecurity worry about their ability to obtain food, moderate food insecurity occurs when people start compromising on the quality and variety of food they eat and reduce the quantity of food they consume, and severe food insecurity occurs when people experience hunger (FAO, 2015). Current estimates from the FAO suggest that 10.4% of the UK population, some 8.4m people over the age of 15 years, live in moderately or severely food insecure households, with approximately half experiencing the most severe form of food insecurity, and 20% living in homes that lack the funds to purchase food. Furthermore, one in five children under the age of 15 years are estimated to live in households where there isn’t enough money to buy food, with 4% of UK children not eating three meals a day (Pereira et al., 2017). Furthermore, the level of food insecurity in the UK has worsened in recent years (Loopstra, Reeves & Tarasuk, 2019; Loopstra, 2020), with 41% of children eligible for FSM experiencing some level of food insecurity during the coronavirus lockdown (Goudie & McIntyre, 2021). A more detailed discussion on this topic in relation to HAF can be found in Long, Defeyter & Stretesky (2022).

Dowler et al., (2001) identified three main factors that influence food (in)security status: (i) affordability of food and sufficient income to purchase food; (ii) accessibility of shops to buy a range of food at a reasonable price; and (iii) knowledge of food and food skills. Because low-income households spend a greater proportion of their income on food compared to better off families, the price of food has a significant impact on low-income families’ food purchasing abilities. An analysis of the cost of complying with the UK Government’s food-based guidelines contained in the Eatwell Guide indicated that low-income families would need to spend nearly three quarters of their income on food (Scott et al., 2018). Whilst low-income families considered a healthy diet was important, and 60% of parents and carers indicated that they would change their children’s diets and buy more fruit and vegetables, their lack of income meant they were unable to do so.

Likewise, analysis of data contained in the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (2020) found that consumption of fruit and vegetables was below the 5-A-Day recommendation in all groups and oily fish consumption was well below the recommendation. Furthermore, intakes of free sugars exceeded recommendations in all age groups and only 4% children met recommended fibre intake. These findings broadly align with prior results of this survey, but it is important to note that the survey was not administered as the height of lockdown and other surveys report a deterioration in children’s dietary intake, especially children in low-income households (e.g. (James et al., 2021).

Recent research conducted in Northern Ireland suggests that household food insecurity may be a dynamic process and that people may move in, out and along the continuum of household food insecurity (Shinwell et al., 2021). For some families, experiencing household food insecurity may be cyclical, for example towards the end of the month when money is low, whilst for others, a shock to their income such as losing their job, increased energy prices, or a relationship breakdown may



result in experiencing episodes of food insecurity. A range of tactics are adopted by people to cope with having insufficient money for food. This includes, at the most basic level, shopping in multiple stores for food to take advantage of special offers to make money go further and eating food of poorer nutritional value. However, as the level of food insecurity becomes more severe, tactics change to seeking (and reciprocating) support from friends and family, to cutting down food portion sizes and parents and carers often, and children occasionally, skipping meals altogether (Gooseman et al., 2019b; Shinwell & Defeyter, 2021). However, the strategy of last resort used by many facing household food insecurity is to seek support from a food bank (Loopstra & Tarasuk, 2015; Shinwell & Defeyter, 2021).

### 1.3 Holiday Hunger

There is evidence of low-income families being at risk of experiencing holiday hunger in the UK. Oral evidence presented to the APPG on Hunger in 2017, showed that during the summer, food shopping bills of parents whose children receive free school meals increase by an average of £30-40 per week and that parents will often compromise on the quality of food they eat, will eat their children's leftovers and skip meals in order to cope with the extra pressure of the summer break (Andrew Forsey, 2017). This evidence reflects earlier research which highlighted that during the school holidays food shopping bills increased and parents compromised on the quality of food they bought, relying on offers in supermarkets to feed their children which often meant buying food of a lower nutritional quality (Defeyter et al., 2015a; Gill & Sharma, 2004). However, it is not only children who are eligible for FSM that are at risk of experiencing holiday food insecurity, the oral evidence to the APPG on Hunger highlighted that up to 2 million children from families whose parents "work for their poverty" may also be going hungry in the holidays (Forsey, 2017).

The risk of low-income families experiencing food insecurity during the school holidays was further reinforced by a pilot study by (Long et al., 2017). Using the six-item food insecurity questionnaire, developed in the USA, to identify households experiencing food insecurity, this research examined the food (in)security status of parents (N=38) attending holiday provision clubs alongside their children in Wales. The findings established that 58% (N=22) of parents identified as food secure, 18% (N=7) as food insecure without hunger and 24% (N=9) as food insecure with hunger (Long et al., 2017). All parents, from both food secure and food insecure households, agreed that they spend more on food during the summer holidays than during term time and some parents reported that without a summer holiday club, they would not have been able to afford to buy food during the summer. Importantly, the researchers found that holiday clubs disproportionately help food insecure households and attenuate food insecurity for these families.

Similarly, more than 90% of parents (N=72), in a mixed methods study examining the experiences of food insecure families in London, reported that in the previous year, they had worried about having enough money for food and had run out of food (Harvey, 2016). Parents also reported that they could not afford to buy healthy food for their children and had reduced their food intake and had skipped meals so that their children could eat. Nonetheless, despite parents' best efforts to protect their children from food insecurity, in qualitative interviews conducted with children (N=19) in the same study, children indicated that they were aware that there was not enough money for food at home and that they had gone to bed hungry. Children also reported that they were more likely to miss meals during the weekends and holidays when school meals and after school clubs were not available. Furthermore, teachers in the UK have also reported that they are aware that low-income families struggle during the summer holidays. In a survey conducted by the NUT teaching union, more than half of the 619 respondents said there were children in their school who did not get enough to eat during the summer holidays and the number of children who were affected was increasing (National Union of Teachers, 2017).

## 1.4 Health and Wellbeing of Children and Parents

Under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, signatory states are required to ensure a standard of living of every child that is adequate for their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development (The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, 2003). Nevertheless, a recent review of food insecurity in advanced capitalist nations shows that it is widely recognised that insufficient household income is associated with negative outcomes for children and adults across all domains including mental and physical health, life expectancy, social wellbeing, cognition, and educational attainment (Long et al., 2020).

A survey conducted by the Royal College of Paediatricians and Child Health (RCPCH) and Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG), highlighted that 99.6% of paediatricians (N=265) considered poverty contributes to the ill health of a child (RCPCH & CPAG, 2017). Moreover, families living in poverty have insufficient income to obtain a healthy diet. Nutritionally poor food tends to be cheaper and have higher fat and / or sugar content than more healthy food items. It is, therefore, unsurprising that there is a greater prevalence of overweight and obese children in the poorest families (Donkin & Marmot, 2016). Using data from the Millennium Cohort Study, (Goisis et al., 2015) examined longitudinal data of children aged 5 years and 11 years (N=9,384). Their findings illustrate that the prevalence of obesity is considerably higher amongst poorer children than their more affluent peers. While there was no evidence of an association between household income and weight of the child at age 5 years, there were emerging inequalities by age 11 years, and a poor diet and lack of physical activity are contributing risk factors (Goisis et al., 2015). Moreover, high levels of obesity in children are associated with poorer health outcomes in adulthood; obesity and being overweight are linked to a wide range of diseases including diabetes, asthma, hypertension, cancer, heart disease and stroke (Marmot, 2010; Public Health England, 2015). Finally, a recent study published in the BMJ (Open) shows an increase in infant mortality with body weight status. However, this sustained and unprecedented rise in infant mortality in England from 2014-2017 has not been experienced evenly across the population. In the most deprived local authorities, the previously declining trend in infant mortality reversed and mortality rose, leading to an additional 24 infant deaths per 100,000 live births per year, relative to the previous trend (Taylor-Robinson et al., 2019a). The findings suggest that about a third of the increases in infant mortality between 2014 and 2017 may be attributed to rising child poverty, equivalent to an extra 172 infant deaths (Taylor-Robinson et al., 2019b).

Whilst growing up in poverty can have a negative impact on a child's physical and mental health, there exists an association between household income and children's outcomes in terms of cognitive, social, and emotional behavioural development (Cooper & Stewart, 2017). Moreover, a qualitative study conducted with children living in poverty in the UK illustrated that a limited household income restricts children's access to services and opportunities, and these have a wider impact on their social relations (Ridge, 2002). Children find it difficult to form friendships and fear social exclusion as they are unable to share similar experiences with their friendship groups. (Ridge, 2013) further argues that childhood is becoming increasingly commodified and the participation of children in social activities and clubs is controlled by the cost of the activities and other factors including access and transport. Children living in poverty are often confined to their neighbourhoods which frequently lack adequate and affordable resources and opportunities to be able to socialise with their friends. Thus, according to Ridge (2002,2013) poverty is a localised experience and children from disadvantaged families are restricted to what is available within their neighbourhood.

## 1.5 Poverty, Food Insecurity and Educational Attainment

As discussed above, children growing up in low-income households are likely to have a poor diet and are more likely to be overweight or obese with associated poorer health outcomes both physically, mentally, and socially compared to their more affluent peers. Research has investigated the effect of living in food insecure households on the educational attainment and social and emotional well-being of children. (Johnson & Markowitz, 2018) analysed data on the results of 3,700 children's

reading and maths skills using tests specially designed for the Early Childhood Longitudinal-Birth (ECLS-B) study and teachers' analysis of children's social and emotional well-being. Data on parental levels of household food insecurity were collected at three time points (when children were aged nine months, when they were two years of age and when they started kindergarten) using the USA Household Food Security Survey Module (HFSSM). The authors found that children who experienced food insecurity performed less well both academically, socially, and emotionally than children who were food secure. Furthermore, children who experienced repeated episodes of household food insecurity, and the greater the frequency of exposure to household food insecurity, the less well children performed in tests.

Using data on children in receipt of FSM as a proxy for disadvantage, data from National Pupil Database (NPD) which contains data on children's performance in tests and teacher assessments when they start school, at Key Stages 1 and 2 and GCSE exam results, researchers found that by the time children reach the age of 16 years, children who were in receipt of free school meals were 24.3 months behind children who did not (Andrews et al., 2017). More recent analysis of the data in the NPD and FSM recipient status suggests that at the current rate of progress, it will take more than 500 years to narrow the gap in attainment between children from different socio-economic backgrounds (Hutchinson et al., 2019).

### 1.6 Childcare

An additional challenge for families during the school holidays is childcare provision. A survey of leaders of holiday clubs, located in deprived communities across the UK (N=325), illustrated that along with the need for food provision, childcare provision and a safe place for children to play formed the top three needs for their communities during the school holidays (Mann, 2019). The Childcare Act 2006 requires local authorities in England and Wales to ensure sufficient childcare is available for parents with children up to the age of 14 years. Nevertheless, a recent survey carried out by Family Childcare Trust (2019) illustrated that there is a lack of affordable holiday clubs and shortages of childcare across some regions of the UK. The most notable gaps in provision are for children aged 12 years or over, for families living in rural areas and for children with special education needs and disabilities (Cottell et al., 2019). The need for childcare provision during the school holidays was further highlighted in a survey of head teachers of primary and secondary schools in England: 39% (N=424) of head teachers stated that parents and carers require access to holiday clubs to support their working and caring commitments during the school holidays (Diss & Jarvie, 2016). Yet, despite the perceived need for holiday provision, only 29% (N=315) of schools offer additional provision during the school holidays with head teachers citing funding and lack of staffing capacity as the main barriers to providing holiday provision for families (Diss & Jarvie, 2016). The challenge of sourcing adequate and affordable childcare provision during the school holidays has been highlighted by a survey conducted by CPAG in Scotland (2015). The survey of parents (N=223) living in Glasgow cited the high cost of childcare provision as one of the main challenges of the school holidays, with many out of school providers oversubscribed or unavailable across all regions of the city (Butcher, 2015). Moreover, a recent investigation by a joint Department for Work and Pensions and Education Select Committee of the House of Commons into poverty during the school summer holiday period heard evidence from parents who said that the requirement to pay child care costs up front and then claim them back through Universal Credit prevented them from being able to work during the summer holiday period and the absence of FSM meant they relied on food aid from food banks to feed their children during the summer holidays (House of Commons, 2019).

A survey commissioned by the Family and Childcare Trust highlighted that families adopt a number of approaches to address their childcare needs in the school holidays, which include: using formal childcare provided by local authorities and the private sector; using informal holiday camps and activities; adopting shift parenting by using the annual leave of both parents to cover holidays; using informal care provided by extended families and friends; and committing to term time only work

(Cottell & Fiaferana, 2018). Moreover, while childcare is a constant challenge for some families, the length of the school summer holiday creates a significant challenge for families to be able to source affordable and consistent childcare, which in turn creates additional financial and emotional pressures for families.

### 1.7 The benefits of HAF/Holiday Clubs

The previous section discussed several factors regarding the need for HAF during the school holidays. In this section, studies focussing on the multi-faceted benefits of participating in holiday clubs will be discussed. A number of studies have shown that the provision of food at holiday clubs has the potential to make a difference to family food and finances by alleviating financial strains on household budgets (Defeyter et al., 2015a; Graham et al., 2016; Morgan, Melendez-Torres, et al., 2019; Shinwell & Defeyter, 2021; Stretesky, Defeyter, Long, Ritchie, et al., 2020). Other studies have shown, holiday provision has the potential to reduce the risk of families experiencing household food insecurity, which has been discussed earlier in this literature review (Holley et al., 2019; Long et al., 2018), and improving children's dietary intake (Crilley et al., 2022; Mann, 2019; Shinwell, 2019). In addition, holiday provision offers numerous additional resources that improve the wellbeing for parents, children, volunteers, and staff (Defeyter et al., 2018b; Stretesky, Defeyter, Long, Sattar, et al., 2020). A summary of peer-reviewed research on the impact of attendance at holiday provision in the UK is presented below in Table 1.1.

In addition to the published academic literature on holiday provision, there are several third sector reports that focus on various outcomes for families and the communities in which these clubs operate. Many of these case studies feature in *Holiday Hunger in the UK: Local Responses to Childhood Food Insecurity* (Long, Defeyter & Stretesky, 2022). Details of example holiday programmes, abstracts of research and policy papers can be found in *Holiday Programmes: Activity and Food* at <https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/takeontomorrow/it-is-time/holiday-activity-and-food-programmes>. Further details on how holiday clubs have adjusted their mode of delivery as a result of Covid social distancing rules are emerging in the literature (Bayes et al., 2021; Long, Defeyter & Stretesky, 2022), as are a number of case studies detailing approaches to holiday provision during Covid by the Governments of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland (Long, Defeyter & Stretesky, 2022). Finally, little is known about the modes of delivering nutritional education within HAF (Round et al., 2021.) .

Table 1 1. Summary of peer-reviewed research on the impact of attendance at holiday provision in the UK

Author, year	Aim of study	Sample	Data collection	Context	Key findings
Defeyter et al., (2015)	To determine the impacts of holiday breakfast club participation and investigate potential areas for future development	Children: <i>N</i> =17; Parents/ Carers: <i>N</i> =18; and Holiday club staff: <i>N</i> =15	Semi-structured interviews	North West England and Northern Ireland	A need for holiday food provision and revealed a multitude of nutritional, social, and financial benefits for those who accessed holiday breakfast clubs.
Graham et al. (2016)	To examine the views of holiday club staff on the need for and benefits of holiday food provision and potential areas for development	Holiday club staff: <i>N</i> =14	Semi-structured interviews	Wales and South of England	Families were perceived to be facing food insecurity and isolation during the school holidays. Holiday clubs are a valuable source of support for children and adults providing food, activities, and learning experiences. Highlighted areas for improvement in delivery of provision.
Shinwell & Defeyter (2017)	To investigate whether summer learning loss in word reading and spelling occurs in primary school aged children living in areas of high deprivation in England and Scotland	Children: <i>N</i> = 77	WRAT 4	England and Scotland	Performance in spelling declined when children returned to school after the summer holiday. However, after seven weeks of learning children caught up and exceeded levels achieved in spelling prior to the summer break. Learning loss did not occur in relation to word reading.
Long et al., (2018)	To investigate if holiday clubs have the potential to reduce food insecurity among households in the UK.	Parents/carers: <i>N</i> =38	Self-completing survey	Wales, South of England and Scotland	42% (16 out of 38 respondents) of children come from households defined as “food insecure” and 24% (9 out of 38 respondents) come from households that are “food insecure with hunger.” Holiday clubs can play an important role in mitigating household food insecurity.

Author, year	Aim of study	Sample	Data collection	Context	Key findings
Mann et al. (2018)	To investigate whether holiday clubs are serving the most deprived communities in England and Wales	Holiday club staff: <i>N</i> = 428	Self-completing online survey	England and Wales	Holiday clubs are likely to be located in deprived areas where there are a high percentage of minority ethnic residents, low average income, high levels of childhood deprivation and unemployed single parent households
Defeyter et al (2019).	Policy paper on the government removing inequalities in children's access to holiday clubs	<i>N/A</i>		UK	Policy recommendations that the root cause of poverty should be addressed but that in the interim, holiday provision should be universal and available during all school summer holidays and not just during the summer break.
Gooseman, Defeyter, & Graham, (2019)	To investigate the existence, impact and potential solutions of holiday hunger	Primary school staff: <i>N</i> =12	Semi-structured interviews	North East England	Year-round hardship as well as holiday hunger exists. The study identified a need for a multi-agency approach to address the complex needs and provide support to families.
Holley et al., (2019)	To examine what opportunities are provided by community holiday sports clubs which include free food and challenges of delivering food provision.	Holiday hub leaders: <i>N</i> =15	Focus groups x 2	UK	Benefits of holiday clubs include alleviation of food insecurity; promoting engagement; encouraging healthy eating habits; promote positive behaviour. Hub leaders highlighted challenges with delivering food provision.

Author, year	Aim of study	Sample	Data collection	Context	Key findings
Morgan, McConnon, et al., (2019)	To examine opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity and explore delivery processes in school-based holiday clubs.	Child survey: <i>N=196</i> Parent/carer survey: <i>N=84</i> Child focus groups: <i>N=74</i> Parent focus groups: <i>N=69</i> Staff/volunteer interviews: <i>N=32</i>	Mixed methods	Wales	Holiday clubs provide opportunities for healthy eating: children consume fewer sugary snacks, fewer sugary drinks and more fruit and vegetables compared to a non-club day.
Stretesky et al., n.d.)	To determine the range of resources offered by holiday clubs	Staff: <i>N=35</i> ; Volunteers: <i>N=29</i> ; Parents: <i>N=77</i> ; Children: <i>N=220</i>	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups (children)	North East England	Holiday clubs deliver a range of anti-poverty resources and services, and these are linked to the staff networks and partnerships at the holiday clubs.
Stretesky et al (2020).	To investigate if there is an association between summer food insecurity and parental stress.	Parents: <i>N = 252</i>	Self-completing questionnaire	North East England	Parental experience of holiday hunger is associated with high levels of parental stress, intrusive thoughts and avoidance behaviours.
Bayes et al (2021).	To investigate how holiday club leaders adapted their food provision and food related enrichment activities during the first UK Covid-19 pandemic lockdown during summer 2020.	Holiday club staff: <i>N = 25</i>	Semi-structured interviews	England and Wales	Holiday clubs introduced new ways of working to ensure that food insecure households with children were able to access support including food aid & enrichment activities during the first Covid-19 national lockdown in summer 2020.
Long et al (2020).	To provide an overview of literature relating to food insecurity in advanced capitalist nations.	<i>N/A</i>	Literature review		Governments in advanced capitalist states are more likely to favour a neoliberalist approach to food

Author, year	Aim of study	Sample	Data collection	Context	Key findings
Defeyter et al. (2020)	Feeding children during the Covid-19 pandemic	N/A	Policy & practice review	UK	insecurity with food aid-based solutions led by not-for-profit and charitable organisations. Parents of children who normally receive free school meals experienced difficulties in accessing and using food vouchers to the value of £15 per child which were introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic.
Mann et al (2020).	To investigate the views of senior stakeholders regarding the need for and barriers to effective holiday provision.	Senior stakeholders: <i>N</i> = 15	Semi structured interviews	England	Cuts to welfare provision are impacting on family budgets and driving the need for holiday provision. Multiple barriers inhibit the successful delivery of holiday provision which to a large extent, depends on using existing networks of community-based organisations.
Shinwell, Finlay & Defeyter (2021)	To investigate the views of children and young people regarding holiday club programmes in Northern Ireland	Children: <i>N</i> = 34	Semi-structured interviews	Northern Ireland	Children were aware of the driving factors behind holiday provision including poverty and food insecurity but did not feel stigmatised by attending holiday clubs and welcomed the inclusive approach of holiday provision as a way of meeting and making new friends out with their normal friendship groups.
Mann et al. (2021).	To investigate how holiday club leaders in London source and buy food to be served in holiday club settings	Holiday club leaders: <i>N</i> = 53	Self-completion online survey	London	Holiday club leaders face significant challenges sourcing and buying food, using multiple strategies and tactics to enable them to serve healthy meals to child holiday club attendees, Clubs rely heavily on donations from surplus food charities.



<b>Author, year</b>	<b>Aim of study</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Data collection</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
Long et al (2021)	To investigate the relationship between child holiday club attendance and parental mental wellbeing	Parents/carers: <i>N</i> = 133	Self-completion questionnaire	North East England	Holiday club attendance reduces social isolation for families and promotes the development of relationships between parents and children

## Chapter 2: HAF in Birmingham: Bring it on Brum Evaluation

Birmingham City Council received just over £8.9M to deliver the HAF programme in Birmingham, in 2021. The Council commissioned StreetGames as the co-ordinating organisation and commissioned the Healthy Living Lab, at Northumbria University to conduct an impact and embedded process evaluation of Birmingham's HAF programme, titled "Bring it on Brum". Two hundred and forty-three providers delivered 278 holiday clubs across Birmingham. The majority of clubs were run by a mixture of community organisations, leisure centres, youth services, children's services and some commercial operators. Eighty-five schools engaged with the programme of which 29 delivered in-house provision and the remaining 56 let their facilities to other organisations to deliver holiday clubs. In total, 12033 primary school children and 4484 secondary school children, plus a further 15,483 non-eligible children attended Bring it on Brum. Clubs delivered a wide range of physical activities and enrichment activities. The majority of meals were delivered by the clubs themselves (70%) and approximately 30% of meals were delivered by a central food service. The central food service also supplied breakfast and snacks to clubs.

Conducting an impact evaluation and process evaluation of Bring it on Brum is essential as the national HAF programme began operating at scale in 2021 and little is known about how the programme is being implemented and the impact it is having at the local authority level among the 151 higher tier Local Authorities. This is important because for interventions to be effective, they must be successfully implemented and normalised into routine practice (Murray et al., 2010). Furthermore, little is known about the impact of HAF on factors such as food insecurity, childcare, parent and child wellbeing etc. To date most surveys evaluating the impact of HAF have lacked a counterfactual group and/or not used standardised measures or have not considered HAF "dosage" in terms of the effect of frequency of attendance on outcome measures. Collecting this evidence will inform Birmingham Council, and other Local Authorities, about how to successfully implement HAF within a local authority to drive desired programme outcomes for children, parents and communities. Thus, to evaluate the impact of Bring it on Brum the researcher team used a quasi-experimental design with an embedded process evaluation.

### 2.1 Impact Evaluation

To evaluate the impact of 'Bring it on Brum' the research team designed two online parent surveys, co-produced in consultation with a Participant Involvement and Engagement Steering Group, to compare HAF attendees to non-HAF attendees. One parent survey was distributed to parents/caregivers with children attending Bring it on Brum and one parent survey was distributed to parents/caregivers with children who did not attend Bring it on Brum.

The parents/caregivers with children who did not attend Bring it on Brum were also composed of two groups: (1) those with children who did not attend any type of childcare outside of the home and (2) those with children who attended non-HAF childcare. This second group of parents included those who sometimes paid significant sums of money for summer childcare. This design allowed the research team to allocate parent/caregivers into one of three groups according to: a) whether one child or more attended Bring it on Brum, b) whether one child or more attended other childcare during the school holiday, and c) whether children attended no form of holiday provision or childcare outside of the home. To reduce contamination across groups, and to ensure that parents were allocated to the correct group, a series of specific screening questions were employed.

In addition to evaluating differences between Bring it on Brum (HAF) and non-HAF attendees/families, the present evaluation also accounts for dose (i.e., the number of hours children

attended Bring it on Brum or accessed another childcare setting). Assessing dose is important in shaping policy and mechanism of delivery at a national and local level. That is, it may be the case that some children or youth only attended one day of Bring it on Brum while others attended multiple days over the course of the summer holiday. Accounting for variation in dose helps provide additional data on the impact of Bring it on Brum club attendance.

Both sets of parent surveys (Bring it on Brum and non-HAF) asked the same set of questions, except that the parents with children attending Bring it on Brum were asked additional questions to evaluate their unique experience of HAF in Birmingham. Across all participant groups, parents were asked to focus on one child within the family, determined by asking parents to focus on their eldest child between 5-to 16-years of age. Participants with children attending Bring it on Brum were sampled through Bring it on Brum parent/caregiver email addresses provided when registering for HAF. The comparator group (excluding all families in Birmingham) were recruited through Prolific, an online survey platform frequently used by social science researchers. Given the Healthy Living Lab's past experience in evaluating holiday programmes, we were aware that a large proportion of HAF programmes target provision to areas of deprivation rather than targeting solely on the basis of means-tested FSM. Thus, the Prolific sample was selected to be representative of those living in deprived areas England. For economic and demographic comparisons between the three groups described above see Figure 3.1 (Page 26) showing similar levels of economic deprivation.

## 2.2 Process Evaluation

To evaluate the implementation and delivery of Bring it on Brum, the research team also conducted an embedded process evaluation underpinned by Normalisation Process Theory (NPT) and other approaches to implementation science. These theories can identify characteristics that promote and inhibit the implementation of an intervention to allow councils/local authorities to view the characteristics that may need to be changed for the successful implementation of the intervention. The work that individuals and groups must undertake to enable an intervention to become normalised is the primary focus of NPT and implementation science. The process evaluation utilised a mixed-methods design including qualitative face-to-face interviews/focus groups with staff from Birmingham City Council, StreetGames (the co-ordinator organisation), holiday club providers and focus groups with children/young people/ parents to gather data on the implementation and perceived impact of Bring it on Brum. All the focus groups and interviews, apart from the interviews with programme co-ordinators and council staff, were conducted face-to-face in Birmingham, as our previous research expertise has demonstrated that conducting interviews in person results in far richer data, especially in terms of young children. Observational data collection methods were used in a sample of 17 clubs, and data were triangulated with the quantitative and qualitative data collected from the holiday club staff, parents and children. In addition, desk top quantitative analysis of holiday club menus assessed adherence of the meals served at clubs to School Food Standards, and mixed-methods analysis assessed the implementation and impact of an online nutritional education programme. A post-intervention, online holiday club leader survey assessed the delivery and perceived impact of the programme on children, parents, staff, and communities. Finally, participatory methods including photo elicitation and drawings were used to capture the 'voice of the child'. To illustrate, a range of photos taken by clubs participating in Bring it on Brum were used to facilitate discussion during focus groups, whilst content analysis of a sample of 279 out of 589 postcards, subsequently sent to Marcus Rashford, captured the child's voice in terms of what they liked about their holiday club. All methods were cognitively tested prior to launch through experts, including those with lived experience, in the Public Involvement and Engagement Steering Group.

## 2.3 Overall Approach, Aims, Objectives and Research Questions

Our approach to this evaluation took into account eight key considerations (see below). There was a need to combine multiple research methods in a systematic way to confidently unpack the complex mix of implementation questions covering delivery, reach, scalability, and mechanisms underpinning local roll-out that support positive outcomes.

1. The related need for a sampling approach that allows us to explore the diversity of delivery partners/venues and factors that may affect delivery.
2. The need for an approach that provides Birmingham City Council with confidence that responses will be maximised over the short fieldwork period.
3. The need for an approach that can be flexed to changing requirements during the evaluation period.
4. The need to assess the impact of Bring it on Brum via a matched parental survey
5. The need to analyse the effect of HAF dosage on specific outcome measures
6. The need to collect the 'voice of the child' using innovative research methods
7. The need to conduct face-to-face, in person interviews and focus groups with parents and young children.
8. The need to engage with service users through the establishment of a Public Involvement and Engagement Group

A full Theory of Change (TOC) was developed as part of the evaluation of Bring it on Brum to outline the programme design from activities to outcomes. All outcomes reported in the TOC are supported by evidence in this report (see Appendix 1).

Our approach was also shaped by the Healthy Living Lab's extensive experience in this area. In considering our theoretical approach we decided to use Normalisation Process Theory and other approaches to implementation science to guide the Process Evaluation. In addition, rather than rely solely on observation or parent reports regarding the meals provided, the research team decided to also conduct quantitative analysis of a sample of holiday club food menus to assess adherence to School Food Standards, as research has shown the parents' perceptions of the healthfulness of meals served do not always align with the nutritional quality of foods offered (Martinelli et al., 2021). In terms of the impact evaluation, the research team decided to develop a parental survey that compared attendees to a matched group of parents using other childcare provision and a group of parents using no club/childcare over the summer holiday period. Where possible, parent questionnaires used standardised measures (e.g., the complete 6-item USDA measure of food security, the Warwick and Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, the Global Perceived Stress Questionnaire). The Healthy Living Lab has already successfully used all these measures in peer-reviewed published papers on this topic. Ideally, we would have liked to have collected pre-and post-intervention data for all parent groups, but this was not possible due to short timescales regarding the start of this research project.

## 2.4 Aims and Objectives:

The first aim of this research study is to explore the impact and implementation of Bring it on Brum in Birmingham. The second aim is to develop a Theory of Change for Birmingham City Council to utilise for future delivery, implementation and monitoring.

- The first objective of this study is to collect senior stakeholders' views (i.e., local authority staff, holiday programme co-ordinators, delivery staff) on the implementation and perceived benefits of Bring it on Brum.
- The second objective of the study is to collect the views of user groups; children, young people and parents regarding Bring it on Brum.
- The third objective is to collect the 'voice of the child' on Bring it on Brum through content analysis of children's own postcards sent to Marcus Rashford.
- The fourth objective of the study is to analyse quantitative data from two parent surveys and one holiday club leader survey regarding the impact of Bring it on Brum on a number of outcomes.
- The fifth objective of this study is to produce a Theory of Change for future HAF delivery in Birmingham

## 2.5 Research Questions:

The following research questions were addressed:

- What was the impact of Bring it on Brum on children's health and wellbeing?
- What was the impact of Bring it on Brum on caregiver's health and wellbeing?
- What are the key stakeholders' views on the implementation and perceived effectiveness of the HAF programme?
- What are the stakeholders' views on the influence of Bring it on Brum on user groups and communities?
- Was the Bring it on Brum delivered according to plans submitted to the DfE? If changes were made, what were they?
- How was physical activity and nutritional education delivered?
- What are the key factors to be considered for successful future HAF delivery in Birmingham?
- Did meals adhere to School Food Standards?

## 2.6 Methods

To respond to the key research questions for the impact and process evaluation, we used a quasi-experimental design with an embedded process evaluation.

## 2.7 Impact Evaluation

The impact evaluation consisted of a parental survey to compare HAF attendees to two counterfactual groups. One group was parents whose children attended Bring it on Brum, while the first counterfactual group were parents that used alternative childcare, and the second consisted of parents who did not access any childcare provision during the summer holiday 2021. The survey for the Bring it on Brum group also collected data on dose (number of hours attending club across the summer) and additional outcome measures. The research team either used standardised measures or measures that the research team have used in the past and have published in peer-reviewed journals. The parent survey collected data on the following outcomes:

- Household food security was measured using the US Department of Agriculture "FS Scale" for a 30-day reference period (USDA Economic Research Services, 2020), recently validated by the UK Department of Work and Pensions for use in the Family Resources Survey (Department for Work and Pensions, 2021).
- Parental Stress was measured using a Global Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen et al., 1983)
- Childcare
- Children's Physical Activity

Bring it on Brum Parent Survey Only:

- Safety
- Anti-social behaviour
- Social Isolation
- Activities
- School Readiness
- Confidence
- Aspirations
- Registration/booking
- Food Provision

### 2.7.1 The Embedded Process Evaluation

The Process Evaluation followed the Medical Research Council guidance (Moore et al., 2015), with data collection focused on developing understanding of Bring it on Brum in relation to context, implementation, and mechanisms of impact. Normalisation Process Theory (May & Finch, 2009) and other approaches from implementation science (Nilsen, 2015) informed data collection and analyses to integrate findings across different data sources.

