



Parents Handbook

The Scott Centre
Mead Hedges Footpath
Andover
Hampshire
SP10 2LB

About Youth Options Childcare

Youth Options is an established and thriving organisation with an outstanding history of supporting children and young people. As an organisation we are committed to delivering services to children and young people that support their own personal development and by creating opportunities for them to participate and learn new skills.

Our after school clubs, breakfast clubs, pre-school and holiday club are based at OFSTED registered venues and are managed and run by Youth Options in partnership with local schools and the early years team from each local authority.

Our settings provide childcare for children aged 2 to 13 years of age, depending on what service you require.

The aim of this handbook is to provide parents and carers with additional information including terms & conditions for using our childcare provision.

To apply for a place you will need to complete our registration form (one for each child place) returning it to:

The Lead Worker on site:

Or by post to:

The Scott Centre
Mead Hedges Footpath
Andover
Hampshire
SP10 2LB

Youth Options Useful Contact Numbers

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|---|---------------|
| Youth Options Head Office | 01794 525 510 |
| Youth Options Childcare Office (The Scott Centre) | 01264 332 188 |
| Early years and Childcare Co-ordinator | 07808 641 617 |
| The Scott Centre Pre-School | 07551 345 763 |
| East Anton After School Club | 07917 343 844 |

After-school care

Our after-school and breakfast clubs provide children with:

- A safe and fun place to be at the beginning and the end of the school day.
- Somewhere to be themselves and to be accepted as they are.
- Opportunities to participate in a variety of different play activities.
- High levels of care enabling them to gain confidence and learn new skills.
- The chance to mix and make friends with children of different ages.
- The opportunity to build relationships with adults other than their parents and teachers.
- A snack.

For parents, after-school and breakfast club care means:

- Opportunities to go out to work or seek employment, training or education.
- Added support in times of need.
- Time to go to college or pursue other activities to enhance their own personal development.

For breakfast club children are cared for from 8:00am until they are safely taken to their classrooms, and for after school club the end of school until an authorised person collects them by 6pm.

Whilst at the clubs the children are given breakfast at breakfast club and light snack at after school club and are free to participate, under the supervision of staff, in a range of free play and structured activities.

On-site club contact numbers

Your club can be contacted via a dedicated mobile phone number. The Lead Play Worker will give you this number when a place at the club for your child(ren) has been confirmed.

Pre-School Care

Our Pre-School is open during term time from 9:00am to 3:00pm Monday to Friday. We accept children from aged 2 and because of our 'Good' grading from Ofsted families that are eligible can benefit from up to 15 hours a week free of charge as this is government funded, more information on this is within the welcome pack. Children aged 3 plus also benefit from 15 hours a week the term after their child's 3rd birthday.

The EYFS (Pre-School)

The EYFS Framework explains how and what your child will be learning to support their healthy development.

Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through **7 areas of learning and development**.

Children should mostly develop the **3 prime areas** first. These are:

- Communication and language;
- Physical development; and
- Personal, social and emotional development.

These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning.

