venture out

Holiday Club Information for Parents and Carers

This document is designed to help you find all the information you need about our Holiday Club. It should answer all the questions you might have before or after you book. Please read it fully as it contains important information about your booking.

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Holiday Club

What is it all about?

Outdoor activities for fun, sociable children who don't mind getting muddy or wet!

Our holiday club is like sending your child to an Outdoor Activity Centre for a week but a lot cheaper because it isn't residential. Morning drop off and evening pick up are around work times so your child can come, have an active day out, then go home and eat a dinner they are used to and get a good night's sleep in their own bed without you worrying about them or them being 'home sick'.

Key Facts:

- It's completely outdoors, regardless of the weather.
- Activities include a mixture of team building, nature handicrafts, outdoor sports, bushcraft, forest school, nature games and canoe trips.
- We provide lots of biscuits for snacks but not lunch. Send them with plenty they like.
- 8:30am drop of – 4:30pm to 5:00 pick up (late pick up possible for extra charge).
- Activities run from 9am - 4:30pm.
- Children can come for a day, a week, multiple weeks, or parts of different weeks.
- Our Centre is based at Burnage Rugby Club in Heaton Mersey, SK4 3EA.
- We use Mersey Vale Nature Park and the river Mersey for our activities.
- We are a small, friendly club.
- Staff hold multiple qualifications and lots of experience of working with children.

Our Program

The week's programme, and daily structure have sound educational and playwork principles imbedded that help make the club so popular with parents and participants. The other key components are the quality of our staff and the great children that come back every year.

Day 1/2: On the first day of the club, we split the children into groups of no more than 10 around their own age and do icebreakers. This starts the process of making new friends, which is easier in a smaller group. We do activities at the centre and in the area nearby to allow us to 'get to know the children' before we take them on longer canoeing journeys. The activities chosen for the first two days enable us to encourage socialisation and buddying up for activities. The activities also allow us to coach the children in a variety of sports to develop their confidence.

By the end of day 2 children will have made new friends and feel more comfortable in the larger group of mixed ages.

Day 3/4: Throughout the week we intersperse the high energy activities and sports with lower energy and more creative activities, like forest games and handicrafts. This is primarily to manage the children's energy levels throughout the week. It is our experience that most children are tired by Thursday and so we do a lower energy bushcraft day then to have enough energy left for Friday. The mixture of activities appeals to the wider audience, and controlling the tempo and tiredness is key to managing the behaviour of the group. We still get tired and grumpy children on a Thursday though so we ask that all parents encourage plenty of early nights during this week!

Who is it for?

Children that are sociable, like to run around in woods and don't mind getting wet, muddy or falling down.

Boys and girls - We work hard to make it inclusive and encouraging for both.

Age Range

Year 3 -7

(Please don't ask "Our child is just finishing Year 2!")

Q: My Child is younger and has older siblings going, can they come?

A: We don't accept younger children, even if they have an older sibling at the club. This is because weather at Easter and Whit can often be colder than Summer and so we do the higher activity sports to keep them warmer. Smaller children get colder more quickly and struggle to cycle on our bikes or to keep up with the older children. Accepting them just wouldn't be fair or safe.

Q: My child is now in Year 8 but has been coming for years, can they still attend?

A: We have started a 'Skills Club' for Year 7 upwards – see the website for more information.

Our Activities

Bikes

We have our own fleet of bikes that fit 8-year-olds to adults. In our first session, we use coaching games and challenges to improve skills and risk assess the groups, and on the second day we take them out for a short ride on gravel trails along the side of the Mersey and in meadowland. On this we practice the skills from the day before. We provide helmets and fingerless gloves which the young people must wear.

We do not teach children to ride a bike, so if your child cannot ride or is very wobbly, then, for their safety, we put them with another group, doing a different activity.

If your child is small for a Year 3 you may need to bring their own bike. Please ensure that the brakes work, and the tyres are not flat.

Bouldering & Climbing

Our short climbing wall with rubber flooring allows us to run climbing sessions without children having to rope up. This allows more children to climb at the same time, play games and challenges that improve their movement and coordination skills. **We also have a mobile climbing wall on site**.

Archery

We have a purpose-built archery range and real bows. This is a popular activity with children and although it sounds 'dangerous' the only accidents wehave is when the string sometimes hits the inside of the arm.

Team Building / Problem Solving

We run these activities early in the week to get to know the children and get them to form new friendships and bonds in their groups.

Canoeing, Kayaking & River Trips

We are situated next to the River Mersey and use it for kayaking and canoeing. The river is normally slow enough for us to paddle up for games sessions, then come back to the centre.

