



What to check when choosing a playscheme or after school activity

If you are choosing to use an organisation that is not on the Local Authority's list of approved service providers, the Joint Service recommends that you check the following:

- Do all staff have a current police check (this was previously a CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) check but is now called a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Scheme) check?)
- How many staff work at the service and are staffing levels sufficient to meet the needs of the children at the group?
- Are there staff working who have First Aid training and are there staff with a First Aid qualification?
- Who is the Manager, and what kind of qualifications and experience do they have? Arrange to meet and talk to them.
- Does the organisation have a training plan for staff which includes induction training (essential training when you first join the service) and ongoing training to ensure staff continue to develop their skills and knowledge?
- Have all staff attended Safeguarding (Child Protection) training?
- How do staff manage behaviour that challenges and what training have they completed?
- Are there health and safety procedures in place to ensure that your child, staff and the building are safe?
- Does the organisation have policies and procedures and risk assessments in place?
- Does the organisation have Public Liability Insurance?
- Are there robust recruitment processes in place to ensure that staff have the right attitude, experience and knowledge to care for your child safely?
- If choosing a holiday playscheme, will your child need to attend for the whole holiday period?
- Can the scheme hold your child's place open while you take a family holiday? (e.g. during summer break)?
- Are outings arranged, are you happy for your child to attend any outings and is there an additional cost?
- Will your child enjoy the structure of a holiday playscheme?
- If your child's session needs to be cancelled by you, will a charge still be made?
- Is the playscheme registered with Ofsted if children under 8 years of age attend? If so, when was the last inspection and what was the judgement?
- How many children attend the service and what is the age range?
- How will the staff contact you in an emergency?



WHAT TO CHECK WHEN CHOOSING A PLAYScheme

- Are the facilities and equipments suitable to meet the needs of children with disabilities?
- On what hours and days does the service operate?
- What is the current charge?
- Are the ages mixed during activities?
- What range of activities is available?
- Are snacks/meals provided?
- Do you need to supply pads, snacks, etc.?
- Are staff welcoming and approachable and interested in you and your child?
- Are staff listening and responding to children and joining in with their play?
- Is the environment bright, comfortable, secure and clean with plenty of floor space for children to move around and with examples of children's work on display?
- Are there clean and safe toys and equipment, appropriate for the different stages of children's development?
- Are there activities planned and can my child choose which activities they do?
- How much individual attention do the children get?
- Is there a quiet area where children can chill out?

Remember you can ask the Manager if you would like to see evidence of any of these.