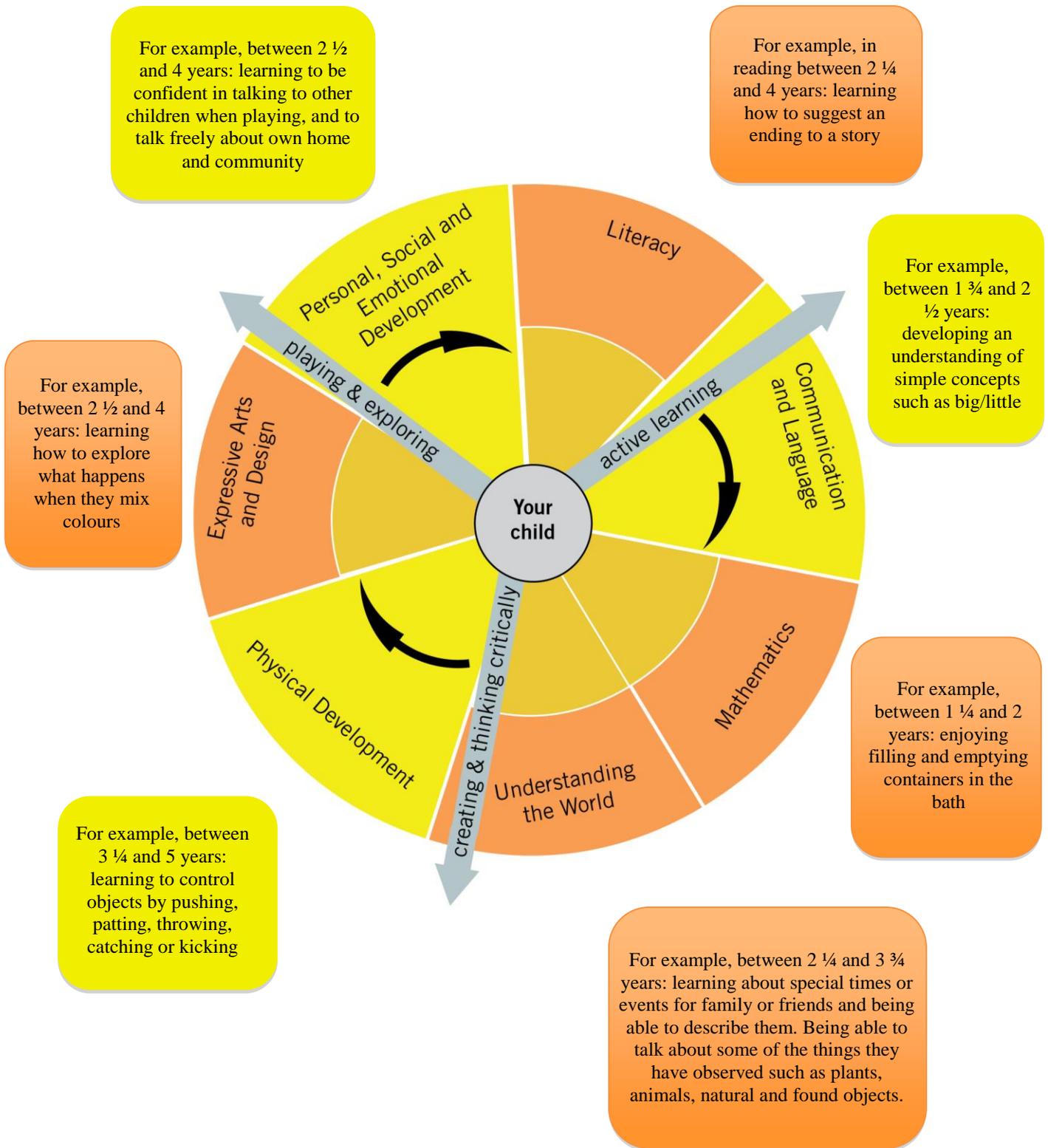
As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in **4 specific areas**. These are:

- Literacy;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding the world; and
- Expressive arts and design.

These 7 areas are used to plan your child's learning and activities. The professionals teaching and supporting your child will make sure that the activities are suited to your child's unique needs. This is a little bit like a curriculum in primary and secondary schools, but it's suitable for very young children, and it's designed to be really flexible so that staff can follow your child's unique needs and interests.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside.

The diagram below gives examples of the areas of learning and development and shows the links between the way in which your child learns and what they learn.



Daily care of children

The programme is child centred with the care and well being of the children paramount. All activities are planned with regard to the safety and development needs of each child. Children are encouraged to play co-operatively and be involved in making decisions about the activity programme.

Snack Time

Children are encouraged to sit with the rest of their group during snack time. They are encouraged to eat and drink what is provided but are never forced to do so. If your child is allergic to, doesn't like or is forbidden to eat certain foods, please put this information on the application form so that staff can meet your child's dietary needs.

