

# The Pulse



@EssexActivAte



# Summer bookings are live

Today sees the launch of our Essex ActivAte summer booking page on the new Active Essex website!

---

This summer Active Essex are delivering our biggest ever holiday activity programme on behalf of the Department for Education, Essex County Council and Thurrock Council. The programme will see over 200,000 FREE places offered for low income families who are eligible for benefits based free school meals over 5 weeks of the summer holiday.

Essex County Council are also funding a number of free places for working families who are struggling financially and would benefit from this holiday club support.

Bookings for summer clubs are live as of today, offering support to children and families across the county!

To celebrate the launch Councillor Louise McKinlay (ECC Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities, Partnerships, Equality & Performance) has discussed the importance of the Holiday Activity and Food programme, alongside Anton Ferdinand (former professional footballer and Active Essex board member) in our launch video which was shared on social media today. [Watch the video on our website.](#)



**Councillor Louise McKinlay**  
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for  
Communities, Partnerships, Equality and Performance

[Find out more on the new  
Active Essex website!](#)

# Fun for every child!

---

Essex ActivAte clubs will feature a wide variety of activities – with every club offering physical and enrichment activities and fun nutrition education sessions, as well as providing a tasty meal for every child. These activities will include:

- Team sports
- Outdoor obstacle courses
- Dance
- Yoga
- Multisports
- Drama
- Parkour
- Arts & craft sessions
- Gardening

During Half Term some clubs even had visits from super heros and princesses and have the chance to ride ponies and unicorns! We can't wait to see what they come up with this summer!

Beyond this, we are running an extensive outreach programme in partnership with the Essex Youth Service, providing support for secondary school children. Plus, if you live in the south of Essex we have a consortium of partners providing an amazing offer for secondary school children At Hadleigh Park, including cycling, bike mechanics, multisports and the chance to try kayaking and paddleboarding!

Alongside this we are expanding our enrichment offer even further, with the opportunity for children to explore nature with organisations such as The Essex Wildlife Trust! Plus many clubs across the county will feature additional enrichment from Essex Library Service and Essex Education Music Hub.





# Why stop there?

Alongside face to face clubs, we understand the importance of providing support for children and families at home. As such we are also providing fun-filled activity packs, hours of YouTube content as we take over the Find Your Active channel and lots of exciting new recipes for families to cook together. This offer will include two activity packs tailored to KS1 and KS2 pupils. Take a look at some of the pages!

### It's dough time!

Did you know? ... You can make simple salt dough from everyday ingredients that you may already have in your kitchen! You could shape it into anything you want - maybe your favourite animal, your favourite fruit, or even try and create a self-portrait! Then if you ask an adult to help you bake it in the oven it will go solid and you can paint your sculpture!

**You will need:**

- 1 cup of plain flour (250g)
- 1/2 cup of table salt (125g)
- 1/2 cup of water (125ml)

**Prep time: 10 minutes**  
**Cooking time: 3 hours**

**Be sure to ask an adult to help you make and bake the dough!**

**Method:**

1. Ask an adult to preheat the oven to its lowest setting and line a baking sheet with baking parchment.
2. Mix the flour and salt in a large bowl. Add the water and stir until it comes together into a ball.
3. Transfer the dough to a floured work surface and shape into your chosen model. You can create anything you like using your imagination... could you invent a new animal - think about where it lives and what it eats! Or could you create a new fruit or vegetable that has so many nutrients it gives you superpowers?
4. Put your finished items on the lined baking sheet and bake for 3 hours or until solid.
5. Leave to cool and then paint your sculpture! Remember this dough cannot be eaten!
6. Share your creation - ask an adult to share on social media tagging @EssexActive and #EssexActive, or email us half@essexactive.org. We can't wait to see what you make!

**We can't wait to see what you create!**  
Share your photos with us on social media, tagging @EssexActive and #EssexActive

### Handy exercises

In the activities on this page you can use your hands to help you take some time out to think, be in the moment or calm down.

**Friendship Five**  
For this first activity you will need a piece of paper and a pencil, and don't forget to bring lots of positivity!

1. Start by placing your hand on the piece of paper and with your fingers spread wide, draw around your hand.
2. Next, draw a picture of someone in the palm of the hand - it could be yourself, a friend or a family member.
3. Now write 5 positive things about that person, one on each finger.
4. Got more than 5 positive things? Why not draw another hand?

**Clever**  
**Caring**  
**Fun**

**Five Finger Breathing**  
Deep breathing is a great way to relax. Deep breathing is a handy little exercise that you can use anytime, anywhere!

If you are starting to feel a little anxious as something is approaching, or you are heading for a full on panic, take a minute, breathe, and give this a go!

1. Stretch one hand out so you have space between your fingers.
2. Hold up your index finger from your other hand.
3. Start at the bottom of your thumb - use your index finger to trace up your thumb as you slowly breathe in through your mouth.
4. When you get to the top of your thumb, slowly breathe out through your nose as you trace down the other side.
5. Repeat all your fingers until you've traced your whole hand!