The process evaluation consisted of:

- Interviews with leads from Birmingham City Council and Street Games, and delivery partner leads to explore how local activities have been coordinated and commissioned, the methods used to identify delivery locations, how local needs and assets have informed the programme design, issues encountered and overcome, and lessons learnt. Interviews were conducted in two stages:
  - During the delivery of Bring it on Brum
    - **64 interviews with holiday club staff** during summer holidays to examine the delivery of provision and to explore the models and approaches to delivery.
    - Interviews/focus groups with parents, children and young people conducted over the summer with **33 parents/carers and 56 children**.
    - Observational data was collected, in person, from across **17 clubs, totalling over 120 hours of observation**.

Post Bring it on Brum delivery

**13 interviews with senior stakeholders** in Birmingham City Council and Street

Games

In addition, the research team:

- Reviewed implementation plans, action plans, and monitoring data.
- Conducted quantitative analysis of a sample of food menus to assess adherence to School Food Standards
- Conducted quantitative and qualitative analysis on the provision of nutritional education.
- Conducted content analysis on children's postcards
- Developed a post Bring it on Brum Holiday Club Leader Survey

*Table 2.1 Overview of the process Evaluation*

Element	Research questions	Data collection methods
<b>Implementation Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Is the programme being implemented as intended and in accordance with the DfE's specified criteria:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Were effective plans in place for implementation?</li> <li>– Were an appropriate mix of organisations engaged to deliver Bring it on Brum?</li> <li>– To what extent did club activities meet DfE requirements?</li> <li>– Were the local delivery partnerships well managed?</li> <li>– Were recruitment and promotion effective in engaging those that would benefit most from the programme?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Review of action plan</li> <li>■ Interviews with HAF lead(s) and relevant staff from Birmingham City Council and coordinator staff</li> <li>■ Interviews with delivery staff</li> <li>■ Programme MI</li> </ul>
<b>Scalability and good practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What are the characteristics of Bring it on Brum, in terms of content and duration?</li> <li>■ What are the key lessons learnt by Birmingham City Council/coordinator and what examples are there of promising practice?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Review of action plan</li> <li>■ Interviews with local authorities and coordinators</li> <li>■ Programme MI</li> </ul>
<b>Reach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What are the characteristics of the children attending Bring it on Brum? For example, what proportion of FSM children/families are attending?</li> <li>■ Was Bring in on Brum delivered in the most deprived neighbourhoods in Birmingham?</li> <li>■ How long do children attend (for how many days, and for how many hours per day)?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Monitoring information</li> <li>■ Analysis of post-intervention management information</li> </ul>
<b>Mechanisms of impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What are the reasons and motivations for children to attend?</li> <li>■ What is the level of demand for Bring it on Brum?</li> <li>■ Were clubs significantly over- or under-subscribed, and how does this relate to promotional activity and local context?</li> <li>■ What factors affect take-up by eligible families?</li> <li>■ What are the perceived barriers and enablers to effective provision?</li> <li>■ What plans have Birmingham City Council/coordinators and delivery partners put in place for implementation and sustainability?</li> <li>■ How is the programme fulfilling the information needs of parents and children for attendance at holiday clubs, through information and communication technologies (ICTs) and otherwise?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Interviews with local authorities and coordinators, delivery partners and user groups</li> <li>■ Analysis of post-intervention management information</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To what extent is Birmingham City Council/coordinator achieving their intended outcomes? Can any unintended outcomes be identified?</li> <li>■ What are the views of providers, participants and parents/carers about Bring it on Brum and its impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Interviews with HAF leads in Birmingham City Council and coordinator staff</li> <li>■ Menu Analysis</li> <li>■ Analysis of MI</li> </ul>

Element	Research questions	Data collection methods
	on healthy eating, nutritional awareness, physical activity, access to enriching activities (e.g., that develop character and resilience), wellbeing, and school readiness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Interviews with parents, children, and young people</li> <li>■ Face-to-face visits to 17 holiday club across a range of venues and neighbourhoods</li> </ul>

### 2.7.2 Ethics

Full ethical approval for this research programme was obtained from the Faculty of Health and Life Science at Northumbria University (Number 33684). The Healthy Living Lab worked in partnership with Birmingham City Council and Street Games to ensure that all ethical protocols were followed, and all data protocols complied with GDPR. A Participant Involvement and Engagement group supported the research through all stages of the programme from conception to dissemination of findings. All organisations participating in Bring it on Brum were fully aware of their role in the evaluation (e.g., sharing meal menus, allowing the research team access to sites etc.).

### 2.7.3 Methods

For clarity the methods section is split into two main sections: The Impact Evaluation and the Process Evaluation.

#### 2.7.3.1 Impact Evaluation:

The combined parents sample consisted of **N = 1,110 participants**. All participants were recruited online. The Bring it on Brum sampling frame consists of all parents/caregivers whose child(ren) attended a Bring it on Brum holiday club and who shared their email address with Street Games. An email was sent to all parents/carers in the sampling frame asking them to participate in the research. That email contained a link to the survey. A total of **N=617 parents** agreed to participate in the research and completed the survey. These 617 parents/carers represented experiences at just over **130 different clubs across Birmingham**. It is important to point out that not all Bring it on Brum parents/carers who filled out and returned the survey answered all survey questions. Thus, the statistical summaries for the Bring it on Brum sample are based only on items that participants answered. Descriptions of survey items presented in this report for the Bring it on Brum parents/carers are therefore dependent on the number of parents/carers who responded to that item and range between N=459 to N=617. The Prolific sample was also recruited online and consisted of **N=90 parents/carers whose children attended childcare other than Bring it on Brum** during the school holiday and **N=403 parents/carers whose children did not attend any form of holiday provision outside of the home**. Parents and carers who completed the Bring it on Brum survey were given a chance to win an Amazon gift voucher as a token of appreciation for their time. Prolific participants were compensated £7.50 per hour for their time. Figure 1 (below) presents the demographic composition of each sample. Once all data were collected from the Bring it on Brum and Prolific sample the data were coded, cleaned and merged into a single file for reporting purposes.



### 2.7.3.2 Process evaluation

#### 2.7.3.2.1 Interviews and Focus Groups

##### 2.7.3.2.1.1 Participants

A total of **N = 153** participants were recruited to participate in interviews and focus groups using non-probability purposive sampling. Participants consisted of a range of different stakeholders: holiday club staff, parents/carers of attendees, children, senior stakeholders (including staff from Street Games and staff from Birmingham City Council involved in the planning and/or operational delivery of Bring it on Brum). Demographic details of participants are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 2. 1 Demographic information of participants

<b>Participant groups</b>	<b>Holiday club staff</b>	<b>Parents/carers</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>Programme co-ordinators</b>
Participants (N-value)	64	33	56	14
Sex	Male (22) Female (42)	Male (2) Female (30) Non-binary (1)	Male (31) Female (24) Non-binary (1)	Male (5) Female (8) Non-binary (1)
Age range (mean age)	16 – 66 years (27 years)	23 – 65 years (23 years)	5 - 18 years (9 years)	Age range: 18-25 (2) 26-35 (3) 26-45 (6) 46-55 (1) 66+ (1) Did not say (1)
Employment status (N-value)				
Full time education	(12)			
Part time education		(1)		
Full time employment	(24)	(2)		(11)
Part time employment	(8)	(3)		(1)
Self employed				
Unemployed		(2)		(2)
Retired	(6)	(7)		
Other	(1)			
Prefer not to say/data not supplied	(1) (10)	(1) (17)		
Ethnicity (N-values)				
Asian/Asian British	(17)	(5)	(13)	
	(18)	(1)	(12)	(12)

<b>Participant groups</b>	<b>Holiday club staff</b>	<b>Parents/carers</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>Programme co-ordinators</b>
White/white British/Scottish				
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	(14)	(8)	(9)	(1)
British Mixed	(4)	(1)	(1)	
Ethnicity	(1)	(1)	(7)	
Mixed/multiple ethnic minority	(2)		(10)	(1)
Other				
Prefer not to say/data not supplied	(1)	(17)	(14)	

#### 2.7.3.2.1.2 Materials

A research information pack, including letters of invitation, research information sheets, consent forms and semi-structured schedules of questions were prepared for each stakeholder group. Schedules of questions comprised a series of open and closed questions to enable the research team to gain insight of participants views on Bring it on Brum. At the conclusion of interviews, participants were provided with a debrief information sheet.

#### 2.7.3.2.1.3 Procedure

Following ethical approval, the co-ordinator circulated information about the research to all holiday club leaders in advance of the research team visiting Birmingham. Seventeen holiday club leaders provided consent for their organisation to participate in the research. The research team sent information packs, including letters of invitation, a research information sheet, consent forms for parents/carers whose children attended the club, child holiday club attendees, holiday club staff and these were circulated to potential participants in advance of the researchers visiting the club. Research information packs for senior stakeholders and programme co-ordinator staff were circulated by email to all involved in the planning and development of the Bring it on Brum.

The research team arranged dates and times to conduct face to face/on-site research in holiday clubs with the StreetGames administration team and a schedule of visits to participating clubs was developed. On the day of testing, participants who, in advance of the researchers visiting the clubs had signed consent forms, were approached and invited to participate in the research. Interviews with holiday programme co-ordinators and senior stakeholders who had expressed an interest in taking part in the research were arranged for a mutually convenient date following delivery of Bring it on Brum. This was to ensure that learning from the implementation to wrap-up of programme was captured.

Focus group interviews with parents and carers, children and holiday club staff took place on club premises during normal club opening hours. Focus groups with children were facilitated though the use of holiday club photos of activities and food to facilitate discussion. One-to-one interviews with holiday programme co-ordinators took place via Microsoft Teams. The decision to conduct interviews via Microsoft Teams was a pragmatic choice, in that it did not require the research team to travel back to Birmingham following the close of Bring it on Brum.

Interviews commenced with an introduction to the research. Interviews were all recorded in club settings using a digital Dictaphone and one to one interviews with holiday programme co-ordinators via Microsoft Teams. Prior to the commencement of recording, researchers asked participants if they were happy for their voice and where appropriate, image to be recorded. Only one child opted out of participating in the research. Participants were encouraged to speak freely throughout the interviews. Participants were advised that all interviews would be transcribed and that their name would be replaced with an anonymised code to prevent identification. Focus groups conducted on club premises lasted approximately 30 minutes, whereas one-to-one interviews with holiday programme co-ordinators and senior stakeholders lasted approximately 60 minutes. Parents and carers were given a £10 Amazon voucher as a token of appreciation for their time, and children were provided with an age-appropriate token of appreciation.

#### *2.7.3.3 Child-focussed Participatory Research Methods:*

In addition to the use of photo elicitation to support discussion in the child focus groups, the research team also wanted to use another method to capture the voice of children. In our prior research on this topic, we found that young children find it quite difficult to convey their thoughts and feelings about complex programmes such as HAF. Often this is due to a lack of scaffolding children's conceptual abilities to the task in hand. To capture rich and meaningful data on children's views about what they liked about Bring it on Brum, all children participating in Bring it on Brum were provided with an opportunity of writing and/or drawing on a postcard to be sent to Marcus Rashford. The postcard was designed to capture children's thoughts about what they liked about Bring it on Brum. The research team conducted content analysis on a sample of **270 postcards** from a total of **589 postcards from 20 clubs**. Sampling of cards took place in two phases. In phase 1, every other card odd numbered card starting at 1 and ending at 21 was sampled. In phase 2, every other even numbered card starting at 2 and ending at 10 was sampled.

#### *2.7.3.4 Observations of Holiday Club Delivery:*

The research team developed an observational schedule and observed the delivery of Bring it on Brum in **17 holiday clubs**. Observational data were recorded to support within and between methods triangulation across participant groups, and to sense check data.

#### *2.7.3.5 Menu Analysis:*

A total of **167 meal menus from 55 different clubs** were evaluated against the twenty-four existing School Food Standards (Department for Education, 2021b, 2021c). For each standard, the menu was defined as either meeting (scored 1) or not meeting (scored 0) when scored by five independent researchers. To compare different types of food offerings, menu options were also coded to be defined as providing only hot or cold options (or mixed offerings), vegetarian, vegan, halal or other specific dietary requirements, or no dietary restrictions for comparison purposes. The existing food standards contain thirteen items that refer to daily menu inclusion (e.g. protein source and fruit provision), ten related to intake per week (e.g. variety of starchy food and vegetables per week) and one (for oily fish) that relates to provision once every three weeks. There are also standards specific to protein sources for vegetarian menus. Due to the variation in ways that clubs run, the format that menu information was made available, and the time length related to each standard, not all menus could be scored against all elements. For example, menu information for 2-3 days per week required analysis as three separate days and thus could not be scored against any weekly standards. To allow comparison between divergent menu information and types, the percentage adherence of each menu to applicable standards was calculated. A total of 53 single-day menus and 114 full-week menus were assessed.

#### *2.7.3.6 Nutrition Education Analysis:*

Qualitative data were collected during focus groups and quantitative data were collected via surveys regarding nutritional education provided as part of the in-person Bring it on Brum provision. In addition, qualitative data was collected on Nutri Troops, a programme that was offered as part of HAF at Home provision by collecting qualitative data from parents and children. Nutri Troops is an online educational programme designed to support children's learning about nutrition and physical activity. The aims of Nutri Troops are to enable and encourage children's continual engagement with activities that support their development of resilience, character, and well-being. Nutri Troops also aims to encourage children to be more physically active and eat healthier through engagement with an online, digital Nutri Troops Game, and a number of physical resources (e.g. pedometers, interactive magazines).

#### *2.7.3.6 Holiday Club Leader Survey:*

At the beginning of September 2021, an online holiday club leader survey link was sent to all holiday club leaders participating in Bring it on Brum. The survey asked questions on:

- How well prepared were you to deliver Bring it on Brum?
- How subscribed was your holiday club?
- Who did your club target?
- How do parent's/carers register?
- Where did you source your food?
- Quality of food provision
- Food waste
- Number of cooking sessions
- Number of physical activity sessions

### 3. Chapter 3 Impact Evaluation Findings

#### 3.1 Parent Survey

The data from the parent survey are presented according to relevant participant group and dosage for the Bring it on Brum group. Firstly, a comparison of group demographics between Bring it on Brum attendees and non-attendees showed that in terms of FSM eligibility the groups were comparable, although as anticipated there are differences in ethnicity that reflect the population in Birmingham and the UK (see Figure 3.1).

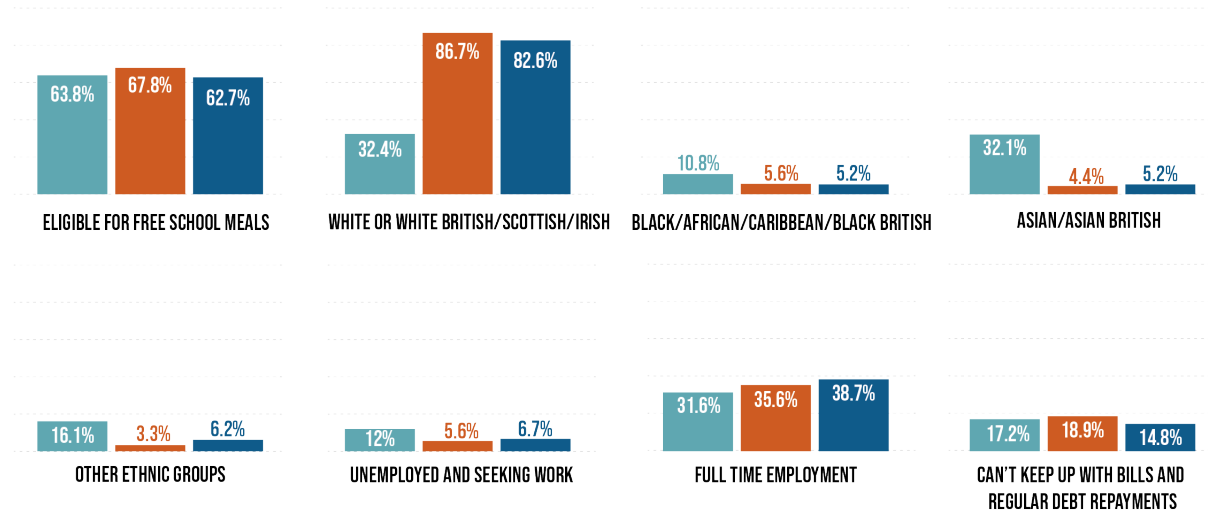


Figure 3. 1 Comparison of group demographics

### 3.1.2 Childcare

The parent/carer survey asked parents about how easy it was on a scale of 0 (not at all difficult) to 10 (extremely difficult) to find affordable childcare during the summer holiday 2021. As shown in Figure 3.2 parents across all groups struggle to find affordable childcare. There were significant differences between Bring it on Brum and other childcare provision for under 100 hours across the summer holiday. In particular, Bring it on Brum parents/carers found it more difficult to access childcare than parents/carers of children attending other childcare (i.e., mean = 7.10 vs. mean= 6.03). However, when parents accessed over 100 hours of childcare, the differences between the two groups were no longer statistically significant (i.e., mean = 6.26 vs. mean = 5.87), suggesting that Bring it on Brum may play an important role in the so called, 'levelling up' agenda when parents can access over 100 hours across the summer holiday. One hundred hours is approximately equivalent to 16 hours a week, but further research is required to ascertain the best model of delivery in terms of childcare provision and other key factors.

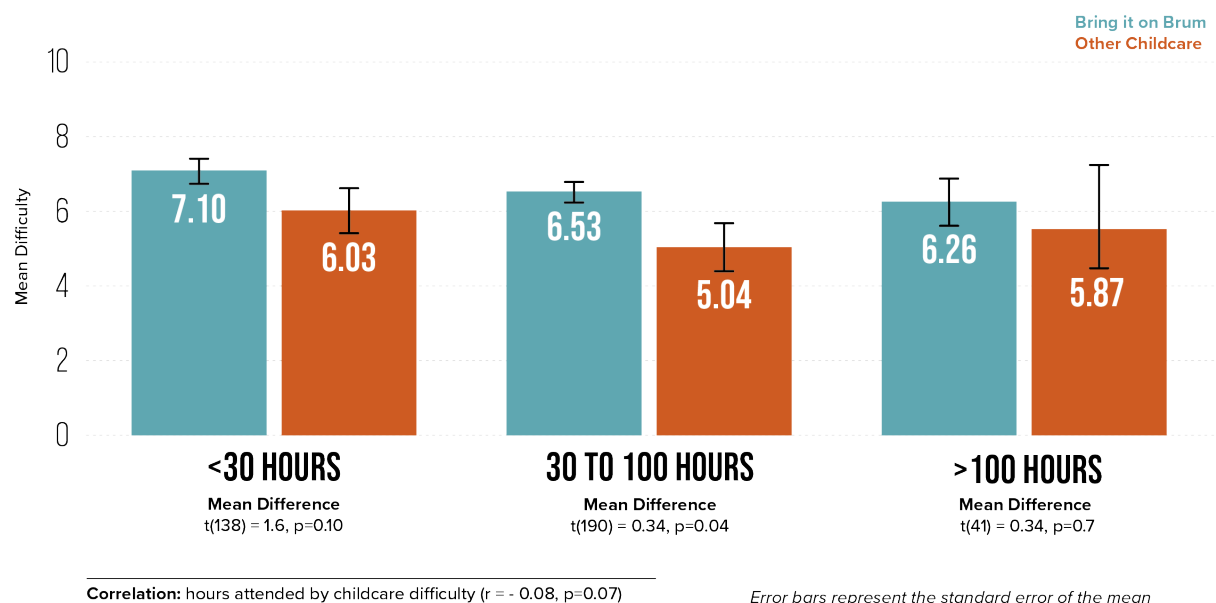
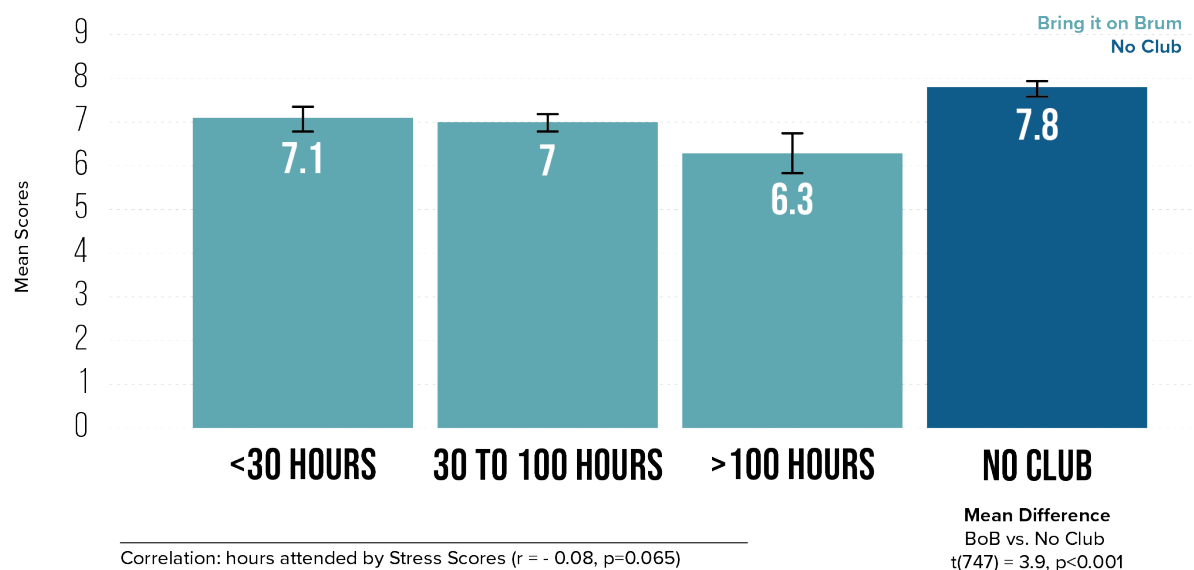


Figure 3. 2 Affordable childcare during the summer according to group and dose

### 3.1.3 Parental Stress

Parental stress was measured using a Global Measure of Perceived Stress (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein (1983). The current findings support prior research from the Healthy Living Lab (Stretesky et al., 2020). However, the current study extended prior findings by comparing parental stress to the number of hours that children attended Bring it on Brum versus the No Club group. The results show a significant correlation between parental stress and hours of attendance (see Figure 3.3). As the number of hours children attend Bring it on Brum increase, parental stress decreases. Also, the level of self-reported stress in parents whose children attended Bring it on Brum was significantly less than the level of stress in parents in the No Club group.



Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., & Mermelstein, R. (1983). A global measure of perceived stress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 24, 385-396.

Figure 3. 3 Perceived Summer Stress Scores of Parents

### 3.1.4 Children's Physical Activity

The World Health Organisation (2020) defines physical activity as any bodily movement that requires energy expenditure including walking, running and playing sports. The Chief Medical Officers (2019) recommend participating in at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous-intensity physical activity every day. This can improve muscular and cardiorespiratory fitness and improve bone and functional health (World Health Organisation, 2020). Whereas, inactive behaviours, also referred to as sedentary behaviours, are defined by the Chief Medical Officers (2019) as undertaking little movement or activity and using little energy above what is used at rest. Given the range in opening times of clubs the researchers used the CMO recommendation of 60 minutes participation in MVPA per day for a minimum of 4 days per week, with a full explanation of MVPA provided to parents. Figure 3.4 clearly shows a significant positive correlation between the number of hours attending and the number of weeks that children were engaged in MVPA (defined as at least 4 days a week for at least 60 mins a day). Analysis also showed a significant difference between Bring it on Brum and No Club attendance, with children participating in Bring it on Brum as engaging in more MVPA than the children in the No Club group.

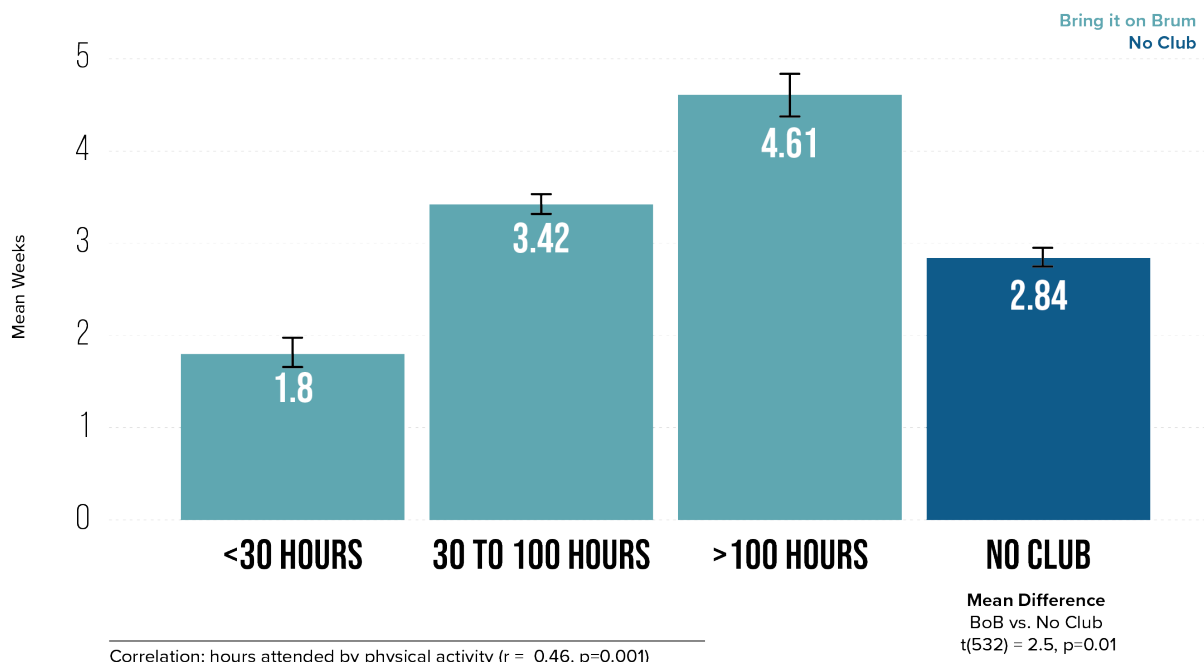


Figure 3. 4 Physical Activity Levels of Children During the Summer School Holidays

Table 3.1 shows that children attending 31-100 hours of Bring it on Brum (48%), and children attending more than 100 hours of Bring it on Brum (92%) were more likely to engage in 60 minutes of MVPA for at least 4 days each week across the summer holiday compared to children who did not attend Bring it on Brum (36%). This table provides a good illustration of why it is important to measure the number of hours children attend Bring it on Brum (HAF).

Table 3.1 Percentage of children/young people exercising at least 4 days a week for at least 60 minutes a day for at least 4 weeks

**Percentage of Children/Youth Exercising at least 4 Days a Week for at least 60 Minutes a Day for at least 4 Weeks (N=798)**

	%
BoB < 30 Hours	21.4%
BoB 31 to 100 hours	48.2%
BoB >100 Hours	91.9%
Did Not Attend Any Club	36.0%

### 3.1.5 Food Security

Given that a key aim of HAF is the provision of at least one healthy meal to children during the school holiday, accompanied by the recent data demonstrating increasing levels of food insecurity in the UK, the research team measured household food security using the Six-item US Household Food Security Survey Module. Analysis showed that households in the Bring it on Brum group experienced significantly less food insecurity compared to the counterfactual group who didn't attend club (see Figure 3.5), suggesting that children's attendance at Bring it on Brum may play a role in reducing household food insecurity. This finding should be viewed with caution as the lack of a pre-

intervention measure of food insecurity means that the researchers cannot ascertain the causality of this difference between groups.

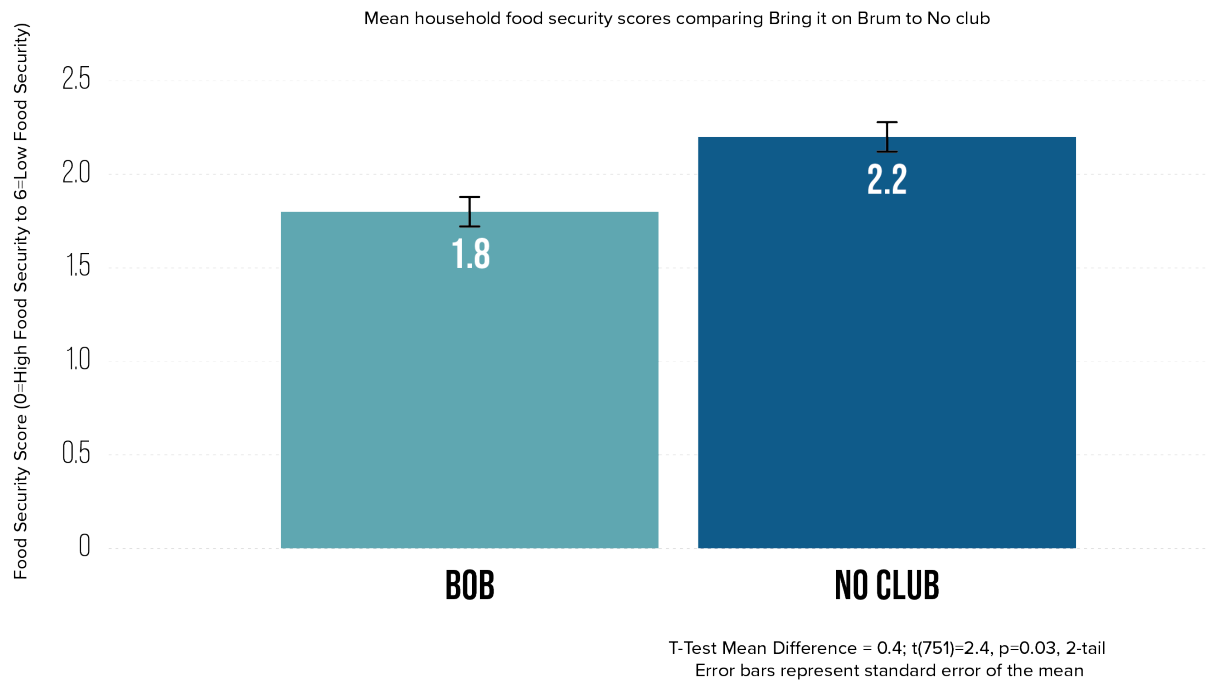


Figure 3. 5. Mean Household Food Security Scores comparing Bring it on Brum and No Club

Given that approximately one third of children attending Bring it on Brum were not in receipt of means-tested FSM but lived in areas of high deprivation across the City, the research team also compared means tested FSM eligible households to non-FSM eligible households for the Bring it on Brum group versus the No Club group. In both situations parents/carers sending their children to Bring it on Brum reported lower levels of food insecurity than those parents/carers whose children do attend no holiday club (see Figure 3.6 and Figure 3.7).



