

# Nurseries and pre-schools/playgroups checklist

You can use this tear-out checklist when you visit a nursery or pre-school/playgroup. If you're visiting more than one, we suggest that you stick to the same questions so you can compare their answers.

## First impressions count

- Did you get a warm welcome when you arrived?
- Do the children there seem to be happy and content?
- Are the staff happy to show you around?
- Is there plenty of space outside for the children to play?
- Do the staff interact with your child?
- Can you meet other staff members?

## Vacancies and costs

- Are there any vacancies - if there is a waiting list, how long is it?
- Do you have to pay a deposit? If so, what's it for? Can you claim it back?
- How much do they charge per hour/day? Do you have to pay for holidays, meals, nappies and other activities?
- Do they offer Free Early Education for 2, 3 and 4 year olds? If you want extra hours how much will it cost?
- Do they accept payments from the Tax-Free Childcare scheme?
- Do they offer a settling in period, to see how your child gets on? If so, how long is it?

## Staffing and premises

- What's the ratio of staff to children? How many children do they care for?
- Do they have a key (named) person system?
- What's the staff turnover like?
- How well qualified and experienced are the staff?
- Are all the enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks up to date?
- Can you see a copy of the registration certificates and inspection reports?

## Activities and support

- What daily routines do they have and how can they build your child's routines and needs into their day?
- Where can your child have a sleep or rest?
- What happens if your child is unhappy? How would they be looked after?
- What's their policy on discipline, how do they manage children's behaviour?
- How will they cater for your child's dietary needs? What systems do they have in place if a child has a severe food allergy?
- How will your child's cultural background be reflected and respected? Are there staff from different backgrounds? Do they have books and activities that reflect all cultures? What about food, music and religious festivals?
- Will there be opportunities for you to get involved?
- How will they tell you about your child's progress? Will they give your child a record book or learning journey?
- Can they tell you about how they plan activities to meet individual children's interests and developmental needs?

## Emergencies

- What happens if your child is unwell when they are there?
- What happens if you are late picking your child up at the end of the day?
- How will they get hold of you in an emergency?