



BREAKFAST AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

# Coombe Connections Club

## Frequently Asked Questions

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## 1. About Connections

### Tell me about Connections

Connections is open every day that school is open to pupils. Bookings are taken for complete half terms and payment is required in advance of each half term. Connections is not suitable for those with varying requirements from week to week. We can accommodate your regular booking of any permutation of Breakfast and/or After School Club sessions, subject to availability. Children are given breakfast in the mornings and a light snack in the afternoons. We offer a play based environment where children have access to a range of resources that support and enhance their learning and social skills. Our playworkers have Disclosure and Barring Service clearance and appropriate qualifications for working with children.

### What times does the club operate?

Breakfast Club - 7.45am to 8.45am. After School Club - 3.00pm to 6.00pm. You may drop off your child later than 7.45am and you may collect earlier than 6.00pm if you wish.

### What are your prices?

Breakfast Club £7.00 (£8.00 from 01/09/24), After School Club £16.00 (£17.50 from 01/09/24) - these are our regular charges per session when the complete half term is booked and paid in advance. Other charges may apply (see under 'Charges')

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## 2. Booking

### How do I book?

If you wish to request a new booking, please submit a Booking Request Form by the published deadline – go to the 'Booking and Payment' section on our webpage.

If you have a booking already, we will automatically roll it over to the next half term. You do not need to submit another booking form.

### Do I need to re-book each half term?

No. Your existing booking will be rolled over automatically to each subsequent half term. If you wish to cancel or make changes, you need to contact us before the published deadline – see the Booking and Payment section of our webpage.

### Can I book different sessions from week to week?

No. Bookings are taken for the same weekly sessions for the complete half term.

### Can I make a temporary booking?

Unfortunately we are unable to accommodate Ad Hoc bookings for occasional sessions. If you know in advance that you'll need a temporary childcare arrangement, it may be worth considering a booking for one whole half term instead (subject to availability).

### Can my child start in the middle of a half term?

Yes, if we have availability. Please contact us by email to make your initial enquiry.

### **Can I book my other children into Connections?**

Connections Club is open only to children attending Coombe Hill Infants' School or Coombe Hill Junior School.

### **Can you reserve a place for my child for the future?**

We cannot hold unpaid places for future half terms. We will try to give you an indication of the likelihood of future availability but we can give no guarantees.

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## **3. Charges**

### **What are all the Connections charges?**

Our charges:-

Breakfast Club £7.00 (£8.00 from 01/09/24), After School Club £16.00 (£17.50 from 01/09/24) – these are the price per session when booked and paid for the half term in advance

Administration charge:- £25 (for changes or new bookings agreed after the published deadline)

Late Collection charge:- £13 (£14.50 from 01/09/24) per 15 minutes late and/or part of 15 minutes late (for collection of children from After School Club later than 6.00pm)

Unexpected attendance:- Breakfast Club £18.00 (£20.00 from 01/09/24), After School Club £41.00 (£44.00 from 01/09/24). Children are accepted into Connections without advance booking only in very exceptional circumstances.

We do not offer Ad Hoc booking

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## **4. Payment**

### **How do I know when to pay?**

Our dates and deadlines are published in the Booking and Payment section on our webpage. We also send out emails to all Connections parents to advise when fees have been applied to ParentPay and the payment deadlines.

### **How do I know what I need to pay?**

A negative red 'Balance' figure shown against your Connections payment item(s) in ParentPay is the amount you need to pay. If the balance figure is positive, in blue, you have credit on that item and no payment is required.

There is more on 'understanding Connections charges on ParentPay' on our webpage.

### **What type of payments do you accept?**

We accept payment by ParentPay made through your ParentPay account. We also accept Childcare Vouchers and HMRC Tax Free Childcare – you need to log into your voucher or HMRC account to instruct the correct amount to pay to us. You will find the reference you need for Connections Club in our 'Voucher Company References' section on our webpage. We also accept college bursary funding – please contact us in advance if you wish to pay by this method.

## **Why is my recent voucher or HMRC payment not reflected in my ParentPay Connections items balances?**

It takes a few days for your voucher or HMRC payment to reach our bank; then another few days for us to manually update your ParentPay account. Please check your ParentPay balances again in a few days' time. If your recent voucher or HMRC payment still isn't showing, please contact us.

## **Can I pay in instalments?**

No. Our terms and conditions state that full payment is required in advance. It is in your interest to contact us as soon as possible if you anticipate you won't be able to pay in full by the payment deadline.

## **Can I pay for a longer period in one go?**

No. Our experience tells us that parents' needs can change unexpectedly and that Connections Club can close unexpectedly (eg. Government Covid-19 directives). Therefore we strongly discourage payments for a greater period than one half term at a time.

In particular, we very strongly recommend that you do not overpay in vouchers or HMRC Tax Free Childcare since refunds of these payments are strictly forbidden by HMRC.

