



THINGS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN STARTING A NURSERY.

Nursery Environment

Is the nursery clean, well-organised, safe and well-maintained? What condition are the toys in? Realistically is the setting conveniently sited for your journey to and from work? Is it part of a group, or is it independent? How big is the outside play space and is it accessible to the children all day?

Atmosphere

Do the children seem relaxed and happy? Are the staff responsive and caring? Do the staff smile at you when you enter the room, are they interacting with the children or just sat? Try to talk to other parents if you can. Are the children active and busy or rigidly controlled and directed? There should be a happy burble of continuous noise.

Routine

What will your child do on a typical day? Is there a good mix of creative play, free play and sitting-down activities? When and where do naps or quiet times happen? Are the children able to access the outdoors, how often do they go outside.

Positive Behaviour Policy

How is good behaviour encouraged and rewarded? How is challenging behaviour handled? What is the policy on discipline?

Staff Qualifications

What are the credentials of the nursery team, especially in the baby room? How many fully qualified staff are there? How many level 3 and above staff do they have? What is staff turn over like?

Staff to Child Ratio

Over 2's 1:4, (although government changed to 1:5 - have they changed this or remaining on a 1:4) Over 3's 1:8. Is the nursery relying on students and untrained staff to meet the required ratio? Remember, very young children are sensitive to contact changes.

Ofsted Inspections

Is there a recent Ofsted report? If so, you may wish to discuss it with the Manager as reports may not tell the whole story.

Food, Medicine and Care Policies

What are the children given to eat and at what times? Are dietary needs catered for? Does the nursery have a medicine policy? (A setting can administer prescribed medicine- if they have a robust procedure.)

Parent/nursery Relationships

Is the setting run by an absentee owner and if so, who decides nursery policy? How does the setting keep parents informed of their child's progress? Is the Manager/ key person available to talk to parents at the beginning or end of each day? (This can make a real difference.) Does the Manager/Key Person follow the child's overall development and encourage the parents to advise of any change in home circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour?

Extras

Ask for the policy on late collections. Will there be a charge?
Check whether nappies, meals, uniforms, or anything else is charged extra.
Is there a charge in closure periods or bank holidays? Is there a deposit or registration fee?
How far in advance are fees due? Understand the Terms and Conditions.

Finally, trust your own instinct.

Only you will be able to tell if your child will be happy there ...

Happy adults, Happy children!