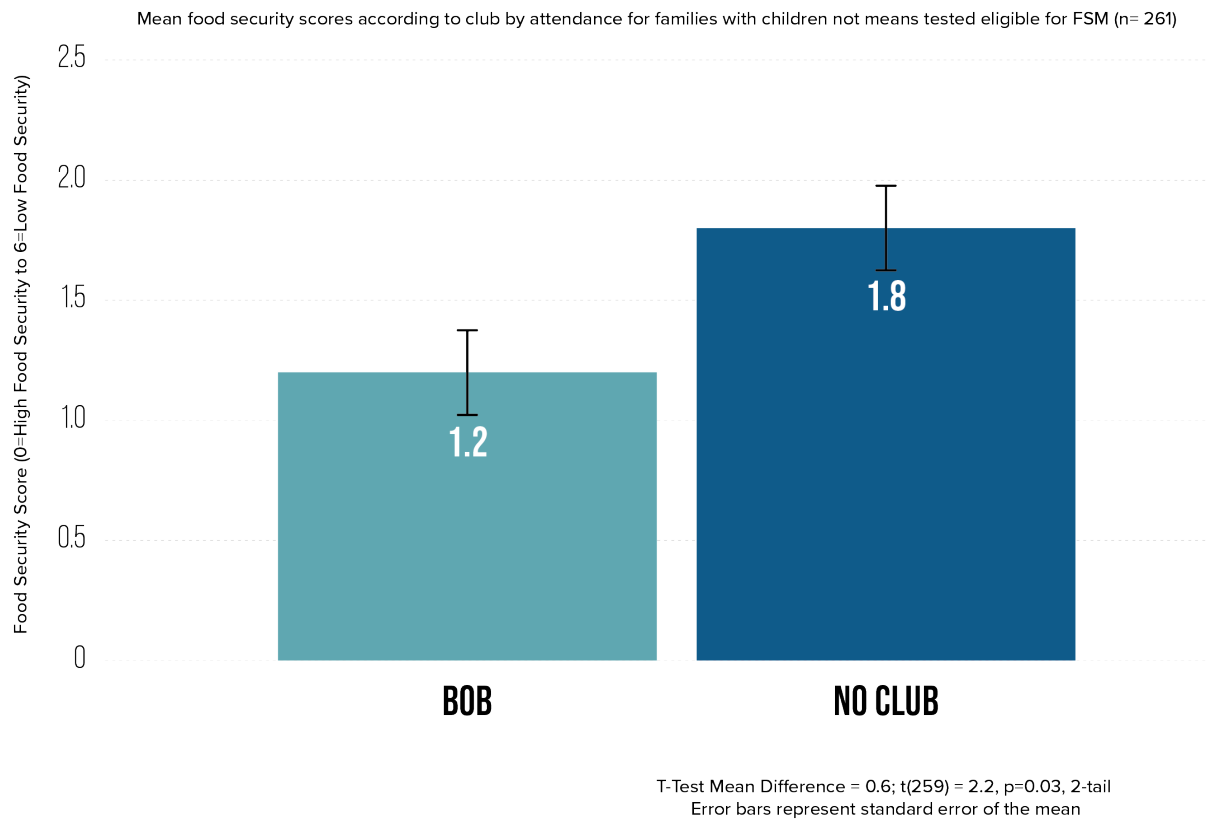


Figure 3. 6 Mean Food Security Scores According by Club Attendance for Families with Children Not Means Tested Eligible for FSM

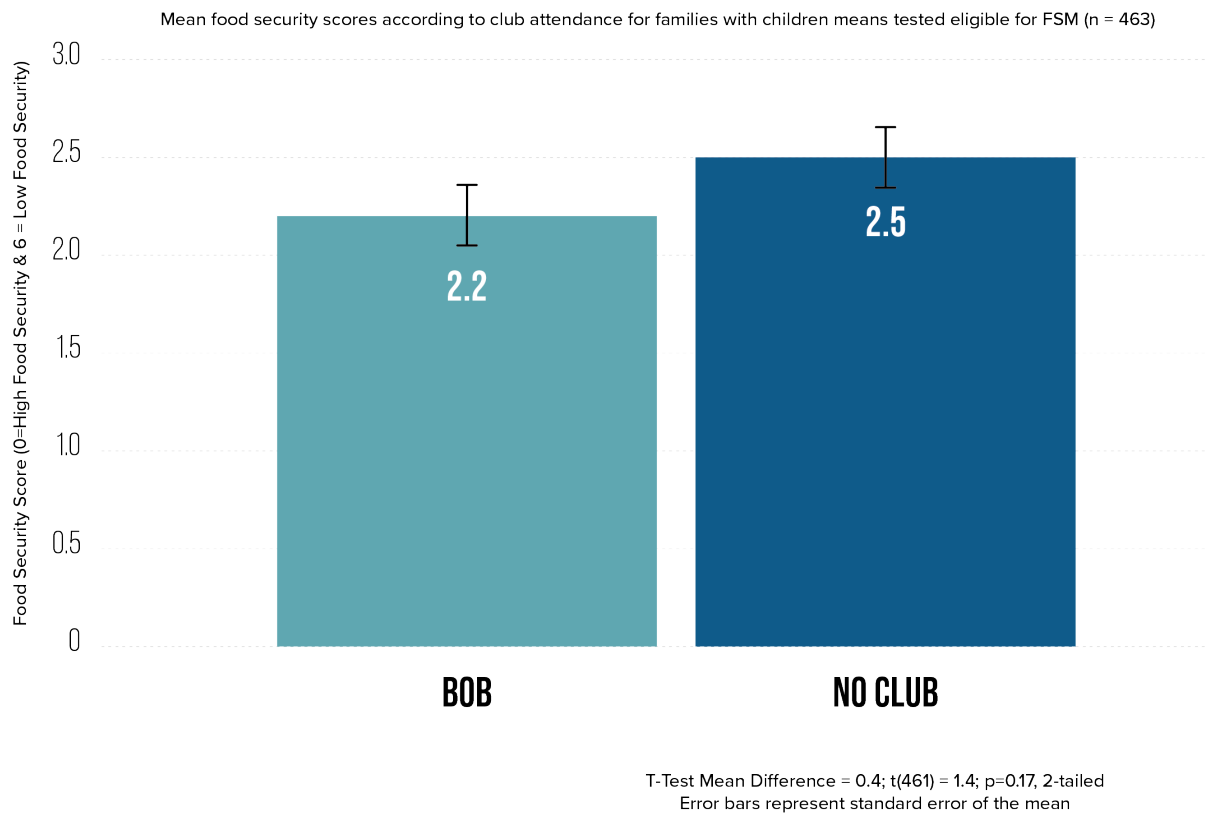


Figure 3. 7 Mean Food Security Scores According to Club by Attendance for Families with Children Means Tested Eligible for FSM .

### 3.1.6 Bring it on Brum Additional Parents Questions

The Bring it on Brum survey contained additional questions to gather **parent's (n=617)** views on the holiday club(s) that their child/children attended. Where a family had multiple children attending Bring it on Brum, and the questions asked about individual child characteristics or outcomes, we asked parents to focus on their eldest child. As the number of parent responses varied according to question, we report the sample size for each outcome.

#### 3.1.6.1 Parents Perceptions about Registering a Child/children for Bring it on Brum

Firstly, we were interested in finding out how parents had heard about Bring it on Brum. The findings showed that the largest proportion of parents/carers (45.8%) found out about Bring it on Brum from their child's school. Secondly, we were interested in whether their child/children had attended free holiday provision in the past. The survey showed that only 2.3% of families had learned about Bring it on Brum because they previously attended a free activity and holiday club, demonstrating a significant increase in club participation (See Figure 3.8).

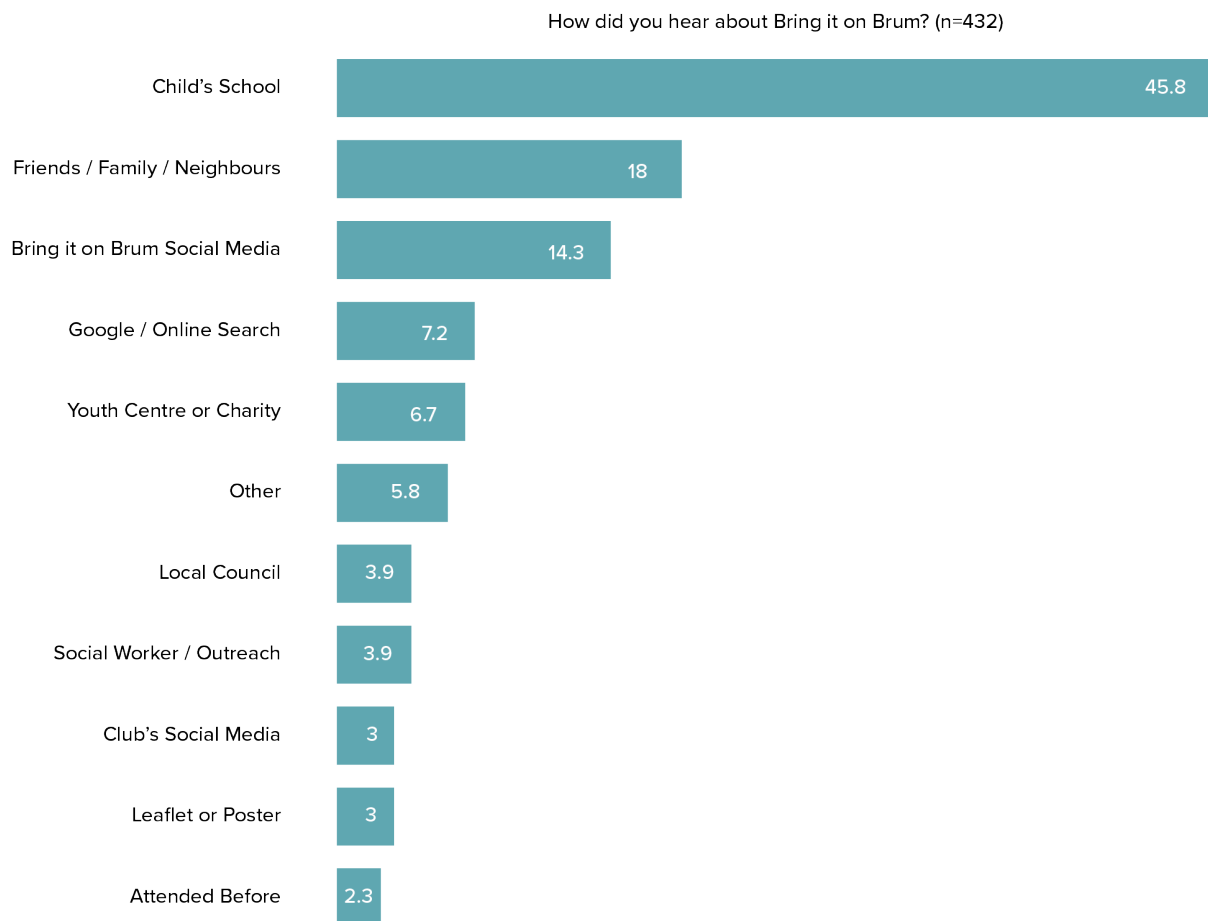


Figure 3. 8 How parents/carers found out about Bring it on Brum

There was considerable variation (Figure 3.9) among parents in how easy/difficult it was for them to find out information about holiday clubs, suggesting that further research is required to explore effective marketing and dissemination of information.

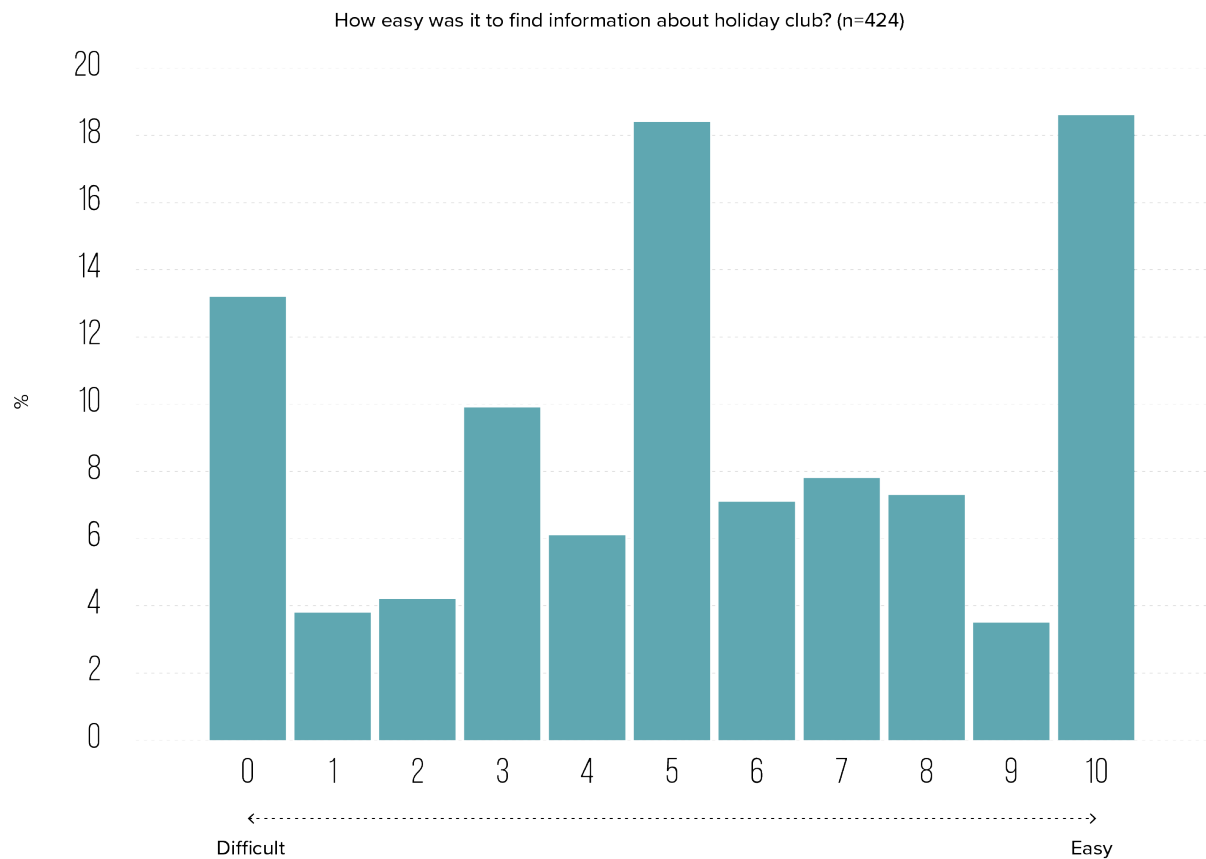


Figure 3. 9 Ease of finding out about holiday club

We also explored how parents registered their child for holiday club attendance. The results showed that 52% parents used the central Bring it on Brum website to register their child, followed by parents visiting clubs (15%), and parents registering their child/children through holiday club’s own website (17%). Although most parents used the Bring it on Brum website, the graph below (Figure 3.10) demonstrates the need for multiple registration routes.

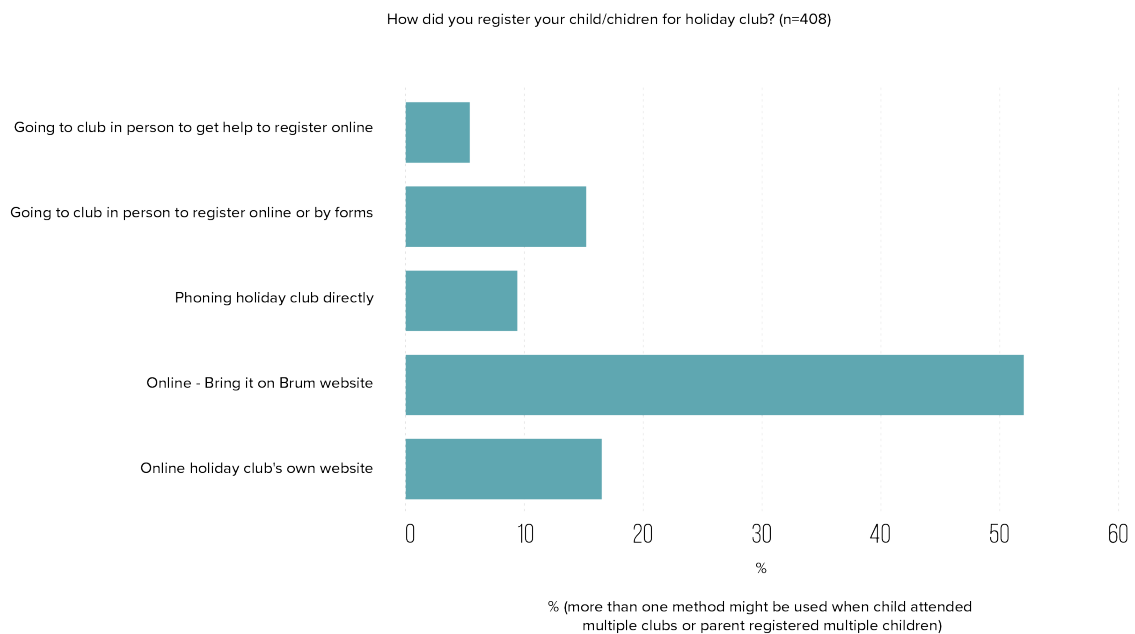


Figure 3. 10 How parents/carers registered children for holiday club

Regardless of registration route, most parents reported that the registration process was easy, although a small percentage of parents found it difficult (See Figure 3.11).

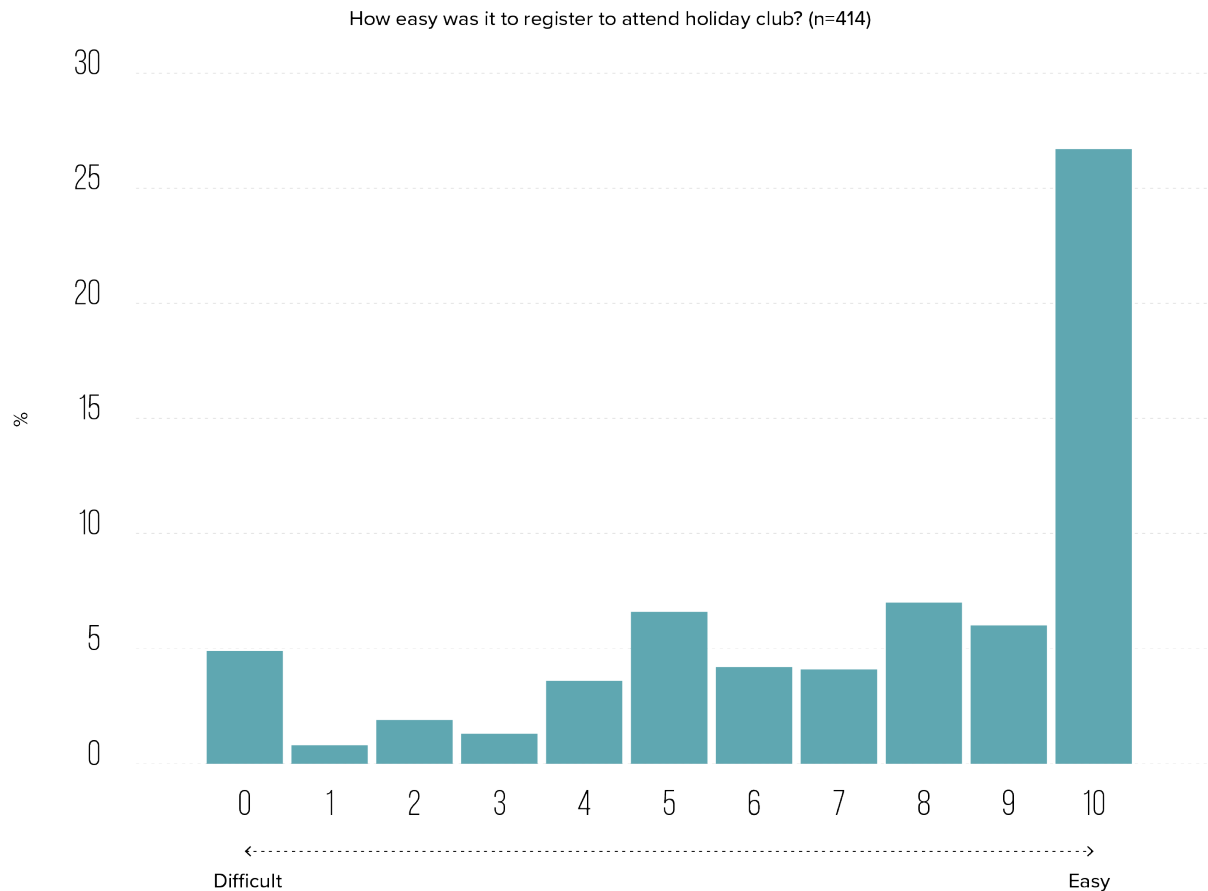


Figure 3. 11 Ease of finding out about holiday club

Finally, we were interested in parents’ perceptions about their child’s/children’s holiday club opening days and times. The descriptive findings showed that 46% of parents thought the opening days and times to be ‘about right’, with only 8% of parents reporting that the clubs were not open enough days, and only 4% of parents reporting that the sessions were too short in time.

### 3.1.6.2 Food

Although prior research has shown that parents perceptions about whether food adheres to the School Food Standards may be problematic, we wanted to collect parent’s views on the food served at club as HAF affords the opportunity of improving dietary intake, increasing the range of food consumed, and opportunities for children to be engaged in hands on food preparation. To measure these outcomes, we asked parents to agree or disagree with the following statements in Table 3.2.

Table 3. 2 Parent/caregiver perceptions about food during Bring it on Brum

	Frequency	% Agree
Club served nutritious food	233	62.8
My child(ren) enjoyed club food	211	56.4
Child(ren) tried new foods at club	162	42.2
Child(ren) ate wider variety of foods at club	152	41.3

Club met food and dietary requirements	221	59.7
Opportunities at club for hands on food activities	109	29.5
Club improved child(ren) knowledge & confidence to prepare food	94	25.4

Interestingly, only 63% of parents thought the food was nutritious and only 56% of parents thought their children enjoyed the food served at holiday clubs. It is also important to note the holiday clubs self-reported more favourable ratings of the food they served in-house. In our experience, where most of the food provision is in-house, clubs find it challenging to serve food that adheres to School Food Standards. Local Authorities and co-ordinators need to ensure robust quality assurance processes are in place to support local organisations to serve food that adheres to School Food Standards. It should also be noted that research studies have shown differences in people’s perceptions of what counts as ‘tasty food’, and this perception may not always correlate with School Food Standards. Understandably, School Food Standards are challenging, but there are significant, sustainable gains for investment in community organisations through appropriate support and staff training. First, investing in staff development programmes means that the investment remains in the local community and increases the knowledge and skills of holiday club staff, and this knowledge may be transferred to the wider community. Secondly, where clubs use local food businesses to provide food, there may also be knowledge mobilisation into local businesses, which may improve the quality of the food offer outside of Bring it on Brum. However, ensuring that club staff are supported through a quality training programme and menu development supported by public health teams is vital. Likewise, where clubs rely on central food provision, selecting an experienced caterer who is familiar with School Food Standards may help to ensure nutritious meals that adhere to School Food Standards.

### 3.1.6.3 Safety

A number of prior, peer-reviewed studies by the Healthy Living identified that children felt safe at holiday clubs (see Figure 3.12). In the present study, the researchers extended this original finding by comparing the percentage of parents who agreed that their children were safe while attending Bring it on Brum compared to their local neighbourhood. The results clearly show that 61.9% parents strongly agree that their children are safe whilst attending Bring it on Brum clubs versus only 21.9% strongly agreeing that their children are safe in their immediate neighbourhood.

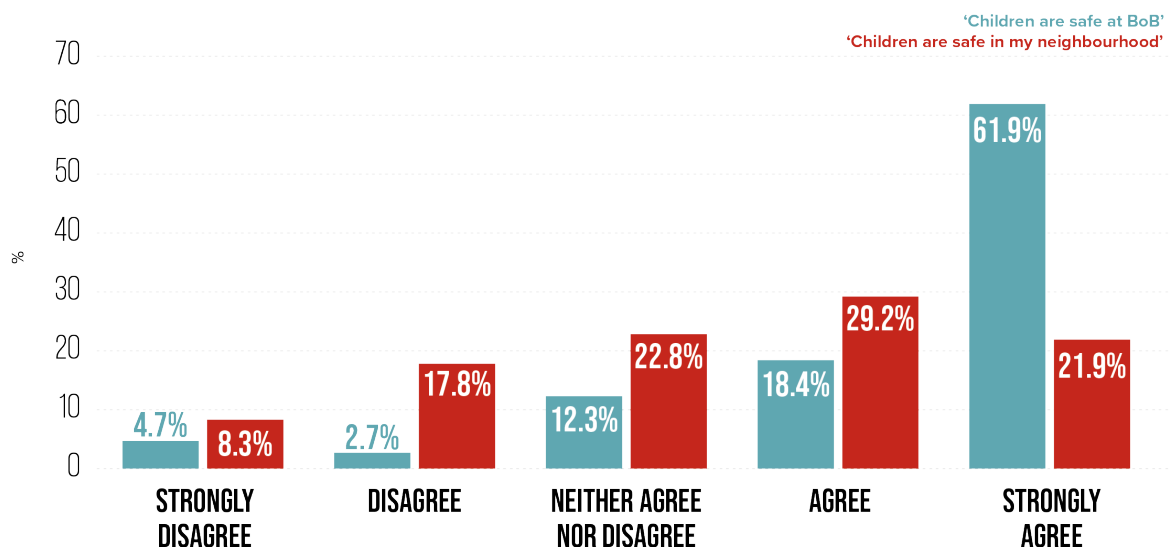


Figure 3. 12 Perceived safety during summer

### 3.1.6.4 Anti-social Behaviour

Some of the early research by the Healthy Living Lab showed that parents thought that holiday clubs kept children from participating in anti-social behaviour during the school holidays (Defeyter et al., 2015a, 2018a; Mann, 2019; Shinwell, 2019). These findings were replicated in the current study, with nearly 75% of parents strongly agreeing or agreeing that Bring it on Brum kept their children from participating in anti-social behaviour (See Figure 3.13).

*"I believe BoB keeps my child/children from participating in anti-social behaviour during the school holiday"*

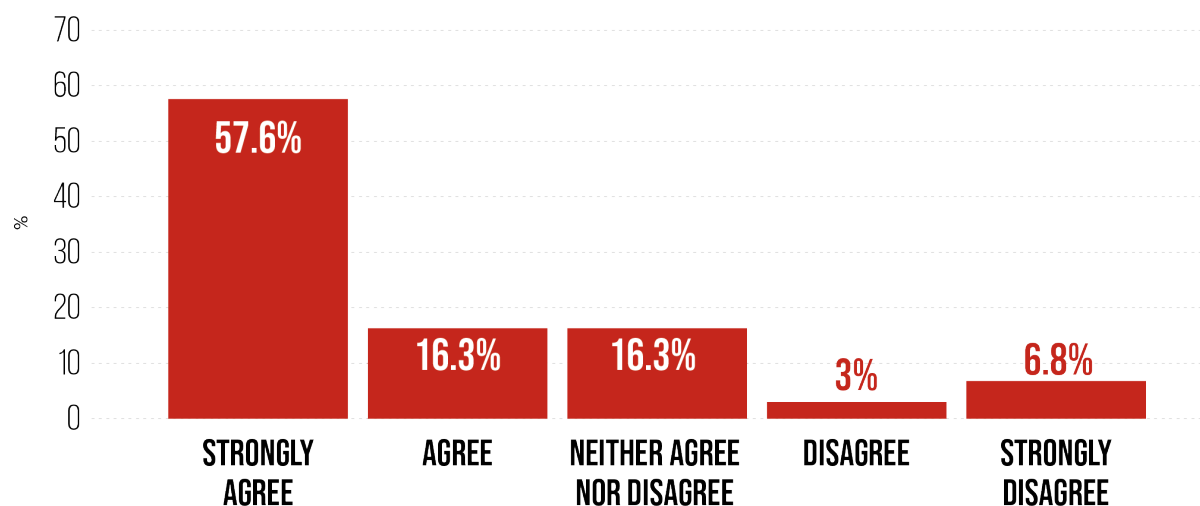


Figure 3. 13 Perceived anti-social behaviour during summer

### 3.1.6.5 Parent reported benefits of Bring it on Brum

In addition to the above factors, the research team explored parents' perceptions about the social and psychological benefits for children afforded by attending Bring it on Brum. 81% of parents strongly agreed/agreed that Bring it on Brum attendance prevented social isolation, 64% of parents considered that attendance raised their child's aspirations, 76% of parents reported that attendance boosted their child's confidence and 62% of parent thought that attendance improved school readiness.

Table 3. 3 Parent/caregiver perceptions about physical Activity and social skills opportunities at club (N = 385)

	Frequency	% Agree
Children more physically active	251	69.9
Club promoted well-being through enriching activities	272	76.2
Prevents social isolation	291	81.3
Raised aspirations of child(ren)	232	65.4
Boosted confidence of child(ren)	272	76.2
Supported school readiness	223	62.5
Enjoyable and fun	305	85.4

### 3.1.6.6 Overall parent satisfaction

Overall parent satisfaction of parents whose children attended Bring it on Brum was measured by the likelihood of parents choosing to send their children to Bring it on Brum in 2022. Overall

satisfaction of Bring it on Brum was very high, with 95% of parents reported that they were very likely to send their children to a Bring it on Brum in 2022.

## 4. Chapter 4 Process Evaluation Findings

### 4.1 Qualitative Findings from interviews and focus groups

All interviews were transcribed verbatim and uploaded to NVIVO 12 for ease of organisation and analysis. Each transcript was read in its entirety several times before being analysed and coded using thematic analysis as developed by Braun & Clark (2006). Quotes from each participant group were grouped under the same topic headings and main themes and sub-themes were identified and defined and refined.

Thematic analysis revealed key themes across participant groups. In order to reduce repetition and to provide a realist narrative, data were organised according to themes with contributions from the relevant stakeholder groups. The source of each quote, each quote is followed by a letter to indicate the stakeholder group (e.g. Holiday club staff (HCS), Parent/carer (PC) child focus group (CGF) and programme co-ordination staff (S)) and a number to indicate the focus group number or individual).

Seven main themes and associated sub-themes were identified from the thematic analysis, which are summarised in Table 4.1.

*Table 4. 1 Main themes and sub-themes identified in qualitative interviews*

Main theme	Sub-themes
Need for Bring it on Brum	Poverty and household food insecurity; Staff motivation; Impact of Covid on need for HAF.
Planning and implementation of Bring it on Brum	Short timescale; Contingency planning Birmingham City Council; Engagement with schools; Administration and Grant Management Process; Policy changes StreetGames' approach.
Food provision during summer 2021	Timescale; Planned food provision: In house provision of food; Local providers; Central food service; Procurement; Delay to start of central food service; Breakfast and Snack provision'; Views of food provided
Future provision of food and cooking and nutrition education	Role of central food service; Building capacity within clubs and community food providers; Cooking and nutrition education.
Marketing Bring it on Brum	Marketing of Bring it on Brum.
Benefits of Bring it on Brum	Impact of HAF funding; Reduction in parental stress and childcare; Enriching activities; Children's well-being and social skills; Perceived safety and distraction from anti-social behaviour;
Recommendations regarding future delivery of Bring it on Brum	Difference HAF Funding made; Desire for more provision; Legacy & lessons learnt; Engagement with schools and community organisations; Bring it on Brum website and data protection

#### 4.1.1 Theme 1: Need for Bring in on Brum (HAF) in Birmingham

Three main sub-themes were identified in interviews with adult participants regarding the need for Bring it on Brum. These included high levels of poverty and the associated risk of household and child food insecurity, staff motivation for developing and delivering Bring it on Brum, the impact of

the Covid in amplifying the need for Bring it on Brum due to a reduction in household income in already socio-economic deprived areas.