## **What if I pay late?**

Late payments may forfeit your booking. If you believe you may have a problem in making your payment on time, it is in your interest to contact us as soon as possible.

## **What if I can't pay?**

You must contact us as soon as possible.

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## **5. Discount and Refunds**

### **Do you offer sibling discount?**

Unfortunately our costs are the same for each individual child so we are unable to offer sibling discount.

### **Do you offer refunds if my child misses a session?**

No. Missed sessions are not refunded.

In extremely exceptional circumstances we will credit your ParentPay account as follows:-

We will credit on ParentPay, 50% of the value of your child's missed sessions if he/she is part of a bubble that has been informed by Coombe Hill staff it is required to isolate away from school as a Covid-19 precaution. If Connections Club or school closes due to an emergency or a Government directive we will credit on ParentPay, 100% of the value of your child's missed sessions.

Credit is not offered on days of staff industrial action when Connections Club is running as normal.

Credit may be used towards future Connections fees. Refunds may be offered only if credit has been unused and your child leaves their Coombe Hill school.

### **Do you offer discount if my child is on a school trip?**

Yes, for residential trips. Charges for your booked sessions on the trip dates will be reduced by 50%.

### **Are fees reduced if my child attends only part of a session?**

No. Each session fee is fixed regardless of how long your child attends on the day.

### **Are fees reduced if my child attends an activity club at school before coming to Connections?**

No. Each session fee is fixed regardless of how long your child attends on the day.

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## **6. Changing or Cancelling My Booking**

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

Email us with your wishes before the deadline published in our Booking and Payment document on our webpage. Changes requested after the deadline will incur our £25 Administration Charge. All requests for changes are subject to availability.

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

Email us before the deadline published in our Booking and Payment document on our webpage. The deadline is approximately 3 weeks before the end of the preceding half term. Cancellations notified after the deadline will incur your usual half termly fees.

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## **7. My Child's Absence**

### **Do I need to let you know if my child is not going to attend the booked session?**

Yes, do please phone or text us (07745 046121) if your child is leaving after school instead of attending After School Club. You don't need to let us know if your child will not be attending Breakfast Club. If your child will be absent from both school and Connections, you need to inform the school office via the usual method.

### **Do you offer refunds if my child misses a session?**

No. Missed sessions are not refunded except in extremely exceptional circumstances. Please see under '5. Discounts and Refunds'

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## **8. Dropping off and collecting my child**

### **Can I drop off my child later than 7.45am or pick up before 6.00pm?**

Yes you can. But do bear in mind that your child may miss food times if you drop off late or pick up early.

## Where do I drop off / collect my child?

**Infants' School children** - the door to Connections is at the back of the Infants' School. In the mornings, escort your child through the blue metal gate next to the Infants' school main entrance, round the outside of the Infants' School building to the back; the Connections door is up the steps next to Bee Class. Collect your child from the same location. The code for the gate will be supplied to you in your booking confirmation email. The gate code is designed to work only at certain times; in the mornings from 07.45 to 08.30 and in the afternoons from 15.40 to 18.00.

**Junior School children** – escort your child to the Junior School main school entrance to drop off your child in the mornings. Ring the Connections bell once and a member of Connections staff will come to receive your child. In the afternoons, wait at the same location and phone 07745 046125 and your child will be brought out to you.

## I don't know the gate code

The code is included in our booking confirmation email to you. If you can't find the email, please call us when you arrive, on 07745 046121.

## Do I have to accompany my child to and from Connections?

Yes, children may not arrive at Breakfast Club or leave After School Club unaccompanied, except for Y5 and Y6 children who are allowed to arrive or leave unaccompanied if you have given your permission in writing in advance.

## How do children transfer between school and Connections?

In the mornings, Connections Infants' School children with their belongings (coat and bags) are escorted by Connections staff from Breakfast Club to their classroom. Junior School children are assisted in gathering up their things in Connections and they make their own way with their things to their classroom, internally through the school building.

In the afternoons, Infants' School children attending Connections are assisted by the classroom staff in gathering up their belongings (coats and bags) and are collected by Connections staff who escort them with their things, to the Connections area. Junior School children are responsible for collecting up their own belongings and making their way internally through the school building to the Connections area. All children are accounted for in the Connections registers – therefore if your child is not attending on a booked day, it is imperative you let Connections know in advance.

## What if my child is attending an activity before Connections After School Club?

Children normally join their booked Connections After School Club session at the end of the school day. Once a child has been dismissed to their parent's / carer's charge, there is no admittance or re-admittance to that day's Connections session.

However, it may be possible for children to join their booked Connections session later than the end of the school day if they have remained in the care of school personnel, for example when attending:-

- an activity club run by school staff
- an activity run by an external provider, organised by school
- an event organised by school
- an event organised by the Parent Teacher Association

Every event brings its own logistical challenges and will be assessed individually. Whilst we will endeavour to make it clear at the time of booking a club/activity whether it is possible for your child to join

Connections later than normal, we do recommend you contact the Connections Manager for confirmation before you book.

