

# How to run a successful before or after school club



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# Why run a before or after school club?

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Many schools now offer all sorts of activities for their pupils either before lessons begin, during lunch breaks or at the end of the school day, often in response to the needs of parents whose working hours are longer than the school day.

Some schools are looking for new and fun ways to help children learn and to support them in their studies. Others are looking for ways to improve their pupils' physical and emotional health and to promote healthy eating.

There are many benefits of running before and after school clubs at your school:

***Additional income for your school*** – Providing before/after school clubs is a great way for schools to generate additional income.

***Hunger*** - Running before school clubs can have a real impact on reducing the numbers of children being hungry in the morning. Pupil hunger has been linked with poor concentration in class & behavioural issues. A good start to the morning and a healthy breakfast will have positive impacts on a pupils' ability to concentrate, pupils are better able to settle into class and are more ready to learn.

## Why run a before & after school club? (continued)

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**Nutrition** – Before & after school clubs can have an impact on pupils eating more healthily, provided that the food on offer is healthy and nutritious.

**Social development** - Eating breakfast together makes it easier for children to mix with other pupils who are not in the same classes as them and with children in different age groups.

It can encourage more reserved pupils to talk to each other and to talk to staff, building new relationships. Clubs run by school staff can also help staff and pupils get to know each other better and to be able to spot if a pupil is having difficulties in school or outside school. Socialising in school clubs gives them confidence to speak to people, they will ask for things and it gives them courage to speak up.

**Punctuality** - Breakfast clubs can help pupils' punctuality and are a way of encouraging pupils to get to school on time.

## Why run a before & after school club? (continued)

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Before and after school clubs can take many forms. They can be based in school or in local community settings, where they may support a small number of schools.

They can be run by school staff, including school caterers, or outside staff employed to manage both before and after-school provision, or volunteers who sometimes are pupils' parents. And of course, the children themselves can be encouraged to get involved and help run activities within the club.

It is this diversity of clubs which means they have considerable potential to help schools meet the different and specific needs of their pupils and working parents.

There is no 'one size fits all' model of running before and after school clubs. The delivery model you choose will need to reflect the space and facilities at your school. The environment should be safe and secure, with space organised to promote children's development.

However you choose to run your own before/after school childcare provision, it can be a smooth and simple process with the right tools and knowledge to hand. This guide will help you to focus on the key aspects that will make your club a success.

# where to start?

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It is a good idea to consult parents and pupils beforehand to gauge what the demand is for a before/after school club and how they would like it to operate. You could ask parents:

- ? What operating times would benefit them?
- ? How many days a week they would want their children to attend?
- ? Would they use it every day or just occasional days?
- ? How much would they be willing to pay to cover or contribute towards the costs?

## **Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery**

Do you know what other schools do? It's useful to find out what kind of clubs other schools operate and ask them what's worked and what's been a problem for them.

If you are a secondary school, find out what your feeder primary schools do. If they run a breakfast club, you may find that year 7 pupils are already open to the idea of eating breakfast in school and their parents may welcome one; they may even expect it.

# A whole school approach

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A key to success is to develop a whole school approach.

Think how your before/after school clubs can support other school activities or be supported by them.

This could include:

- ✓ Links into the curriculum
- ✓ Lunchtime or after school activities
- ✓ Promoting good health
- ✓ Developing links with parents

In most schools the head teacher leads the decision to implement a club but you may also seek the support of the governing body.

Adopting a whole school approach means that you will pick up on how the club can support other priorities in the school and link the before/after school clubs to school development plans.

# Do we need to register with ofsted?

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Although there are a few exceptions, most out of school clubs which provide childcare will need to be registered with Ofsted.

This is as opposed to clubs providing coaching in specific activities such as football, chess or French.

However, if the club is run directly by your school (i.e. the club's staff are employed by the school governors) and at least one child from the school attends the club, in most cases it will come under the school's own Ofsted registration and does not need to register separately.

To find out more, search the internet for ***Ofsted school-based childcare*** or go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/factsheet-children-are-registering-school-based-provision>

**Please note:** always check the latest information from Ofsted as the rules may change over time.



# Staffing & ratios

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Schools can adopt two approaches to the way they run their clubs:

1. Some hire external companies to run their clubs
2. Some schools choose to run it themselves, therefore maximising their income.

If you have an external company run your clubs, they will be responsible for staffing but if you will run the club yourselves, staffing will be a key concern.

School staff are an important part of before and after school clubs and tend to lead the day-to-day running of the club in many schools.

In special schools, clubs tend to be more classroom-based, so you are more likely to involve teachers in the staffing of the club.

Some schools can meet staff costs by altering the times staff work within their existing hours, such as teaching assistants coming in one hour earlier/later and replacing other work with their breakfast/after school club activities.