#### 4.1.1.1 Poverty and household food insecurity

Bring it on Brum holiday clubs were located in areas of high deprivation across Birmingham. Holiday club staff told researchers that, without Bring in on Brum holiday clubs, they were concerned that many children would be at risk of experiencing food insecurity during the six-week school summer holidays:

*“We’ve got the highest child poverty in England, one of them anyway...” (HCS1)*

*“I don’t know about the other schools, but at XXX (name of school), it’s got 70% (of) children on free school meals” (HCS1)*

Club staff empathised with parents and carers whom they considered would be struggling to cope with the expense of the school summer holidays, trying to keep children entertained, but more importantly, the expense of having to provide at least one additional meal per day:

*“...so we’ve noticed that, obviously in the summer holidays it means that kids are at home, they’re not at school, so kids that get free school meals when they’re at school, they aren’t necessarily getting that at home...” (HCS11)*

*“Especially during the six-week holidays ‘cause obviously, kids are eating more and a lot of them do rely on schools for their breakfast and their lunches ...” (HCS1)*

Thus, staff thought that children’s attendance at Bring it on Brum clubs helped children access nutritious meals during the six-week summer holidays:

*“some of these children are coming here getting their meals probably the only meal they will get ... there’s a good meal that they’re getting for the day, you know what I mean? They’re having breakfast, they’re having their lunch, they’re having their little snacks in between, and you can see, you know, they need it, they want it and they say, you know, you don’t really, you rarely see waste or anything, you know what I mean? You can tell that, you know, it’s a valuable thing that they’re coming here to do.” (HCS7)*

Both holiday club staff and children noted that attendees were often part of large families. In one focus group with children, for example, children reported that they had several siblings of varying ages. However, in a number of instances, children and parents expressed regret that places were limited which meant that not all siblings were able to attend holiday club:

*“...I’m not happy, because one (of) the children come here, they are looked after properly, they are very happy. Even my son, he told me every day, activities were (making him) really happy but the other children, they need all that.” (PC1)*

In some instances, clubs had an age limit, and older or younger children could not attend:

*“Yes like, my six-year-old he’s complaining ‘why not me, why not me? it’s unfair’, he’s telling me about injustice, it’s unfair.” (PC11)*



*“It, it was nice to be able to get out the house before, we had, we booked, we left the older three in the house cos we didn’t think they could really do it, it was more for the younger ones” (PC2)*

Many children were acutely aware that family members at home may not have access to food and asked if they could take surplus food home for family members. In many cases, holiday club staff ensured that surplus food was given to children or their parents/carers at the end of each daily session:

*“A lot of the, especially one little boy in my group (XXX), he, you know (said) “no, I don’t (want breakfast), but can I take it home for my dad?” I’m going, “if you want to take it home for your dad, take home for your dad” (HCS1)*

*“And so yes, we always made sure the food went back to the families as well, you know, so if they you know, haven’t gotten much food in their fridges or had run out of bread, at least we were sending something home. You know, even if it wasn’t to feed that child, it might be a sibling that had it” (HCS19)*

*“Then everything that wasn’t taken, the kids would like themselves, split it up into the crates and then whoever wants it would take it at the end of the day. And then I think someone would come in and sort of take the sandwiches that weren’t used and take them, so everything got used no matter what” (HCS9)*

#### 4.1.1.2 Staff Motivation

In addition to holiday club staff and volunteers being acutely aware of the underlying need for Bring it on Brum in the areas where clubs were located, other factors also influenced their decision to get involved in Bring it on Brum. Some holiday club staff and volunteers saw their involvement as an opportunity to gain new skills and expertise that would be useful in applying for educational courses and employment:

*“...it definitely helps, so I play a lot of badminton, so for the sporting application for badminton you have to run a club or a session, and having stuff like this where it’s organised and laid out and you know what you’re running and how to run it, that will definitely be a transferable skill I can take and apply when I’m applying for qualifications in coaching...”(HCS11).*

However, for many holiday club staff, their motivation was based on wanting to give something back to the local communities in which they had grown up. A number of staff spoke of their desire to help nurture, support and encourage local children to aspire and achieve:

*“So, in a nutshell, what brings me here is trying to help these children’s mindset develop into believing that they can achieve whatever they want as long as they believe. Everybody makes mistakes in life, nobody is perfect, so don’t ever think that nobody loves you, you can never climb that ladder because of this is what you’ve done...” (HCS7)*

*“Personally, when I was younger, I didn’t get many opportunities. I was at home quite a lot, I was always kind of on the computer or doing after school clubs... but there wasn’t many outside opportunities where I got to meet other people in the*

*community. So, I felt that this was important for development with the kids and other people, and the parents as well.” (HCS7)*

#### 4.1.1.3 Impact of Covid

It was considered that Covid had amplified the need for HAF because many households had lost income:

*“But I think economically in XXX (name of place), the families that had got working parents were massively impacted by Covid. A lot of taxi drivers, a lot of care professionals, all the professions that you associate with zero-hour contracts, gig economy, low paid work for a lot of hours and hard work. They were all the kind of jobs that our families (were) working. And so, they've been the most impacted in every single aspect I think, and that's why it's not a case of they're (not) just choosing to not to feed the children, that isn't, that isn't the case at all...” (HCS1)*

*“now obviously as with the covid just happened and we know so many stories about children you know not being able to eat healthy and er obviously there's so much of people don't have, I've heard stories they don't have enough food peoples lost their jobs, the circumstances have changed” (HCS2)*

Holiday club staff also felt that Covid had disrupted the networks and relationships they had built with families through primarily face-to-face contact, many of whom had been unable to attend HAF, as demonstrated in the following exchange between holiday club staff in one club:

**“Staff member 1:** *Yeah, see that's what saddens me this time around is that 'cause we lost a lot of our families with Covid anyway cos they stopped coming to groups and...*

**Staff member 2:** *And the children have grown up.*

**Staff member 1:** *They're older now and things have changed, so that saddens me obviously a little bit to be honest, and it has made me a bit sad that I don't know any of these families, but that's fine because this is for families that need it, it's not as if they're not families that (don't) need it, so I'm fine with that, but I just feel really sad that we had a really good rapport with families didn't we just before covid, brilliant and then it's just gone. “(HCS2)*

Moreover, many staff and parents spoke about the impact that Covid had on children and young people. Many children suffered psychological distress due to family deaths or as a result of hearing about death, and many had become socially isolated, and experienced difficulties in terms of accessing education:

*“a lot of the kids, may have experienced a lot of death during Covid, d'you know what I mean, and if they haven't experienced it, they've heard it from their adults you know, their parents that somebody's died this, so you know, they've had a lot to take in.” (HCS1)*

*“They've missed so much ... so they are so behind. I'm working in a school, so I know how much they've missed” (PC1)*

In addition to Bring it on Brum helping to address genuine concerns regarding increasing levels of poverty, many considered that Bring it on Brum was an essential tool to support children’s well-being. Parents told researchers that lockdowns and school closures meant that children had lost skills and knowledge, become isolated and had forgotten how to socialise:

*“and Covid, the pandemic... you know, us as adults, it's hit us, and gave us a little bit of a mental rock, so can you imagine what it's going to do to SEN children, autism (sic) children, children's services...so, our, our aim for this, since covid, is just maybe keep them safe, let them smile, let them have a bit of fun because, up there, they're numb.” (HCS 7)*

*“A lot of parents actually came and said that you know, it taught them to sort of cocoon themselves during the pandemic, so they used to be very confident before the pandemic came, it's completely changed them, so when they've come back in, you know, each day, they would say 'oh there's progress', you know, I can see that they're speaking a bit more... they're getting involved a bit more...” (HCS11)*

#### 4.1.2 Theme 2: Planning, implementation and delivery of Bring it on Brum

A number of key sub-themes were identified regarding the planning, implementation and delivery of Bring it on Brum. A key issue was the short timescale available to plan and implement Bring it on Brum. In addition, the on-going Covid pandemic meant that it was necessary to develop contingency plans in the event that face-to-face provision could not take place. However, a counter-intuitive benefit of the pandemic was that the requirement to work from home had assisted the planning and delivery of Bring it on Brum. In addition, the approach of Birmingham City Council, engagement with schools, the administration and grant management process, StreetGames’ approach and changing policy changes were also key themes identified in relation to planning.

##### 4.1.2.1 Short timescale

The short timescale available to plan and implement Bring it on Brum 2021 was a key theme identified in interviews with holiday club staff and co-ordinators. It resonated across a number of issues and, the delay in the funding announcement from the DfE played a significant role in terms of planning, implementation and delivery of the programme.

*“but I suppose it was just time we just didn't have the lead in time. Everything was rushed. That's the main problem.” (S11)*

*“So, by the time we started the conversations we were already thinking it's a shame these weren't started three months ago, so I think that's the kind of probably the biggest theme across all of it is timescales.” (S11)*

Limited time for strategic planning impacted on holiday clubs, who were given very little notice between confirmation of successful funding bids and delivering their summer holiday club programme:

*“But right across the piste, one of the big feedback items is about the sort of timescales and lead in on things.” (S7)*

*“And I'd probably argue that and say notice was non-existent and decision making was very last minute as well. You know the fact that 5 minutes out from the summer we had no program, no delivery team no confirmation and then in less than five weeks, we've recruited 40 casual team members, created a program, bought resources and equipment for it.” (HCS19)*

If more lead-in time had been available, many holiday club staff and programme co-ordinators thought that Bring in on Brum would have been even better.

*“And the big thing for me will be time, some more time, so obviously, be able to plan better, and obviously having (a) more effective program, and again, like I think with time we could have you know, brought more resources, you know to ensure that the children had a better, you know an even better...” (HCS19)*

However, despite the short lead-in timescale, there was strong agreement and confidence that community organisations and schools would willingly be involved in developing and delivering Bring it on Brum in future years:

*“OK, the application process was late and the, some of the timings were not ideal, but I have not spoken to a single organization that said they would not do this program again or they are so fed up with it all that they just are not interested.” (S2)*

#### *4.1.2.2 Contingency Planning*

The DfE provided clear direction to all 151 higher-tier Local Authorities that HAF should be face-to-face delivery. However, there were concerns amongst the Bring it on Brum co-ordination team and Birmingham City Council that due to rapidly rising coronavirus infection rates in Birmingham, a contingency plan informed by the council's public health team was required:

*“we were never going to put all of our eggs into the face to face basket and we were really clear from the outset with the DfE, they pushed us and pushed us on this. They were not happy with our proposals to the extent where it was raised in a cluster meeting, I wasn't actually there, but (member of staff from the council), said that basically we will be led by our own internal public health and kind of not the HAF coordinators nationally” (S2)*

With a small proportion of the total budget allocated for 'HAF at home', planning continued for face-to-face provision including all appropriate risk assessments. The Government's guidance regarding social distancing rules changed immediately prior to the start of the summer, allowing HAF to be delivered without the need to ensure that children were in social bubbles. This significantly increased the breadth and reach of Bring it on Brum, and only 10 out of 240 clubs closed as a result of Covid outbreaks.

Although Covid meant additional planning and risk assessments etc., an unforeseen, counter-intuitive benefit was that switching to working remotely and online, meant that the HAF co-ordinating team were able to gain access senior officials in the council with relative ease:

*“I just, I know that if I was sitting in the building, I probably wouldn't have had access to all those senior people to read and approve reports .... and there's just*

*no way I would have got in front of people that quickly. So, I think it really did help to focus the mind 'cause there was only one place anyone could be, and that was in front of the computer.” (S11)*

In addition, because so many organisations were involved in delivering Bring it on Brum across the summer, training sessions and materials were put online. This meant that all providers had flexible, free, online access to training, reducing the logistical problems of organising and/or attending large scale meetings:

*“and that’s where StreetGames really stepped up on that because they provided a whole suite of training online, and again because of COVID that was done virtually, and I think that meant that the take up on the training was much higher because the need to find a venue to accommodate all these people, didn’t need to make sure it met peoples hours because a lot of those were sort of webinars, and it just gave, worked around peoples availability and flexibility. So, I thought that worked well.” (S11)*

#### *4.1.2.3 Birmingham City Council*

Participants told researchers that they considered that whilst the delay by the Government in announcing funding for HAF caused a number of issues in developing and implementing the Bring it on Brum programme, a further concern was that the council itself had been slow to respond.

*“yeah, so the first thing was the announcement that was late ... but it wasn’t the only reason. They (the council) just were just slow to respond.” (S11)*

*“The difficult bits for me are the approach of the Council, which without a shadow of a doubt was flawed from the outset. That just meant that we were already against the kosh. It just made it, compounded everything at every step, and so we were never on track or on time for any element of the program.” (S1)*

The general opinion was that whilst Birmingham City Council had shown a good level of political support regarding the implementation and delivery of Bring it on Brum, they had not allocated enough resources to ensure effective project management. Moreover, many senior stakeholders thought that at the start of the process there was a lack of “buy-in” (S11) and ownership of the project from senior management within the council, where responsibility for the successful implementation of HAF was passed around like a “hot potato” (S11).

*“so councillors’ buy in (was) very supportive, but senior management, let’s say it was lacking, which is a real shame” (S11)*

*“you’d think you’d want to get behind something that’s fairly easy to show an impact because I think because it’s such a tight program with tight deadlines and it’s got clear sort of criteria, it’s easy to show an impact if you get it right and I thought they would have recognised that and got behind it a bit more...” (S11)*

Responsibility for overseeing the implementation of Bring it on Brum was placed within the Council’s Department for Education and Schools on the basis that this team was responsible for overseeing FSM contracts for state schools during term time. However, this department did not have the capacity to deliver HAF and hence they took the decision to tender for a HAF co-ordinator to deliver Bring it on Brum:

*“That’s why we commissioned it in the first place. We don’t have a resource like that existing. You know the old sports development teams that would have been the sort of thing that they used to do. The old sports development teams with the Sports Development Officers for each sport used to go out and do community development type activities based around the sport that they’re trying to, you know, grow in the grassroots level. And I guess they would have been the people historically that would have collected that information back and then being able to support and do in the local community. We don’t have that anymore.” (S18)*

Notwithstanding this, once a small team was established to oversee the programme, the overarching objective was to work quickly, within the structures and processes of the Council to ensure effective project management and delivery of Bring it on Brum across the city:

*“one of the challenges with this programme is because the budget is so big every pot of money we need to spend is over half a million, so it involves writing lots of reports to ensure that every pot of money is allocated and spent in the most appropriate way” (S11)*

More importantly however, there was a strong sense that implementation of Bring it on Brum was not an exercise in bureaucracy and that inaction would and could have serious, negative implications for children and families in the city during the summer:

*“..., it was a project that has a real like on the ground individual level impact, and you know, if this hadn’t been delivered successfully then potentially children would go hungry. Children would not have any positive activities to engage with over the summer ... So I do think that if the HAF program had not been put in place and had not been successful then it would definitely have a knock on effect on you know at all different levels so it’s really important.” (S17)*

Programme co-ordinators within the council told researchers that the funding process set up by the council to facilitate the application and award of grants to organisations to deliver Bring it on Brum initially included four strands, namely: community and voluntary sector, early years, schools, and direct awards for organisations that did not fall into either of the former categories. In accordance with the council’s procurement process, funding was allocated to each strand. The decision to separate funding into strands had been adopted by the council because the respective organisations and/or teams within the council had prior relationships with the relevant organisations from each sector and the Council considered that this approach would enable potential applications to apply for funding through the most appropriate channel, as explained by one stakeholder:

*“we’ve got this relationship with these providers (early years), we’re well known in the sector, let us do this, and if we hadn’t said that, probably they would have filtered through either XXXX (name of organisation) or actually probably a lot of them then wouldn’t because they weren’t all voluntary organisations there so they wouldn’t have been eligible through XXXX (name of organisation) through that community route, and they weren’t schools so they wouldn’t have been able to do it through that route. Yeah, so I guess that’s why, because XXXX was really about the voluntary sector in the community approach and they have, in the same way that we have that ongoing relationship with childcare and out of school providers. XXXX have that relationship with community providers, so it*

*made sense to put it there. So I guess really from the commissioning team's perspective they were positioning things where they were most likely to get the best outcomes because of the fact that the people you were engaging with were the people that were familiar with you.”(S18)*

Thus, the application process for the voluntary and community sector was planned to be managed through a community-based organisation that had contacts with grass roots community organisations and had experience of managing grants to this sector. The funding relating to working with early years and out of school providers was planned to be managed by a team within the Council that had experience of administering and awarding grants. Both of these management teams had a clear strategy, and project management processes set up:

*“So we were doing the funding mechanism, particularly for the out of school providers. So we advertised the opportunity to existing providers. We told them what the priorities and focus were, and then we had a time scale for them to apply. We had a process whereby applications came back into us. We would assess those applications based against the criteria for the HAF programme and we also applied a value for money aspect. We also brought in the existing knowledge that we have with our early years consultants who are out there supporting settings to bring in a quality angle on it ... and then we had a panel within my team that would review all of the applications and then agree to support and fund it at a particular level, or not support and reject it back.” (S18)*

The early years and out of school providers team was subsequently asked to take on responsibility for the funding application process relating to schools. A fourth strand of funding was dedicated to funding commercial delivery partners not eligible to apply via the community, early years, or schools funding streams.

#### *4.1.2.4 Engagement with Schools*

Birmingham City Council, like the majority of Local Authorities across England, had a very short lead in time to implement HAF. This meant that the Council had to heavily rely on existing partnerships, networks and relationships, implement new systems and ways of working, whilst managing a complex programme with hundreds of external organisations. Given the late notification regarding funding, it is not surprising that only 10% of the 400+ schools in Birmingham engaged with Bring it on Brum. The coronavirus pandemic and the short timescale involved contributed to the low level of school engagement:

*“so we originally started conversations with schools and said, what have you got planned for the summer and if we give you some of this grant, can you make this meet the DfE Specifications. But there are so many schools in Birmingham that would kind of be a mammoth task and a lot of school's kind of pushed back on that and said COVID has messed everything up for us. It's been a real blocker. We're not going to be able to kind of plan something at such short notice for the summer when we haven't had access to school buildings because of the pandemic, teachers just want a break, they don't want to be coming in over the summer.” (S17)*

However, even if schools themselves did not want to directly deliver Bring it on Brum themselves, the involvement of schools may have supported wider dissemination of information to families:

*“If we had schools on board and schools didn't even need to deliver, they could have just been involved in getting those messages there, I think we would have reached more children on free school meals.” (S11)*

Furthermore, the team managing the application process for early years and out of school providers was asked to take on the administration of the application process for schools after they had established their own processes. This meant that the process of assessing and awarding funding to schools became more complicated:

*“So the fact that the schools bit didn't start under the same process that we had and having to then bring it in, that was difficult, not having the overall control made it difficult because we had to keep going and getting clarification on things with XXXX and with StreetGames, and the difficult thing is that you might have a conversation with one person and get one answer, have a conversation with somebody else and get a different answer, and then it's like that going backwards and forwards. Well, well, when you said this, did you mean this, or you know have you spoken to XXXX about it or (do) you have the same opinion? You know that that was what was difficult about it.” (S18)*

A lack of clarity combined with frequent changes to application deadlines most likely had a negative impact on some organisations' decisions to apply for funding as explained by a member of holiday club staff:

*“...because I just think that the goal posts moved or you know, the initial information given wasn't maybe what actually was and it wasn't clear which I think (put) a lot of people off and then again, because people weren't applying, you know, as I said at the start, you know you know deadlines to apply got extended” (HCS19)*

#### *4.1.2.5 Administration and Grant Management Processes*

The Council's decision to have four separate teams managing the application process resulted in separate application forms with differing criteria and deadlines, which lead to some confusion:

*“there were some inconsistencies 'cause we're kind of playing out that now in terms of oh, they got a community grant and the requirements on them was this, whereas if they went for the schools route it was slightly different. So I was always mindful of the inconsistencies that we'd need to address in a future grants round.” (S11)*

Programme co-ordinators also told researchers that they considered that a lack of understanding about the HAF programme combined with an under estimation of the size of Bring it on Brum, and not fully understanding the expectations of the programme meant that the local, community-based organisation appointed to administer the community grants was ill-equipped to deal with the volume and monitoring of the process.

*“But from my point of view, given the scale and the pace, it needed to be an organisation that has an online grants management system rather than one that was doing it manually.”(S11)*



The lack of accurate and timely management data meant that it was not possible to accurately map provision against need across the city. StreetGames, in their role of co-ordinator, addressed some of these issues by streamlining the application process and monitored spend by manually entering data from paper-based records:

*“When they run out of time basically then we rocked in and looked at what they're going to do, and we're like hang on, no way, no way is that application from going out, which creates tension. Then because it's like we're rocking into other people's kind of, on other people's turf. But we got there, you know, we've had to make and salvage relationships to get the job done.” (S2)*

*“The information we needed and poor XXXX and her team literally took every single form and then I had to work out the level of provision across the 10 localities in the city.” (S2)*

*“So we couldn't do the map of need, so in a normal grant system it would be just you set your criteria and you allocate the grants, and it probably didn't really matter where the provision was. But because of the nature of the funding and the requirements of the grant, we needed to know all of that information. It just wasn't readily available.” (S11)*

#### 4.1.2.6 Policy Changes

The fast-moving pace of administering, implementing and delivering HAF, combined with short timescales led to frequent changes in policy at the local level. Unsurprisingly these changes resulted in people sometimes becoming frustrated:

*“I would suggest on a weekly basis there were policy shifts that were taking place partly because the way the whole thing was structured...” (S3)*

*“That was frustrating. That was difficult. That was U turns. That was you've gone two weeks headlong into it going this way and then a blocker arriving, and you can't do it that way. So now we need to think of something else.” (S1)*

During the initial stages of implementation there was a lack of clarity regarding DfE guidance regarding the number of sessions and hours providers had to provide, and the provision of hot food. The council adopted a strategic city-wide approach to implementing the 4 x 4 x 4 model. Rather than requiring every organisation to deliver the 4 x 4 x 4 model of provision, the co-ordinating team ensured that children living in the vast majority of targeted neighbourhoods had access to, as a minimum, 4 x 4 x 4 provision through delivery organisations working in partnership:

*“Some providers had very valuable things to offer, but just couldn't offer four hours a day, four days a week...so I think we kind of 'cause originally, we thought that every provider had to provide 4 x 4 x 4 but, in the end, the way we made it work was kind of like a mix and match approach So different providers could provide activities. So not the 4 x 4 x 4 but in the same kind of locations, so you'd have one provider come in and do like a morning session at a school and then different provider come in doing afternoon session. So, the one provider didn't have to provide that. But you could mix and match providers just to ensure that each placement had the opportunity to do 4 x 4 x 4.” (S17)*

Similarly, at a national level, the DfE adopted a more flexible approach in terms of providing hot and cold meals, whilst maintaining School Food Standards:

*“they (DfE) did change the specification later on and say that it didn't have to be a hot meal because so many people, local authorities were finding it challenging to provide a hot meal for every people in attendance.” (S17)*

There was some confusion regarding the type of management information the DfE required and there was a concern that Local Authorities may all have different interpretations of the requirements. This lack of clarity impacted on the development and implementation of a booking and data monitoring management system:

*“We created a report that we thought was 90% of what DfE would need, and that's kind of a running theme. We don't really know what we need to report on yet, and that was kind of being pushed back and pushed back. So, there's the interpretation from each local authority or each HAF coordinator on what needs to be reported if people can be eligible.” (S10)*

StreetGames were awarded the contract to co-ordinate Bring it on Brum but the fragmented approach to the funding application process caused some issues:

*“But the funding distribution, the commissioning and the contracting for the different elements of the delivery of that funding were in different locations, so some through the city which was the schools, the leisure centre and the youth service. And then the XXX were commissioned to do the grants management. Even though we could have done it, but we were to one side of all of that and we're actually working behind the scenes and picking things up as they changed. And because of the decisions or indecisions or the changing of decisions at the local authority that impacted everything.” (S3)*

Likewise, the fragmented approach to funding delivery organisations resulted in some management issues:

*“so we had different versions of the application forms and we had people having said, well, they've been promised different time scales and so it was more difficult to manage that even though we applied the same process it was more difficult to manage” (S18)*

#### *4.2.1.7 StreetGames' Approach*

Despite the short timescales, holiday club staff and programme co-ordinators told researchers that StreetGames' positive, 'can do' approach was vital across all stages of the project, from implementation to evaluation:

*“And so I guess my reflection is it was like absolutely hit the ground running if I've ever done a job that means you have to hit the ground running, this is absolutely (it), and people say all the time oh yeah, you know, really, I really hope someone's gonna come in and hit the ground running. Well, there was literally like this is like talking like day, day one. In fact, before I even started, I did join quite a lot of calls*

*while I was still in my old job to try and make sure that I wasn't missing out on too much When I first started. So, it really literally was like that.” (S2)*

StreetGames formed a Steering Group and a Central Operations Group, with clearly defined roles for each group. The Steering Group dealt with strategic issues and what was referred to as exception reporting, e.g., changing government guidance on Covid, whilst the Operations Group dealt with the granularity and operational side of project implementation. A StreetGames staff member was seconded to Birmingham City Council and worked at a very strategic level with the council, and a further StreetGames member of staff acted as overall project manager, working closely with the council and the StreetGames area team leads whose geographic area of responsibility reflected the way the city council operated across 10 areas in the city and were appointed to ensure effective implementation and delivery of HAF in each of their areas:

*“...actually finding organizations to work with or converting an organization from having a conversation into a grant application form was really easy because organizations got it. They understood what programs (was) about, they understood the aims and they appreciated the flexibility that we provide as part of our program...” (S2).*

StreetGames knowledge, experience and ‘can do’ approach in undertaking the coordinator role was appreciated by Birmingham City Council:

*“I think our partnership with street games was really, really helpful. They did a lot of legwork in like engaging providers and finding suitable providers and then they just took a lot of pressure off the council when it came to finding like large scale providers...” (S17)*

*“they were responsive, just, so from XXXX to the area leads that I've met, all of them are very committed, very professional, no problems with them at all. You know if there was a problem, we kind of sit down, sit down and work through it together. You know, we'd always find a solution. They've all got a very can-do attitude and that really helped for a successful program 'cause they are, and I think 'cause of their experience and they understand the sector....” (S11)*

StreetGames area leads worked hard to build trust with delivery organisations:

*“So a support person who is going to help you with every aspect of the program. And I think building that trust up by supporting organizations with their application form so the grant application for example, yeah, it was vital, really in in terms of getting their trust...But also making sure that they (providers) then sort of understood the role of StreetGames in the program as a whole and actually they could come talk to us about any element of it. So, the food, the physical activity, safeguarding well, it, whatever it might be, they knew they could then come and speak to us.” (S2)*

StreetGames also provided additional, free, online, training and support to delivery organisations:

*“StreetGames really stepped up on that because they provided a whole suite of training online, and again because of COVID that was done virtually, and I think that meant that they take up on the training was much higher because the need*

*to find a venue to accommodate all these people, didn't need to make sure it met peoples hours because a lot of those were sort of webinars and it just gave, worked around peoples availability and flexibility. So, I thought that worked well.”*  
(S11)

A number of delivery partners had their own in-house training, but many identified gaps in their in-house training and hence supplemented this with the training provided by StreetGames. Moreover, many holiday club staff commented on both the quality of the training and how the training could be used to support other community programmes beyond HAF:

*“Yeah, so there were lots of different courses you could access through a portal. So I was lucky enough to go on quite a few of their courses, children's mental health, mental health first aid, level three first aid, safeguarding, there's so many different ones to equip you to be ready to start this holiday programme.”* (HCS11)

#### 4.1.3 Theme 3: Food provision during summer 2021

A number of key sub-themes were identified in relation to the provision of food. As with the planning, delivery and implementation of Bring it on Brum overall, the short timescale available to develop a service for the provision of lunch, breakfast and snacks was a key sub-theme. Additional sub-themes included planned provision of food, in house provision of food, local food providers; central food service, procurement, delays to the start of the central food service, breakfast and snack provision and views of food provided.

##### 4.1.3.1 Timescale

Programme co-ordinators told researchers that the co-ordination of food provision proved challenging.

*“But actually, when it came to delivery of food there were just bits and pieces of challenges all over, but it wasn't really one thing, it was just food. This was a bit of a challenge in general.”* (S2)

An operational group was set up which included representatives from the Council's environmental and public health teams, the city's Food Justice Network, StreetGames, Feeding Britain and food providers to coordinate food provision. Although it was considered that the necessary infrastructure was in place across the city to co-ordinate the provision of food, many felt that discussions should have started far earlier. In addition, programme co-ordinators acknowledged that the scale of food provision was also an issue:

*“if we had more time definitely, I think the size, so this there's time and the scale of the ask was the biggest challenge because I think even with more time, more time would afforded us the opportunity just to think about how we would deliver the food...”* (S11)

The short timescale meant that plans for the provision of food needed to be put in place very quickly, but it was still necessary to operate within the strict protocols for contracting services. However, the need to act with speed was understood within the council's procurement team:

*“I mean procurement were great, and the person I spoke with in procurement kind of understood the pace we were working at but I suppose it was just time,*

*we just didn't have the lead in time. Everything was rushed. That's the main problem. " (S11).*

#### *4.1.3.2 Planned Food Provision*

Programme co-ordinators told researchers that it was intended that three options would be available to ensure smooth provision of food, that adhered to School Food Standards, in holiday club settings. Option one was for holiday clubs to prepare and serve meals in house. Option two included the provision of meals by local food providers, which in addition to providing culturally appropriate food meant that the local economy would benefit. Where clubs were unable to provide catering in house or from a local provider, the third option was for food to be provided through a central food service, the procurement of which would be led by the council.

*"It was always that we would first and foremost have small scale community food providers, involve them as much as we could in the program. So you've got your local cafe or local restaurant doing the food for the club on their road and then we thought we might have some slightly bigger community food providers who could perhaps serve five clubs, 10 clubs, and then we thought we'd have this massive scale food provider who the Council would commission, who would fill in all the gaps. So, we wanted to build it up in that way, like small first, then medium, filling in the gaps, and then biggest. And we thought that had real value because it was channelling money back into the community." (S8)*

The flexibility of the range of options to provide food in club settings was appreciated by the holiday clubs:

*"going back to breakfast and lunch and stuff ermm... there was a few different ways we could have gone about it so you could do it through StreetGames I think... and they'll help you provide the food, they've got the caterers and stuff, or you can do it externally, or potentially in your venue, depending on if you have the right certifications and stuff like that, so, this time we chose to go through StreetGames as it was just ideal." (HCS11)*

#### *4.1.3.2.1 In-house Provision of Food*

Clubs that opted to prepare and serve food themselves were provided with training on food handling and provision relating to dietary requirements including cultural and religious needs, allergies, and coping with children who were fussy eaters. Clubs were required to provide evidence that kitchen staff had participated in relevant training and had Level 2 Food Hygiene certificates. Kitchen premises were also inspected by the council's environmental health team to ensure that they met the highest level of hygiene standards. A quality assurance process was set up by the central co-ordinating team and the council to provide feedback and support to clubs to meet all appropriate standards:

*"Food, so if they're providing their own food, have they sent me their training documents? Their menu, have we fed back on the menu 'cause we got their hygiene rating confirmed, but then also the area leads would RAG rate them based on their application and information from the application process... So then we were able to prioritise who are the clubs we're really concerned about, like have they sent in their menu but it didn't look completely up to scratch and we haven't heard back with a revision. And obviously any, where we were really,*

*really concerned about, like they hadn't sent proof of their training or their hygiene rating, we would then have taken action before the program started....”*  
(S8)

In addition to meeting food safety and environmental health standards, food provided by clubs had to adhere to School Food Standards. This was one of the main challenges faced by the central co-ordinating team faced:

*“...in the in terms of the individual clubs that were providing their own food, I would say our biggest battleground areas were around lots of clubs wanting to do chips and chicken nuggets type meals regarding the inhouse provision of food.*  
(S8)

*“and then we had a few other providers in the program who also at first, just it wasn't meeting School Food Standards. So there was a lot of conversations about, you know, including vegetables and fruit etc., and no, you can't have that chocolate dessert and it was really helpful having those two quality assurance people with that background and that kind of confidence with the school food standards.”* (S8)

A specific quality assurance process was set up to quality assess menus and all clubs were asked to send proposed menus to the central team where they were checked against the standards. Feedback and guidance were provided as appropriate:

*“So what we did for all clubs involved in the program, so any clubs that will provide in their own food and then for all of our food providers, we asked them to submit a menu in advance of the program and then one each week if that menu is changing and we had two members of staff in the quality assurance team who have a background in school catering so they were checking those menus against School Food Standards and then providing written feedback to the food providers or the clubs.”*(S8)

Where clubs had teams in place who were experienced in preparing food at scale, it worked well:

*“...I think on reflection that where food work best in the program, it was where clubs were providing their own food on site and they had a team that were really confident and passionate about doing that.”*(S8)

*“I mean, I'm gonna be biased, it's my mum's cooking, she's been cooking for many, many years... like 30 years, and she does like funerals and weddings and so forth...”* (PC7)

Where clubs had intended to provide food in house, but it then transpired that they were unable to provide this service, they were able to change to either sourcing food from a local provider or accessing the central food service:

*“...there was a lot of clubs who changed, who initially when they put in their grant application, which was already late or, you know, in the short time scale of turnaround, initially wanted to provide the food themselves but hadn't got the training, hadn't got the confidence, they have the confidence to do the delivery of*

*the activities but they haven't got the confidence to source the food themselves, and then when they looked at the training options and things like the level 2 in food hygiene, and you know the involvement behind you know menus etc. etc., they went for the easy option which was to change from option 2 or 1 to option 3 or it was done for them.” (S11)*

#### 4.1.3.2.2 Local Providers

It was hoped that by supporting the local economy by bringing local food providers on board, children would be able to access more culturally appropriate food:

*“and I was really hopeful that it would be amazing. We were going to have only community food providers and it's channelling money directly into the community. And wow, they can offer something far more interesting than just sandwiches.” (S8)*

StreetGames led the process of engaging local suppliers, and a small number of local organisations were supported to enable them to meet the appropriate food safety standards:

*“I supported three, only three food providers to go through the process with environmental health of registering as a food business with Birmingham City Council and then having their environmental health inspection to get their four or five star hygiene rating so they could be a food provider this year, and I was amazed that they could be bothered to do that for a six week program 'cause it was so much of those food providers time. Whereas if they knew that they could then be involved in future years, there's a much bigger incentive than to bother with that stuff.” (S8)*

The local food providers were flexible and responded to requests to ensure that food was available in clubs:

