



Nottinghamshire
County Council

Nottinghamshire Families Information Service

Information for parents & carers

Day nurseries

Plus points

- Opportunities to mix with other children.
- Geared towards the needs of working parents.
- Professionally trained staff.
- Some offer free nursery education sessions for children aged three and four.

Choosing a day nursery

First you will need a list of registered day nurseries in your area from the Nottinghamshire Families Information Service (FIS) on 0800 781 2168.

Some nurseries are heavily subscribed so start your search as early as possible. Phone round the ones you think would be suitable to arrange a visit. Don't forget to check with your personnel department at work - they may have an agreement with a local nursery.

It is important to visit a few nurseries so you can get an idea of what you like and what you don't like. Visit the nurseries during the day when there are children around and take your own child with you.

These are some things to look out for:

- Your first impression - gut feelings count
- Is it clean?
- Are there play areas inside and out?
- Does it look safe and secure?
- Are there plenty of toys, activities and books?
- What are the babies doing?
- Do the children seem happy?
- Do the staff appear caring and welcoming?
- Are the staff talking to and playing with the children?

Don't be afraid to ask if you can speak to other parents who use the nursery to find out what they think. Don't forget to ask about the fees and check the terms and conditions.

Each nursery will have its own set of terms and conditions, they all should include acceptance of the place, date of issue, period of notice, belongings, allergies, payment dates, illness and fees.

When you find a nursery that you like, tell them sooner rather than later because you might lose your place. You may be asked to pay a deposit at this stage, normally a month's fee. If you are on a waiting list for several months before a vacancy opens it is a good idea to visit the nursery again to check it hasn't changed.

Top questions to ask a nursery:

- What is the ratio of carers to children?
- What was the turnover of staff last year?
- What qualifications or training do the staff have?
- What happens if my child falls ill at nursery?
- What will be my child's routine?
- Who covers for staff when they are ill?
- What food is served, are there vegetarian options and choice and do staff eat with children? Ask to see a sample menu.
- How is information passed to parents?
- What is the settling in policy?
- What is the policy on discipline?
- What safety and security measures are in place?

Help paying for your childcare

