

Connections News Update, 02 November 2020

Dear
parents,

We appreciate that many parents' work arrangements and therefore childcare requirements may have changed at short notice as a result of the lockdown commencing on 05/11/20.

We have put in place temporary special terms and conditions for changes to your Connections booking should you require them.

Temporary terms and conditions for Autumn term 2020 second half:-

- These temporary terms and conditions relate to requests for changes to this current half term and will be in place right up to the end of the half term, 18/12/20.
- Please contact us via email at connectionsclub@chi.rbksch.org to make your request.
- Under these terms and conditions, the first request for changes will not incur our usual £25 administration fee. Any subsequent requests for changes will be charged £25.
- We require a minimum notice period of 5 school days before your changes will be in place. Please wait for our confirmation email before you make your plans.
- Requests for additional sessions will be subject to our availability within your child's bubble.
- If you wish to reduce or cancel your booking, the full value of your paid cancelled sessions will be held as credit on ParentPay for use towards a future Connections booking. This applies to every method of payment we have received ie. ParentPay, childcare voucher, HMRC TFC. At this stage we are not offering to refund ParentPay payments. Please be aware that HMRC's strict rules prohibit any refunds on payments made via childcare voucher or HMRC Tax Free Childcare.
- We have moved the deadline for new bookings, requests for changes and cancellations relating to the first half of the Spring term 2021 a week later than our usual scheduled date - the deadline is now 30/11/20 which is three weeks prior to the end of this current half term. If you wish to request changes for Spring 1 2021 after 30/11/20, our usual £25 administration fee will apply.

We will of course try to be as accommodating as we possibly can, but we do kindly remind parents that as always, we are obliged to comply with government guidelines and adhere to safe and viable ratios of staff:children. Working in bubbles puts extra pressure on our staffing levels and we cannot always be as flexible as we would wish. We appreciate your understanding as we all find a way to work through the requirements.

Should the Covid-19 situation and government guidance change again, our plans will be amended as appropriate.

If you have any queries, please email us at connectionsclub@chi.rbksch.org

Best wishes

Connections Team

Connections News Update, July 2020

Dear
parents,

Thank you to those who responded to our Connections questionnaire. We have taken your responses and comments on board and we are forming plans for re-opening Connections in the autumn in line with government guidance.

To begin with in September, we will not be able to offer the same Connections provision as before lockdown. The details below outline our current intention for September, subject to change dependent upon Covid-19 developments.

Our booked Connections Breakfast and After School Club sessions are planned to restart on 21/09/20. All parents wishing to book sessions are required to submit a Booking Request Form whether an existing customer or new.

We are also aiming to provide After School Club sessions for existing Connections pupils in the first full two weeks of term.

First Two Weeks of Term – After School Club for Existing Connections Pupils only

We plan to run After School Club only during the first full two weeks of the Autumn term. Children who were booked into After School Club for the first half of the Summer term 2020 may attend from 07/09/20 to 18/09/20. A Booking Request Form is not required for these two weeks - we will assume for now that your requirements are the same as they were in Summer 1 though you may make changes to these first two weeks at short notice without penalty. These sessions will be charged at our normal rate per session of £14 and charges will be added to your ParentPay account retrospectively. THIS FLEXIBILITY IS OFFERED FOR THE FIRST TWO WEEKS ONLY. Unfortunately we are not able to offer Breakfast Club in these two weeks nor are we able to offer After School Club places to additional children who were not booked into Connections for Summer 1 2020.

ALL PARENTS, WHETHER EXISTING CUSTOMERS OR NEW WILL BE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT A BOOKING REQUEST FORM FOR THE REMAINING HALF TERM.

Our usual terms and conditions will apply from 21/09/20.

Connections Plans for the first half of the Autumn term 2020 from 21/09/20

Booked Breakfast and After School sessions will start on 21/09/20. Breakfast and After School Club will be restricted in the number of children we can accommodate and booking of Ad Hoc sessions will not be offered. Children will be accommodated in appropriate 'bubbles' which means siblings may be separated. Each child attending will receive breakfast (Breakfast Club) or a pre-packed light snack (After School Club) and some communal activities will not be offered.

Booking for the first half of the Autumn term 2020

Parents of **all children** wishing to attend Connections from 21/09/20, will be required to submit a fresh Booking Request Form, one per child, **whether a previous customer or new**. The electronic Booking Request Form will be available on both schools' Connections websites on 02/09/20 with a closing date of 08/09/20 and payment due by 15/09/20. Requests will be accommodated subject to availability within the appropriate bubble and in the following priority:-

1. Existing Connections customers who were booked for Summer 1 2020 (whether paid or not) and their siblings (including siblings who are starting school in September 2020)
2. Other booking requests, to be considered in order of our receipt of the Booking Request Form.