*“And again, because those community food providers will often, organisations where their whole focus was getting good food out to families, they weren't saying XXXX, it's 7:00 PM and you're asking for lunches tomorrow. They were saying I'll go down to the kitchen now and sort that out for you. So yeah, having that mix of food providers really helped us out there as well.” (S8)*

However, overall, the logistics and the practicalities of providing a hot lunch through local providers proved problematic:

*“We had some real issues with food providers who were really well placed to do lovely, hot cooked and then cold meals that then would be heated up again. So you could have a hot meal in the club, but actually, just thinking through the logistics of facilities for clubs having enough microwaves and how long it might take to microwave 75 meals, but also the environmental health team were very very solid on the fact that if the club was going to be microwaving meals, they would need to be registered and have a four or five star hygiene rating and all the staff have the right training. And obviously we absolutely need to do that safely. So we had to kind of back away from the option of providing hot meals as much as you might have liked to...” (S8)*

Nonetheless, where clubs were able to get their food provided by a local food provider, the general consensus was that it worked well:

*Holiday club staff: "We have caterers, and they're in there if you want to speak to them. We have caterers who come, they bring the food, cook it all for them and then they serve it... and then people... so they, he's... he organised all that didn't he? ..."*

*Holiday club staff: "He's been absolute top drawer to be fair, amazing...". (HCS7)*

#### 4.1.3.2.1 Central Food Service

The process of setting up a central food service for clubs that did not want to or could not provide food themselves or through a local provider was co-ordinated by Birmingham City Council. This was a complex process, as a programme co-ordinator explained:

*"So first you've got the analysis phase where you analyse what's already out there and what is the project aiming to deliver and yeah, basically you kind of look at the market and see what's available and how you're going to appeal to those markets. And then you've got the planning phase next, which is where you look at specifications ... and do you give those outlines to providers and see who can meet those targets, and then you've got the do stage, which is where you actually go out to these providers with your specification get them to come in with their bids and then evaluate their bids see who can meet the criteria, and then you've got the review phase where you look at what each provider's delivered. Did they meet their targets and sort out their payment And then of course, you go straight back to the analyse phase and say what can we do better next time." (S17)*

A framework was already in place through an organisation, the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) that is used by local authorities to identify potential suppliers of services. It was decided that this framework would be used to commission a large-scale food supplier as this would speed up the process because appropriate terms and conditions would already be in place:

*"so yeah, we were still going through very long, convoluted procurement process, we were told it was gonna be quite brief because we were using the YPO framework. Think it's Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation ... So anyway, so we decided to use the framework because they were, on that framework, there are a number of commercial providers who do packed lunches and provide them for schools." (S11)*

Local food providers were not on the YPO approved list of contractor's framework and were therefore not able to bid for the central food provision tender:

*"So in the background XXXX (name of person) from XXXX (name of organisation) had already been sort of liaising with a number of the local community food providers who weren't able to participate in this framework because it's, they needed to be already registered with YPO before we went out to tender. So I*



*didn't realise, I thought it was just like a normal tendering process where you put your specification out, you invite supplies to bid, but in this case you have to be registered and then you see the opportunities.” (S11)*

Thus, a tender specification was sent out to suppliers on the YPO framework. However, the first specification that was issued did not contain enough detail and did not state that food provided must meet School Food Standards. Hence, a further specification had to be written and issued to potential suppliers, which further delayed the process:

*“but I remember when I first started, someone in the team within sort of a month of me starting said ... there's a food element, they'd already started engaging with the market, “can I pick this up and carry it through to conclusion? The specs already written.” And then when I read this specification, I thought no it's not written, you know, it doesn't have all of the requirements, didn't even mention food, school standards...” (S11)*

*“...They were just literally going out and saying, can we have an organisation that provides packed lunch but didn't actually specify anything else, so it should have gone out earlier but I realised that if I put it earlier, we would have had, we wouldn't have had what we needed, so I had to delay it to rewrite the spec in order that we could have a successful outcome ...” (S11)*

#### 4.1.3.3 Procurement

Once the specification for a central food provider had been issued, three potential suppliers were identified, one of which indicated that they could also provide breakfast. However, a subsequent review of the service offered by this supplier revealed that the supplier lacked appropriate experience and expertise:

*“...we concluded the process with two, three providers and one of them said that they could provide breakfast and then when we kind of asked them for menus and to kind of understand exactly what this looks like, we then realised that they've never provided breakfast before, and they were trying to enter a market that they didn't have even have supply chains for. So we just decided that this was going to be too much of a nightmare, because even when we just tried to explain the School Food Standards and then try to talk about children who couldn't have, who had a lactose intolerance, couldn't have gluten, and all of these other issue It was just getting too complicated so we just said let's just walk away from this then now because it's gonna be too much to get right.” (S11)*

The Council was then left with two potential suppliers. However, one withdrew from the process because they believed it was not financially viable for their organisation to fulfil the contract:

*“so we ended the process with three and by the time we were ready to roll out during the mobilisation period, we had another one pulled out because they said it wasn't financially viable for them.” (S11)*

A contract was issued to the remaining contractor to provide packed lunches to individual clubs:

*“So we did ask for the School Food Standards and they assured us that they adhere to this because they provide packed lunches to schools, they're already in that market and were also (aware) there are a number of things around, you know, food safety, allergen awareness, you know, making sure that you know their supply chain is traceable...” (S11)*

Although the contractor was able to accommodate different dietary requirements, it took several rounds of negotiation to ensure that the food provided adhered to School Food Standards:

*“Food just did not meet School Food Standards. It was a sandwich, a pack of crisps, so a piece of cake and a fizzy drink and we were able to through many meetings, persuade them to swap out the drink for water, add in a fruit bag. We nearly got a carrot sticks bag in there but that had to be lost in the end and then at least the option of a malt loaf, rather than cake.” (S8)*

#### *4.1.3.4 Delay to the Start of the Central Food Service*

The delays in the procurement process meant that by the start of the school summer holidays, although a contract was in place, the provider was not able to deliver food for the first two weeks of the programme.

*“By the kind of 20th of July, we were still having conversations with different food providers and working out if they could even deliver on this scale as that bringing on of that big provider just happened so late in the day that we needed to get a food system in place for those first few weeks...” (S8)*

It was therefore necessary to identify an alternative food provider for the start of the delivery of Bring it on Brum. One programme co-ordinator described this as *“a bit of a mad scramble really”* (S8). However, although it had not been within StreetGames’ remit to co-ordinate food provision, the organisation stepped in and took on the responsibility identify an alternative provider for the first two and a half weeks of Bring it on Brum:

*“We never wanted to be the food management body. We had no choice with, seriously 2 1/2 weeks to go and we had zero food sourced for those that needed central food. Two and, two- and a-bit weeks ago we were that pushed on where we found ourselves. So that was really challenging.” (S1)*

*“my understanding was at the beginning, right at the beginning the city were to let a contract for central food which didn't happen and it was getting too close to the line and I think, I don't know, XXXX (name of person) would know better than I would, but I think we picked up the responsibility to take that approach...” (S3)*

StreetGames negotiated with local providers that had originally been contracted to provide lunches but at a smaller scale, to fill the gap until the central food service was operational:

*“...in our first, the first two and a half weeks of the program, the food was only provided by what I call community food providers. All I mean there is these are kind of smaller food providers rather than the big sandwich provider that the*

*council were bringing on, and we had to do that (for) two and a half weeks with those community food providers simply because of how late in the day the Council bringing on their provider happened.” (S8)*

However, local providers struggled to cope with the increased scale of provision they were asked to fulfil at short notice to bridge the gap between the start of Bring it on Brum and the central provision of food coming on stream:

*“And I think that in a few cases we overstretched those community food providers, I think they were offering them; they were offering more than they ever should have really done which then lead to challenges further down the line in terms of logistics and quality of provision. And so that was a challenge about identifying food providers which I'm delighted that we solved, but yeah, certainly it was tricky, and I think it did have knock on repercussions in the program...” (S8)*

Once the central food supplier came onboard, StreetGames had to ‘undo’ all the arrangements they had put in place to bridge the gap in food provision. This created further “chaos” (S3) and a repeat of some of the problems encountered in the first two weeks of the holidays:

*“...and then part way through the program, fairly soon the city said we need to let a contract, so we have to change that, and you have to get your hands off what you've set up. And all the preparation and all the setup and all the teething problems in the first week had to be re-lived in a different way by everybody and that was fundamentally a major flaw, and that was a change in decision and policy halfway through the program, essentially, which knocked everything out.” (S3)*

*“Then we had this switch to the big sandwich provider which was really disruptive for lots of clubs having to learn how the new system of food ordering where worked. They might have just got things up and running with those food providers. So yeah, that was massive. I wish we didn't have to do that big change, but at the same time I think the food provision from week three onwards was often better suited to what the clubs actually needed. I think the sandwiches did work better for a lot of clubs and I'm, I was really sad that like they just didn't feel as nutritionally great.” (S8)*

#### *4.1.3.5 Breakfast and Snack Provision*

As with lunch, problems were encountered in identifying a central contractor to provide breakfast. It was not possible to identify a supplier through the YPO framework as had become apparent when issuing the tender for lunch, and there was no desire to go through the procurement exercise again:

*“So we ended up with no breakfast being provided through this central, the through the commercial providers.” (S11)*

*“we needed breakfast ASAP and we'd already exhausted the framework and I was saying to procurement internally I do not want to go for another procurement process.” (S11)*

However, it was necessary for the council to work within the strict rules regarding contracting and procurement to ensure that due process was followed. The council's rules provided that in

exceptional circumstances, such as extremely tight timeframes, exceptions could be made, and it was agreed by the council's legal team, after receiving quotes, that a direct award could be made to a local provider to supply breakfasts to clubs:

*“so on the back of the award report for kind of the completion of the food tender, I then agreed, with procurement that we would write a line in to say we're doing a direct award to XXXX so that's how that got approved...and legal signed it off. But it's because the program was starting in the following week. We didn't have a provider, so we had to stress that we've got, we have no options because breakfast is kind of one of the requirements...” (S11)*

It had been hoped that healthy snacks and fruit would be provided by a certain supplier that diverts surplus food to community-based organisations. However, the short timescale and delays in making decisions meant that the preferred supplier had to withdraw from the process:

*“there were just some decisions that ended up being made so late that we lost out on things, so we'd hope to bring someone like XXXX in as a fruit provider of all the snacks and fruit for the whole program and actually in the end for XXXX to turn around to us and say sorry guys, it's now so late in the day that we can't be involved in this program, so we would have liked to be able to offer every club fresh fruit delivered every day, maybe yogurts, healthy snacks, things like that, because of how late the tendering process got, they pulled out from us and then we were left with very limited choices of who we could go with as a snack provider for example.” (S8)*

The central food provider was able to provide food for snacks, but the range, which included crisps, malt loaf and flap jacks, was considered to be 'unhealthy' with some clubs providing negative about the service:

*“...I think the clubs would have liked it more as well. We had negative feedback from the clubs of like we don't want to give them crisps every day and it was just all that it was the kind of best of a bad bunch in the end.” (S8)*

#### *4.1.3.6 Views on the Food Provided*

Whilst the project management team found the changeover in food provider problematic, the change was welcomed at the holiday club level as a number of complaints had been made about the food provided during the first two and a half weeks of Bring it on Brum. Holiday club staff, parents and carers and children told researchers that the food provided initially was more suitable for an adult and therefore not suitable for young people:

*“clubs were saying, look, these kids are used to eating like, can we just have some pots of boiled rice please with sauces, like we just need plainer food than this. So I think that was a big learning, making sure the meals are not just kid friendly, but they're developed for young people and the types of diets that the, this demographic of young people are eating.” (S8)*

However, the single biggest complaint about the food served in the initial weeks of Bring it on Brum was that meals that are traditionally eaten whilst hot, were served cold because clubs did not have the facilities to reheat the food.:

*“They like the food, they eat the food, very happy with the food but... they wish it was hot... and that's understandable... so, some things are fine... like... we've had ermm, nachos and chicken and stuff, and that, that is fine cold... ermm... but some of the other things, like we had some noodles yeah, we've had pasta and obviously chicken and rice, that's a, that's a good example, that would be nicer hot but we don't have the facilities for that at the minute which we're hoping to change in the future...” (HCS11)*

*“The food... they like the food, but the only thing is... my kids are... my kids... it's really cold... that's the only thing, they do like it but, they don't... my kids are quite fussy anyway, ermm but... it's cold...” (PC11)*

*Interviewer: “What...is the food healthy?”*

*CFG11: “Yeah yeah but it's cold... it is cold.”*

*CFG11: “I don't like that.”*

In one instance, holiday club staff refused to serve the food that had been provided and bought food locally instead. However, there was a concern that the alternative food provided may not have met School Food Standards:

*“I remember one of our food providers delivered boxes of pasta salads on one day and the club leader said: ‘I've chosen not to serve it 'cause I don't like pasta salad so I know the kids won't eat it either’ and I think they just went down the road and kind of got some food locally which I would you know, I assume that probably may not have met School Food Standards, so I think there's a massive piece to be done to engage the club leaders and help them feel really confident in talking to the kids around healthy eating...”(S8)*

When the central food provider changed, clubs perceived that the change of supplier had happened because of their complaints:

*“I'm glad that they perceived it like that. 'cause you're totally right, that switch was happening regardless, but we would have been in a really difficult position if we didn't have that that new provider coming in because the food provision for the first couple of weeks just wasn't working for clubs. So, it all worked out for the best in the end that we did have that switch coming. But when we first knew that we had to make that switch, that that yeah, that felt like it would be really tricky, but it ended up working out well.” (S8)*

The introduction of packed lunches was welcomed for several reasons. Children liked the novelty of their food being provided in a lunch bag and packed lunches were often easier to administer at some of the venues:

*“They were over the moon. That’s all they want. And they love the novelty of having it in a prepacked, you know, little bag, sandwich bag...” (HCS1)*

*“I like all foods and like pastry, but I like how they brought snacks for us not just, we have cheese sandwiches but it’s healthy snacks, but I think everyone likes them cos before we just had just meals and it was urghhh it was okay I guess but it is good now.” (CFG4)*

*“...in some ways sandwiches are great If you’ve got activity club where kids are really active, lunchtime literally lasts half an hour because they scoff a sandwich, they drink a bottle of water and then want to go and play football again or you know do a sport activity again if that is what the focus is at the club.” (S11)*

Some holiday club staff indicated that if funding were to be provided for holiday clubs in the future, they would update and upgrade their club facilities to enable them to provide hot food for attendees:

*“and then hopefully in future if we can do this again, we are looking to convert the kitchen and we will hopefully do it here, and get all the right certifications and everything so we can cook on site, cause obviously we’ve heard... that the kids want hot food and we, we can’t do that at the minute... we don’t have the right stuff” (HCS 11)*

#### 4.1.4 Theme 4: Future Provision of Food and Cooking and Nutrition Related Activities

Three sub-themes were identified in interviews regarding how food and cooking and nutrition related activities could be delivered in the future, namely the role of the central food service, building capacity within clubs and community food providers and cooking and nutrition education.

##### 4.1.4.1 Role of Central Food Service

There was uncertainty regarding the central food service should funding for HAF be provided in the future. It was suggested that the central food service should no longer be provided in favour of supporting clubs to source food for the lunch time meal:

*“I would move completely away from the central food service, but I would still really engage those (local) food providers as a HAF program and give them support, but it just wouldn’t be us kind of commissioning them. It would be the individual clubs choosing from that selection.” (S8)*

However, it was further suggested that central food service could be retained but its role could be repositioned to sourcing and supplying clubs with healthy breakfasts and snacks:

*“I still think there’s probably a role possibly for the central food provision, but I’m not sure in the same way... and I’m still not clear about potentially where the central stuff should be managed or should happen or could happen.” (S6)*

*“There are a few things that I still would keep a core service of, like we were able to offer breakfast provision for all club starting early in the morning and I think if we had the funding to do that, I would do that again. I would start that planning far earlier again that started once the program had already begun and so I wasn’t*

*happy with the kind of food options we were able to offer a breakfast, but I think it was a really great thing to build the offer for breakfasts and so if we could, I (would) keep a core breakfast offer... and I would probably keep the core snack offer as well just to bulk out the food that the clubs can provide. But again, I'd probably make that snack offer of a fruit, fruit, yogurt type of offer..." (S8)*

An alternative suggestion was that schools could play a role in cooking and supplying food to other community-based clubs:

*"at the moment we've got a relatively small number of schools, and one of the assumptions I understood at the start from the school meal standards side was if the schools are providing it, it will meet the standards because the likelihood is there's going to be a schools food provider and the schools will have the kitchens and so on.... That's another method, having central school provision through schools 'cause they've got facilities and people in place, that's another method. So maybe it's a combination of these methods in the relevant settings in a relevant way. I don't know. I don't know if there is a one size fits all solution to be honest, especially at the scale we're talking about. (S3)*

Given the scale of Bring it on Brum programme where more than 350,000 meals were provided during summer 2021, an alternative course of action suggested by one programme co-ordinator, was for the wholesale operation and oversight of food provision to holiday clubs to be put out to tender. However, there was uncertainty as to whether there was a single organisation that could provide meals on the scale required:

*"it'd be brilliant to have a big contract caterer who would be willing to take on a contract where they facilitate that, so they could provide, so I don't even know if this, if an organization like this exists, but some kind of umbrella organization that that we would have a contract with and then they would in turn subcontract these small organisations because if you think of 350,000 meals, how many providers that we wouldn't want to, we wouldn't have the time or the capacity to enter into those individual relationships and then on top of that, leaving that to the whim of providers to then ensure the standard is a big ask so it needs and so it needs a big organisation to actually make sure that the standards are being maintained and provide for support on the ground." (S11)*

*"My understanding is that for next year, if there is a next summer, Birmingham Council are interested in finding ways for different providers to end up on that potential tender list, which I think would be a really good thing." (S8)*

#### *4.1.4.2 Building Capacity within Clubs and Community Food Providers*

Programme co-ordinators envisaged a much stronger role for clubs in making their own decisions about food provision in the future and suggested that this could be achieved by delegating funding to directly to clubs:

*"...it's better just to give the clubs a bit of choice and control and hand the baton over to them to make their own decisions around food...(S8)*

*"So clubs are either being given their own funding to do their own food, or they're being given funding to choose their own food provider." (S8)*

*"I think trying to move more to option one and two aren't we, to try and basically move away from a central food provision, and I think you're you mentioned XXXXX (name of person) earlier about you know, the premise of trying to engage local food catering providers wherever that's you know, cafes or caterers or whatever, and I think there were a lot of clubs that did try and do that obviously, I think we can do that more" (S6)*

Clubs would then have more choice about the type of food provided in future:

*"And that does loads of great things. It gives clubs choice, like I think with our model in Birmingham this year, the food just turned up. They didn't get a choice of what type of food they wanted. You know they could tell us dietary requirements, but they couldn't tell us "We would like hot food, cold food, curry, wraps, sandwiches" whatever it might be." (S8)*

However, this approach would need to be underpinned by supporting and building capacity in clubs and more time would be needed to ensure this approach worked:

*"I would start really, really early with kind of capacity building to get as many clubs in a position as possible to do their own food, so that's making sure that their staff have got loads of training to help them realize why the food element is so important and then give them the skills and knowledge and confidence to do it and get environmental health in, maybe with some consultancy support so we can get their kitchen and facilities up to scratch, inspected getting the four or five (star) hygiene rating." (S8)*

If funding for HAF holiday provision was secured for a number of years, this, it was suggested, would encourage clubs to invest in their kitchen facilities, which would enable more clubs to meet the strict food hygiene standards:

*"Decisions around funding from the Department for Education is happening so late. If that continues, then year on year you're delivering a program that just is never as good as it could be, and whereas if clubs knew they were going to get HAF funding for the next three years, they might think "Oh, it is worth us having our kitchen refurbished or putting some of our staff forward for training or bringing on a food expert that can lead that aspect of the program", so I think there's massive opportunities for it to be the type of program that strengthens here one year. But I think the current approach to funding from the DfE is holding that back." (S8)*



Furthermore, longer-term funding would mean that greater investment could be made in providing training and support to clubs:

*“Well, I think that if there was a commitment of longer-term funding from the government, the HAF program everywhere and in Birmingham could and should be something that strengthens here. One year, like if we were able to invest in really brilliant training. I mean the training program I think was brilliant, but we could do even more in some, you know, like if you get a club set up next year to do their own food, then they're set up to do that year on year on year. So, I do think it is and should be something that builds and strengthens. But one of the big things that holds us back from that is the short-term nature of the funding and the fact that we already we know we're on for Christmas, but we don't know we're on for Easter...” (S8)*

If clubs were not in a position to deliver food in-house, programme co-ordinators suggested that clubs could be matched with local providers whom they would then liaise with directly to provide food:

*“But actually, we probably, we could do a lot more with matching up providers, so activity providers with local food providers just to provide that relationship where they can then get really bespoke food done to the exact number that they need.” (S2)*

*“I guess we want community engagement (so) that clubs that can't provide their own food have a relationship with a local organization that is going to provide them the food that they need.” (S2)*

Rather than being driven by a desire to make a profit, it was suggested that local providers would be motivated by a desire to provide good quality food to local children:

*“Because they (local providers) really, really love the idea of the program and they're really passionate about doing, like that was the amazing thing is, if you're working with community food organizations, their whole mission is often around supporting their community with food. They're not there to make a profit, and sometimes I would ring some of our, I will not name names, some of our providers and say, look guys like this is absolutely not good enough, whatever happened yesterday or today, and they will say we're chucking so much resource at it. You know it's; it becomes like we, it wouldn't make any sense for us to put more resource on this 'cause our profit margins will get too small. Whereas if you're saying that to a community kitchen that are providing lunches for two of their local holiday clubs, they will bend over backwards because it's their local reputation. But also, because their whole reason for being as an organization is getting good food to families.” (S8)*

It was further proposed that a brochure could be prepared that would enable holiday clubs to identify potential food providers in their community who would apply to be included in the document. This approach would also be underpinned by providing advice and guidance to ensure

that local food providers were aware of School Food Standards and that they met all appropriate health and hygiene regulations:

*“...because I think even though the community providers can deliver this, I think there's still some training that they would need to undergo in order to understand what the School Food Standards are and how they need to meet them. So, I think that there's more work that needs to be that done there...” (S6).*

*“So maybe what you're doing is having some kind of application type process for a food provider to be one of the ones that we will recommend, so that process would be us checking their hygiene rating, making sure they've got the relevant training in place, checking their menus, doing some form of quality control on them and then keeping that relationship throughout the program as well, and maybe we're saying to end up in that brochure of providers that we're recommending you do need to go through those steps and say yeah, and then have some kind of quality assurance process in place for them.”(S8)*

One programme co-ordinator suggested that there should be guidance and support from central government on how to implement and support food providers to ensure food provided adhered to School Food Standards:

*“Is this something that should be, not dictated, but sort of arranged and defined on a national level in terms of the quality of the standards of the food. I mean, it clearly is for the School Food Standards already, but rather than us working out a plan at a local level that is a sort of Birmingham level, for example, should it, should it come down from above to say this is the standard. This is what a HAF program should be delivering food wise. And it has to be generic enough that you can apply at a local level. You know at a community kitchen, for example, where they know what the standard is. They understand it even if they're doing it in a culturally different way or so providing it.” (S15)*

#### *4.1.4.3 Cooking and Nutrition Education*

Programme co-ordinators acknowledged more could have been done to provide cooking and nutritional education sessions for children and families. As well as providing sessions in clubs, cooking and nutrition sessions could have been incorporated into the wider enrichment programme:

*“The work to involve clubs and club leaders in food and nutrition is one kind of a gap. I think the work to involve families a bit more in cooking and nutrition is another gap, but I also really wish, we did this beautiful program of days out that kind of, we go to the theme park, off we go to the beach and I wish that we'd done some food theme days out. I think that there was an opportunity there too.” (S8)*

It was suggested that in future years, opportunities could be built into club programmes to blend food provision with nutrition education so children could get involved in preparing food, which did not have to be overly complicated:

*“I wonder if there's kind of some kind of hybrid, 'cause just following up from what XXXX (name of person) said and that really simple model that seems to work in the youth-based setting. If you could replicate that type of approach. Plus, I don't know, XXXX (name of person) is probably going to be talking to people about seeing if she can train and educate young people with the chefs and the range of people on the ground to build capacity.” (S3)*

A programme co-ordinator gave an example of a club that had successfully achieved this hybrid approach of combining nutritional education and food provision in the club:

*“So we just went to visit them and they've got a local chef in who was really well known in the community an African Caribbean lady who everybody knew, came in and developed a menu that all of the kids could get involved in making, so they used flatbreads and they made savoury pizzas. They made sweet pizzas and wraps on a really simple premise, and by the end, the kids were making it all themselves and it was a really simple method and because the simple method had passed the School Food Standards, they didn't have to do anything complicated and because they were working with the kids on what would go in it. It also met the nutritional guidelines as well, so it was quite a simple premise and I think they could really share that methodology with other projects that were going to start doing their own food ...” (S4)*

Several clubs provided pre-prepared meals, such as spaghetti bolognese for families to take home and reheat later. A QR code on the packaging provided a link to the ingredients and cooking method so that families could replicate the meals. Centrally organised online cooking sessions were also held. Unfortunately, take up of these services had been lower than hoped:

*“I think it's really brilliant and completely right that we offered those things. My understanding is that the take up of the cooking sessions wasn't massively higher, (I) wasn't very involved with that, but I don't think there was much take up of it as we might have wanted.” (S8)*

Face to face cooking sessions in clubs for families had greater success:

*“but also some clubs themselves organised their own face to face. Families comes in and they do cooking sessions together and I think where there were clubs that were already had good relationships with families, maybe pre-existing or maybe just the way that their club was working, their families are quite involved. I get a sense that some of those face-to-face ones worked quite well.” (S8)*

The HAF at home food box service delivered through the supermarket Morrisons were also well received by families:

*“We had absolutely massive take up of the food boxes that we're going home. So families really wanted yeah, food parcels, but I think the actual kind of engaging parents and families in the cooking and nutrition aside was much weaker to be honest...” (S8)*

#### 4.1.5 Theme 5: Marketing

Two key sub-themes were identified in relation to raising awareness of Bring it on Brum: marketing of Bring it on Brum and the Bring it on Brum website.

##### 4.1.5.1 Marketing of Bring it on Brum

The way parents and carers found out about Bring it on Brum fell into two broad categories of informal and formal marketing. Informal marketing included word of mouth either directly or indirectly from clubs or other professionals to parents and carers and use of private Whatsapp groups or word of mouth to share information about holiday club provision between parents and carers. More formal methods included leafleting, though this was then used informally by parents and carers who shared it in private Whatsapp groups with others.

Organisations that had well established links with families in their local communities tended to communicate in a more informal way and told individual families about the availability of places at holiday clubs:

*“We have like a list of families and parents who we work with regular, and then I'll just give them a call and say, “we have space available; do you want a space?” (HCS1)*

In the same club, a parent who volunteered at the centre where the club was held explained that she was told about the summer holiday club by centre staff:

*“Because I volunteer here, so the XXX staff told me this, like you know (about the programme and my older daughter, she's, at the moment she's thirteen, when she was young, she usually came here and she love this you know, programme.” (PC1)*

In another club, holiday club staff similarly advised that they or other professionals referred families to the holiday club:

*“We've also referred some of our families to come because they don't really get any family support form XXX Road, and the health visitor referred some in as well.” (HCS2)*

Similarly, a number of parents explained that they found out about the club from their health visitor:

*“but it's only because my health visitor did it on my behalf, whereas it wasn't, it won't have been easy cos I didn't know, I didn't know, I knew there was a centre here, but I didn't know about this holiday stuff.” (PC2)*

Other parents however, explained that they found out about holiday clubs via word of mouth or via chat groups in private Whatsapp groups. Once they knew about their local holiday club, they then told other friends and family members:

*“It was my wife, and you Tu... I was going to say you tube..erm kind of WhatsApp, you know they have groups, and everyone sends you all the stuff.” (PC11)*

*“I've got a WhatsApp group, cause I know XXX anyway so I've got a WhatsApp talk from him...” (PC2)*

Some parents and carers advised that they found out about their local holiday club because they happened to be walking past the venue. However, once they were aware of the holiday provision, they found it easy to register their child/children:

*“When I seen the like the (activities in the park), I came in, I walked in straight away. They are very nice here they helped me and then I went online and registered my children.” (PC7)*

Some clubs used more traditional forms of marketing (e.g. distributing leaflets in their communities) to let people know about their holiday club. Potential attendees photographed leaflets and circulated the photos via WhatsApp groups or private messages:

*“As soon as I got the leaflet, I called my sister and was like 'oh this is going on ... and I screenshot and showed... did you get this? And she's like yeah.” (PC11)*

Some parents and carers thought that it would have been useful to have received information from their child's school about holiday clubs in their local area. They considered schools a more reliable source compared to receiving a leaflet through the door.

*“I think if they advertised it in schools before the school holidays, they would have more... I think a lot more parents and kids would know about it... because it's, a lot of people, leaflets come they just throw them out” (PC11)*

There was some confusion as to whether schools had supported the dissemination of information about Bring it on Brum. Some programme co-ordinators considered that a huge opportunity had been missed to promote the Bring it on Brum by not sending leaflets and letters home to parents and carers, either via schools:

*“You know, we wanted to put satchel mail in the hands of free school meal parents. No, it was a blocked. It was a closed door every single time. So to think how our marketing and comms strategy has worked has been incredible considering we didn't have the obvious avenue to use.” (S1)*

However, a member of holiday club staff advised that letters had been sent to parents via schools:

*“Yeah, I seen it from my son's school ermm... they sent it through email, the Bring it on Brum?” (HCS11)*

#### 4.1.5.2 Bring it on Brum Website

The short timescale, delays in the procurement process, delays in notifying successful organisations about award of funding, alongside frequent changes to the interpretation of the type of management data required by Department for Education, meant that the development of the Bring it on Brum website and registration/booking portal was delayed. As a result, the system only went live after Bring it on Brum had started:

*“And the website was actually developed after the start of the program. It wasn't really launched until after the start of the programme...” (S3)*

Under “normal” conditions, the process of developing a customer facing software booking package requires a much longer lead in time than what was available during summer 2021:

*“So, for us it's like really challenging you know, implementing software generally we would implement it, takes us three to six months to do this and we probably did it in three to six weeks...” (S10)*

Initially, it was anticipated that the website would provide a space where holiday club providers could promote their club and activities and parents and carers would be able book places at clubs. However, it became apparent that what was needed was more complicated than just an online booking system and that what had been developed, albeit at a rapid pace, did not quite meet the needs of Bring it on Brum:

*“In the very first instance, I found it quite tricky to just grasp and understanding and get my head round the actual system itself, and that, I guess, and I guess I was baffled a little bit by their belief that they had designed something that was perfect for holiday clubs because it isn't.” (S2)*

In addition, with more than 220 providers, the system had to be flexible enough to accommodate clubs that wanted to use the system to publicise their holiday club provision (referred to as open bookings), as well as clubs that allocated places to children on the basis of pre-existing relationships with families, and clubs who had previously delivered a holiday club in the past and/or already had their own booking system in place (referred to as closed bookings):

*“and also I think it's the it's being able to cater for the different types of organisations. So, you've got like I said, the commercial ones and the ones who like booking ‘we want to take online bookings, that's how we want to do it.’ Great. But then others that have got that relationship there. We believe like our solution does, does, can support them...” (S10)*

To support the 220 holiday club providers, key staff within StreetGames were trained on how to use the system and they then cascaded and supported providers. Training materials for holiday club staff were accessed via an online portal:

*“...but being able to being able to effectively train them at scale is difficult, right? So, we have a training academies online videos and that's for scale.” (S10)*

Some clubs found that the open booking system, and the development of an online mapping of clubs that showed the location of clubs, availability, alongside details on how parents could book places helped to maximise uptake:

*"...Their numbers went through the roof in projects where they needed support so there's a bit of a like what's the word, a conflict going on in my mind, there because I, it clearly, with the map and the extra support, numbers went through the roof" (S4)*

However, it proved slightly problematic, from a data management perspective, to obtain data from organisations operating closed bookings and those clubs with well-established booking/registration systems of their own. These clubs entered information into their own system and then had to enter the same information into the Bring it on Brum system:

*"So they were kind of see, 'cause it had closed, so getting their information on the system was tricky, but also seemed a little bit of a waste of time because they weren't taking bookings through the system. So they purely became organisations we're working with just to do the data." (S2)*

*"But in the meantime, we've just been printing out the register of the children signed in.. and ticking them off and get them to sign in and then I've got them all filed away" (HCS1)*

Some holiday club staff told researchers that they found the on-line system beneficial:

*"literally every day, the children will come in, you'll update, because they, you wouldn't, obviously you can't let them through the gate if they're not actually on there, obviously for safeguarding, you know, having parents' numbers and everything in, so you need, everything needs to be done before they're even through the gate... So, everything is done, it's all set up and basically they are coming in" (HCS7)*

Problems accessing the website were also voiced by holiday club staff:

*"Yeah, but I think a lot of people were having trouble with that... at the start. They clicked the link, but it wouldn't work..." (HCS 11)*

However, once a new link was sent, the website worked:

*"At first, we had some difficulties with the ermm... actual... it wouldn't open... but then once we got sent the proper, another link it was fine... I think I don't know if we were just doing it wrong but, you know, I don't know, but once we got the link it was absolutely fine" (HCS11)*

There were mixed views amongst parents and carers regarding how easy or difficult it was to use the online booking system. Some found it difficult:

*"And when I, umm you know, searching this thing, then I like you know, applied online, and it seems like, you know, a little bit of confusion, because my other friend who lived in XXX, you know, you also, you know, in Birmingham, and she was to register her kids into there, and it's kind of, like you know, she took a long*

*time to find out which venue would hold it and you know, it's kind of, but at the moment, she knew this, like you know, summer holiday club thing, but she wasn't able to register her children, so it's kind of like, you know.. it was disappointing for some, you know, for some parents, yeah.” (PC1)*

On the other hand, some parents and carers reported that they did not have any issues with the booking via the website, even for example when standing in the club car park to register a child:

*“Well, I didn't realise because I just brought my daughter up on the Tuesday, I didn't sign anything, so I just came up and just went 'here you are' and she says 'oh no, you've got to, you've got to sign... fill this out...' so, you know, get the app, do it online, and I done it online, just out there.” (PC7)*

Where clubs were operating open bookings, there were concerns that places were booked up very quickly:

**Interviewer: “... so did anyone go to the online, Bring it on Brum, website?”**

**(PC 2):** *yeah it sold out within seconds*

However, there was a greater concern that some parents/carers did not have access to the internet or have the skills, knowledge or equipment to book online, reflecting the need to have both booking systems in operation:

*“And actually, I'm not sure how many people in terms of their digital poverty would access that. So, I think the approach was right. I think how we use a website is something to be perhaps reviewed, but I there's value in it, but perhaps not purely as a as a booking system.” (S3)*

#### 4.1.6 Theme 6: Perceived Benefits of Bring it on Brum

A number of sub-themes were identified regarding the benefits of holiday provision for parents, children and communities. First and foremost, the impact of HAF funding on clubs meant the clubs were able to provide a greater depth and breadth of provision and work with more families. A consequence of this meant that more families were able to benefit from the additionally identified sub-themes of parental stress and perceived reduction in food insecurity, access to childcare, enriching activities, children's well-being and social skills, perceived safety and distraction from anti-social behaviour.

