

Choosing the very best nursery for your child

It is a good idea, before you visit, to think of some questions to ask

People

Research evidence shows that the best form of day care, whether provided by nursery, child minder or parent, is where there is good interaction between carers and children so important things to consider are...

- How many full time staff are employed?
- Is there a high staff turnover?
- Have any staff left during the last year?
- How many staff have relevant qualifications in child care?
- Are younger children organised in small groups with Key workers?
- What provision is made when staff are on holiday or sick?
- Is there always a suitably qualified first-aid person on the premises?
- Will the care staff ask about your child in the morning?
- Will they report back to you at night?
- Can parents visit freely and is there an open evening?
- What is the extent of parent involvement?
- Have staff who drive the minibus had appropriate training?
- Is the workforce up to date with relevant training?
- Has the nursery achieved any of the following kite marks?
 - N.D.N.A. Quality Counts
 - Investors in Children
 - Healthy Eating Awards
 - Investors in People

Premises

Is there a range of equipment for your child?

Are materials and toys accessible and creative?

Is there daily, supervised outdoor play?

Are there opportunities for both quiet play and boisterous play?

Are there resting times to support your child's routine?

Do outings take place, and what are the supervision arrangements?

VISIT..... LOOK..... LISTEN..... QUESTION..... THINK.....

Your child

- Is there a settling in procedure?
- What will their routine be?
- Is there a time table of activities?
- Does the nursery reflect the social, religious & cultural needs of your child?
- Are you happy with the discipline arrangements and the educational and developmental philosophy of the nursery?
- Do the children seem animated and interested in what they are doing?
- Is the noise level reasonable?
- Do the staff seem to be experienced and provide you with confidence?
- Is food prepared fresh on the premises?
- Is the menu varied and healthy?
- Can the nursery cater for special dietary requirements?

Fees

- What is the fee exactly? Make sure you know what it includes.
- How often are the fees reviewed?
- Can payment arrangement be tailored to suit your needs?
- What period of notice do I have to give?
- What happens when we go in holiday?
- When is the nursery closed?
- Is the nursery able to offer a grant funded place for your child?

Every nursery has an inspection by Ofsted on a 3 year basis. The report should be available for you to read when visiting the nursery.

Concerning complaints

All nurseries must be registered by law and inspected regularly by Ofsted. If you are unhappy about the standard of care you witness during a visit to any nursery please use the complaint procedure on the Ofsted website.

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

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Choosing a Nursery