# Staffing & ratios (continued)

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You will also need to consider your other staffing requirements which will be dictated by:

- The number of children you are planning to care for
- The ages of the children
- The space available
- The layout of the setting
- The type of activities that you intend to offer

For out of school clubs in which the youngest children are of reception age or older, the statutory minimum staffing ratio was reduced to 1:30 for children up to the age of eight in September 2014.

Although this is the absolute minimum legal ratio, very few clubs will be able to operate safely at this level, and specialist childcare insurers are unlikely to provide cover.

Ofsted will still expect you to operate using safe staffing levels and to meet all the other requirements regarding care for the children as set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, but it is now down to you as the provider to decide what the appropriate staffing levels are:

# Staffing & ratios (continued)

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- It is recommend that out of school clubs continue to operate at a ratio of around 1:8 for children up to the age of eight.
- A ratio of around 1:10 is recommended for children over the age of eight.

The Early Years Register and the Childcare Register no longer require settings to have at least two members of staff on duty at all times.

However, you are required to have sufficient staff to supervise the children, keep them safe and meet their individual needs.

For this reason it is recommend that you try to ensure that you continue to have a least two members of staff on duty.

**Please note:** always check the latest information from Ofsted as the rules may change over time.

# Staff qualifications

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If your out of school club only takes children of reception age or above and is on either the Early Years Register or the Compulsory Childcare Register, you are no longer required by Ofsted to have staff with specific childcare or playwork qualifications.

However, you should bear in mind that you still need to be able to demonstrate to the inspector that your staff have the necessary training and experience to fulfil their roles.

In addition, most childcare insurance companies will require your club to have some staff with a relevant qualification as a condition of cover.

You will also need staff with paediatric first aid certificates, with child protection training, food hygiene training and more.

**Please note:** always check the latest information from Ofsted as the rules may change over time.

# Safe recruitment

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If you need to recruit for your school clubs, your staff need to be in place before your club can be up and running, so don't leave recruitment to the last minute.

When recruiting staff you must follow safe recruitment practices, including:

- ✓ Have more than one person conducting the interview
- ✓ Verify the applicant's identity
- ✓ Require application forms to be completed in writing
- ✓ Follow-up references and check qualifications
- ✓ Obtain enhanced DBS checks.

You might find it helpful to draw up a safe recruitment policy for your clubs and to use a safe recruitment checklist.

# Policies and procedures

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You will need to have a comprehensive set of policies, procedures and forms, from administering medication to sign-in sheets for visitors, with many, many others in between.

Listed on the next page are just some of the policies & forms you will need in place for your clubs.

Should your organisation already hold these policies, you will need to ensure they are revised to include out of school childcare provisions.

- The six policies highlighted in red are explicitly required by Welfare and Safeguarding Requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017)
- The five policies highlighted in green are either implicitly required by EYFS 2017, or are required by other legislation
- The others will be useful to have in place to help you deal with daily common situations

# Policies and procedures (continued)

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*Accident record*

*Activity risk assessment form*

***Administering medication policy***

*Admissions and fees policy*

*Arrivals and departures policy*

*Behaviour management policy*

*Central DBS record*

***Complaints policy***

*Daily checklist*

*Daily register*

***Emergency evacuation procedure***

***Equalities policy***

***EYFS policy***

***Health and safety policy***

*Incident record*

*Logging a concern form*

*Medical form*

***Missing Child policy***

*Permission to administer medication form*

*Permission to apply sun-cream form*

*Permission to take photographs form*

*Record of medication given*

*Record of pre-existing injuries*

*Registration form*

*Risk assessment policy*

***Safeguarding (Child protection) policy***

*Safe recruitment policy*

*Smoking, alcohol and drugs policy*

***Staff behaviour policy***

***Uncollected child policy***

***Visitor policy***

# Space requirements

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It is important to consider the questions outlined later in this section when assessing the suitability of premises for housing an out of school club.

If you use a room on the school site, such as a spare classroom, you should customize it for your club's use as much as possible, for example through the use of club wall displays, rugs, timetables, photographs, etc...

It is important that the children see the club as separate from the school and not as a continuation of the school day. Transforming the appearance of the classroom will help to distinguish club time from school time.

Theming each terms after school club is also a great way to encourage children to regularly attend. The school termly theme could link to a school topic, food themes and art and craft activities will tie in nicely with this too.

## **How will you get children to the club?**

For breakfast club you will need to ensure a regular collection and drop off registration/de-registration area, usually this is the front/side door to the room where the club is held.



# Space requirements (continued)

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## **What facilities are available: is there adequate storage, use of kitchen, outdoor play area?**

Your club must have access to an outdoor play area or, if that is not possible, you must ensure that outdoor activities (e.g. a trip to a local park) are planned and taken on a regular basis (weather permitting). The premises and outdoor area **MUST** be secured to prevent unwanted visitors and ensure that children cannot wander off.