We try to provide a variety of snacks that can be eaten by all children. However, if your child is on a very restricted diet you may prefer to provide food or drink for them.

Settings rules

The aim of the club is to create an informal and friendly atmosphere, so rules are kept to a minimum and those used are the ones necessary to ensure the club runs smoothly, e.g. consideration for others, care of premises and equipment. Children will be encouraged to participate in developing these rules and can then sign up to the club "Pledge" they have created.

Sweets and toys

As a general rule, we would prefer it if children did not bring their own sweets or toys to the club, unless the club has asked them to, or if the children have asked in advance. Sweets and cakes, to be shared with all the children, can be brought in for birthdays.

Expected behaviour at our settings

We encourage parents to work with us in our efforts to maintain an atmosphere of respect for all in the club. You can do this by making sure that your child is aware of what the staff expect of them and explaining why good behaviour is important.

Good behaviour is encouraged through praise and appreciation of your child's achievements. Inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour is dealt with immediately.

- For minor incidents children will be spoken to.
- If a child is repeatedly disruptive then the Lead Play Worker will complete an incident form that parents must read and sign, giving full details and asking for their support on the matter. If you do not normally collect your child from the club then you will be asked to come in and meet with the Lead Play Worker to discuss the best possible action for your child.
- Children who are continually disruptive may be asked to leave the club for a 'cooling off' period.
- Continual or extremely bad behaviour will result in the termination of your child's place at the club.

Anti-Bullying

Bullying is not tolerated and is dealt with very firmly. Name-calling, discriminating and excluding behaviour as well as physical harming are all forms of bullying and are unacceptable. Children are encouraged to show consideration and care for others and to report any bullying to club staff.

Bullying is treated as a serious offence and the circumstances are discussed with both parents of the bully and of the child being bullied. When bullying occurs, the child who is bullying is spoken to about their behaviour and asked to apologise to the victim. In all cases, sensitivity is shown and appropriate support given to the child suffering from bullying.

Activities and staff (After School Clubs)

Range of activities

We aim to provide an environment where children can relax after a busy day at school. On most days the club will be set up and the programme designed so that children can pick and choose the activities they wish to do. Toys and equipment have been chosen and activities planned which relate to the ages, skills and interests of the children.

Children are given the opportunity to play actively with friends, sit quietly and read or listen music. Staff understand the importance of being able to listen to a child who wants to talk about their day. Any key or relevant information will be passed onto parents or the person collecting the child. We may use a communication book as a tool to pass on vital information.

The activity programme usually includes a combination of free play and structured activities led by the staff.

Staffing

The lead play workers, pre-school supervisor and the staff team are supervised and supported on a regular basis by the organisations early years and childcare coordinator, who visits the club on a regular basis and is based at one of our sites in Andover.

Volunteers and trainees

In addition to the staff there are often volunteers and students on placement who will help at the club. All volunteers are given basic training and are supervised by club staff.

Disclosure of Criminal Background Checks (DBS) and references

All staff and volunteers undergo the fully enhanced Disclosure of Criminal Background checks (DBS) References are taken up on all staff and volunteers at point of entry to Youth Options.

Harassment

Youth Options will not tolerate any form of harassment or discrimination towards its staff.

Important information

Medical conditions

If your child has any medical conditions please make sure you include this information on the application form. Once your child has started at the club it is important that you let the lead play worker know immediately should circumstances change or new conditions or needs occur.

Administering medicines

Club staff are not permitted to administer any prescribed or over the counter medicines to your child without your written permission. All administered prescriptions are recorded on our data sheet that you are required to sign when you collect your child.

Inhalers

If your child has an inhaler for asthma or any other conditions the inhaler must be given to a designated member of staff. It will be kept in a safe place, accessible to all staff. Children under eight years of age must not be responsible for their own inhalers.

Additional needs

Children with additional needs have the right to be included and for their needs to be met. These needs are most likely to be met when the lead play worker and other staff are aware of and understand the individual needs of your child. Please ensure that you include any relevant information on your application form and inform the lead play worker of any change in circumstances.