Brought to you by **Chat Sat**

### Safari Adventure

Explore nature with our WILD boardgame! You will need a dice and a small item for each player to move across the board!

1. Each player must take it in turns to roll the dice and move through the desert, jungle and mountains!
2. Follow the instructions in each circle, as you encounter different wildlife! If you have limited mobility can you make lots of noises to show which animal you are?
3. If you land on a compass, pick an animal for the whole group to act like!
4. The first person to reach FINISH wins!

**START**

You begin your trek in the desert! Can you crawl like a tortoise?

You see a snake! Can you slither and hiss like they do?

There's something coming! Quick - curl up in a ball like an armadillo!

You've entered the jungle! Can you leap like a lemur?

You see an ostrich running! Can you keep up?

OH NO! A scorpion blocks your path! Go back to the start!

OH NO! You see a bear ahead, go back 3 spaces!

Now you've escaped the bear, can you walk like one?

Phew, you've almost made it! Now just hop like a mountain hare over the finish line!

**FINISH**

**WOW!** A herd of forest elephants! Stomp and wave your trunk to say hello!

Tiger's move with great precision! Try crawling along silently and carefully!

Did you know sloths are great swimmers? Show how you think they'd swim!

You've found a rare orangutan! Can you swing through the trees with them?

OH NO! You see an angry crocodile! Move back 2 spaces!

You see a herd of mountain goats! Can you jump around like them?

You've made it to the mountain! Can you soar like an eagle?

### Feed the Birds

Can you believe that around 15 BILLION plastic bottles are used in the UK each year? Plus, it can take over 450 years for a plastic bottle to decompose! And whilst some get recycled, many end up in the ocean or in nature and can be harmful to wildlife!

Now that you've had a go at Vird Yaga, why not try creating a bird feeder using an empty plastic bottle if you don't have old spoons you're fancy aren't using anymore, any other spoon or take-away cutlery. Don't forget to share your pictures with us @EssexActive.

Head to [encounteredu.com/steam-activities](https://encounteredu.com/steam-activities) to follow along step by step with Charlotte the Seed Champion!

1. Draw a circle the size of the spoon on one side, then a circle the size of a coin opposite. Make sure the bottoms line up.
2. Pinch the bottle so you can carefully cut out the holes where you've drawn circles. Ask an adult for help with this part!
3. You can repeat the process further up the bottle if you have two spoons. Then slot the spoons into place, as shown here.
4. Put a plate or newspaper down to avoid mess and carefully fill the bottle with bird seed. Be sure to clean up any that spill.
5. Screw the lid back on and tie some string twice around the ridge. Make sure it's tight so it can hold the weight.
6. Hang your bird feeder somewhere they will see it, and enjoy watching the birds come to visit! Fill your feeder as needed.

### Design a Garden

Use the space below to design a garden that animals would love...

Whether you have a garden already, or would love to have one in the future, we bet you can already think of lots of ways to encourage wildlife to visit! Maybe there would be lots of flowers and bushes, or perhaps a bird bath or vegetable patch!

**More ways to make your garden into a wildlife paradise...**

**Create a hedgehog shelter**  
They love messy corners, dry leaves and log piles.

**Build a bee hotel**  
Ask an adult if you could build one together!

Visit the **Explore Essex** blog to find out:

- How to make your garden hedgehog friendly
- How to make a bee hotel
- How to build a bird house



# Family support

---

Alongside the opportunity for children to make friends, have fun and experience new things, we are also asking providers to support families!

Every Essex ActivAte club provider has been asked to consider how they can offer advice, guidance and support to parents/carers of the children attending the weekly activities. Providers have also been asked to be creative and look at ways to offer family engagement and activity sessions as part of ActivAte 'Family Hour'.

In addition to this we are working with the following providers to support and signpost the whole family:

- ***Adult Community Learning***
- ***Essex Libraries***
- ***Community 360 – Essex Family support***
- ***Foodbanks and food pantries***
- ***Essex Child and Family Well-being service***

Plus, all families will receive a family support flyer alongside their child's activity pack, offering ideas for free fun days out, signposting to the new Active Essex Activity Finder for inspiration, and running two exciting competitions with prizes to help keep youngsters entertained and provide fun days out for all the family!





# Ensuring every club is inclusive

---

All clubs are inclusive, with a trained SEND ambassador and Mental Wellbeing ambassador at every club. Active Essex and Essex County Council also recognise the importance of offering specialist hubs for children who require this support, and have a number of SEND and Mental Wellbeing Hubs available in each district. These exciting activities will include:

- Buffy's Play Bus will be traveling around the county with lots of equipment to provide fun-filled sessions for children with SEND.
- The Essex Wildlife Trust will be running sessions to encourage children to use their senses to connect with nature.
- Essex Education Music Hub are offering unique music based enrichment throughout the county, as well as running a SEND Hub in Epping Forest District.
- Roots to Wellbeing will be offering Mental Wellbeing and SEND sessions in green spaces – offering children the opportunity to explore nature.
- Some clubs will feature the chance for children to make exciting crafts, including bath bombs, soap, baking and spray paint art!

