



# Parent & Carer Welcome Pack

## Our Mission Statement:

'Our Mission at The Gap Club Ltd is to provide high quality, innovative out of school childcare with a difference. We aim to bridge the 'Gap' between work and play, whilst providing 'Peace of Mind For You' and 'Fun for your Child'.

We utilise contemporary, traditional and creative play/learning method's to expand your child's opportunities for growth and personal success.

Our core values are based on open and honest communication, personalised childcare, integrity in our work and above all individual respect for all members of The Gap Club Ltd and the wider community.

Our aim at The Gap Club is to create a **stimulating** and **engaging** environment where children have the **freedom** to explore through **creativity, imagination** and **play**.



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## **1. Introduction & Welcome**

Dear Parents & Carers,

Thank you for your interest in The Gap Club Ltd. The Gap Club are a team of qualified professional people who specialise in providing 'outstanding' childcare for children, ages 3 years and upwards.

***'It is with our combined childcare knowledge, experience and our background of working in customer focussed environments, that we have been able to design the very best quality 'out of school care' service, one which we are confident will exceed your childcare needs and provide you with the PEACE OF MIND that busy/working parents need.'***

All new parents are able to utilise our no obligation 'Parent Preview' visit which provides you with the opportunity to visit the setting, familiarise yourself with the routine/arrangements, ask any questions you may have and meet the staff and children. You are then able to arrange a 'Taster Day' if you wish, this session enables your child/children to trial a typical 'Gap Club' day in readiness for when you need the childcare to take place – this is a very important part of the transition process for children to feel safe and prepared in a new setting, these are particularly useful for children within the EYFS. Please contact your setting by phone or email to arrange these.

The Gap Club offers an extensive and varied play programme through our Breakfast, After School, Holiday and Sports Clubs. Our staff are dedicated to children's enjoyment and development of play, learning and sports.

### **What Happens Next?**

If you wish to register with The Gap Club Ltd please visit our website, [www.thegapclub.com](http://www.thegapclub.com). You will be asked to provide all pertinent information to the care of your child before being able to request the sessions you require. If you are having difficulties with the bookings process, please reach out to the Head Office team by phone at 07854 078728 or email at [bookings@thegapclub.com](mailto:bookings@thegapclub.com).

## **2. Inclusion & Accessibility**

At The Gap Club we are committed to ensuring that all of the children that attend our settings are fully involved with all aspects of the session, including the planning, snack choices and the play environment itself. Wherever possible the activities and experiences will be adapted so that all children can participate regardless of their level of ability and/or any additional needs they may have. All of our provisions are based at schools, so are therefore fully accessible to those with disabilities.

We have a huge range of resources and provide suitable activities that cater for varying interests and developmental needs that meet the multi-cultural aspects of our community. Where possible we will make adjustments to support individual needs through adapting activities, providing a personalised routine, offering support tools/strategies and with 1-2-1 support if essential. This will be implemented after consultation with the Primary Provider and/or the Early Years/Inclusion team at the Local Authority.

All literature/Information Packs regarding The Gap Club are available upon request in other formats and are also widely advertised within the community to ensure that as many parents as possible have access to information about our services.

## **3. Working in Partnership with Parents**

At The Gap Club we believe Parent Partnerships are essential to enable positive relations and continuity of care for children, therefore we will ensure we meet the following expectations:

### **The Gap Club Charter to Parents - Our Pledge**

- We welcome and encourage honest and open communication relating to all aspects of The Gap Club including child related matters.
- We encourage you to be pro-active in settling in your child at the club, this includes the use of our parent preview and taster days.
- Our staff will regularly discuss your child's progress with respect to friendships, overall happiness, achievements, experiences and involvement in play activities with you. We will take on board your comments and consult with you so that we can continue to meet both yours and your child's expectations.