Personal circumstances

In order to help staff give appropriate and sensitive care to your child(ren), please let the lead play worker know if there are any changes in your personal circumstances that are likely to have an effect on your child. It would also be helpful if you informed staff of any problems or particular areas of concern that you have regarding your child's behaviour.

Record keeping

Information concerning your child/children will be recorded in:

- The registration form.
- The accident or incident sheets as necessary

Information you need to know

Insurance

Youth Options holds full public and employer's liability insurance for all activities carried out by staff in the course of their duties. Our current certificate is displayed on the club's notice board.

Dealing with accidents

All accidents and injuries are recorded in the club's accident book. If your child has a minor accident the person collecting him/her will be told and asked to sign the accident book. Club staff will make every effort to contact you in the event of accidents or illness requiring medical attention.

Child protection/Safeguarding

All staff and volunteers are made aware of the importance of child protection. If staff feel there are reasons for concern about a child's welfare these concerns will normally be discussed with the parent. If the cause for concern continues then the lead play worker will discuss the matter with the childcare coordinator or senior staff member, who will follow Youth Option's Safeguarding Child's Policy and Procedure. In addition Youth Options has Child Protection Officers in place.

Confidentiality

All information contained in your child's records is treated confidentially and the right to privacy for you and your child is respected. In extreme situations such as child protection, safeguarding issues or the need for urgent medical treatment, in the best interests of your child we may decide it is necessary to share personal details with other staff and professionals such as teachers, social workers or medical staff.

Collection of your child

Children are to be signed out at the end of each session. They will only be allowed to leave with adults named on the application form. Authorised persons collecting your child(ren) must be over the age of 16 years of age.

Parental involvement

We believe that as parents and carers you have a key role to play in the success of the club. You are always welcome to visit, help with and take part in activities.

We are always happy to discuss your child's needs with you. However, if you wish to have a long or confidential conversation, please arrange an appointment with the lead play worker..

We would very much like to encourage parents to become involved not only with the After-School Club but also with Youth Options. If you would like to know more about Youth Options please speak to:

- The lead play worker.
- Childcare Coordinator or
- A youth Options Service Manager

Your contact information

It is essential that you inform the lead play worker of any changes to your contact details, addresses etc. We are required through OFSTED to hold this information and a failure to inform us of changes will mean we do not hold vital up-to-date information.

Your Concerns

We try to review all aspects of our work on a regular, ongoing basis. However, from time to time you or your child may feel that you have a concern about some aspect of the club or about an individual member of staff. It is usually possible to resolve any problems as they occur by discussing them with the lead play worker. If you feel that your concern has not been adequately dealt with by the lead play worker or is of a particularly serious or sensitive nature then you should contact the childcare coordinator who visits the club on a regular basis.

If you have exhausted all of the above and feel that your concerns have not been adequately dealt with please write to the Chief Executive at Youth Options who will respond within seven working days of receipt of your letter.

If you wish to contact OFSTED you can write to OFSTED, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD, call 0300 123 1231 or by emailing enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk stating the club location and their unique EY reference number – This can be found on the registration certificate displayed on the clubs notice board.

Notification of change of sessions

If your child will not be a session it is essential to contact the lead worker by calling 01264 332188 before 9.00am of that day.

Sickness

In the event that your child cannot attend the club through ill health, you must continue to pay fees, to secure your child's place. In the event of a long-term illness, Youth Options will not charge fees for such absences, subject to the provision of a medical certificate.

Short holidays

If you plan to take your child out of the club for one or more weeks during term-time, for example for a family holiday, please give the lead play worker at least two weeks' written notice. Your child's sessions during this time will have to be paid in order to retain their place.

Permanent change of attendance days

If you plan to permanently change the days that your child attends please inform the lead play worker, we require a months notice.

Temporary change of attendance days

In cases of emergency, your child can attend a session that they would not normally attend provided there is space on that day. You will need to contact the lead play worker as early as possible on the day to request this. Please note you will incur additional cost.