During the first couple of days on the holiday club, we have short sessions where the children are shown how to paddle the craft and then play games. This develops their confidence. Later in the week we go as a larger group for longer trips on the local rivers.

However, there can be the odd day or week when the river is too high and fast to make this fun so we either do it on another day, or if heavy rain is forecast all week, we avoid the'Fun and games sessions' but still do the river trips.

<u>Please bear in mind if you are just booking one day for your child to go canoeing - we never guarantee paddling.</u>

Children do not need to be able to swim, but they must not be afraid of water. They must wear life jackets and if they fall in, they will befloating next to their floating boat to hold onto until the leader helps them climb back on.Staff leading these activities are qualified coaches. For kayaking and Stand-Up Paddle boarding they wear helmets. We have child size paddles for all craft. For these activities the children must wear their waterproof trousers and coats to help them stay warmer.

Bushcraft / Forest School / Nature Crafts & Games

We spread these activities throughout the week and the dedicated day of Bushcraft is one of the most popular days. Children enjoy these more chilled out activities interspersed with the higher energy activities and sports.

These can be activities like dipping in our purpose-built pond, building toy rafts to race in the river, playing 'Hide-and-Seek' style games in the woods and meadow.

Bushcraft day - This has the children working in small groups to learn survival skills like: how to build a tarp shelter, gathering wood and starting a fire and cooking on an open fire. These activities are tailored to the age group to ensure they are not put at undue risk from tools or fire.

What to Wear and Bring

This is a completely outdoor holiday club. We do not use any indoor space, other than the toilets and a canopy where we start and finish the day and have lunch. This means that your child will be outside from 8:30am-4:30pm (8 hours). For this reason, we ask that you help your child wear and pack appropriate clothing.

Children should always wear/ bring:

- **Sport clothes** that they are happy to get wet and muddy. This can be any type of sports / outdoor sports clothing.
- **Waterproof trousers and Coat** – THEY WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED ON THE DAY WITHOUT even on warm days. They will need these for canoeing. (Waterproofs can be bought from Decathlon from between £6-10)
- **Fleece/Jumper**
- **Long sleeve tops and trousers** / leggings are preferred as they provide protection from the sun and from nettles.
- **Old Trainers** (not crocs or sandals as they are not secure for running around in the woods and they float off in the river.

The correct clothing is essential to your little ones comfort and ultimately to their safety and welfare.

YOU MAY BE ASKED TO RETURN WITH ANY ESSENTIAL KIT THAT HAS BEEN FORGOTTEN

Optional Extras

Wellies are good for the days where we go on canoeing trips or on the bushcraft day.

Gloves and Hat - On cold or wet weeks

We do not use **wetsuits** as they are not necessary for sitting in a canoe however, if your child wants to bring their own, they are welcome to.

Extra snacks - We provide 'cheap and cheerful.' biscuits for snacks, these are not gluten free.

Drinks Bottle - We provide beakers to drink from, but drinks bottles are popular and can be refilled with our juice.

Sun cream & Medication:

You must send your child with sun block (spf 30-50) and already creamed. Even on cloudy days because they are outside for 8 hours. Send them with a small bottle of their own cream.

If your child suffers from hay fever, please ensure they take an antihistamine every morning.

We will look after medication, but your child must be able to self-medicate.

EpiPen's. If your child carries one, please ask them to give it to the leader at the beginning ofthe activity. Our leaders are all qualified first aiders and know how to use them.

Health & Safety

As parents, you will already know that small accidents and illness are commonplace for children when at school or out playing – it is not different when children come to do an activity week with us. Our job is to minimize these, but they cannot be completely eradicated. Common things we experience every year are; children getting tummy bugs, exhaustion from dehydration and sun, small cuts, stings and thorns. Bruises from falling over or banging into things. Some parents worry unduly about canoeing and water, when it's one of the safest things they will do that day. The cycling however is more problematic, it is common for less able or experienced riders to 'lose control' and fall over.It's rarely at speed but can result in grazed hands and cut shins (pedal strikes). Therefore, we provide gloves and start all sessions with a few skills checks before committing the group to a longer ride. Thankfully never anything more major than that.

All staff hold national qualifications to lead these sports and hold a first aid qualification and will have a first aid kit with them.

Our Staff

The holiday club has been running since 2011 in one form or another (children who first attended are now fully fledged adults!)

Ian Sheldrake (Director) founded the company from a background in Primary School Teaching to offer local adventure to local children and families and the holiday club totally embodies this aim.

All our group leaders are very experienced in working with young people and are very good at what they do. They will hold the qualifications required for them to lead the sports we provide, and they will have worked extensively with this age group before.

