Day Nurseries

What is a Day Nursery?

Day nurseries provide care and early year’s education for children from six weeks to school age. They are all registered with Ofsted, and work towards the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Most nurseries can offer free childcare places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.

Choosing a day nursery:

First you will need to obtain a list of registered day nurseries in your area. This is available from the Nottinghamshire Families Information Service (FIS) at www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk and clicking to enter the Families directory.

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 don’t like. Visit the nurseries during the day when there are children around and take your own child with you.

Here are a few things to look out for:

- Is it clean?
- Your first impression – gut feelings count!
- Are there play areas inside and out?
- Are there plenty of toys, activities & books?
- What are the babies doing?
- Do the children seem happy?
- Do the staff appear caring and welcoming?
- How are the staff interacting with 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.

When you find a nursery 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, which is usually 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 day 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 if they are ill?
- What food is served? 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?

There may be other questions you may want to ask – Take time to think of these before you visit.

Contact information:

Phone: 0300 500 8080
Monday to Friday: 8am to 8pm
Saturday: 8am to 12 noon

Email: enquiries@nottscc.gov.uk
Website: www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk