

Holiday Childcare Scheme Summer fun

Visit our
website for
information
about our next
scheme
in October
2025.

We're delighted to share the highlights and wonderful experiences from this year's Summer Holiday Scheme at St Anne's and Guardian Angel Primary School.

This summer was our busiest, with an unprecedented number of bookings — averaging 130–150 children each day. It was fantastic to see so many children filling our spaces with energy, creativity, and joy.

Throughout the scheme, we provided a safe, engaging, and fun environment where children could explore new interests, develop key skills, and build lasting friendships. From creative arts, mini trips, exciting sports to hands-on cooking incorporated with our themed weeks, every day was packed with activities designed to inspire and delight.

In this newsletter, you'll find a recap of the fantastic moments that made this summer so special. We hope you enjoy looking back on the highlights just as much as we enjoyed creating them!



Figures from our Summer 2025 scheme bookings

2,515

sessions booked

295

children supported

220

total families supported

69

LBTH schools represented in bookings

The Holiday Childcare Team is part of the Parent and Family Support Service.

For more information, to leave feedback or to book places visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/hcs



Week 1: Kicking Off Summer with Disney Magic!

We started the summer with a splash of creativity and a whole lot of fun during our Disney-themed first week! The children fully embraced the magic, showcasing their artistic talents through a

variety of creative activities. From drawing and crafts to imaginative storytelling, their enthusiasm was truly inspiring.

The excitement didn't stop there — the week was packed with

energetic games including bench football, capture the flag, tennis, and many more outdoor sports. It was the perfect start to a summer of adventure, creativity, and active play!



Week 2: Sports and National Play Day

What a fantastic week we've had! The children got stuck into paper mâché, proudly made their very own medals, and enjoyed lots of sports-themed arts and crafts. There was plenty of laughter, teamwork, and creativity all around!

One of the biggest highlights was our National Play Day celebration. The children loved showing off their play to some very special guests:

- **Steve Reddy**, Corporate Director of Children's Services
- **Catherine Grace**, Head of School Admissions & Place Planning
- **Pam Grant**, Executive Support to Lisa Fraser, Director of Education

They were so impressed by the children's energy and creativity. Catherine feedback was

"Thank you for hosting us today and, as with last year, this is just the best way to spend a morning. A fantastic job done by all, and the children were all having such a brilliant time. It was lovely to observe."

It was a wonderful week full of smiles, imagination, and play!



Week 3: I am a superhero

This week's theme was "I Am a Superhero" – and our children truly showed us their amazing superpowers every single day. At the heart of our scheme, we believe that every child who walks through our doors is already a superhero. Whether it's through kindness, creativity, bravery, or friendship, they shine in their own unique ways.

The children had a brilliant time embracing the theme with imaginative play, laughter, and teamwork – proving that superheroes come in all shapes and sizes, and that play is for everyone, no matter their abilities.

Our superheroes also showed off their energy and team spirit with a week packed full of sports and activities. From urban golf and cricket to karaoke fun and energising games, there was something for everyone to enjoy.

And on the hottest day of the year, what better way to cool down than with an epic water balloon afternoon? Both children and staff had a blast splashing, laughing, and keeping cool together – the perfect superhero ending to a sunny day!

Because being a superhero isn't about flying or wearing a cape... it's about having fun, being yourself, and sharing smiles with others.

I am a superhero...
With paper, paint, and glue,
I can build a world of colour
And make dreams come true.

I am a superhero...
My medal shines so bright,
It shows my strength and courage
And all the things I try.

I am a superhero...
When I laugh, play, and run,
I spread my joy like sunshine
And share my smiles with everyone.

Because superheroes aren't just
in comics,
They're here every single day...In
every child who's brave and kind
And finds new games to play.



Week 4: Environment

We finished the summer with a vibrant celebration of our environment. Children created thoughtful time capsules, wildlife clay models, and colourful environmental posters to show the importance of looking after our world.

The grand finale was a fancy dress party, where the children proudly showcased their creations and enjoyed a day filled with dancing, laughter, and fun.

Sports carried on right through to the end, with team tag, hula hoop races, and athletics challenges bringing the perfect balance of creativity and physical activity.

Daily Cooking Creations with our children.

Throughout the scheme, cooking was a daily delight. Under the guidance of our very own Patricia – who carefully organised the ingredients and encouraged the children step by step – the children had the chance to make and bake a variety of tasty treats.

Their culinary creations included treacle sponge bites, apple fruit cakes, blueberry muffins, carrot cake, and many more! Not only did these activities teach valuable cooking skills, but they also inspired children to try new foods and flavours. The pride they felt tasting their own creations was as sweet as the cakes themselves!

We are proud of the enthusiasm and creativity the children brought to every activity. It was a pleasure to see them grow, learn, and have so much fun over the four weeks.



Mini trips

Another one of our highlights at the Holiday Childcare Scheme was the series of trips we organised for the children. Each outing gave them the chance to explore, play, and discover lovely places together.

Here's a look at the wonderful places we visited:

Victoria Park, Tower Hamlets – A local favourite! The children enjoyed the playgrounds, wide-open spaces, and a relaxing picnic in one of London's most beloved parks.

- **Spitalfields City Farm** – Full of character and charm, the children met animals, learned about farming, and explored this unique city farm, which first opened back in 1978 on a former railway goods depot.
- **Weavers Fields, Bethnal Green** – The largest park in Bethnal Green (measuring 15.6 acres), and the 6th largest open space in Tower Hamlets. The children loved running, playing, and making the most of this wonderful green space.

Each trip was carefully planned so that every child had the choice to attend, and our amazing staff worked hard to make each outing safe, fun, and memorable. These experiences gave children the chance to connect with nature, try new activities, and create lasting memories with their friends.

We're already looking forward to planning more exciting excursions for future schemes!

Children's Highlights – Our Leavers

This section is dedicated to the amazing children who have been with us since nursery and are now moving on as they embark on their next journey — into youth clubs and beyond. We are so proud of all they have achieved and the memories they've created here.

Xavier, 13

How long have you been coming?

"I started coming to the scheme when I was 4 years old, and now I am 13."

What do you like about it?

"It's a very social place, with lots of things to do. It's easy to make friends, and I never felt alone."

Do you feel it's a good place for teens?

"Yes! The teen space is so much fun — it has a pool table, PlayStation, and lots of board games."

What are the staff like?

"The staff are so welcoming and nice to be around. They are comforting whenever I've needed them."

Has it changed over the years?

"Yes, in a good way. When we give feedback and ask for resources, we actually see them at the scheme later!"

Do children get to give feedback?

"Yes, we can always give feedback to Joe about the things we'd like to do."



Aya, 13

How long have you been coming?

"I started in Early Years at four, and now I'm 13."

What do you like about the scheme?

"I love coming here and meeting new children. It's inclusive for all age groups under 13."

Do you feel it's a good place for teens?

"Yes, because you get trusted and sometimes have more privileges to explore the scheme without an adult."

What are the staff like?

"They are very kind and supportive. They help us all the time — they don't just sit around and ignore us."

Has it changed over the years?

"It's stayed consistent, but every time I come it feels different. I've never felt bored."

Do children get to give feedback?

"Yes, I've asked for more trips — I think some should be especially for the older children."



We are incredibly proud of Xavier and Aya, and all of our past leavers. Their journeys with us show the heart of the scheme: friendship, fun, inclusion, and growth. We wish them the very best in their next chapter.

Children's feedback

One of the best parts of our Holiday Childcare Scheme is hearing directly from the children themselves. Here's what they had to say about their favourite parts of the summer:

I like making new friends.

Layton, 10

I like going on trips..

Ray, 7

I like playing dodgeball and making things in the art room.