##### 4.1.6.1 Impact of HAF funding

Holiday club staff told researchers that HAF funding had made a big difference to the quantity, quality, reach and depth of provision they were able to provide through Bring it on Brum. HAF funding enabled holiday clubs to reach more children:

*“without the funding then it would be just a reduced kind of sessions, like what we used to do before, we would have like two families per session. Ehm... I think*



*the funding allows us to kind of get the providers in and open up to more children as well. But without the funding, we would definitely would have done stuff, but it would just... we wouldn't have been able to reach as much.” (HCS1)*

In addition, without the funding from HAF, holiday club staff said that it was highly likely that they would not have been able to provide food to holiday club attendees:

*“Ehm... would it have gone ahead without the funding? We would have still done our own because we know it's important for our families to have something in the summer...it may not have necessarily provided the food” (HCS1)*

The funding also relieved the stress and pressure that holiday club staff faced to deliver sessions themselves, which meant that they could spend more time developing important, professional relationships with children. The funding was also used to enhance the type of activities provided and meant that clubs could be very flexible in adapting the provision to meet the needs of the children who attended:

*“Well, the first thing is it's made it easier. It's taken it off us a bit so we can, we don't have that added stress... meaning that more of our time and effort can go into the kids, which is really important... but it's also allowed us to have the food... to be able to buy different games, and to be able to have that bit of funding aside...” (HCS11)*

#### *4.1.6.2 Reduction in parental stress and perceived reduction in food insecurity*

Parents and carers told researchers that the school summer holidays were a period of stress and anxiety. Some parents were concerned about the expense of the summer holidays, and holiday club staff were likewise aware that parents and carers were anxious about the cost of keeping children entertained and fed during the school summer break:

*“I think it's great for me... I tell you something, it's taken a whole lot of pressure off us as parents, thinking 'well what am I gonna do with them today?', 'how am I going to keep them occupied?', you know, and keep three children happy through football. So, it's just been absolutely fantastic...by the time they get home they're tired... watch a bit of TV and before you know it it's bedtime.” (PC7)*

Parents were also concerned about both themselves and their children being lonely, socially isolated and 'stuck' in the house. Some families for example, lived in high rise tower blocks and if the weather was poor, they would not go out. Furthermore, there were only a small number of easily accessible activities that were free, for example going to a nearby park, thus attending holiday club helped relieve financial, social and psychological pressures:

*“when I found out it was like yeah we'll get up and go there cos obviously with summer holidays it's hard to find things and it's expensive ...so take the opportunity and get out the house as well cos it can be isolating for me an him just us two” (PC2)*

*“...getting out the house more than anything being stuck in house with four kids which isn't the best.” (PC2)*

Parents and carers, holiday club staff and children acknowledged that providing children with lunch

and other food and snacks further alleviated some of the pressure of the school holidays:

*“it just means, you know, that you can at least feed. erm the child, which takes some of the strain off the parents so hopefully they can use the money that they're saving on something else that will be beneficial for them during the time...” (HCS7)*

*“it's such a busy lifestyle isn't it... at least that, when they're here you don't have to worry about that lunch, I can do something else in that time in terms of preparing, it does come in handy ...” (PC11)*

Many adults thought that the programme was effective in alleviating household food insecurity. A programme co-ordinator explained that informal feedback from food aid providers in Birmingham suggested that demand for food aid from community-based food aid providers had fallen over the summer because children were attending Bring it on Brum:

*“And we did also get feedback directly from food banks in Birmingham that they saw levels of demand for their services decreasing from families that they knew accessing HAF. So there is a sense that (may)have took the pressure off, you know, which is what you'd hoped to do? Right that HAF takes some of the pressure off emergency food support” (S8)*

In some holiday clubs, parents and carers were required to stay with younger children, particularly clubs based in family centres. However, where parents were able to drop their child/children off at holiday club, it meant that they could spend the time to catch up on other activities at home or take care of siblings:

*“Yeah, and one of the parents was saying that they're happier, their kids, their kids keep saying 'oh we wanna go to the camp' ... and you know it gets like one headache off their chest, if they've got things to do at home, they just drop their kids here...” (HCS11)*

*“so, you know, it gives me a bit of time to carry on doing whatever I'm supposed to do and then come and pick him up.” (PC3)*

*“my mum is probably taking care of my brothers but she might have a hard time with that because my brothers are pretty naughty” (CFG4)*

Holiday clubs also provided parents and carers with access to childcare:

*“parents, then can utilise that as an opportunity to continue work or whatever, and the idea is that it gives children a good solid period of time over the holidays where they've got something to do and can keep them out of trouble and get them fed.” (S18)*

One parent explained that they had been made redundant earlier in the year, but if she had still been working, holiday club would have helped her with childcare during school holiday periods:

*“I think that would be really good, especially for the holidays, see with me, I was made redundant in February, so obviously that's why it doesn't really, I'm ok I'm free at the moment so other than that I think, if I was still working, I think it would be really good when I could drop them off, then I come back and pick them up, I think that would've kind of helped” (PC11A programme co-ordinator explained that they had received feedback from parents who said summer 2021 was the first year that they had been able to work because their children had attended holiday clubs:*

*“... but heard from a few parents who were saying for the first summer I've been able to carry on working throughout the summer, whereas normally they were in this cycle of having to give up work mid-July because work doesn't let you take six weeks off, but they couldn't afford childcare during the holidays.” (S8)*

Children were also aware that attendance at holiday club meant that their parents could work, and, without holiday club, siblings would have to look after younger family members who therefore indirectly had the responsibility of childcare removed:

*“mmm, but I don't know really, she probably just does chores at home probs but today she had to go on a trip with her work so it is my sisters who are looking after me...” (CFG4)*

However, whilst holiday clubs may have provided parents and carers with an opportunity to access childcare, not all agreed that this was not the main purpose of HAF, there was confusion regarding whether the purpose of HAF provision was for childcare:

*“XXXX said the DfE is being very clear that this should not be childcare, and I just thought that's ridiculous 'cause if you're a working parent, even if it were low income or not, if you're sending your child to a provision during the summer holidays, you're going to expect it to provide you with child care I mean that's just ridiculous” (S11)*

Another stakeholder suggested that the current level of provision would not be enough for a parent or carer who worked full time. However, as with funding for early years provision, it was suggested that if parents could afford it and there was enough flexibility and capacity in the way provision was administered, parents could top up and pay for extra hours over and above their notionally allocated amount of provision:

*“I don't think that (childcare) was a priority for it, so it wasn't about childcare. But if you've got a parent that can you know pay, you know could have paid for maybe 8 hours of provision in a week and they could have afforded to pay for that, but because in the holidays that's not enough, that's what they might be doing you know, term time. In the holiday that's not enough, so ordinarily they would have to stop work, or you know, not be working, or it would stop them from working. If you then add in the HAF entitlement or the HAF availability on top of what they could afford to do for themselves, sometimes that's the difference between a parent then choosing to do it and not.” (S18)*

#### 4.1.6.3 Enriching Activities:

Attending Bring it on Brum meant that children had opportunities to participate in a wide range of activities including, arts and crafts, playing board games, singing, dancing and a variety of sporting and physical activities:

*“Yeah, yeah, they've done all the activities... so they've been doing like football, they've been doing like football rounders. football cricket, handball, dodgeball, Olympics, they've had the cricket coaches coming in with them... who else... as in competition... we've had cricket coaches coming in, they've been out rock climbing, they've been out archery, they've been out cinemas, ten pin bowling...”*  
(HCS7)

Parents welcomed and were impressed with the range of enrichment activities on offer:

*“I'm impressed with the chess, and all the different, you know, board games and they've got physical activities.”* (PC11)

When children were asked what their favourite activities were or to score their favourite activities some children preferred arts and crafts, and playing:

*“I like the arts that we do... butterflies and we do balloons and I like the way when we did a shop today”* (CFG2)

Other children indicated that they preferred quieter activities:

*“...the most thing I take is, if there was like a mosque room cos I am like a Muslim and I like to go to the mosque and stuff and I would turn one of the rooms into a mosque”* (CFG4)

Whilst other children enjoyed participating in physical activities or simply playing outside:

*“Interviewer: so outside activities or inside activities?”*

*Child: out*

*Interviewer: out*

*Child: out*

*Child: out*

*Child: out*

*Child: in out*

*Interviewer: in out, so we've got four out and one in out so all of you like out and then we've got an in so at the club here today ...*

*Child: er yeah I'm a bit more in than out, I'm better at like I mean I'm better at drawing and singing and dancing ... "(CFG2)*

Children told researchers that if they were not at holiday club, it was highly likely that they would spend most of their time engaged in sedentary activities, such as watching TV or playing on a tablet:

*Interviewer: "So when yeah, you said something about tablet. Do you play on your tablet?"*

*Child: uh-huh (agreement). All day*

*Interviewer: All day?"*

*Child: Sometimes*

*Interviewer: What do you do, when you're not playing football outside?"*

*Child: I just watch TV" (CFG1)*

Similarly, parents told researchers that their children were more physically active when they were at holiday club, but as well as being more active, they had the opportunity to take part in new activities and develop new skills:

*"I think it's got, it's helped us because there's only so much you can do with them at home... we don't want them to be in front of a screen all day because they're not really learning nothing, they're just watching stuff that they want to watch instead of watching something educational, because they don't want to do that. But coming here I think, doing activities, I think they get a lot of exercise as well, not lazing around sitting on the couch. I think that's one of the, I think with my son, I think they're more, they've become more active now, so that's good. Because as I said, they've got into sports more... they really love it here, so that's something new he's trying and enjoying it..." (PC11)*

*"and plus they say she's brilliant at football... so and she loves football... so that's a bonus... she loves football..." (PC7)*

Holiday club staff were aware that children liked the range of activities on offer but explained that they had a flexible approach to the activities provided. As they got to know what children liked, HAF funding enabled clubs to introduce new activities:

*"...its been an evolving process I think, so at the start we sort of had simple things, a bit of games here, a bit of crafts here... slowly as you get to know the kids and what they like to do, we've arranged for that so...I think a few said they liked golf and something not so static, with a bit of outdoors, so, we've got some golf in.. which wasn't there the day before, and some painting, plus, some kids don't like playing outside so they want to do something sort of chill, so there's been a few books and things, and it's been an evolving process, we're learning as we go... but it's getting better each day." (HCS11)*

#### 4.1.6.4 Children's well-being and social skills

Children enjoyed the opportunity holiday club provided to meet existing friends, but making new friends was just as important:

*"One time when I was new here, yeah, I was just sitting in there, yeah, ehm... nobody was talking to me and one girl said, "do you have a sister?" and I said "yes". And then we 'came friends. That's how I got loads of friends." (CFG1)*

In some clubs, holiday club staff deliberately mixed children into groups with children they did not know to help them interact with new people and make new friends:

*"and I do it specifically because I know myself, in that, sometimes, being with your friends is not an education for you, you need to go out and be with other children to go and actually, find yourself and realise, and there's children here that, at the start, you know yourself, 'I want to be with this person' and, hold on. a minute. Let's do this for like, a day, and let's see how it goes, and all of a sudden they're happy to stay where they are, and by the end of the week they, you know, they're best friends with somebody else, without realising that things are different, there is something else out there." (HCS7)*

Club activities were often structured to incorporate important life lessons, for example, working as a team. Children also recognised the importance of this as a way of making new friends:

*Interviewer: "Dodgeball, and why do you like that so much?"*

*Child: "It's just because you get to know other people in your teams because if you don't know them yet." (CFG4)*

Parents and carers considered that attendance at holiday club helped their children's social skills, which transferred into improved behaviour at home. Improved socialisation skills gained at holiday club would, parents said, also benefit children when they returned to school after the school summer holidays:

*"it's like he's just come out of his shell, they've just come out, it's like they've just burst out of and they've just, you know, and he's just in a field and he's just doing his thing... and I've loved the fact that, you know, he's not sitting in his room, and the thing is, he's actually doing it less now, cause he'll come home and he'll actually sit downstairs, you know, he's doing it less..." (PC7)*

*"like even the summer holidays, obviously he doesn't see his friends, and going back to school, he doesn't want to talk to them for the first few days because he's so shy. But I think here is quite good, it kind of gives them that push on and the extra confidence to do things..." (PC11)*

Holiday club staff similarly considered that the work they were doing with children would help boost their confidence and social skills and help children when they returned to school after the summer break:

*“and that's what I'm hoping that, you know, a little conversation with one child who came in with a chip on his shoulder when he came in or, didn't want to mix with people when he came in, but that little conversation to let him realise about teamwork or getting on with people, and then he comes out of here and then goes into year 8 when he goes back, cause he was in year 7, and then has a different attitude, do you know what I mean, would be amazing for me” (HCS7)*

*“...from the rep trip (Birmingham theatre) that they went on, they all really enjoyed it, didn't they? Most of them said that it increased their confidence skills, and then it would improve them at school with drama and confidence...” (HCS1)*

#### *4.1.6.5 Perceived safety and distraction from anti-social behaviour*

Parents and carers considered that the neighbourhood streets were not a safe place for children to play and sought out safe environments for their children to be during school holidays:

*“cos the streets aren't safe this is lovely and secure” (PC2)*

*“to be honest, we've got the garden, hey play in the garden but they won't, but you know like there's like kids who play on the streets, our kids don't, we don't allow them (to do) that...” (PC11)*

Holiday club staff similarly considered that a major role of holiday club provision was to keep children safe:

*“they're giving us this funding... to keep kids safe, to give them something to do and... to make them happy” (HCS11)*

*“Yeah, but the majority of it, I think as soon as school finishes, I think a lot of parents around here are looking, they're just looking, they just want kids to be in a safe environment.” (HCS7)*

Holiday clubs were thus considered to be a safe environment for children and the feeling was enhanced by the safeguarding procedures in place including for example, signing children in and out. Parents felt comfortable leaving their children at the holiday clubs. A parent explained that when her daughter first attended holiday club, she allowed her daughter to take a mobile phone with her in case her daughter needed to get in touch with her. However, after visiting the club, she was satisfied that the safeguarding procedures in place were robust, so stopped her daughter from taking her phone in to club:

*“My daughter, she's got a phone, but she doesn't bring it here, I don't ... it's very hit and miss where I give her phone, she's not allowed to take it to certain places and... when I first, (on) the first day I was like oh shall I give her her phone so I gave it to her but now, I don't get... she's not allowed to get her phone here, because I know that (if) she has her phone she'll be on her phone, so now, there's loads of activities to do, and I know she's safe here, that's why she doesn't bring her phone here at all... she doesn't need it” (PC11)*

When parents and carers left their children at holiday club, they felt confident that their children were safe and the following comment from a parent reflected that feeling of confidence expressed by other parents and carers:

*“It just makes you feel comfortable to leave your child, you don't have to worry. You really don't, and that's what you want as a parent for your children to be happy, so they've definitely done that.” (PC7)*

Moreover, holiday club staff voiced real concerns that in the absence of Bring it on Brum, there was a risk that some children and young people were in danger of being drawn into drug related activities. Holiday club staff thought that because young people were concerned about their parents' financial situation or ability to buy food, young people were at risk of getting involved in county lines or other anti-social behaviours (e.g. petty theft). However, because holiday clubs kept children off the streets and alleviated household financial budgets, several parents thought that the risk of children and young people being involved in anti-social behaviour was reduced:

*“what I'd add to that as well is ermm... a lot of the time, some kids would go into stuff like that because money is tight at home, and they're worried about their parents, and they're, they want to take some stress off in their way... so, having the food here helps that, because that takes such a weight off the parents shoulders, because, like I said, they can spend that bit of money on food shopping and they might not have to get as much, so it's that bit cheaper, so they can use that money on something else. So I think, having that food here... and having dinners on certain days to take home... really helps, and can prevent children kind of... straying off into bad things like that because it means that there is that little bit less stress on the parents...” (HCS11)*

#### 4.1.7 Theme 7: Recommendations regarding future delivery of Bring it on Brum

When programme co-ordinators were asked what they would do differently in terms of delivering a HAF funded programme in the future, three key sub- themes were identified. First and foremost, there was a clear recognition that the grant management/funding application process needed to be streamlined. Secondly, a more targeted approach was needed. Earlier engagement with schools was needed, particularly to ensure that more children who were eligible for means tested free school meals were able to attend. A final key sub-them related to data protection.

##### 4.1.7.1 Streamlined grant management system

In the initial stage of setting up the funding and application process for Bring it on Brum, the funding had been allocated into four separate pots of funding: community and voluntary sector, early years, schools and commercial/direct award. As a result, the council's procurement process meant that it was difficult to then move funding from one pot to another, specifically in terms of shifting funding to areas where demand was high:

*“And then where we knew that the commercial bit which we did in house, which is through a form of procurement process pot for providers, so we didn't get much uptake through that route. We would then try to divert through our other funding route, and it wasn't that easy to do that. It's already been written in stone, but this is how much we said (was) allocated to each route. So that then made me*



*think well, actually going forward you can't have it separated. We just need to have it in one pot. You know, kind of one funding route..." (S11)*

Thus, a key learning point in terms of future delivery was to have one central pot of funding and, more importantly, a single application form with clearly defined funding criteria for applicants and clearly defined post evaluation processes:

*"it's about having a clear process from the get go, one that's standard and universal across, so it's not confusing for applicants so that you're not saying well, if you're this organization you apply using this route, if you're this organization you apply using this route, it was confusing for providers, and so if you want to be engaged in the program, just apply here. That's much, much easier, isn't it?" (S18)*

It was important therefore that the lessons learnt over the summer should not be repeated for the forthcoming school Christmas holidays. The Council took swift action, and a tender exercise was undertaken inviting organisations to bid to run a grants management service:

*"yeah, so we've got a new grants application system. So, we went out to tender for a grant application system, so we had several bids and then we got kind of a look at the portal and how that would handle applications start to finish. So, with this new grant management system, everything is online. Providers put everything on online and then they're all evaluated online and then payments are made within the system as well. So that is going to take a lot of that manual, a lot of manual steps out of the process for grant management, and I believe all of the providers are going through this one grant management system now. So that will mean that we don't have three different streams of applications coming in. We're just going to have the one centralised portal, and everything is going to go through there, so that will streamline everything and make everything a lot easier and hopefully more automated and less manual work needs to be done, so that'll mean payments get made on time and evaluations can happen, as in when they come in and they don't need to be manually entered into system." (S17)*

A streamlined system would make the process much easier to manage in the future:

*"It's gonna make the experience for providers much better because they'll just log their details on this system. They can go in and out and mess around with (it) until the time they submit, it'll allow StreetGames to see how many organisations have actually logged on and set themselves up to apply even if they don't submit." (S11)*

#### *4.1.7.2 Targeting and engagement with schools*

Stakeholders acknowledged that around 60% of holiday club attendees were in receipt of means-tested free school meals and that going forward, a more targeted approach was needed to ensure that more vulnerable children attended holiday club:

*"We know that there's a large amount of poverty, poverty, and deprivation across the city, almost uniformly. Not quite almost. It makes, it makes it slightly easier to get it out there you have to target so much, but we will be targeting more I think,*

*and being more sophisticated with our approach and that goes back to being commissioned and being able to control that. And as long as we've got the ability to manage that and filter it, I think we've got the relationships to enable it to happen.” (S3)*

Senior stakeholders thought that the key to ensuring that provision was targeted towards means-tested free school meal children was to work collaboratively with schools. The short timescales and delays in decision making for summer 2021 meant that many schools were not able to participate:

*“certainly with the schools it, I mean I, you, you did have to have, how can I put it, you really felt for them because actually they did get decisions very late and stuff like that” (S7)*

Looking ahead, the Council were exploring collaborative ways to engage schools much earlier in the process:

*“one of the things I think is important that we do is we keep the speed of response up and the support. That we get the timings (right), we improve the timings for people looking at next year and some of the discussions as XXXX said this morning related to if there's going to be a growth with schools, we all know that schools work a year ahead of themselves. They don't work three weeks ahead of themselves. So now is the time to start talking about next year, and we can start to do that, not necessarily without the approval of the commissioners, so to speak, but we can still start to have those conversations” (S3)*

Overall, it was thought that schools would be able to assist in getting information to parents and carers because they knew who was eligible for free school meals:

*“...schools, are the hub, right? So it's like that's the captive audience, so if we can get them involved in some, to some extent not asking them to deliver the project but have them on board a lot more.” (S6)*

Moreover, schools were located in the heart of communities, and even if they did not want to deliver holiday provision themselves, their premises may be able to be utilised by community-based organisations:

*“... so one of the things that you know, if we know early, we're going to do stuff that we'll have to do is try and strengthen links between the community projects and the schools because there's going to be lots of school buildings where they really, they're more than happy for their school building to be used, but they're not as expert as some of those community organizations in delivering, XXXX is a perfect example who are desperate for a venue you know to do stuff in the short term and it would be great to pair them up with somebody. So I think that's a big thing going forward, isn't it?” (S6)*

#### *4.1.7.3 Data Protection*

It was acknowledged that further work needed to be done in terms of clarifying data sharing agreements, data storage etc. Introducing such processes and safeguards would make the

parent/carer/user experience of booking places at holiday clubs easier, reducing the requirement for parents/carers to enter the same information for each provider:

*“We didn't have agreements in place and with each of the providers to share data across each of them or with the providers and the contractor for, like which is StreetGames, so we're doing a lot of work with our DPO (Data Protection Officer) to essentially allow us to do that. The agreements from the end user or the audience when they sign up they'd be signed up to say yeah, I do agree for you to share my data between providers and between funders.” (S10)*

In addition, further work was needed to make the online booking system easier for providers to use. Additional training should be provided to ensure that the functions that were available, for example, reminding families about bookings, could be used to their full potential:

*“There are definitely bits in the system that I've said to them needs to change because it makes it really hard for people like you, like a lot of the quirks in the system just make it really hard and we just need to make it as easy as possible for everybody. And so I'd say that like the system can do everything we want it to do and more, like the messaging element of the system, we have not used at all the way that we could have done, which is messaging out to families, which is reminding them of their they've booked, which is thanking you for coming. We didn't do anywhere near enough with that bit of it.” (S2)*

#### 4.2 Post card Analysis

A total of 270 postcards from across 20 holiday clubs were subjected to content analysis. Examples of the material collected is provided below.

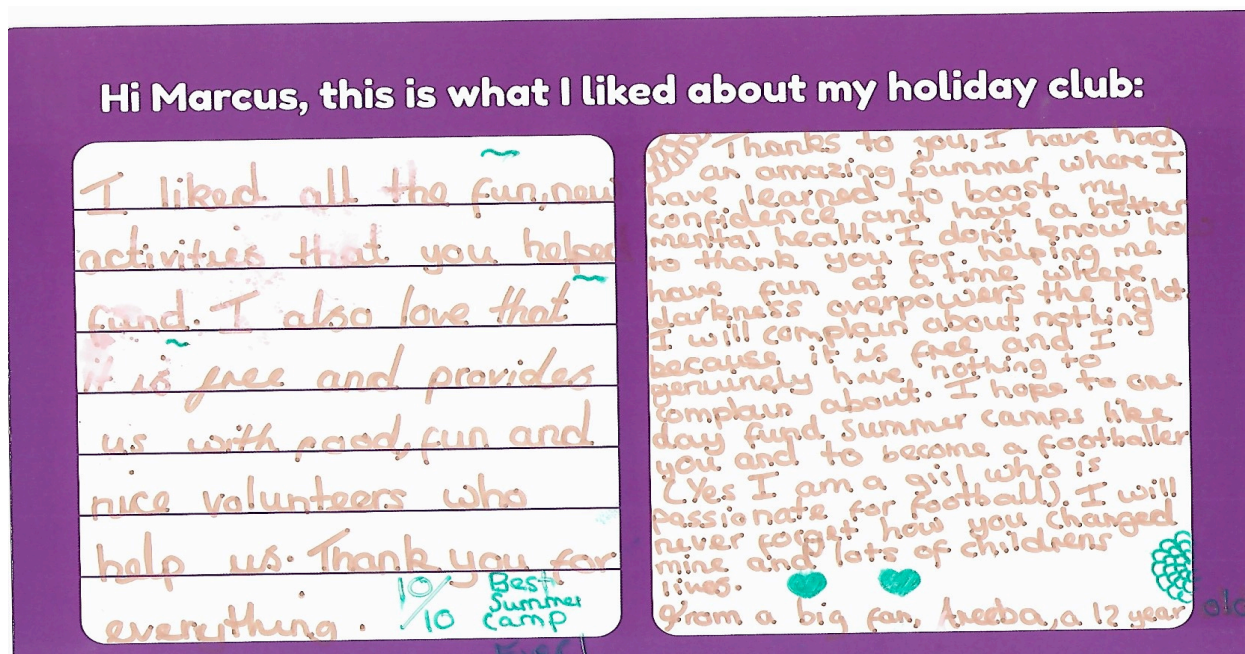




Figure 4. 1 Examples of postcards completed by child holiday club attendees

The content analysis of postcards revealed several key themes: Activities, Food, Wellbeing and Aspirations. These activities matched the offer provided by clubs, although aspirations were independent of club activity. Providing children with a specific focus and outcome in terms of what would happen to their postcards proved extremely effective, with a high number of children participation (n= 589) and rich, quality data within the sample (n = 270). The key themes and sub-themes can be found in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4. 2 Summary of key themes and sub-themed identified in analysis of postcards

Theme 1: Activities			Theme 2: Food eaten/accessing food at holiday club	Theme 3: Wellbeing (social and emotional)	Theme 4: Aspirations	
<i>Sub theme: Alternative activities if not at holiday club</i>	<i>Sub theme: New activities</i>	<i>General activities</i>	<i>General food eaten/accessing food at holiday club</i>	<i>Sub theme: Making new friends/ meeting new people</i>	<i>Sub theme: Good staff members</i>	<i>General aspirations</i>
“Is the activities I’ve been able to do and the meals that have been cooked. And that I haven’t had to sit at home bored! Sharon’s been amazing” - B202BY – 007	“Being able to do new things and make new friends...” - B248RE – 007	“Is the activities I’ve been able to do and the meals that have been cooked. And that I haven’t had to sit at home bored! Sharon’s been amazing” - B202BY – 007	“The thing that I liked is playing football and tasting the food” – B235AP - 007	“I liked meeting new people and playing a range of different games. I also liked trying new food and the trips and activities out...” - B65RW – 001	“Is the activities I’ve been able to do and the meals that have been cooked. And that I haven’t had to sit at home bored! Sharon’s been amazing” - B202BY – 007	“It is fun and is good for people passionate about acting” – B12EP - 017
“I liked that I got to do fun activities and not stay in the house bored” – B12EP - 013	“I like the fact that you get to meet new people and play new, fun sports. I enjoyed doing archery for the first time...” - B146ET – 009	“Football and basketball and I like these because it is nice exercise” – B422RY - 007	“is the food and free time” - B94BS - 011	“What I love about 1 <sup>st</sup> class is that we do a lot of fun activities, go on fun trips and I loved making new friends...” - B65RW – 003	“The food was great, and the coaches were really fun” - B347SB – 009	“I hope to one day fund summer camps like you and to become a footballer...” – B66LR - 021
“I hope you see this and I hope that you could sponsor another club as I will not be bored over	“... what I liked about the club was we did lots of activities like rock climbing, skiing and	“I liked the sport and meeting new people. I like the sports because it keeps you fit” – B422RY – 009		“I liked sawing and hammering at forest school. I also liked making new friends” - B235RP – 005	“I came and met new people and enjoyed playing football and new things and the staff works v hard.” - B736XV - 003	“I want to play football like you...” – B248RE - 013

	Theme 1: Activities		Theme 2: Food eaten/accessing food at holiday club		Theme 3: Wellbeing (social and emotional)		Theme 4: Aspirations
holidays” – B65RW - 011	football, and thanks for all the food...” - B736XV - 001						
“I liked absolutely everything because I would rather go to this theatre other than staying home so I really enjoyed” – B12EP - 006	“I came and met new people and enjoyed playing football and new things and the staff works v hard.” - B736XV - 003	“I enjoyed playing football and making new friends. I also enjoyed playing different sports and activities...” – B262AX - 011	“We get free food and the activities like football, tennis and dodgeball...” – B736XV - 011		“I liked the types of games we played and the type of roleplay we did, I also liked meeting new people and making new friends” - B12EP – 009	“I liked playing sports especially football. Also I liked how the staff had fun with us” – B422RY - 015	“I liked playing football and archery and want to be a footballer like you” – B235AP - 010
“... It keeps me out of the house and I’ve had lots of fun here and it’s a pleasure, I’ve liked every activity” – B248RE - 002	“I enjoyed playing football and making new friends. I also enjoyed playing different sports and activities...” – B262AX - 011	“The coaches are really fun and they allow us to get exercise and the games, especially football, dodgeball. I appreciate your work and effort” – B240AQ - 019			“Meeting new people each day and making great friends...”- B258FD – 001	“At this camp I loved everything and all of the coaches were very nice especially Dan” – B240AQ - 011	
“...I really like this summer camp because in other summer holidays it’s a bit boring not doing anything, but this is a fun advantage to have	“I liked that I learnt new sport activities and met new people...” – B248RE - 011	“We get free food and the activities like football, tennis and dodgeball...” – B736XV - 011	“I like the football and the different dinners...” – B736XV - 015		“I enjoyed playing football with my friends that I already knew and making new friends” – B736XV - 007	“The coaches are really fun and they allow us to get exercise and the games, especially football, dodgeball. I appreciate your	