**For those attending a regular club:-**

Connections staff will have the list of club attendees. Infants' children, with their belongings, are escorted from their classroom by classroom staff to the activity club location, then later from the club location, with belongings, to Connections by Connections staff. Junior School children make their own way with their belongings, to each location when prompted.

Some of Connections light snack of the day will be reserved for children arriving late to Connections After School Club from activity clubs.

**Do I need to let you know if someone else is collecting my child?**

Please do tell us in advance but also remember we won't release a child to an unknown adult unless he/she can give us the password you supplied on your Booking Request Form regardless of whether you have told us in advance.

**My child has an appointment. Can he/she leave and return to After School Club?**

No. Once your child has been dismissed from Connections to their parent/carer, there is no return to the session.

**Can I park in the school car park?**

You may use the school car park only at certain times, otherwise park in a side road near school.

You may drive into our car park and pull-up temporarily in the school 'horseshoe' (the school drive-through area) only if it's before 8.00am. Do not park in the marked bays.

You may drive into our car park if you arrive to collect after 4.45pm. Park only in a marked bay.

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## 9. What's goes on in the club?

**What activities do you offer?**

We plan activities around the children's interests, and the weather! We provide a choice of activities such as crafts, board games, floor games, small world play and construction. Weather permitting, we encourage all the children to be outside using as much of the space as we can (ie the Infants' playground, the MUGA, field and Junior playground and log cabin area.) We organise ball games, Space Hoppers, Swing Ball, den building etc. The children have access to quiet areas both inside and out for quiet reading and games as well as physical activities. We have short ICT sessions, occasional films, dancing, yoga, sewing, cooking and competitions. We offer a session with 'Love the Ball' sports coaches on one day per week.

**Can my child choose his/her activity?**

Yes, within reason! Children are encouraged to 'choose it, use it, put it away'. We usually offer an adult led activity each afternoon and put out a choice of resources for free play but once the children get used to us and the range of resources available they happily choose their own.

**Do children play outside?**

Yes, if weather and daylight permit.



### **Can my Infants' School child and my Junior School child be together?**

No. Children in years 3,4,5,6 use the Junior school premises. Reception and Year 1 and Year 2 children use the Infants' school.

### **What food do you offer?**

Fresh water and fruit/vegetables are available at both morning and afternoon sessions. Breakfast is usually a selection of cereal/yoghurt/toast/pancakes/brioche/croissants with jam/honey/marmite.

As soon as the children arrive in the afternoon, a light snack is served, such as sandwiches/soup/beans on toast/pasta/jacket potato/wraps. Fillings are a choice of cheese/tuna/marmite. This is not intended to be the childrens' main meal; it's just something to keep them going until they get home.

If your child is attending a school activity club and arriving into Connections later, some of the day's light snack will be reserved for them.

Late drop-off / early collection – if you drop off significantly later than 07.45 or collect early from After School Club, your child may miss snack time. Connections staff will do their best to make sure your child gets something to eat but the food choices may be limited.

### **Is there a choice of food?**

The snack choice is rotated on different days each week. If any child does not like the snack choice of the day, we try to offer an alternative within reason.

### **My child has a food allergy. How do you know and cater for this?**

We refer to the information you have supplied to the school office. We currently cater for lactose free and gluten free diets. We are happy to work with you to provide the appropriate food for your child.

### **Can my child bring his/her own snack?**

No. Only food provided by Connections is permitted.

### **What's the ratio of staff to children?**

We aim for a ratio of 1:10

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## **10. Behaviour**

### **Children's Behaviour**

#### **What is the Connections children's behaviour policy?**

The club promotes an atmosphere of care, consideration and respect for everyone attending. If a child is violent, or if their behaviour poses an immediate danger to themselves or others, we will require them to be collected from the club straightaway. In exceptional circumstances, and only when all other attempts at behaviour management have failed, we reserve the right to permanently exclude a child from the club. The notice period will be determined on an individual basis.

### **Adult's Behaviour**

## **What is the Connections adult's behaviour policy?**

The club promotes an atmosphere of care, consideration and respect for everyone attending. We will not tolerate, from any person (whether a parent, carer or visitor) bullying, aggressive, confrontational or threatening behaviour or behaviour intended to result in conflict towards any member of staff or child within the club. We reserve the right to ban from our premises anyone exhibiting inappropriate behaviour.

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## **11. Contact Us**

If you haven't found the answer to your question, you can contact us

Email: [connectionsclub@chi.rbksch.org](mailto:connectionsclub@chi.rbksch.org)

Phone: 07745 046121 (this number is answered only when the club is open. Please leave a message if outside these hours)