Nuvy, 6

I like the staff and children. Children can sometimes be mischievous, but staff are excellent.

Safwan, 11

I like dodgeball because it's fun and it's something other than football, which I equally like.

Elijah, 9

The staff don't force us to do activities. We can choose arts or sports, and we go on trips which is very exciting.

Zoe



I love the different activities that we can choose and having different sports. I enjoy it!

Zahraa, 9

I really like the art room because I can draw and paint.

Amber, 6

I like playing with the ball and the climbing frame.

Obasola, 5

I like going into the main playground to play on the slide.

Sufyan, 4

That we get to go in the art room and do clay.

Olive, 6



I love going on the climbing frames, painting and drawing. I love playing with my cousin Yusuf.

Iqra, 4

I love playing in the kitchen area and doing lots of drawing.

Saiha, 5

I want to do more superhero masks and painting. I liked the farm trip and park.

Maia B

Parents/carers feedback

We're so grateful to the parents and carers who shared their thoughts with us. Their feedback means so much and reminds us of the value this scheme brings to families across the borough. Here are just a few of their kind words:

The drop-off and collection arrangements and staff are very professional and reassuring.

The scheme is amazing for parents in the borough. Thank you for offering this — I'm telling all my parent friends about it as well. Staff are friendly and remember us.

We would 100% use the scheme again. The staff are brilliant, especially when my son struggled to settle.

Cannot fault the scheme — absolutely love everything they do, and so do both of my children. They always leave happy.

Comforted that they checked who I was before picking up (other parent did drop off and pick up except once when I did it).

My daughter loved the activities, particularly when it was hot and they had a water fight.

My son came in with huge issues experienced at school. I was very unsure about using another childcare provider where so many had failed to support my son's needs. The biggest thing was not to watch my son like a hawk but letting him play as a child and addressing things quickly then moving on. Now he turns up yearly with zero incidents. On the first morning, they're always reluctant to go, but by the end of the first day they ask why I picked them up early at 3.30 — and that I should come later! The staff always remember their names, which makes it feel incredibly personal. I guess they manage to keep the same staff, and this consistency is great for children and shows that management must be in tune with their workforce too.

Both girls loved the scheme. They came home tired and had lots to tell me — especially about the trips and parks.

The voices of our families reflect the care, energy, and dedication of the whole team. We're proud that the scheme continues to support children to thrive and parents to feel reassured.

Responding to Parent Feedback

Parents shared

"More availability of space. I could not book a place for my child as they got booked out. Priorities for working families to enable us to work without the stress of looking for childcare."

We completely understand how challenging it can be to secure childcare, especially when balancing work and family responsibilities. Demand for our holiday scheme is always high, and while we are proud so many families value the service, we also know how important it is to increase availability wherever possible.

To support this, we:

- Already prioritise access for working families, recognising how essential reliable childcare is for professional commitments.
- Are actively exploring ways to expand places in future schemes, so that more families can benefit.
- Encourage parents to check our website for future scheme dates and booking windows, especially for working parents who receive priority access.



"I'd like my son to feel more engaged with activities as he finds the playground situation quite overwhelming."

We know that joining a new setting or navigating busy play spaces can sometimes feel daunting for children. To support this, we have a robust buddy system, where children of a similar age are paired together. This helps new children to settle in, make friends, and feel part of the group.

We've seen many children thrive through this system, and it's something we are proud to continue developing. In addition, our caring and experienced staff are always on hand to support children who may feel overwhelmed, gently

encouraging them to join in at their own pace and helping them find activities they enjoy.

Our aim is to make sure every child feels safe, included, and confident — because every child deserves to feel like a superhero in our scheme.

Your feedback is invaluable and helps us improve. Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us — together, we can continue to make the scheme even better.

The Holiday childcare staff are thankful to be part of the experience for all the children who attended this summer. We look forward to more adventures in the future, seeing you at the October 2025 scheme.

For more information about our schemes please visit our website: :

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/hcs