Our **Adventurous Activities licence** is awarded by the Health & Safety Executive for sessions we run down the river. All activities are fully insured through Activities Industry Mutual.

Bullying: Each morning starts with a quick chat about expectations and how to support each other. Meanness is discouraged, and bullying isnot tolerated.

In general, the children who come are an absolute joy to be around, but it is not unheard of for a good child to show off or experience another child who rubs them up the wrong way or get caught up with others that are being inconsiderate, especially as children get more tired as the week goes on. In these instances, we talk to the children concerned and have them suggest improvements – and then we hold them to it.

We will inform both sets of parents at the end of the day to ask for their support. If a child continues to struggle, we can offer 'chances' and discuss 'day bans' with parents. It is rare for aggressive behaviour and in these instances, we would have the child collected by a parent.

Our staff are experienced with managing behaviour, and we do not look to be over-bearing,instead we encourage safe, enjoyable, experiences. Our primary concern will however always lie with the larger group, and the holiday club experience that their parents felt theywere buying in to.

Likewise, we need parental support, so if your child comes home unhappy about something then please feel free to drop us an email or give us a ring to alert us to the problem.

Illness: In the event of a child needing to go home during the day, it is a similar procedure to school - we will ring the emergency contact number you give us on the booking form and have someone come and collect them.

Our full range of policies, insurance and activities license are available to view on our website.

How to book

1. Go to www.venture-out.co.uk
2. Select the Holiday Club you wish to book onto (Easter/Summer/ Half Term)
3. Select Dates on the Calendar
4. Fill in the booking details for each child. (one booking per child)
5. Pay using the online payment - No cash on the day.

Cost

£37 for all places booked before 31st May 2026

£38for all places booked before 30th June 2026

£39 for all places booked after 1st July 2026

This includes:

- At least four activities each day
- All equipment
- High quality tuition from qualified staff
- Low group numbers
-

Terms & Conditions

Cancellation by you: This is non-refundable within last 2 weeks. We are usually over-subscribed for the Summer weeks, this means that if you cancel at short notice, other parents who were interested in that week or day, will already have found alternatives. And so, we are not guaranteed to recoup any cost of re-reimbursing you. We don't absorb the cost as it is no fault of ours.

Cancellation by us: You get full refund. This has never happened for a Summer week and it is rare for the Easter and Whit weeks. If it were to be a possibility, it would be because of very low numbers booked on a day – we have found that if there are only 5 children booked then those 5 children just don't enjoy it. We would give you 14 days' notice to allow you to make other arrangements.

Childcare vouchers? – No sorry, we cannot register with Ofsted because we use a building that is accessible to the public and spend most of our time outside in public areas.

Communicating with us

We receive huge numbers of emails and phone calls about activities each day and we don't have someone answering emails all day everyday - during the Summer especially we are outdoors working most of the time. We may not be able to reply to your email straight away.

Before you email or ring us:

Check for your answer on our website and make sure you have read through this document.

When you email us, please provide as much detail as possible about who you are and whatyou want.

Please respect our home-life, we ask that you not ring us before 8am or after 8pm in the evenings and at weekends not after 6pm.

If you need to contact us during the day, then ring 07905851299

Follow the fun on Facebook or Instagram

We aim to upload photos of the activities each evening, so you can see what your children are talking about.

@Venture.Out.co.uk

@venture_out_ltd

Not sure how long to book or if your child will like it?

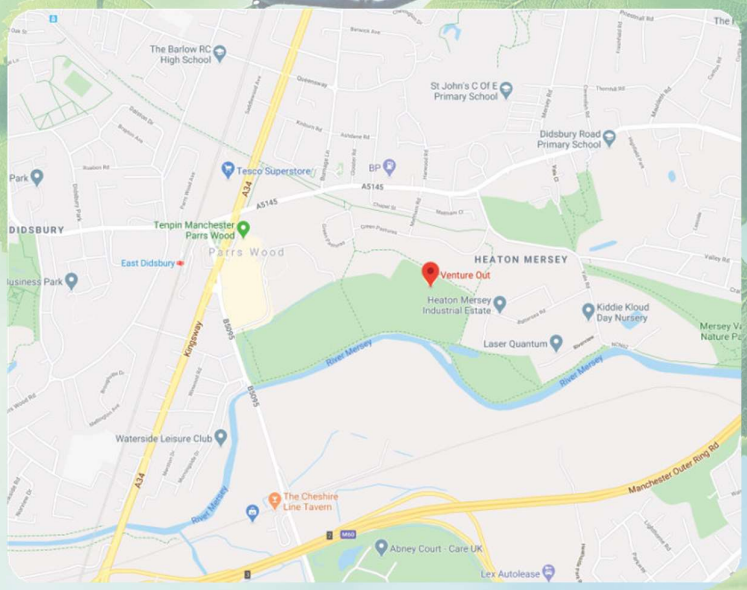
You can book for a day, a week, multiple weeks or parts of different weeks.

