



TOP TIPS

Always take up references. You could ask other parents about your chosen provider.

Remember, you are making a contract with your childcare provider. Always ask enough questions to make sure you are comfortable with any contracts before you sign.

If your child seems unhappy, or unsettled in their setting – listen to them and try and find out why. You are the expert on your child, so always trust your feelings.



HOW TO CHOOSE CHILDCARE

REGISTRATION WITH OFSTED

All daycare providers must be registered with Ofsted if they are caring for children under 8 or for more than 2 hours per session. Ofsted inspects all day care providers regularly. The inspection requires providers to show that children are safe, well cared for and take part in activities that contribute to their development and learning. A certificate of registration should be on display on the premises together with a certificate of insurance.

For childcare providers that are not required to register but may wish to, there is now the Ofsted Voluntary registration scheme. You can find out more about this on the Ofsted website.

Inspection reports should be available made available by providers and can also be accessed on the Ofsted website at www.ofsted.gov.uk.



Wolverhampton Family Information Service

10 King Street Wolverhampton WV1 1ST

t 0800 294 9939 f 01902 574243 e enquiries@wolvesfis.com

There are many different types of childcare. You will want to decide what will best suit your child and is appropriate for their age.

Some childcare providers have waiting lists and you may have to plan in advance to ensure a place will be available for your child when you want it.

When visiting potential childcare providers, it is advisable to visit more than one provider and if appropriate, more than one type so you can compare.

Visit the providers on a normal working day. Take your child along to see their reaction to the setting and how staff communicate with your child.

Give yourself enough time to visit. Good childcare staff expect you to ask questions and will be happy to answer them. Visit a second or third time, and ask further questions if necessary.



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THINGS TO LOOK FOR WHEN YOU VISIT

- Does the setting make you and your child welcome?
- Are the children enjoying themselves?
- How do the staff and children interact with each other?
- Is there a variety of activities available and are children able to choose what they do?
- Is the equipment in good condition? Is there a variety of different types to choose from?
- What are the attitudes towards disability, more able children, gender and different cultures?
- Is there good access to and around the setting?
- Are there suitable changing facilities if your child is still in nappies?
- Do you feel that your child will be happy, settled and safe in this setting?

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- When and how do you pay for the care?
- Do you have to pay for
 - Absence due to holiday or sickness
 - Early morning, late evening or weekend care
 - Snacks, meals, outings, nappies etc
- How many children are there to each member of staff?
- Are all members of staff appropriately qualified? Are staff given the opportunity for further training?
- How is the day organised? How will the provider inform you about your child's day?
- Will you have a named person at the setting who will normally be your child's main carer?
- Is there an opportunity for children to be involved in physical play, either in a secure outdoor play area or by organised visits to nearby parks?
- Is the provider able to meet any additional needs, including dietary requirements your child has?
- How do staff manage challenging behaviour? Do they have a behaviour policy?
- How much notice do you have to give if your child leaves?
- Does the setting have a Special Needs Policy? Is there a special needs co-ordinator?
- Are parents actively encouraged to become involved?

CHILDREN WHO HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES

Additional support is available for parents/carers with children who have special needs and/or disabilities/ For more information please contact the Family Information Service on **0800 294 9939**