

## **1 Where do your Holiday Clubs take place?**

We currently run at our main venue: Sydenham High School, Senior, 19 Westwood Hill SE26 6BL, where we run every half term, two weeks over Easter and all six weeks over the Summer. We are very lucky to have excellent facilities, including a fantastic 100-seat theatre, a large hall with a stage, an outdoor area and Astro turf where the children can play outside at lunch.

## **2 What age groups do you take?**

We take children from ages 5-15. We tailor our weeks to the different ages, so we split the children into age appropriate groups. These are ages 5-7 ages 8-10 and ages 11+. If children are on the cusp of an age group then we encourage the children to join the more advanced group once they have done a week or two with us already. Please note we can only take children ages 5+ as this is a legal Ofsted requirement.

## **3 How many children in each group and what is your adult to child ratio?**

The most children we ever take in one group is 20 with 2 teachers assigned to that group. For the younger ages 5-7 group, our max is 18 with 2 teachers assigned.

## **4 What are the hours? Can you take children earlier/later?**

The main club runs from 9.00 – 3.30. We used to offer extended hours but unfortunately the school now like to close the building at 3.30. Our staff are on site from 8.30 so occasionally we can take children from before 9am.

## **5 How are the days organised? What activities do they do?**

The first day is all about settling the children in. We begin the morning playing lots of fun games and ice-breakers to introduce the children to each other and the teachers. We then begin introducing the theme for that week, exploring the different characters and storylines. We then do a read-through of the script and slowly begin casting and rehearsing the show. We begin every morning with a warm up to wake us up and prepare us for the day ahead. This could involve games, a stretch or a physical dance warm up. We also do a singing warm up and some fun articulation games to help with the children's speech.

Each day, we take a break around 10.30am for a snack, followed by lunch approximately 12.00-1.00. Weather permitting, after we have eaten our lunch, we take the children outside for fresh air and a run around. We then take an afternoon break around 2.30 and then break for games to finish the day and a de-brief around 3.00 before pick up. The rest of the day is spent working towards our performance; rehearsing the lines, learning the songs or making arts and crafts for costumes or posters. Our aim is for the children to have fun, so our days are relaxed and creative and we break up the rehearsals so there is not too much pressure put on the children. Children stay in their groups all day, however at lunch time we may merge the groups depending on what time they take their breaks.

Friday is performance day, where we will do dress rehearsals with the children in the morning, often performing their show to the other groups, before the parents/guardians join us in the afternoon for the final performance. After the children have performed, we will dismiss the children back to their carer, encouraging everyone to take home all their belongings and say goodbye to their new friends!

## **6 What is your drop off & collection policy? What if someone different is collecting my child?**

All children are dropped and collected from the front main gate and no adults enter the school site. Once a child is dropped by their parent/guardian, the manager will sign the child in via our online register. If someone different is collecting your child, we ask for written consent via email or adding the adults name to the child's class4kids profile. Our staff may ask for identification if it is not an adult that we already know.

## **7 How do I book?**

We use the booking system Class4Kids. Please fill in the online form with all your child's details. You will then be sent confirmation and an email regarding payment. You can pay via the email with card, but please be aware there is a booking fee, or our bank details are also listed. Places do fill up very quickly so we do advise booking early.

## **8 What if my child does not know anyone or is feeling apprehensive on the first day?**

Many children come to Gems not knowing anyone, so we do our very best to make them feel at ease as soon as they arrive. This may involve buddying them up with another child or one of our teachers may stay with them until they feel settled. For the younger ones, we begin our games straight away, so that they can dive straight into the fun and any nerves will soon be forgotten. Parents are welcome to stay for the beginning if they are feeling really anxious, but we do find that the children settle in quicker once they get fully involved in the games without their carer in the room. We would be happy to give you an update in the afternoon.

## **9 Do you provide lunch?**

We do not provide lunch and we expect children to come with a packed lunch, snacks and water. We have a 'no-sharing' policy and ask that you do not bring anything with nuts, including peanut butter. We are happy to re-fill water bottles or heat food up.

## **10 What should my child wear?**

Something comfortable that they can move and dance in like tracksuit bottoms or leggings and a t-shirt and make sure that shorts or leggings are worn under any skirts and dresses. Sensible shoes are really important so that your child can take part safely, that means no bare feet, sandals, crocs etc.

## **11 Who are your teachers?**

Many of our Holiday Club teachers work for us during the week running after school clubs or at our Saturday Theatre School. They all have several years experience teaching children of all ages and many have a performance background, having trained at a Drama school or University. We are very lucky to have some amazing teachers, many who have performed in West End shows or appeared on the TV and work as performing arts teachers or teaching assistants in schools on the side. We are all passionate about sharing the positive impact that the performing arts can have on children. All teachers have a current, clear DBS, first aid and safeguarding training. There will be a Gems Manager assigned for the week, should you have any questions, complaints or compliments.

## **12 What time are the shows on the Friday and can we bring family/friends?**

We will confirm the show times but generally the ages 5-7 perform from 2.00 – 2.30, ages 8-10 perform from 2.30-3.00 and ages 11+ perform 3.00- 3.30. Please do bring family and friends along to support the children – the more the merrier!

## **13 Do you provide costumes?**

We do not provide costumes for the children and we ask you to find something during

the week. We do not expect you to buy anything expensive, but instead we will give you some basic ideas then it is up to you to get creative at home! We always have an arts and crafts afternoon where the children can make masks or props to add to their costumes. Please bring your costume in a named bag so it does not get lost.

#### **14 What happens to Lost Property?**

All lost property is kept in the lost property box in/near the main hall. We will collect all items at the end of the week and leave them in the box. At the end of term, if the items have not been collected then we will take them to a charity shop. Please call us if you believe your child has left something and we will arrange a time for you to collect it.

#### **15 What happens if my child is ill? How do you deal with first aid?**

Please inform a teacher if your child has a specific allergy or is not feeling too well that day. If children feel ill, then we will carry out basic checks and if we are concerned, then we will contact the parent. We have several fully stocked first aid kits and staff are trained with basic first aid care. We will always assess the situation and keep parents in the loop. If your child is not well that day, please call us, as it may be best to keep them at home if their illness is infectious. Should your child require medication during the day, please email us beforehand and you will be asked to sign a form, giving permission for us to administer this.

#### **16 Do you take photographs or videos of the children?**

We do take several photographs throughout the week on the Gems phone and some of these may be used on our website, social media and email marketing. On the booking form, please inform us if you would rather we did NOT take any photographs or videos of your child. When sharing the images, we do not include the children's names and try to avoid faces where possible. We ask that parents do not share images of other children online.

Any further questions, please email [hello@gemsperformingarts.com](mailto:hello@gemsperformingarts.com) or call 07946 176 452  
We look forward to welcoming your child.