Theme 1: Activities	Theme 2: Food eaten/accessing food at holiday club	Theme 3: Wellbeing (social and emotional)	Theme 4: Aspirations
this year!" – B248RE - 006	"I liked that I got to do fun activities and not stay in the house bored" – B12EP - 013	"I enjoy coming to this holiday scheme to socialise with new children and play various activities..." - B65RW – 009	work and effort" – B240AQ - 019 "In this holiday club I liked playing dodgeball, snooker, playing games and spending time with the volunteers" - B66LR - 017
"I liked to do acting most! But overall I loved everything I did. It was very fun. I would like to go again some other day" – B12EP - 019	"I liked that we went on trips, we had free food like chicken, beef and rice. The trips I liked were rock climbing and bowling" – B736XV - 021	"Being able to do new things and make new friends..." - B248RE – 007	"I liked all the fun, new activities that you helped fund. I also love that it is free and provides us with food, fun and nice volunteers who help us... 10/10 – best summer camp ever!" – B66LR - 021
"... I enjoyed my holiday club because I did many activities and games" – B66LR - 013	"I liked all the fun, new activities that you helped fund. I also love that it is free and provides us with food, fun and nice volunteers who help us... 10/10 – best summer camp ever!" – B66LR - 021	"I like the fact that you get to meet new people and play new, fun sports. I enjoyed doing archery for the first time..." - B146ET – 009	"I like the coaches so so much..." – B347SB - 017

Theme 1: Activities	Theme 2: Food eaten/accessing food at holiday club	Theme 3: Wellbeing (social and emotional)	Theme 4: Aspirations
<p>“In this holiday club I liked playing dodgeball, snooker, playing games and spending time with the volunteers” - B66LR - 017</p>	<p>“I liked the food a lot. I loved the activities. I liked the people that where there” – B347SB - 011</p>	<p>“I had a very fun time making friends...” – B736EB - 011</p>	<p>“What I’ve liked about the summer camp is the food, football and all the support from the staff” – B202BY - 013</p>
<p>“I really enjoy coming here, the activities are very enjoyable and creative. They make my summer more exciting” – B313BS - 013</p>	<p>“What I’ve liked about the summer camp is the food, football and all the support from the staff” – B202BY - 013</p>	<p>“Today was so fun! We did, played games, got to know each other, but best of all was when we got to make scenes...” – B12EP – 021</p>	<p>“... All of the coaches are really nice as well” – B736EB - 010</p>
<p>“I liked all the fun, new activities that you helped fund. I also love that it is free and provides us with food, fun and nice volunteers who help us... 10/10 – best summer camp ever!” – B66LR - 021</p>	<p>“I loved the games because they were entertaining! Also the food!” – B235AP - 004</p>	<p>“I enjoyed playing football and making new friends. I also enjoyed playing different sports and activities...” – B262AX - 011</p>	<p>“I liked the food, the games and the coaches” – B347SB - 002</p>
<p>“I liked the food a lot. I loved the activities. I liked the people that where</p>	<p>“At holiday club I enjoyed interacting and making new friends. I enjoyed the school</p>	<p>“I liked that I learnt new sport activities and met new people...” – B248RE - 011</p>	



Theme 1: Activities	Theme 2: Food eaten/accessing food at holiday club	Theme 3: Wellbeing (social and emotional)	Theme 4: Aspirations
there" – B347SB - 011	dinner. The summer club has been a wonderful opportunity to have fun and getting out of the house during the summer. Most of the people I met, we are friends for life" – B736XV - 002	"I liked the swimming and making lots of friends. Doing all the games..." – B736EB - 06	
"I liked the swimming and making lots of friends. Doing all the games..." – B736EB - 06	"I liked all the trips and breakfast won with all my new friends..." – B736XV - 004	"I liked the swimming and making lots of friends. Doing all the games..." – B736EB - 06	
"I loved playing football matches and before I wasn't really into football but now I really like it..." – B262AX - 010	"I enjoyed seeing friend and the school dinners that were very nice and tasty. It was good playing football and dodgeball with my nice friend..." – B736XV - 008	"What I like about my holiday club is that I make new friends and play fun games" – B94BS - 010	
"I liked the trips like bowling and the cinema and skiing, food and the football drills and matches, the Olympics and nerf wars, it was all	"...I enjoyed the range of activities and food options. I also enjoyed making new friends that had the same interests as me" – B66LR - 010	"At holiday club I enjoyed interacting and making new friends. I enjoyed the school dinners. The summer club has been a wonderful opportunity to have fun and getting out	

Theme 1: Activities	Theme 2: Food eaten/accessing food at holiday club	Theme 3: Wellbeing (social and emotional)	Theme 4: Aspirations
so fun!!!” – B736XV - 006		of the house during the summer. Most of the people I met, we are friends for life” – B736XV - 002	
“I loved meeting new people and the various sports that I got to participate in. I also enjoyed the trips I went on” – B65RW - 008	“I liked meeting new people and playing a range of different games. I also liked trying new food and the trips and activities out...” - B65RW – 001	“I liked all the trips and breakfast won with all my new friends...” – B736XV - 004	
	“I liked the food, the games and the coaches” – B347SB - 002	“I liked making new friends, playing in the forest and looking at all the pretty flowers in the allotments” – B235RP - 004	
	“Food was really nice, games were fun and food was tasty” – B347SB - 006	“...I enjoyed the range of activities and food options. I also enjoyed making new friends that had the same interests as me” – B66LR - 010	
	“Had fun playing games, lunch was great, met new friends” – B347SB - 008	“Thank you Marcus for setting up this camp for us here. Had a brilliant time making friends and	

Theme 1: Activities	Theme 2: Food eaten/accessing food at holiday club	Theme 3: Wellbeing (social and emotional)	Theme 4: Aspirations
	<p>“Living Well UK are doing a great job for the kids with exercise and healthy eating” – B280DE - 002</p>	<p>playing dodgeball” – B146ET - 008</p> <p>“Had fun playing games, lunch was great, met new friends” – B347SB - 008</p> <p>“During this summer camp I have had the opportunity to meet other people from other backgrounds. I have really enjoyed playing football because it keeps me fit and healthy...” – B248RE - 004</p> <p>“I liked Go Ape and meeting new people. I also enjoyed the trips and the games...” – B65RW - 002</p> <p>“I loved the trips and activities, there was never a time when it was boring to be honest. I liked meeting new people...” – B65RW - 004</p>	

---

Theme 1: Activities	Theme 2: Food eaten/accessing food at holiday club	Theme 3: Wellbeing (social and emotional)	Theme 4: Aspirations
		“I loved meeting new people and the various sports that I got to participate in. I also enjoyed the trips I went on” – B65RW - 008	

---

### 4.3 Menu Analysis

Whilst only four of the 167 menus analysed met all School Food Standards, median adherence was 70.0 % (interquartile range 59.4-78.8 %). Hot (n = 117, 70.6 % median adherence, IQR 61.1 – 78.6 %), cold (n = 25, 70.0 % median adherence, IQR 63.6 – 70.0 %) and mixed (n = 25, median adherence = 70.6 %, IQR 50.0 – 78.9 %) menu offerings scored similarly, as did vegetarian (n=82, median adherence = 70.6%, IQR 61.1 - 80.7 %) and non-vegetarian options (n = 85, median adherence = 70.0 %, IQR 57.1 - 77.8 %), as well as halal/other alternatives (n = 25, median adherence = 68.4 %, IQR 60.0 – 70.0 %) versus non-alternative (n = 142, median adherence = 70.6 %, IQR 58.2 – 78.9 %) options (see Figure 4.2).

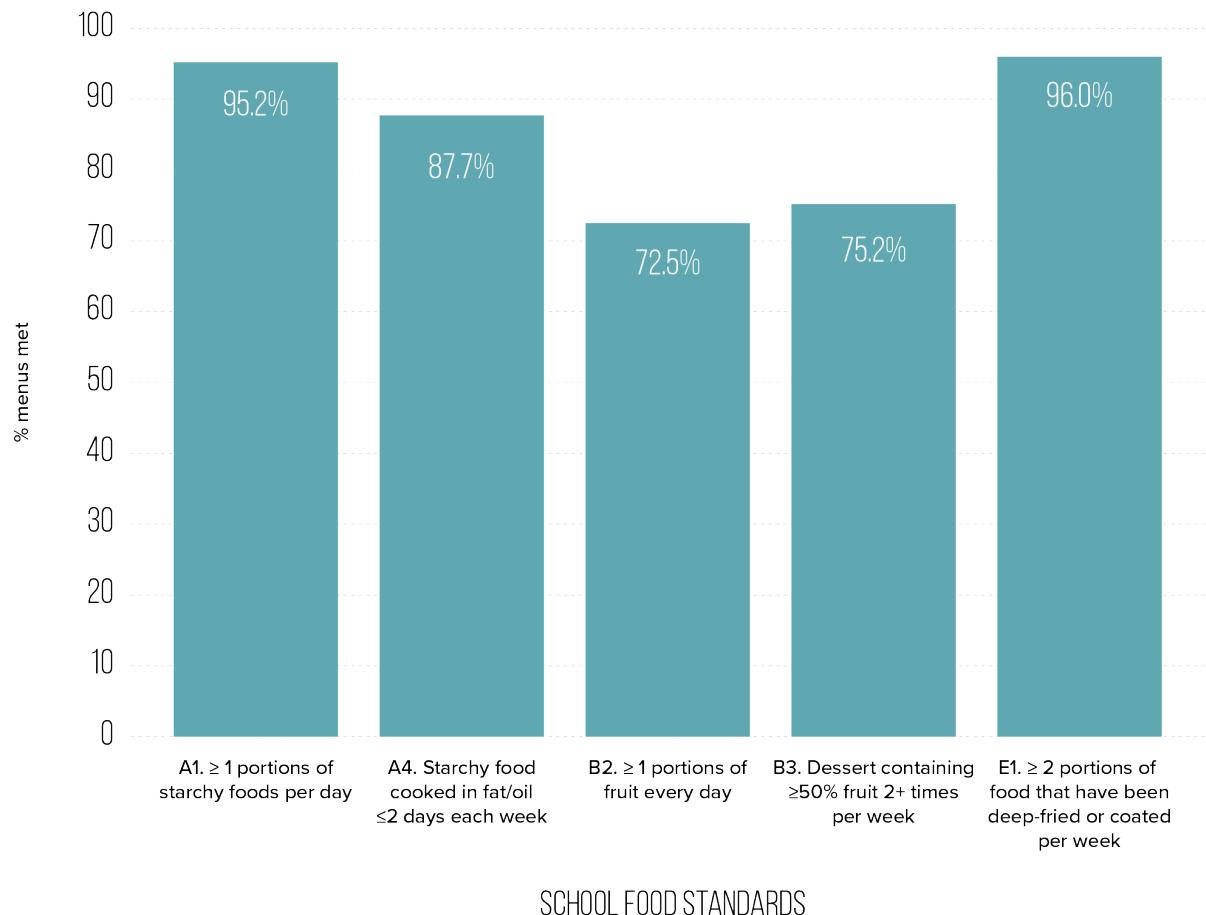
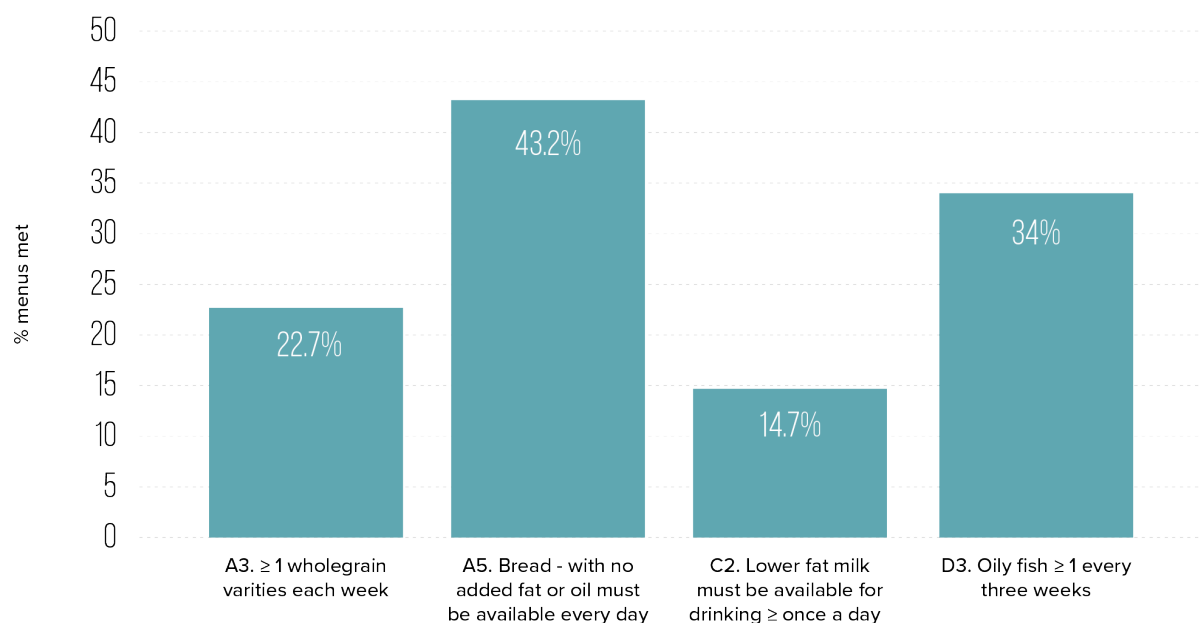


Figure 4.2 Median Adherence to School Food Standards A1, A4, B2, E1

The standards that were most commonly met by menus included: provision of at least one starchy food a day (95.2 % met), less than two portions of food that have been deep-fried or coated per week (95.7 % met) starch foods cooked in fat or oil less than two days a week (87.7 % met), dessert containing over 50 % fruit twice or more per week (75.2 % met) and one or more portions of fruit being made available per day (72.5 % met). The least frequently met standards were lower fat milk options being available daily (14.8 % met), one or more wholegrain food varieties made available every week (22.8 % met), oily fish being available once or more every three weeks (34% met) and bread being available with no fat or oil every day (43.3 % met - see Figure 4.3)



## SCHOOL FOOD STANDARDS

Figure 4. 3 Percentage of holiday club menus meeting A3, A5, C2 and D3 School Food Standards

### 4.3.1 Future Recommendations to Improve Adherence to School Food Standards

The current approach has provided a broad overview of some of the potential areas of limitations and areas for improvements within the cross section of clubs evaluated in Birmingham. Future engagement with holiday club teams, central and external caterers should explore realistic ways in which club catering could be improved towards school foods standards. Ensuring dairy and high calcium alternatives are available through clubs is prudent to support growth and reduce risk of osteoporosis and fracture later in life (Clynes et al., 2020). An immediate cost-effective approach could be the inclusion of UHT dairy alternative offerings through the clubs, ensuring that products provided centrally have favourable overall compositional profiles (e.g. being relatively low in fat and salt) and meeting School Food Standards beverage guidelines where relevant (e.g. containing less than 5 % free sugars).

Low intake of wholegrain foods appears to be commonly observed in younger populations, including children and adolescents in the UK. Alongside reduction in sodium intake, increasing wholegrain food intake has been estimated to be one of the two global dietary habit changes that would be expected to reduce non-communicable disease morbidity and mortality risk by the largest amount (Afshin et al., 2019). Provision of wholemeal bread, pasta, rice, and breakfast (where appropriate) options should be explored with club caterers and delivery teams further.

### 4.4 Nutritional Education Delivered via Nutri Troops:

Nutri Troops was delivered primarily through HAF at Home, although a number of face-to-face sessions were offered at some holiday clubs. Qualitative feedback was collected from children (n=25) and parents (n=20) was generally positive, especially in terms of an interactive magazine, playing cards and face-to-face events developed specifically for Bring it on Brum. The need for child-focused nutrition education was a key theme, especially independent learning within the home environment.

*“It’s a great way for children to play and try new things and is perhaps especially valuable after a year in which many of these opportunities have not been possible” (NTP1).*

Children enjoyed receiving pedometers, and an interactive magazine, both of which supported their independent learning.

*“xxxx has really enjoyed being part of the Nutri Troops Academy this summer. As a parent it’s been great to have something positive to keep him engaged which has actually encouraged him to want to go and exercise. I have found it quite hard in the past to get him off his iPad! He has really enjoyed logging his points and collecting the badges. Would be great if we could buy some merchandise soon as he loves the characters. Big thank you to Bring It On Brum for making this happen!” (NTP2).*

Qualitative data showed that some parents were unaware of how to register their children for the online programme, and this reduced children’s participation across the summer. The research team considered that this may be the result of either digital exclusion within households or issues in disseminating information, or both. However, although outside of the scope of this evaluation, the number of children (n=900) engaged in Bring it on Brum, accompanied by continual engagement (70%) across Christmas suggests that it was a lack of dissemination and knowledge rather than digital exclusion *per se*.

#### 4.5 Holiday Club Leader Survey

Seventy-one holiday club leads completed the online holiday club leader survey. Firstly, we asked how prepared club leaders were for Summer 2021 delivery of Bring it on Brum. The findings (see Figure 4.4) showed that nearly approximately 90% of clubs were either very prepared or somewhat prepared to deliver summer provision.

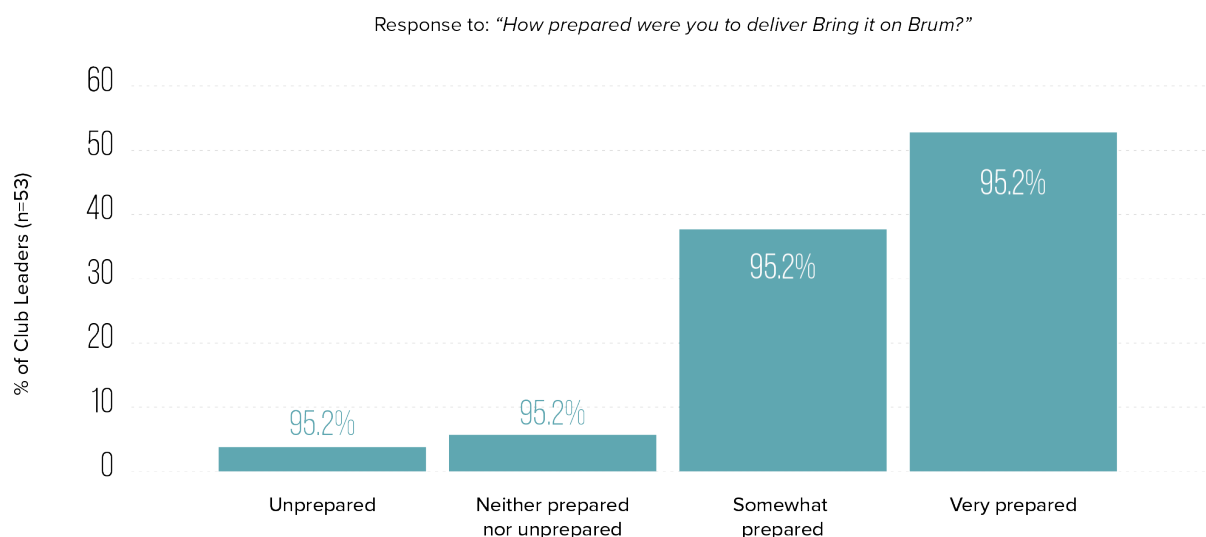
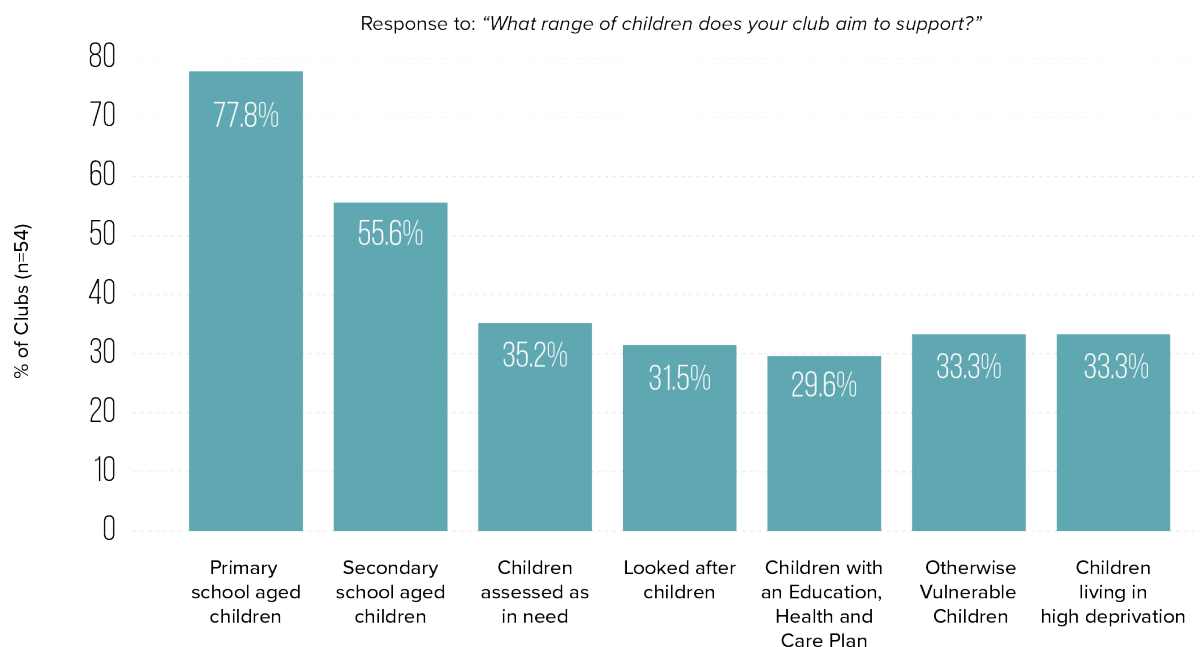


Figure 4. 4 Preparedness to deliver Bring it on Brum

The research team were also interested in how subscribed holiday clubs were. Although MI data, accompanied by targeting provision in deprived neighbourhoods, suggested good significant reach, it is important to measure how uptake at the local club level. Analysis showed the just over half of the

clubs surveyed thought that subscription was ‘about right’, but nearly 40% of clubs reported as being oversubscribed. These data suggest that additional club provision is required in some neighbourhoods.

In terms of the target population, the majority of clubs aimed to serve a wide range of children. Encouragingly, clubs aimed to target their provision to accommodate a wide range of children (see figure 4.5).



Note: Nearly All Clubs Aimed to Serve Multiple Types of Children

Figure 4. 5 Range of children targeted by holiday clubs

The majority of club leaders stated that parent/caregivers registered their children by completing paperwork, in person, at holiday clubs (60%), followed by online registration in person at the club (37%) and then online registration through the club’s own website or social media account (35%). Other methods were not used for frequently but ensured multiple routes for parents to register their child/children. Given the qualitative findings and the findings from the parent survey, we propose that parents may have used multiple routes to register children.

#### 4.5.1 Activities:

Over 88% of clubs offered daily enrichment activities to children to develop pro-social behaviours, mental well-being, and fine motor skill development etc. Most clubs offered a range of physical activities and enrichment activities to children, with a small percentage of clubs offering sessions to both children and parents (see Table 4.3).

Table 4. 3 Number of Physical Activities sessions offered to primary school aged children, secondary school aged children and parents/carers (n=41 clubs)

	0 Sessions	1 to 10 Sessions	More Than 10 Sessions
Primary School Children	11.5%	53.9%	34.6%
Secondary School Children	36.5%	42.3%	21.2%
Parents/carers	86.5%	9.5%	3.8%



#### 4.5.2 Nutritional Education Sessions.

The number of nutritional education sessions was relatively low compared to other activities offered. Most clubs (71%) offered 1-10 sessions to primary school children and 46.5% offering 1-10 sessions to secondary school children across the summer school holiday period (see Table 4.4). The qualitative data, in this report, reported that the content of nutritional educational sessions was highly varied in content and mode of delivery. Furthermore, it was outside the scope of this evaluation to measure the effectiveness of the different modes of delivery (but see Round et al., under review).

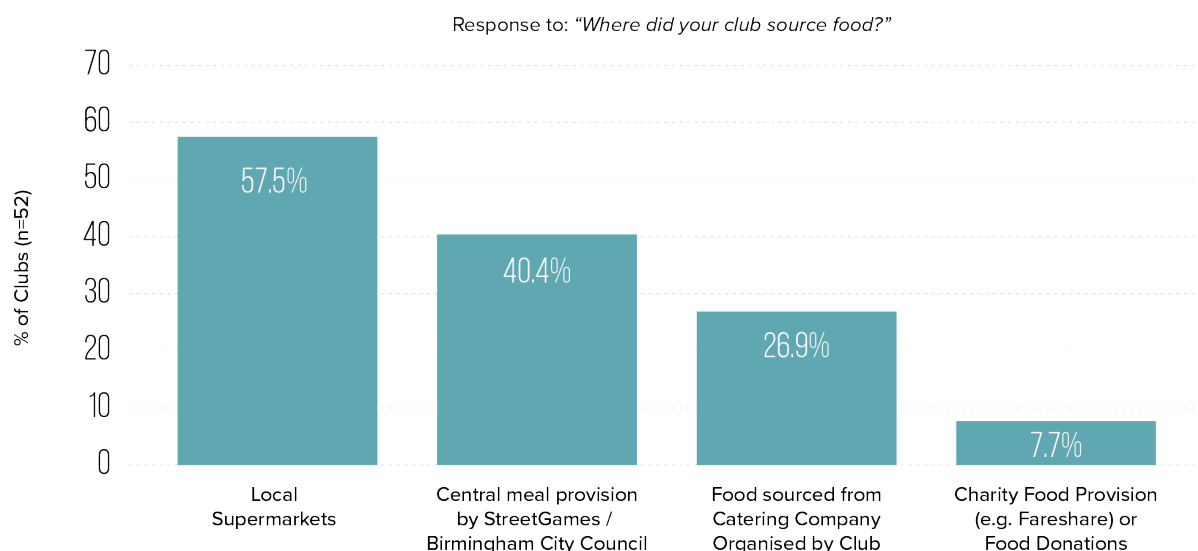
Table 4. 4 Number of cooking/nutritional education sessions offered to primary school children, secondary school children and parents/carers

	0 Sessions	1 to 10 Sessions	More Than 10 Sessions
Primary School Children	12.7%	70.5%	16.8%
Secondary School Children	46.3%	46.5%	7.2%
Parents	80.5%	14.6%	4.9%

n=41 clubs

#### 4.5.3 Food & Meals Served:

The focus on sustainability and investment in the local economy etc. was explored by asking club leaders about where they sourced food (see Figure 4.5) and food waste. The majority of clubs sourced food from local supermarkets (58%), followed by the central meal provision (40%), although it should be noted that some clubs sourced food from multiple sources. The reliance on surplus food via charitable donations was relatively small (8%), and most likely attributed to HAF funding.



Note: Nearly All Clubs Aimed to Serve Multiple Types of Children

Table 4. 5 Source of food

Club leaders were asked to rate the quality of the meals served on a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent). The overall median score was 8, with the majority of clubs scoring their food provision as good or excellent. In addition (see figure 4.6), we separated club leaders' ratings according to on-site

versus central meal provision (see Figure 4.7). We purposefully asked club leaders to provide a rating of meals served, rather than asking club leaders to rate meals in terms of adherence to School Food Standards, as our prior research on holiday clubs has demonstrated that club leaders often rate the food offer as excellent, even in cases where the food does not fully adhere to School Food Standards. A good understanding of School Food Standards requires considerable knowledge and expertise, as demonstrated by school caterers employing nutritionists and dieticians to develop menus that adhere to School Food Standards. Holiday club staff are expected to carry out numerous roles, ranging from administration, child safeguarding, providing physical and enrichment activities, and many more. Future suggestions to support clubs to deliver high quality meals that adhere to school food standards, whether through on-site provision or through a central provider, can be found on page 107.

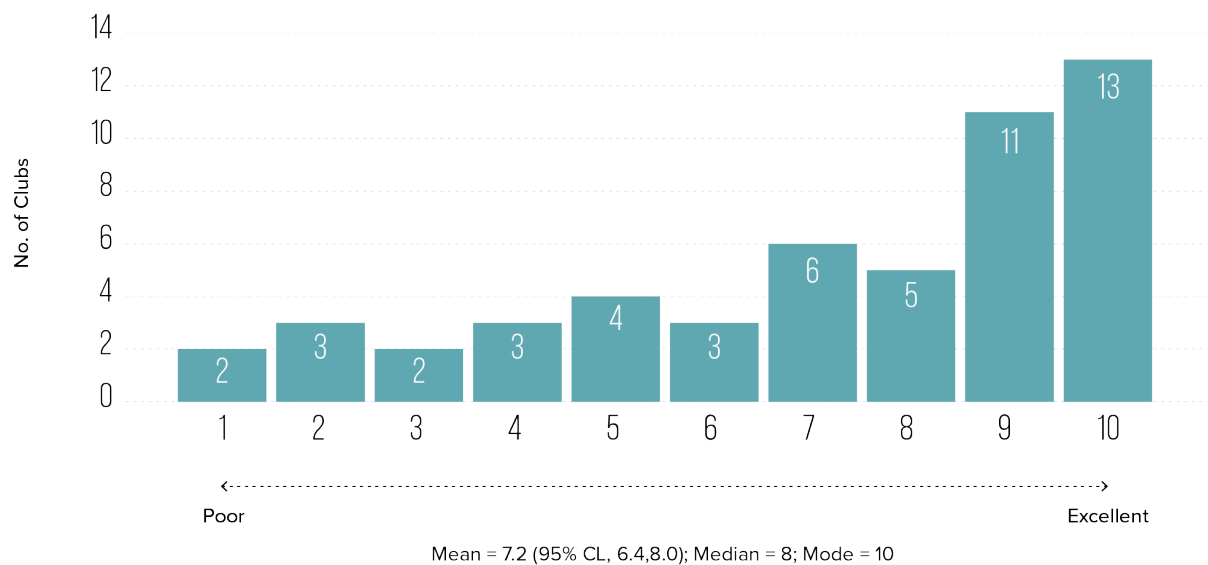


Figure 4. 6 Club leader rating of meals served

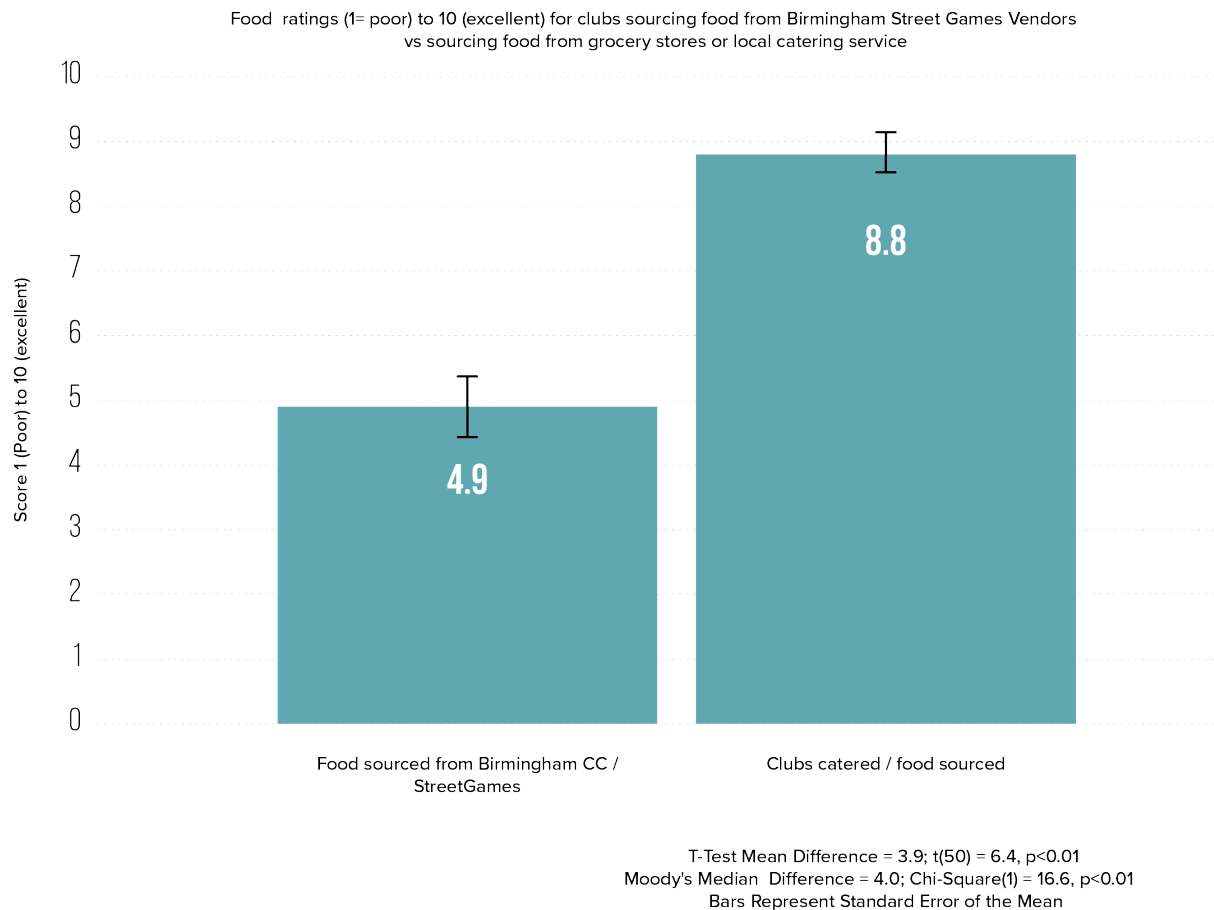


Figure 4. 7 Rating of food source Bring it on Brum vs food sourced from grocery stores or local catering service

#### 4.5.4 Wasted Food:

Managing varying attendance patterns, and the number of meals required on a daily basis can prove complicated even with an effective booking system. However, the findings (see Figure 4.8) showed that the majority of clubs did not throw away much food at all.