- Our ethos of learning through play and our ability to create a stimulating environment will encourage your child to thrive and express themselves.
- Our Sports provisions are centred around the needs of the children and benefit from a stimulating and challenging environment. We provide several sports activities that promote mind, body and soul. Our qualified team of sports coaches work with children to develop new skills and gain confidence in a healthier, active lifestyle.
- Your child will be provided with a healthy **snack** and drink whilst at the setting, unless otherwise stated. (All Holiday and Sports Clubs require parents to provide their child with a **nut-free** packed lunch).
- We will inform you as soon as possible if your child is involved in an incident/accident, and you will be provided with all relevant documentation to support these events.
- The Gap Club aims to achieve high standards in all areas including relationships with parents. We will work in partnership with you and keep you informed about all aspects of the club from activities, outings, menus, prices, special events and celebrations via our Facebook and Twitter pages, notice/parent boards and newsletters.
- We will be pro-active in the use, evaluation and delivery of findings from customer satisfaction questionnaires to ensure we continue to deliver a high-quality childcare provision.
- We shall ensure that you are confident in our complaints policy (on display) and feel that you can approach us at any time to resolve matters that may be troubling you.
- The Gap Club will ensure that we follow through on our Terms and Conditions so that parents feel secure about our beliefs and ethos and there is no ambiguity in our terms of reference. We will keep you informed about The Gap Club services and any changes or developments that may occur including our policies and procedures and/or our Terms and Conditions.
- We will continually review and evaluate our practices and work hard towards delivering consistent and fair processes in partnership with you regarding behaviour, as highlighted in the Behaviour Agreement.
- The Gap Club will always operate from a goodwill perspective, our intention is to support and aid you in your work life balance. We will discuss group social care matters with you to ensure your child's individual needs are always met and the group care needs of the children at the club are not compromised.
- The Gap Club will ensure that we respect the needs and identity of all children and their families at all times. The club's anti-discriminatory and anti-bias practices underpin all areas to ensure equality of opportunity for all.
- We will abide by all legal requirements including safer recruitment, DBS checks, public liability insurance, Ofsted requirements and early year's protocols to ensure a safe and secure environment at The Gap Club.
- We will ensure effective staff development and training is provided to enhance the environment and provide reassurance to all stakeholders regarding the level of quality care The Gap Club provides.

#### **4. Playwork & Play**

At The Gap Club we facilitate play through the 'Playwork Principles'.

The Playwork Principles maintain the professional and ethical framework for Playwork. They describe what is unique about play and Playwork and provide perspective for working with children and young people. They are based on the recognition that children and young people's capacity for positive development will be enhanced if given access to the broadest range of environments and play opportunities.

We enable and adapt our play environments to ensure children and young people have a wide range of different, challenging and exciting experiences available to them.

#### **Playwork Principles**

1. All children and young people need to play. The impulse to play is innate. Play is a biological, psychological and social necessity, and is fundamental to the healthy development and well-being of individuals and communities.
2. Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children and young people determine and control the content and intent of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way for their own reasons.
3. The prime focus and essence of playwork is to support and facilitate the play process and this should inform the development of play policy, strategy, training and education.
4. For playworkers, the play process takes precedence and playworkers act as advocates for play when engaging with adult led agendas.



5. The role of the playworker is to support all children and young people in the creation of a space in which they can play.
6. The playworker's response to children and young people playing is based on a sound up to date knowledge of the play process, and reflective practice.
7. Playworkers recognise their own impact on the play space and also the impact of children and young people's play on the playworker.
8. Playworkers choose an intervention style that enables children and young people to extend their play. All playworker intervention must balance risk with the developmental benefit and well-being of children.

## **5. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework within The Gap Club**

At The Gap Club we meet the EYFS framework through the following avenues:

- **Primary Provider Links**
- **Key Person's at The Gap Club**

A key person is responsible for a small number of children that are in the EYFS age group. You will be informed who your child's key person is once your child/children have had an opportunity to settle in and initiate bonds with the staff and a natural candidate has been identified.

### **The Key Person's role is:**

- This person is someone whom the child has built a connection with and is your primary contact for feedback.
- To ensure that the health & well-being of the child is paramount and that the child's individual care and developmental needs were met.

### **EYFS Planning & the Play Environment**

All of the play opportunities provided at The Gap Club arise from planning which has been devised through consultations, inclusion and discussions with the children, staff and parents. Children are particularly involved in providing feedback on previous activities and providing future ideas for themes and activities for upcoming Holiday Clubs. Our planning is adaptable and child-centred and the children have the flexibility to choose what they would like to do during the session, and also to adapt or change the environment to cater for spontaneous activities and ideas that they have during the day.

