



Choosing Childcare and Other Activities



Choosing the right childcare or other activities can be a difficult task and we hope the information in this leaflet will be useful.

www.familyspacecroydon.co.uk





Ofsted

Ofsted registration helps to make sure that children and young people are cared for in the safe environment they need. If your child's school is providing childcare or activities, these will be included in the school's own registration (unless the care is for children aged 3 years or under).

Early Years Register (EYR)

Providers must join this register if they are caring for children from birth to 5 years. Any provider on this register must adhere to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). These will include childminders, day nurseries, pre-schools, out of school and holiday clubs.

Compulsory part of the Childcare Register (CCR)

Providers must join this register if they are caring for children from 5 years to 7 years. These will include childminders, out of school and holiday clubs and some day nurseries and pre-schools.

Voluntary part of the Childcare Register (VCR)

Providers caring for children aged 8 years and over or those caring for children in the child's own home are not required to register, but may choose to join this register. These will include childminders, nannies, out of school and holiday clubs and activity based care such as sports, drama and language or arts clubs.

Schools offering childcare or activities before or after school or during school holidays, where the care is provided by the school's own board of governors, cannot register on the Childcare Register.

Different types of childcare

These are now registered by Ofsted under the following categories:

- Childminder
- Childcare on domestic premises
- Childcare on non-domestic premises
- Home Childcarers





- Childminders – (Childminder) - provide full or part time childcare for reward in someone’s home – usually their own, for children of all ages up to 18 years of age.
- Day nurseries - provide full or part time childcare in a setting, for children aged up to 5 years, all year round. Some nurseries provide out of school care for older children.
- Pre-schools - provide part time childcare in a setting, for children aged 2 years up to 5 years, normally term time only.
- Out of school clubs - provide full or part time childcare before and after school and during school holidays in a setting, for children of primary school age. Some clubs will cater for younger or older children.
- Nannies - provide full or part time childcare in the child’s own home, for children of all ages.
- Crèche - provide childcare on an occasional basis in a setting, for children of all ages.
- Activity based care – provides care and activities for children of all ages.

Whichever type of childcare setting your child attends in Croydon, there is a programme of professional support for providers caring for children so that any concerns or issues you may have regarding your child’s development can be addressed at the earliest opportunity.

Choosing quality provision and arranging childcare or activities

- Try to arrange your childcare or activity in good time.
- Look at all available options and visit a range of providers.
- Think about combining different types of childcare
- Think about your child’s needs when making a choice and ensure that it meets your requirements.
- Don’t feel guilty about revisiting providers or taking someone with you.





Childcare providers and staff

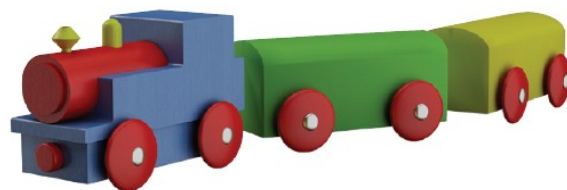
- What qualifications or recent training do the provider or staff team have and is there an on-going training and supervision plan?
- Do all staff have a Disclosure & Barring Service check (DBS) and is there a qualified first aider present at all times?
- Who will be your child's key person and how does this role work?
- How many children are cared for and are there adequate staff to ensure your child gets the attention they need?

Buildings and environment

- Is it safe and secure but accessible for those with additional needs?
- Is it clean, bright and welcoming?
- Is there outdoor provision or arrangements for outdoor play?
- Are there suitable changing and toilet facilities for your child?
- Are there suitable sleeping arrangements?
- Where will your child eat and is there a varied menu? Are there arrangements for special diets?

Equipment and activities

- Is the equipment creative, varied, plentiful and of a high standard and reflect the age range of the children cared for?
- Do the activities and equipment reflect cultural diversity?
- Do the children have free choice and access to activities?
- Is there a quiet area?
- Will the activities support your child's learning and development in a positive way?
What outings will your child be taking part in?





Documentation

- Ask to see the Ofsted registration certificate and inspection reports.
- Ask to see relevant insurance documents e.g. public liability and/or car insurance. Does the childcare provider have clear policies and procedures on, for example, safeguarding children, behaviour, management and administration of medicines?
- Ask about terms and conditions e.g. notice period, holiday and sickness pay, retainer fees, deposits, contract review periods etc. before signing anything.
- Clarify what is included in your fees and when they are reviewed, whether a deposit is required, what it covers and whether it is returnable or is used to offset fees.

Paying for childcare

If you are using or going to use any of the providers on any of the registers and you are eligible, you may be able to get help with your childcare costs through the Working Tax Credit or employer-supported childcare schemes. The free entitlement for 15 hours a week childcare and education becomes available from the term after your child becomes 3 years old – please check with your childcare provider how this scheme is administered.

Settling in

Once you have found your childcare, your child will need to become familiar with a new routine. A good provider will always offer a settling-in period which should be included as part of your contract. Prepare your child for the changes and reassure them. No matter how old your child is, it can be difficult to leave them and it will take time to adjust.





Useful websites and numbers

www.familyspacecroydon.co.uk – Croydon’s new website for childcare and other family related services

www.ofsted.gov.uk – government website where you can access inspection reports for providers and schools and other information on registered providers and Ofsted regulations.

Ofsted Telephone Helpline and Complaints Line

0845 6404040.

www.direct.gov.uk – government website for information on all public services including childcare, funding, education and learning.

www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits - government website for advice on tax credits. Tax Credit helpline 0845 3003900

