

Breakfast clubs, after school clubs and holiday playschemes checklist

You can use this tear-out checklist when you visit a breakfast club, after school club or holiday playscheme. 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 they open in the holidays, bank holidays or on inset days?
- Do you have to pay a deposit or retainer fee to secure a place?
- Do you have to pay for settling in time, when your child can get to know them before they start?
- How much are the fees, what do they include and when and how should you pay?
- Do they offer a discount if you pay for a whole week? Do they offer a sibling discount?
- Do you have to pay for holidays, meals, snacks and other activities?
- Do they accept payments from the Tax-Free Childcare scheme?

Staffing and premises

- How many children do they care for and what's the ratio of staff to children?
- Do they have a key (named) person system?
- What's the staff turnover like?
- How well qualified and experienced are the staff? Are staff qualified in playwork?
- Are all their enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks up to date?

Registration and paperwork

- Can you see a copy of their registration certificates and inspection reports?
- What records do they keep and how do they record accidents?

Activities and support

- Do children take part in daily indoor and outdoor activities? Is there direct access to the outside space?
- Are the resources easy for children to get too?
- What happens if your child is unhappy? How would they be looked after?
- How do they discipline the children and manage children's behaviour?
- 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?
- What will your child need to bring everyday?
- Do they undertake risk assessments on their premises and on outings?

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?