### **Transitions/Settling In**

We ask parents to fill out a My Child form before their child joins our setting so that we can get to know your child's likes and dislikes in advance. This provides us with a starting point on their interests and needs and supports us in settling them into the setting. An All About Me form will be filled in with the child within the first week so that they can tell us about themselves as well. After a few weeks we will allocate a member of staff to be the child's key person. This member of staff is then responsible for identifying, supporting and reviewing the child's needs and the prime liaison with you.

## **6. Admissions**

We aim to ensure that anyone in our community has access to our settings through open, fair and clearly communicated procedures in line with the club's policy and procedures, in particular the Admissions and Equal Opportunity Policies.

- We accept children in accordance with our OFSTED registration. Children from the age of 3 years upwards can attend The Gap Club Ltd.
- Applications for admissions will be considered according to the number of places available. Full-time, part-time or ad-hoc places are allocated on a first come, first serve basis.
- A waiting list is in operation when applications for admissions exceed the number of places available and will be based on the following criteria:
  - Full time place
  - Siblings of those attending the club
  - Regular part time place
  - Length of time on waiting list
  - Ad-hoc or occasional places



## 7. Our Staff

At The Gap Club our ratios, staff training and qualifications are determined by the Statutory Framework of the EYFS.

Qualifications - As we provide group care, each setting has a Supervisor on site that holds a relevant qualification in Childcare or Playwork. Several other staff within the setting can also hold relevant qualifications.

Ratios - For children under 8 years of age, our staff are deployed on a 1:8 ratio and for any children over the age of 8, we have the flexibility of a 1:10 ratio. At the Gap Club we aim to stick to a 1:8 ratio throughout all age ranges to ensure quality and safety is maintained, however this is not a legal requirement.

Training - Regular staff receive 12 hour Paediatric First Aid Training, Level 2 Food Hygiene and Catering Training and an Introduction to Safeguarding. These three courses are deemed as essential training and are updated every three years. We can access training programmes through Surrey County Council and The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. These programmes consist of many training opportunities for our staff in several areas such as advanced safeguarding, risky play, various special educational needs, leadership and management, safer recruitment, behaviour management, EYFS and Play.

## 8. Our Settings

### Daily Routine

We have a wide range of activities available for children who attend The Gap Club, these include sports, arts and crafts, cooking, drama and age-appropriate toys and equipment.

We always encourage our children to follow play that is freely chosen by themselves. This then allows them to control the content of their play with their own ideas, interests and instincts. Our staff will support and facilitate the children's play in a safe environment using our sound and up to date knowledge of the play process and using reflective practice.

Please see the individual setting pages on our website for information on the specific daily routines of each club.

### Menu & Dietary Requirements

The Gap Club is committed to providing healthy, nutritious and tasty food and drinks for children during our sessions.

Children who eat a variety of healthy foods feel better and are able to enjoy a better quality of life; eating a balanced diet can also prevent serious health problems as children grow into adulthood, at The Gap Club we supply a daily balanced **snack** as well as fresh fruit & vegetables. Our children can self-select what they eat each day and children are encouraged to make healthy choices through praise, rewards & stickers.

Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating so we regularly consult the children about menu choices, and future options. Our weekly snack menus are displayed on 'Parent Notice' boards and/or Entrance Boards. Please note the snack we provide is only a 'snack' and should not be deemed as an evening meal.

The Supervisor and staff will make every effort to ensure that food and drink is safely prepared and sensitive to the dietary, religious and cultural requirements of all the children. To ensure children with serious allergies are safe in our settings, we operate a strict '**no-nut**' policy. We do not provide snacks containing nuts and do not allow them into our settings.

We ask parents to provide detailed information regarding their child's health and well-being through a series of questions in our registration form. It is important that we have this information in place before the child starts as further information may be needed to ensure that we can provide the best care. An additional form, a Healthcare Plan will need to be completed in relation to epi-pens, allergies, medication, additional needs and intimate care. Incomplete documentation and insufficient information will result in a delay to your child starting with us.