There must also be an area where staff can talk confidentially to parents or carers. This does not necessarily need to be a separate room: a quiet corner where you will not be disturbed or overheard would suffice.

You will need to ensure there are sufficient tables and chairs for the children to sit and eat/complete timetabled activities and a clean food preparation area.

## **Is there sufficient space for indoor play to comply with Ofsted requirements?**

For children aged three to five years the space requirements are 2.3 m<sup>2</sup> per child. There are no statutory space requirements for older children.

# Space requirements (continued)

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## **Are there sufficient toilet and hand-washing facilities?**

EYFS states that there should be an adequate number of toilet and hand basins available.

The Childcare Register states that: there must be a sufficient number of toilet and handwashing facilities suitable for the use of children.

Neither register specifies what constitutes a sufficient number, it is up to you as a provider to decide and potentially justify to your Ofsted inspector.

In addition there should normally be separate toilet facilities for adults.

You can find out more about the EYFS Framework here:

<https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/eyfs-statutory-framework>

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# Equipment

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For your before/after school club you may decide to allow free play with tables/zones set up with art & craft, construction, reading, and sports activities running alongside.

Consult with children and parents to see what sort of activities they would like at the club, don't be shy to let people know that you're in need of equipment—it's amazing what people want to get rid of.

When choosing play equipment, here are some areas to try and cover:

- Craft materials
- Games (e.g.: draughts, bingo, snakes & ladders, Connect4, chess, etc...)
- Construction (e.g.: Lego, K'Nex)
- Sports equipment (balls of all sizes, goals, skipping ropes, bean bags, hula hoops, bats, etc...)
- Small worlds (e.g.: cars, dinosaurs, Playmobil, etc...)
- Role play (e.g.: dressing up clothes, bags, sunglasses, hi-vis jackets, play money, etc...)

# Equipment (continued)

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- Quiet area (e.g.: rugs, cushions, blankets, books)
- Den making (e.g.: blankets, tarpaulins, camouflage netting, ropes, cardboard boxes)
- Home learning resources for the staff and children

Other items to consider include:

- Lockable medical boxes
- Cash boxes
- First aid kits
- Table & chair for registration
- Folders for all forms & policies
- Pens
- CD player & music CDs
- Food preparation – suitable cutlery, plates, bowls, storage, cleaning products, use of a fridge

# Food

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It's important to remember to ensure you cater for all dietary needs and allergies.

If you have a catering contract, a good starting point is to find out if your current contract enables breakfasts/snacks to be provided or if you would have to negotiate changes if you wanted this.

You don't have to use your caterer; you could place food orders to be collected/delivered by your local supermarket, this gives you the flexibility of planning what foods you would like to offer and rotate on a weekly/termly basis.

## **What food should we offer?**

There is a wide range of food that you could provide. All food should be in line with the School Food Standards.

Schools in the DofE programme typically provide bagels, fruit, toast, cereals, porridge, water & juice for breakfast. If you have pupils with additional needs you might need to consider more carefully what food to provide.

For example, pupils with autism tend to be very particular about the food they eat and may only want to eat specific cereals. This means food from a general catering contract may be less appropriate.

# Food (continued)

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Typical after school club food and snacks for those who schools who do not have cooking facilities to hand are:

- ✓ Bagels
- ✓ Sandwiches
- ✓ Wraps
- ✓ Cheese
- ✓ Ham
- ✓ Chicken
- ✓ Fruit/vegetable batons
- ✓ Breadsticks
- ✓ Hummus and various dips
- ✓ Water/squash for drinks

## Food (continued)

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Public Health in England has supported the School Food Plan to develop the ‘what works well’ Recipe Hub.

The Hub brings together over 100 recipes for pupil’s favourite meals and snacks. These tried and tested recipes have been created by school cooks and caterers and cover food served across the whole day: breakfast clubs, mid-morning break, lunch and after-school clubs.

Children’s Food Trust has checked each recipe against the School Food Standards, best practice guidance and recommend typical portion sizes. Ingredients are aligned to the Government Buying Standards for Food & Catering Services nutrition criteria (GBSF) and allergens are listed.

<http://whatworkswell.schoolfoodplan.com/articles/view/517>

# Timings

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Most before/after school club providers offer timings similar to those below:

## **Breakfast club:**

8:00am – 8:45am

## **After School club:**

- Short Session: 3:30pm – 4:30pm – with one snack
- Medium Session: 4:30pm - 6:00pm – with two snacks (this session allows for a child to attend another after school activity such as a football or gymnastic club then attend after school club afterwards)
- Long session: 3:30pm – 6:00pm - with two snacks

Snack examples: cereals, toast, pitta, bagels, ham, cheese, fruit & vegetable selection and dips.



# Activities

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If you are going to organise activities, think about how pupils could help run them.