Notice period

Parents are required to give at least one month's written notice, from the first day that their child is due to leave. You are liable for all fees for this period and any outstanding balances regardless of attendance.

Late collection of children

It is important to club and school staff that you collect your child(ren) by the time stated by the club.

If for any reason you are unable to do this you should arrange for one of the people named on the application form to collect your child. If you are unable to arrange an alternative collection then you should phone the club as soon as is practical to do so before the end of the session informing them that you are going to be late and the approximate time of your arrival.

Late collection procedure

If a child is not collected at the end of the session the following procedure is implemented:

At closing time, if you, or your nominated person, have not contacted the staff to tell them you are going to be late, a member of staff will try to reach you or persons listed as emergency contacts listed on your initial registration form and arrange for them to collect your child(ren).

If contact cannot be made your child(ren) will remain at the setting with staff. We will continue trying to contact you or a person listed as emergency contacts from the registration form for 30 minutes, if no contact has been made by this time we will have no alternative but to contact children's Services. Please help us to avoid this happening. It is very stressful for both the child and the staff member if the child has to be handed over to someone they do not know, a situation we hope to avoid at all costs.

Late collection fee

Youth Options reserves the right to charge parents or carers for any costs incurred due to their failure to collect their child at the correct time. (£1.00 per minute) Failure to pay these additional fees may result in your child's place at the club being terminated.

Recurring lateness

Whilst Youth Options understand that occasional late collection is unavoidable, we reserve the right to terminate your child's place after three formal warnings.

Payment of fees

Fee agreement

Payment of fees

A £50.00 deposit is required to secure your child's place this is deducted from your final invoice when your child leaves.

Other than as stated elsewhere in this handbook, fees are payable for all days registered, regardless of attendance. Fees are payable strictly in advance. There is no exception to this rule.

This means that you must ensure that any fees are paid by 15th of each month, or in advance. Fees can be paid in a number of ways:

- By cheque, made payable to Youth Options Centres LTD, to the Lead play worker or designated staff member directly.
- By credit or debit card.
- Directly into our bank account, please see your lead play worker for more details
- By using childcare vouchers

Youth Options are registered with a number of childcare voucher providers, which can help you offset the cost of childcare, please ask a member of staff for further details.

A receipt/invoice will be given to you for all payments made to the lead play worker or designated staff member. Please retain this in the event that you have a query regarding payment.

Non-payment of fees

If you fall into arrears outside of any agreement made between you and the club then the following action will be taken:

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| 16 th of each month | You will be sent an email reminder, with an invitation to discuss any difficulties you are facing that are preventing you from keeping up with payments |
| 28 th of each month | If you have not responded to the invitation to discuss why you are having difficulties in paying, then you will be notified that unless you settle payment by the end of the month your child's place at the club will be terminated. |

Events that can affect the agreed fees due

Permanent changes of days

If you need to change the days of your child's sessions, please inform from the lead play worker.

Please note that changing your child's sessions depends on availability of days in question.

School holidays and other non-school days

Parents will not be charged for any school holidays, teacher training in-set days or any days when the school is closed, for example through industrial action or insufficient heating or for absences due to an organised school outings.

Possible Forms of Financial Help

Tax Credit

Parents who meet the criteria to qualify for Tax Credits may receive help towards childcare costs. Phone 0845 300 3900 or go to: www.hmrc.gov.uk for more information.

Colleges

Some college's help towards childcare costs and information is usually available from the student services office. We are always happy to assist you by confirming attendance and payment of fees.

Employers' Childcare Vouchers

Some employers provide help towards the childcare costs in the form of Child Care Vouchers. Youth Options will consider these as payment for fees. For further information contact your Personnel Department or speak to a member of staff.

Children's Services

If you or your child fulfils the criteria then financial help may be available from children's services. If you already have a social worker then they should be able to help you with this. If not then contact your local Children's Services office and ask to speak to the person responsible for helping children and families in need.