### Transportation & Collection Services

#### After School Clubs:

Children arrive at The Gap Club in various manners-



## Base school collection

- Younger children are either collected by a member of The Gap Club staff from their individual classrooms, or the classroom assistants will bring the children to The Gap Club area/room.
- In some settings where it is deemed safe to do so we encourage independence for the older children by allowing them to arrive at the setting on their own. We ensure that we have fully explained the responsibility/expectations of this process to them and have a stringent approach to efficient signing in procedures and are able to identify 'unaccounted for' children promptly and act accordingly.

## Collection Service

- For all other children that need transportation to The Gap Club we use the services of a local mini-bus company and/or taxi company. The vehicles are fully insured and fitted with seat belts, with all insurance/legal documentation including driver DBS checks held at each setting. A member of The Gap Club Staff is present during the transportation process and all identification details of the staff will be provided to the schools to ensure they are always aware of current Gap Club staff with permission to collect the children.
- In cases where a mini-bus is not viable senior members of staff are able to use their own vehicles to collect children. Each child is provided with a booster seat and The Gap Club ensures the correct insurance/legal documentation is in place for these occasions.

Please note that individual clubs may adapt these processes to compliment the specific needs of their children, please speak to the Supervisor directly for clarification on this.

## Trips & Visitors

Trips are an exciting addition to childcare provisions. All venues are risk assessed beforehand and child/adult ratios are reduced to 1:5 for trips. The mini bus operator/taxi company is fully insured, licensed and fitted with seat belts (documentation is available onsite). The logistics of organising trips is demanding and mainly driven by the expression of interest shown by the children/parents. We will attempt to support the costs of these trips as much as we can to enable these events. All external trips require an additional consent form which will be provided on each occasion.

Visitors to the settings may incur a cost but we will try to ensure these are kept to a minimum. We will keep you regularly informed about these events.

## 9. Setting Requirements

### Safeguarding

*Please see our 'Safeguarding Policy' provided for full details.*

### Policies & Procedures

If you require more information regarding our Policies & Procedures, these are available upon request, or to view in all settings. These include:

- Concerns, Complaints & Compliments Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Online Policy

### Belongings & Property

The Gap Club cannot be held responsible for loss or damage to children's property. Parents should ensure that children take care of their own personal belongings and have them labelled.



In the event of 'lost property' parents should consult the staff in case the property has been found, in most cases lost property is kept for 6 weeks and then distributed to local charities.

Unless it is requested or optional as part of an ongoing activity, we would appreciate your support in ensuring children do not bring personal, important or expensive items particularly mobile phones or any handheld computer games to the club.

*To comply with childcare sector safeguarding good practices it is important that electronic equipment/games consoles with inbuilt cameras are NOT used at the club.*

## Confidentiality

The Gap Club's dealings with children and families will sometimes bring the company into contact with confidential information.

Confidentiality will be respected through the following procedures:

- Parents will have ready access to the files and records of their own children but will not have access to information about any other child.
- Staff will not discuss individual children, other than for purposes of planning, with people other than the parents of the child.
- Information given to the club by the parent will not be passed on to adults without permission (see our 'Safeguarding Policy' for variations/exceptions to this).
- All records are stored safely and securely.
- Parents will be asked regularly (annually) if there are any changes to the information on the registration forms.
- All information exchanged by any person involved with the club must be kept strictly confidential.
- The Gap Club is registered under The Data Protection Act.

## Complaints

*Please see the 'Concerns, Complaints & Compliments Policy' provided and our Terms & Conditions for further instruction.*

## Correspondence

Please direct all general enquires to: [office@thegapclub.com](mailto:office@thegapclub.com) or 07854 078728. Our office landline is 01753 251077.

## Customer comments

The Gap Club is committed to providing the highest quality service for parents and children. We have a 'Praises and Grumbles' form at all settings, which are available to all parents should they wish to note any comments about the service we provide.

During the year The Gap Club will perform Customer Satisfaction Surveys, these surveys help us to ensure we are providing the best service possible and are giving our customers what they really want. You may be asked to fill out a questionnaire/survey and we would appreciate it if you could provide us with feedback.