Please note – keeping children in bubbles creates additional restrictions on whether we can accommodate your request. For example, if you submit requests for siblings, we may have space for only one child, in which case we will contact you as to how you wish to proceed.

Successful bookings will be rolled over to subsequent half terms as per our terms and conditions.

Payment

Full payment details will be included with your booking confirmation. Payment will continue to be via ParentPay, Childcare Vouchers and HMRC Tax Free Childcare. We will apply any credit you have with us from paid cancelled sessions from Spring 2 2020 and Summer 1 2020 to your ParentPay Parent Account. Breakfast Club is £6 and After School Club is £14 per session, with the half term from 21/09/20 to 22/10/20 to be paid in advance. The way your charges appear in your ParentPay account will look slightly different but, as before, children may not attend booked Connections sessions unless payment is cleared in advance.

Of course, should the Covid-19 situation and government guidance change between now and September, our plans will be amended as appropriate.

The health and safety of your children is paramount. The current situation does not allow us to offer Connections as we would wish, but we will endeavour to accommodate your requests if we can, within our capabilities and we will adjust our provision as soon as government guidance allows.

If you have any queries, please email us at connectionsclub@chi.rbksch.org

Best wishes

Connections Team

Connections News Update - May 2020

Dear
Parents,

We do hope you and your families are keeping well.

The current situation continues to bring uncertainty to us all which makes it impossible to ascertain and plan provision for childcare needs in the coming months.

Therefore, until some sort of normality resumes in school we are not accepting new bookings or requests for amendments to existing bookings.

Once Connections Club is in a position to re-open, we will endeavour to let you know by email and via this webpage. We strongly recommend that you keep checking this webpage from time to time for updates.

Be assured we will do our best to accommodate your childcare needs within our capacity.

Our previous news update below contains information on how we are dealing with your payments already received for sessions now cancelled.

If you have any queries, please email us at connectionsclub@chi.rbksch.org

Best wishes

Connections Team

Coombe Connections News Update - March 2020

Connections Parents

We do hope you are all keeping well and are following the Government's guidelines.

In these unprecedented times, not surprisingly, we have no established protocol to deal with the situation in which we find ourselves.

However we now have a plan for crediting or refunding paid cancelled Connections sessions as follows:-

We will refund/credit cancelled Connections sessions for the two remaining weeks of the second half of the Spring term, from Monday 23/03/20 to Friday 03/04/20. If you had made payment towards next half term, the first half of the summer 2020, we will refund/credit your payment in the same way – see below

Refunds and credit will be processed as follows:-

- **If you paid by ParentPay**, Connections will carry forward the full value of your paid cancelled sessions as credit towards future Connections sessions **unless you contact us to request a refund**. Refunds will be via ParentPay to your original payment method. If you wish to request a refund, please contact us via this email address: connectionsclub@chi.rbksch.org giving us as much detail as you can so that we can identify the correct payment and amount.
- **If you paid by HMRC Tax Free Childcare, or by a Childcare Voucher scheme**, whether run by an external company or in-house, Connections will carry forward the full value of your paid cancelled sessions as credit towards future Connections sessions. For tax reasons, it is not possible to return your HMRC TFC or Vouchers directly to you as a refund.

The only exception to this will apply to children not returning to Connections, in which case we will offer to investigate whether we can make a return payment to your HMRC or Voucher account or we will apply your credit to a family sibling. Please note – we will not start to make these enquiries until we know the date we are to re-open and we can 100% establish the children who will not be returning to Connections – so please do not ask us to investigate a return payment until timescales become apparent.

If you are a keyworker and your child is still attending school and is staying for Connections After School sessions during the period of closure, there will be a small daily charge to be paid. Details will follow later and charges will be added to ParentPay or will be off-set against your Connections credit.

A reminder - We advise that you do NOT directly approach your credit card company or bank, under their guarantee, for a refund of your ParentPay payment – there is a £25 fee for doing this which will ultimately be charged to you.

Please be assured that we will process your credit or refund and that you will get the full value of your paid cancelled sessions as described above. What we don't know is

how quickly it will be possible to action a refund request – ParentPay is inundated with requests currently and this is new territory to us all.

If you have any concerns or questions, please don't hesitate to contact us via email at connectionsclub@chi.rbksch.org

Thank you

Connections Team