The first two days are are structured to help them make friends. New friends are made every day at our holiday clubs!

If you are unsure if your child will go on their own, then we recommend that you tell the parents of their friends and see if they too would be interested in sending their child along.

Weeks book up fast and we have a max of 50 per day, so it's unlikely we can add extra days for you once the week has begun.

Dropping off and picking up



Our centre is on the grounds at Burnage Rugby Club SK4 3EA.

Google Map: Click Here
We start each morning with a register on the veranda beside the Club's front door.
Pick up destinations can be different on some of the days we do river trips.

Drop off

We accept drop-offs at our centre from 8:30am and activities start at 9am. Our staff are there earlier but will not register children as they are busy setting up activities. You are welcome to come earlier but must sit with your child until registration starts.

Activities start at 9am and children must be there by 9am as we often go off-site and may not be there if you are late.

Arriving late or sick child? – please ring or text (07905851299) before 9am if you are not coming or are going to be late. We need to know that we can start without your child. And if you need to arrive late or have a medical appointment, we can arrange to be at the centre when you arrive.

Pick up

We finish all activities by 4:30pm so please pick up children between 4:30 and 5pm (at the latest) from the veranda.

If you need a later pick up this is available up to 6pm for a charge of £10/child/day but this is only by prior arrangement

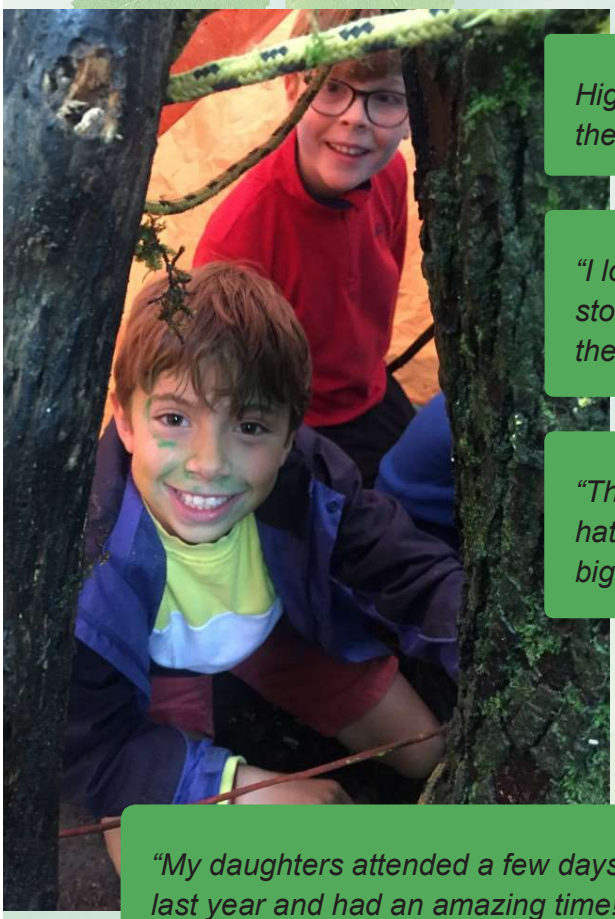
Pick up (down river)

Some days we paddle down to Northenden.This will be part of the weekly schedule and you will know in advance.

Address: Mill Lane, Northenden M22 4HJ

What people say about the Venture Out Holiday Club

Our Holiday Club has been running for 13 years and is loved by children and parents. Drawing children from all over South Manchester, but mainly Didsbury, the Heatons,Stockport, Chorlton. Attracting comments from parents on our social media like:



Highly recommended for a fun and exciting alternative to the usual summer's camps!!!" (Trip advisor)

"I love your Holiday Club, my child comes home full of stories of new friends and great activities. They eat all their dinner and then fall asleep!"

"This is the only holiday club my boys will go to, they hated all the ones with too many children going crazy in a big hall all day, they just felt lost or bored"

"My daughters attended a few days of the summer camp last year and had an amazing time! They really enjoyed all the activities, especially the kayaking. The staff are very experienced and are really good with all the children. My daughters will definitely be back this half-term and also in the summer.

"Ben did this last week! Every night he came home saying it was the best week ever! The best holiday club ever xx"