Some schools encourage pupils to lead peer learning or to offer mentoring support to younger pupils. This helps older pupils develop their skills and confidence as well as supporting younger ones.

## **Breakfast clubs**

Breakfast clubs are typically only 45 minutes long. They allow just enough time for registration then short games/ maths and reading activities to help pupils' development; then breakfast before preparing to transition into class.

Games and activities are less commonly offered alongside breakfast clubs in secondary schools where an informal, unstructured approach often works best.

## **After school clubs**

After school club sessions are much longer and ideally should be structured.

Weekly art & craft themes will link nicely into school topics, alternatively let the children lead the way as to what they would like the weekly themes to be about, i.e. Rainforest, Neolithic Ages or Around the World to name a few.

# Cost to parents/guardians

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The cost of your clubs will vary depending on the time options you will offer.

Many before/after school clubs (whether run by the school or an external agency) charge a set price per child for the morning session & tiered prices for the after school club based on session lengths.

When setting your prices, you will need to take into account:

- ✓ Staffing
- ✓ Food
- ✓ Equipment costs
- ✓ Rent (if not using your school for the club setting)

Before/after school clubs may be funded by school budgets, local or national government schemes, or sponsorship from charities or businesses, so parents may or may not be expected to foot the bill.

In March 2018, the government announced that it was investing £26 million – raised by the sugary drinks levy – into breakfast clubs.

# Cost to parents/guardians (continued)

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You may want to consider providing free spaces for children in receipt of Pupil Premium & FSM children that will benefit from these clubs.

## **Regular or ad-hoc sessions**

From your initial research you will have an idea of whether parents would like to use your club on a regular basis or a more ad-hoc basis.

If parents choose to have regular sessions for their children, it's common for clubs to invoice the parents for these regular sessions on a monthly or half termly basis (either in advance or arrears). This may not be practical if parents would prefer to not have regular sessions and instead use varying sessions each week on an ad-hoc basis (e.g. if there are a lot of shift workers).

In practise, it's common to have a mixture of children that attend regular sessions and those that attend on an ad-hoc basis.

## **Discounts**

You will need to think about whether you will only charge a day rate to parents or whether to also offer a reduced whole week booking, therefore increasing your confirmed numbers for the week and income but also reducing the cost to the parent by block booking.

# Cost to parents/guardians (continued)

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Another option to think about is whether you will offer a discount for siblings which attend the club together.

## **Late collection fees**

Some childcare companies/schools have introduced a late collection fee to parents/guardians to discourage them picking up their children late.

A warning system could be put in place such as a three strikes rule before you impose an additional charge for lateness.

# Cost to parents/guardians (continued)

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## **Payment options**

There are a multitude of ways that parents could make payment for their child's sessions at your club including credit or debit card, cash, cheque, bank transfer, the list goes on.

It's important to think about how you will accept payment before you start to run sessions. For example, handling cash and cheques in the setting may not be ideal for you.

## **Government Schemes to help parents**

The latest scheme from the Government is Childcare Choices which includes Tax-Free Childcare and 30 hours free childcare. For more information on childcare Choices visit:  
<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/providers/>

A more established Government scheme is Childcare Vouchers, but these will be closed to new applicants from October 2018. Here is a link to more information:  
<https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/childcare-vouchers>

More information for parents who need help covering their childcare and to see if they are eligible, you can direct them to the GOV website 'help paying for childcare' section:  
<https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs>

# Marketing & promotion

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Getting the marketing and promotion right and keeping pupils and parents aware of the offer is important to the success of your before or after school club.

There are a variety of methods you can use to alert parents to your clubs including:

- ✓ Advertising on the school website
- ✓ Letters home
- ✓ Newsletters
- ✓ Posters in school
- ✓ Social media

Pupils are a key source of information about the clubs run at the school and many pupils ask their parents if they can attend, often so that they can see their friends in the morning/socialise after school.

It is therefore vital to ensure that pupils are aware of your clubs. Assemblies are a great way to highlight this to the children alongside leaflets home.

# Making your life easier

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Hopefully, you have a clear vision for how your before or after school clubs will work and you're ready to get started.

You will also have realised that there's a lot to do before you can start running the club and that there will be an ongoing need to keep on top the admin.

At Kids Club HQ, we've built an easy to use cloud based system that will save you hours each week on the admin for your club.

- ✓ Online booking for parents - no need for paper forms
- ✓ Registers up to date automatically based on parents bookings
- ✓ Invoices generated and sent automatically to parents
- ✓ Automated reminders for outstanding payments
- ✓ A comprehensive administration system for you and the club staff

Schools like yours rely on Kids Club HQ to keep on top of the admin for their clubs.

If you'd like to find out more or book a demonstration, please get in touch at: [hello@kidsclubhq.co.uk](mailto:hello@kidsclubhq.co.uk)