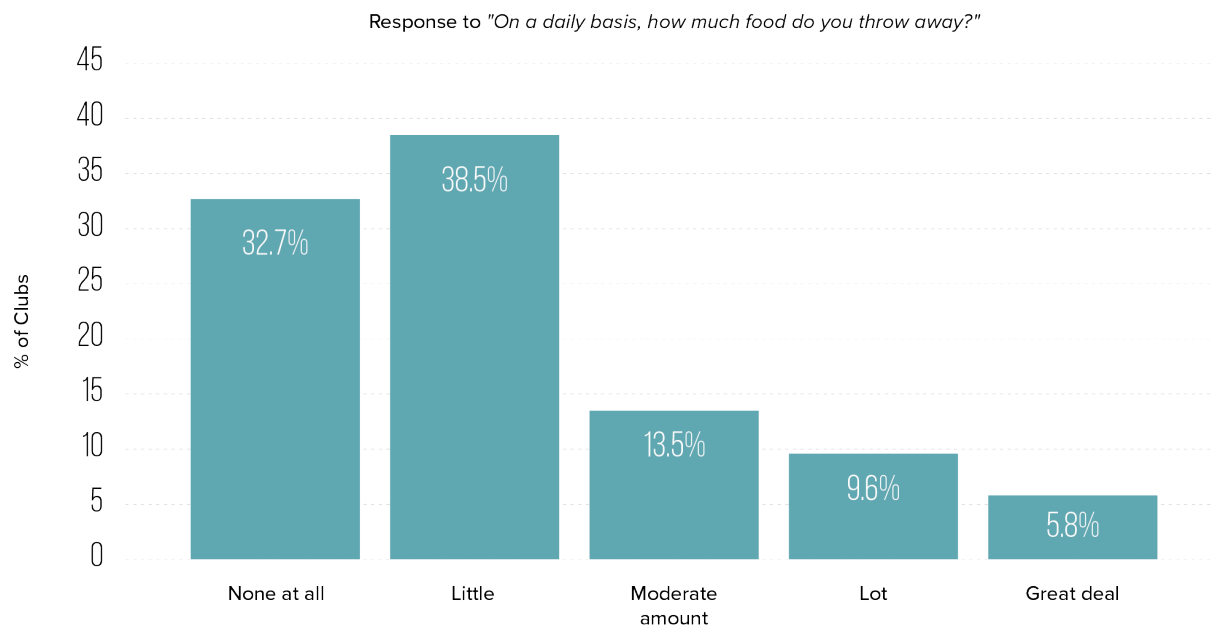


Figure 4. 8 Food wastage

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Delivery

Overall, the strategic management and co-ordination of Bring it on Brum by Street Games was excellent and provides Birmingham City Council with a solid foundation on which to build future HAF delivery. Importantly, Bring it on Brum delivered significant, positive outcomes across a wide range of factors, including childcare, food security, health and wellbeing, school readiness, anti-social behaviour, and many more at individual, community, and city level. The evaluation found that positive outcomes were driven by a high level of community engagement in Bring it on Brum by community organisations, schools, businesses, and service users, made possible by £800,000 of DfE HAF funding to Birmingham City Council. There was extensive HAF provision across Birmingham, with a focus of targeting provision in the most deprived wards; although improved mapping would help to identify areas where clubs were over and under subscribed. Despite this, StreetGames were effective in engaging local organisations and key programme outcomes include the involvement of 243 providers in delivering 278 holiday clubs. The engagement of 85 schools of which 29 delivered the Bring it on Brum programme, with the remaining 56 letting their facilities to other providers was good within the short time scale available to start the programme. Overall, Bring it on Brum was attended by 12,033 primary school children and 4,484 secondary school children eligible for means-tested Free School Meals. In addition, a further 15,484 children and young people living in areas of high deprivation attended the programme, with over 350,000 meals provided to children living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The findings also showed that the impact of Bring it on Brum not only depended on attendance but on how often children and young people attended the programme. Based on the findings of the current evaluation, we recommend that Birmingham City Council ensures extensive provision and access to encourage individual child attendance of a minimum of 100 hours and additional flexibility in access for working parents. Co-ordination across neighbourhood clubs will ensure that individual clubs are not over-burdened.

All the key recommendations in this report result from the research findings of the current evaluation. There may be additional learning by participating organisations that is not captured in this evaluation. The key recommendations of this report for the future delivery of Bring it on Brum include:

- Ensure that an appropriate infrastructure, systems, and processes are in place to support the delivery, monitoring and evaluation of this large-scale programme.
- Plan for 3-years of delivery incorporating sustainability plans to mitigate against changes to DfE funding.
- Continue with a community targeting approach to prevent stigma and drive positive outcomes at all levels.
- Ensure that food, whether hot or cold, adheres to School Food Standards.
- Consistent use of a clear definition of 'vulnerable' to ensure equality to accessing the programme.
- Adopt a multi-channel marketing approach (schools, digital marketing across the city etc.)
- Implement a central booking system that links to an interactive dashboard that can be used for safeguarding, monitoring and attendance (subject to GDPR)
- Consider associating Bring it on Brum to the Commonwealth Games 2022, and other City initiatives.
- Build on the excellent staff development programme delivered in 2021.

- Conduct a pre-programme mapping exercise to match need, provision, and assets across the City.
- Develop an inclusive Community of Practice to support peer to peer knowledge transfer and mobilisation
- Establish a public involvement and engagement group for adults and a separate group for children to ensure that the voice of the service user is heard and acted upon.

The following paragraphs elaborate on 3 key recommendations.

### 5.1 Infrastructure, processes, and systems

Although ‘Bring it on Brum’ proved to be very successful in terms of HAF implementation, delivery, and positive outcomes for children, parents and communities, there are some key areas for improvement. First, to deliver HAF at scale at a Local Authority level, it is important to have the appropriate infrastructure, systems, and processes in place. For example, grants management, booking system, marketing and communications, workforce development and training, quality assurance, mapping, monitoring and evaluation. Alongside the implementation of effective systems and processes, it is also important to have coherent systems and communication across Council Services, with clear service provision agreements prior to the start of the intervention for internal and external partners. Furthermore, a clear governance structure that provides both strategic and operational directive and monitoring is essential. Alongside governance, we suggest the establishment of a Children’s and Young Persons Steering Group, and a Parent Steering Group to ensure that HAF implementation and delivery reflects the needs of the service (and non-service) users, as this may vary across time and context. Cumulatively these measures will support effective strategic leadership and operational management, whilst considering service users views to deliver positive economic, health, social, and educational outcomes for children, parents/carers, communities, and the city.

### 5.2 Meals

In terms of food, Bring it on Brum offered considerable flexibility in whether the main meal was provided ‘in-house’, by a local caterer or centrally organised. Whilst this flexibility was welcomed by holiday clubs, it resulted in the need for additional quality assurance processes (e.g., inspection of kitchens, assessing multiple menus in terms of adherence to School Food Standards). As demonstrated in several prior research studies, the provision of food that adheres to School Food Standards, is culturally appropriate, checked for allergies etc., can be challenging for some holiday clubs, especially in cases where staff perform multiple roles. It should also be noted that school catering companies employ nutritionists to support menu development to check menus for compliance to School Food Standards for this very reason. Given that more than 350,000 meals were provided during summer 2021, the issue of quality assuring meal provision is not trivial. In moving forward, club staff could be supported through professional staff development opportunities such as nutritional training and sharing examples of good practice. There were some excellent, creative School Food Standards compliant meals provided by clubs and sharing menus through a central resource would a) enable PH nutritionists to check menus for adherence to School Food Standards, b) showcase examples of good practice, and c) support holiday club staff through the provision of ‘tried and tested’ menus. It would also provide clubs the framework to develop an inclusive community of practice for sharing ideas, resources and providing support. For those clubs not in a position to offer in-house catering, a central food service offered by a caterer experienced in delivering to School Food Standards should be considered.

### 5.3 Activities and Nutritional Education

The range of enrichment and cultural activities were excellent overall and wide ranging in nature (e.g., forestry school, football, arts and crafts, day visits to local parks and attractions). This practice should be continued, and the Council may wish to consider how HAF could be used to secure existing relationships with local businesses, museums, and other cultural and leisure venues, and to develop new partnerships. Although the overall enrichment activities were excellent, the provision of nutritional education was limited. Several clubs offered little or no opportunities for children, or parents, to participate in hands on cooking activities or nutrition education. This area requires specific attention in terms of staff development, the implementation and delivery of effective nutritional educational sessions specifically developed for HAF, and quality assurance and monitoring of provision. The Council may wish to seek support from skilled chefs employed in local restaurants, and/or purchasing online nutritional programmes/staff development or develop their own resources for holiday clubs.

# Appendix 1 Theory of change: Implementing HAF at a local level

## Theory of Change: Implementing HAF at a LA Level

© Northumbria University

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Intermediate Outcomes	Outcomes
<p>DfE Funding (preferably early notification)</p> <p>Placement within/across LA Service Departments (co-ordinate in-house or out to tender). Procurement (short lead in time)</p> <p>Costs re: staff, technology, marketing, additional funding, food, venue, admin etc.</p> <p>Co-ordinator (Leadership, Local Area Plan, Mapping of provision against IDA-CI /FSM data, etc. Strategic and Operational leads, leads and enablers embedded in Birmingham)</p> <p>Delivery plan (and contingency plan; staff, technology, marketing, cost return on investment, food, venues, activities, training)</p> <p>Plan for inclusion for different groups of service providers and service users (local steering group)</p> <p>Flexible delivery model based on an asset based neighbourhood approach and area coverage (&lt;1 mile) from home to club</p> <p>Partnership Arrangements (early engagement vital)</p> <p>Training &amp; Workforce Development (online and face-to face)</p> <p>Food (uniform or flexible model of delivery, central, in-house)</p> <p>Consider booking system (single point of access vs. multiple; internal vs. external, ensure GDPR compliant)</p> <p>Monitoring system (Audit tools, quality standards)</p> <p>Interactive map of HAF online (enabling search functions, clusters, etc.)</p> <p>Develop widening participation and out-</p>	<p>Develop a template for awarding funding (ensuring clear alignment to HAF objectives and goals)</p> <p>Implement policies and procedures (Safeguarding, health &amp; safety, insurance, EDI, Ofsted, SFS)</p> <p>Implement local action plan</p> <p>Establish and embed a governance structure (Strategic Steering Group)</p> <p>Set up Steering Groups with service delivers and service users</p> <p>Award funding to organisations</p> <p>Provide pre-during-post delivery training (quality assurance)</p> <p>Develop a Community of Practice (to share good practice and to be a single point of contact for providers)</p> <p>Activate local help lines for a) providers and b) parents</p> <p>Monitor provision and uptake and flex according to neighbourhood need</p> <p>Actively market Bring it on Brum to maintain awareness and engagement (manage interplay between club and programme)</p> <p>Ensure a wide range of participating organisations to enable participation of a wide range of groups (e.g. SEND, secondary school aged children, etc.)</p> <p>For secondary school children link to colleges, and other training providers</p> <p>Seek additional funding /support from local organisations</p> <p>Fund as a minimum, children's access to 4 x 4 x 4 (this may be provided by multiple clubs) within a neighbourhood)</p> <p>Aspire to fund each child to attend 100 hours + of provision across the summer to drive child and parent capital</p> <p>Mix 'standard' provision with 'days out' to promote participation and wider community engagement</p> <p>Provide a wide range of age and culturally appropriate physical activities and enrichment activities to promote EDI</p>	<p>Provide a city-wide approach to HAF to include an ongoing commitment to physical activities, enrichment activities, food security, and wider services</p> <p>Embed effective nutritional education sessions through face-to-face and online provision extending HAF into home environment (provide central resources for clubs to use/download)</p> <p>Quality assurance of all activities to ensure adherence to standards (e.g. 60 minutes of MVPA daily, SFS)</p> <p>Incorporate bio-diversity, sustainability and food provenance sessions where appropriate</p> <p>Effective referral routes incorporated within physical and online resources</p> <p>Provide parent/child choice of clubs/activities</p> <p>Provide parents access to schedule and menus</p> <p>Provide different levels of support to clubs (clubs are at different stages of development, skills and knowledge sets)</p> <p>Support from the DfE, the National co-ordinator and HAF Alliance</p> <p>Marketing materials allowing autonomy at club level for target audience (e.g. BAME, SEND provision)</p> <p>Different modes of delivery for target audiences (e.g. age groups, cognition &amp; learning, communication and language etc.)</p> <p>Increase digital access and support for clubs</p> <p>Enable provision of objectives to be co-developed with service users</p> <p>Effective outcome and impact framework at club and programme level</p> <p>Sustainability plans</p>	<p><b>Children</b></p> <p>Increased children's MVPA</p> <p>Increased children's engagement in social activities accompanied by a decrease in social isolation</p> <p>Opportunities to participate in enrichment activities, including hands on cooking</p> <p>Children learnt a wide range of new skills (soft skills, social skills etc.)</p> <p>Provided a safe place to play</p> <p>Raised aspirations</p> <p>Improved confidence</p> <p>Supported school readiness</p> <p>Supported child development through fun activities and play</p> <p><b>Parents</b></p> <p>Reduced parental stress</p> <p>Reduced isocial isolation</p> <p>Provided affordable childcare</p> <p>Alleviated household financial strain</p> <p>Improved household food security</p> <p>Provided effective referral system</p> <p>Supported parents employment/training</p> <p>Provided support for carers/kinship carers</p> <p><b>Communities/City</b></p> <p>Increased community resilience</p> <p>Improved social networks</p> <p>Provided a safe place for children and young people</p> <p>Reduced anti-social behaviour</p> <p>Supported the local economy</p> <p>Reduced lifestyle related health inequalities</p>	<p><b>Children</b></p> <p>Improved dietary intake and behaviours (especially through continued digital support materials)</p> <p>Support physical and mental development</p> <p>Increased engagement with school (school readiness)</p> <p>Gains in knowledge regarding healthy lifestyles ( nutrition, cooking, PA, environment etc.)</p> <p>Decrease in anti-social behaviours (e.g. vandalism, county lines)</p> <p><b>Parents/Carers</b></p> <p>Improved employment opportunities for parents/carers/volunteers through skills development and acquisition of qualifications</p> <p>Affordable, accessible holiday childcare</p> <p>Increased household food security</p> <p>Improved attachment relationships with children</p> <p>Improved wellbeing (e.g. reduction in stress).</p> <p><b>Communities/City</b></p> <p>Improved community networks</p> <p>Improved ways of working across the Council</p> <p>Resilient communities/city</p> <p>Opportunity to embed council services within communities</p> <p>A 'year round' approach to supporting children, young people, and families in areas experiencing multiple forms of deprivation</p> <p>Investment in the local economy (economic, cultural, social and human capital)</p> <p>Systems change to map HAF to wider initiatives and services</p> <p>Co-design HAF provision with parents, children to capture the voices and rights of parents and children</p>

## References

- Afshin, A., Sur, P. J., Fay, K. A., Cornaby, L., Ferrara, G., Salama, J. S., Mullany, E. C., Abate, K. H., Abbafati, C., Abebe, Z., Afarideh, M., Aggarwal, A., Agrawal, S., Akinyemiju, T., Alahdab, F., Bacha, U., Bachman, V. F., Badali, H., Badawi, A., ... Murray, C. J. L. (2019). Health effects of dietary risks in 195 countries, 1990–2017: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017. *The Lancet*, 393(10184), 1958–1972. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(19\)30041-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(19)30041-8)
- Andrews, J., Robinson, D., & Hutchinson, J. (2017). *Closing the Gap? Trends in Educational Attainment and Disadvantage*.
- Bates, B., Jones, K., Paige, P., Roberts, C., Steer, T., & Swan, G. (2020). *National Diet and Nutrition Survey. Rolling programme Years 9 to 11 (2016/2017 to 2018/2019)*.
- BBC. (2019). *School holiday hunger: Parents “living on cereal”, says MP*. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-49162986>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful qualitative research: A practical guide for beginners*. SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Butcher, D. (2015). *The Cost of the School Holidays*.
- Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., & Mermelstein, R. (1983). A Global Measure of Perceived Stress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 24(4), 385–396. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2136404>
- Collard, S., Collings, D., Kempson, E., & Evans, J. (2021). Bearing the Brunt: The impact of the crisis on families with children. In *International Review of Mission*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1758-6631.1959.tb02420.x>
- Cooper, K., & Stewart, K. (2017). *Does Money Affect Children’s Outcomes? An update*.
- Cottell, J., Descateaux, S., & Coleman, L. (2019). *Childcare Survey 2019*.
- Cottell, J., & Fiaferana, K. (2018). *Holiday Childcare Survey 2018*.
- Crilley, E. (2021). *An investigation into the “Kitchen Social” holiday programme in terms of the operation and impacts on the wellbeing, diet and activity of service users*. Northumbria University.
- Crilley, E., Brownlee, I., & Defeyter, M. A. (2022). The Diet of Children Attending a Holiday Programme in the UK: Adherence to UK Food-Based Dietary Guidelines and School Food Standards. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH AND PUBLIC HEALTH*, 19(55).
- Defeyter, M. A., Graham, P. L., & Prince, K. (2015a). A Qualitative Evaluation of Holiday Breakfast Clubs in the UK: Views of Adult Attendees, Children, and Staff. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 3(August). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2015.00199>
- Defeyter, M. A., Graham, P. L., & Prince, K. (2015b). A Qualitative Evaluation of Holiday Breakfast Clubs in the UK: Views of Adult Attendees, Children, and Staff. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 3(August). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2015.00199>



- Defeyter, M. A., Mann, E., Wonders, P., & Sabine, G. (2020). Feeding disadvantaged children during the COVID-19 pandemic. In *Journal of Health Visiting* (Vol. 8, Issue 9).  
[www.familygateway.co.uk/](http://www.familygateway.co.uk/)
- Defeyter, M. A., Stretesky, P. B., & Long, M. A. (2019). Holiday hunger: The government must remove the inequalities in children's access to holiday clubs. *BMJ (Online)*.
- Defeyter, M. A., Stretesky, P. B., Sattar, Z., & Crilley, E. (2018a). *Evaluation of 'A Day Out , Not a Handout' Holiday Provision Programme*. [https://children-ne.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/A\\_Day\\_Out\\_Not\\_a\\_Handout\\_Final\\_Report\\_Northumbria.pdf](https://children-ne.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/A_Day_Out_Not_a_Handout_Final_Report_Northumbria.pdf)
- Defeyter, M. A., Stretesky, P., Sattar, Z., & Crilley, E. (2018b). *Evaluation of 'A Day Out, Not a Handout' Holiday Provision Programme*.
- Department for Education. (2021a). *Holiday activities and food programme 2021*.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/holiday-activities-and-food-programme/holiday-activities-and-food-programme-2021>
- Department for Education. (2021b). *Portion sizes and food groups*.
- Department for Education. (2021c). *School food standards practical guide*.
- Department for Work and Pensions. (2021). *Family Resources Survey: background information and methodology*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2019-to-2020/family-resources-survey-background-information-and-methodology>
- Diss, O., & Jarvie, M. (2016). *Unfinished Business: Where next for Extended Schools?*
- Donkin, A., & Marmot, M. (2016). A standard of living sufficient for health, wellbeing and development. In J. Tucker (Ed.), *Improving Children's Life Chances* (pp. 49–57). CPAG.
- Dowler, E., Turner, S., & Dobson, B. (2001). *Poverty Bites: Food, health and poor families* (1st ed.). Child Poverty Action Group.
- FAO. (2015). *The State of Food Insecurity in the World*.
- Forsey, A. (2017a). *Hungry Holidays*.
- Forsey, A. (2017b). *Hungry Holidays: A report on hunger amongst children during school holidays*.
- Gill, O., & Sharma, N. (2004). *Food Poverty in the School Holidays*.
- Goisis, A., Sacker, A., & Kelly, Y. (2015). Why are poorer children at higher risk of obesity and overweight? A UK cohort study. *The European Journal of Public Health*, *ckv219*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckv219>
- Gooseman, A., Defeyter, M. A., & Graham, P. L. (2019a). Hunger in the primary school setting: evidence, impacts and solutions according to school staff in the North East of England, UK solutions according to school staff in the North East of England, UK. *International Journal of Primary, Elementary and Early Years Education*, *3*(13), 1–13.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03004279.2019.1602155>

- Gooseman, A., Defeyter, M. A., & Graham, P. L. P. L. (2019b). Hunger in the primary school setting: evidence, impacts and solutions according to school staff in the North East of England, UK. *Education 3-13*, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004279.2019.1602155>
- Goudie, S., & McIntyre, Z. (2021). The impact of covid-19 on Household food insecurity. *Food Foundation*, 19(2), 11–23.
- Graham, P. L., Crilley, E., Stretesky, P. B., Long, M. A., Palmer, K. J., Steinbock, E., & Defeyter, M. A. (2016). School Holiday Food Provision in the UK: A Qualitative Investigation of Needs, Benefits, and Potential for Development. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 4(April 2014), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2016.00172>
- Griffiths, S. (2019). Emma Thompson: My fight to end Easter holiday hunger for 4m British school children. *The Sunday Times*.
- Harvey, K. (2016). “When I go to bed hungry and sleep, I’m not hungry”: children and parents’ experiences of Food Insecurity. *Appetite*, 99, 235–244. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2016.01.004>
- Holley, C. E., & Mason, C. (2019). A systematic review of the evaluation of interventions to tackle children’s food insecurity. *Current Nutrition Reports*, 18.
- Holley, C. E., Mason, C., & Haycraft, E. (2019a). Opportunities and Challenges Arising from Holiday Clubs Tackling Children’s Hunger in the UK: Pilot Club Leader Perspectives. *Nutrients*, 11(1237). <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu11061237>
- Holley, C. E., Mason, C., & Haycraft, E. (2019b). Opportunities and Challenges Arising from Holiday Clubs Tackling Children’s Hunger in the UK: Pilot Club Leader Perspectives. *Nutrients*, 11(1237). <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu11061237>
- House of Commons. (2019). *Work and Pensions and Education Committees - Oral Evidence: School holiday poverty*. House of Commons.
- Hutchinson, J., Bonetti, S., Crenna-Jennings, W., & Akhal, A. (2019). *Education in England: Annual Report 2019*.
- James, M., Marchant, E., Defeyter, M. A., Woodside, J. V., & Brophy, S. (2021). Impact of School Closures on the Health and Well-Being of Primary School Children in Wales UK; A Routine Data Linkage Study Using the HAPPEN Survey (2018-2020). *The Lancet*, (Pre-print (5), 7352–7363.
- Johnson, A. D., & Markowitz, A. J. (2018). Associations Between Household Food Insecurity in Early Childhood and Children’s Kindergarten Skills. *Child Development*, 89(2), e1–e17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12764>
- The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Tenth Report of Session 2002–03 (2003). [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-89295-5\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-89295-5_2)
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation. (n.d.). *UK Poverty 2022. The essential guide to understanding poverty in the UK*.
- Lambie-Mumford, H., & Sims, L. (2018). *Children’s experiences of food and poverty: the rise and implications of charitable breakfast clubs and holiday hunger projects in the UK*. (Issue 31).

- Long, M. A., Defeyter, M. A., & Stretesky, P. B. (2022). *Holiday Hunger in the UK: Local Responses to Childhood Food Insecurity* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Long, M. A., Gonçalves, L., Stretesky, P. B., & Defeyter, M. A. (2020). Food insecurity in advanced capitalist nations: A review. In *Sustainability (Switzerland)* (Vol. 12, Issue 9). MDPI. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12093654>
- Long, M. A., Stretesky, P. B., Defeyter, M. A., Crilley, E., & Sattar, Z. (2020). Examining the relationship between child holiday club attendance and parental wellbeing. *ENUF Conference 2020*, 20.
- Long, M. A., Stretesky, P. B., Graham, P. L., Palmer, K. J., Steinbock, E., & Defeyter, M. A. (2017). The impact of holiday clubs on household food insecurity - A pilot study. *Health and Social Care in the Community*, *2*, September 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hsc.12507>
- Long, M. A., Stretesky, P. B., Graham, P. L., Palmer, K. J., Steinbock, E., & Defeyter, M. A. (2018a). The impact of holiday clubs on household food insecurity—A pilot study. *Health and Social Care in the Community*, *26*(2), e261–e269. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hsc.12507>
- Long, M. A., Stretesky, P. B., Graham, P. L., Palmer, K. J., Steinbock, E., & Defeyter, M. A. (2018b). The impact of holiday clubs on household food insecurity—A pilot study. *Health and Social Care in the Community*, *26*(2), e261–e269. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hsc.12507>
- Loopstra, R. (2020). *Vulnerability to food insecurity since the COVID-19 lockdown Preliminary report*. (Issue April).
- Loopstra, R., Reeves, A., & Tarasuk, V. (2019). The rise of hunger among low-income households: an analysis of the risks of food insecurity between 2004 and 2016 in a population-based study of UK adults. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, jech-2018-211194. <https://doi.org/10.1136/jech-2018-211194>
- Loopstra, R., & Tarasuk, V. (2015). Food Bank Usage Is a Poor Indicator of Food Insecurity: Insights from Canada. *Social Policy and Society*, *14*(03), 443–455. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1474746415000184>
- Mann, E. (2019). *Holiday Provision: A mixed methods investigation of holiday clubs in terms of location, implementation, delivery and impact* [Northumbria University]. [https://researchportal.northumbria.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/20966249/mann.emily\\_phd.pdf](https://researchportal.northumbria.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/20966249/mann.emily_phd.pdf)
- Mann, E., Defeyter, M. A., & Widdison, C. (2020). Implementing Holiday Provision Programmes: A Qualitative Investigation of the Experiences of Senior Stakeholders. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, (In press), 286–302.
- Mann, E., Long, M. A., Stretesky, P. B., & Defeyter, M. A. (2018). A question of justice: Are holiday clubs serving the most deprived communities in England? *Local Environment*, *0*(0), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13549839.2018.1518415>
- Marmot, M. (2010). *The Marmot Review: Fair society, healthy lives*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2012.05.014>
- Martinelli, S., Acciai, F., Yedidia, M. J., & Ohri-Vachaspati, P. (2021). Do parental perceptions of the nutritional quality of school meals reflect the food environment in public schools? *International*

*Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(20).

<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182010764>

- May, C., & Finch, T. (2009). Implementing, embedding, and integrating practices: An outline of normalization process theory. *Sociology*, 43(3), 535–554.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038509103208>
- Morgan, K., McConnon, L., Van Godwin, J., Hawkins, J., Bond, A., & Fletcher, A. (2019a). Use of the School Setting During the Summer Holidays: Mixed-Methods Evaluation of Food and Fun Clubs in Wales. *Journal of School Health*, 89(10), 829–838. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josh.12824>
- Morgan, K., McConnon, L., Van Godwin, J., Hawkins, J., Bond, A., & Fletcher, A. (2019b). Use of the School Setting During the Summer Holidays: Mixed-Methods Evaluation of Food and Fun Clubs in Wales. *Journal of School Health*, 89(10), 829–838. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josh.12824>
- Morgan, K., Melendez-Torres, G., Bond, A., Hawkins, J., Hewitt, G., Murphy, S., & Moore, G. (2019). Socio-Economic Inequalities in Adolescent Summer Holiday Experiences, and Mental Wellbeing on Return to School: Analysis of the School Health Research Network/Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children Survey in Wales. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(7), 1107. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16071107>
- National Union of Teachers. (2017). *NUT Survey on holiday hunger*.
- Nilsen, P. (2015). Making sense of implementation theories, models and frameworks. *Implementation Science*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-015-0242-0>
- Osborne, S. (2018, December). Nearly four in five teachers say “holiday hunger” is failing to improve. *The Independent*.
- Pereira, A. L., Handa, S., & Holmqvist, G. (2017). *Prevalence and Correlates of Food Insecurity among Children across the Globe* (Issue June).
- Perraudin, F. (2018). “They hadn’t eaten all day”: foodbanks tackle holiday hunger. *The Guardian*.
- Public Health England. (2015). *Childhood obesity: applying All Our Health*.
- RCPCH & CPAG. (2017). *Poverty and Child Health: Views from the frontline* (Issue May).
- Ridge, T. (2002). *Childhood Poverty and Social Exclusion: the child’s perspective*. The Policy Press.
- Ridge, T. (2013). ‘We are All in This Together’? The Hidden Costs of Poverty, Recession and Austerity Policies on Britain’s Poorest Children. *Children & Society*, 27, 406–417.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/chso.12055>
- Round, E. K., Shinwell, J., Stretesky, P. B., & Defeyter, M. A. (n.d.). An exploration of nutritional education within the Holiday Activities and Food programme in England. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*.
- Scott, C., Sutherland, J., & Taylor, A. (2018). *Affordability of the UK’s Eatwell Guide* (Issue September). The Food Foundation.
- Shinwell, J. (2019). *An investigation of Holiday Club Provision: Impact on Children’s Educational Attainment, Nutritional Intake and Wider Family Benefits* [Northumbria University].  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.126.1.78>

- Shinwell, J., & Defeyter, M. A. (2021). *Food Insecurity: A Constant Factor in the Lives of Low-Income Families in Scotland and England*. 9(May), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2021.588254>
- Shinwell, J., Finlay, E., Allen, C., & Defeyter, M. A. (2021). Holiday Club Programmes in Northern Ireland : The Voices of Children and Young People. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(1337).
- Stretesky, P. B., Defeyter, M. A., Long, M. A., Ritchie, L. A., & Gill, D. A. (2020). Holiday hunger and parental stress: Evidence from North East England. *Sustainability*, 12, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12104141>
- Stretesky, P. B., Defeyter, M. A., Long, M. A., Sattar, Z., & Crilley, E. (n.d.). Holiday clubs as community organisations. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 689.
- Stretesky, P. B., Defeyter, M. A., Long, M. A., Sattar, Z. Z., & Crilley, E. (2020). Holiday Clubs as Community Organisations. *The ANALS of the American Academy of Political an Social Science*, 689(May), 129–148. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716220917657>
- Taylor-Robinson, D., Lai, E. T. C., Wickham, S., Rose, T., Norman, P., Bambra, C., Whitehead, M., & Barr, B. (2019a). Assessing the impact of rising child poverty on the unprecedented rise in infant mortality in England, 2000-2017: time trend analysis. *BMJ Open*, 9(10), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2019-029424>
- Taylor-Robinson, D., Lai, E. T. C., Wickham, S., Rose, T., Norman, P., Bambra, C., Whitehead, M., & Barr, B. (2019b). Assessing the impact of rising child poverty on the unprecedented rise in infant mortality in England, 2000-2017: time trend analysis. *BMJ Open*, 9(10), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2019-029424>
- The Food Foundation. (2017). *New evidence of child food insecurity in the UK*. <https://foodfoundation.org.uk/new-evidence-of-child-food-insecurity-in-the-uk/>
- USDA Economic Research Services. (2020). *Survey Tools*. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/survey-tools/#six>
- Van Lancker, W., & Parolin, Z. (2020). COVID-19, school closures, and child poverty: a social crisis in the making. *The Lancet*. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667\(20\)30084-0](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667(20)30084-0)