

CHILD CARE CENTRE CHECKLIST

We have compiled a useful checklist on the things parents should note when considering a centre for their child.

Before You Visit/Over the Phone	Yes	No	n/a	?
Think about the days and times you require care and call the centre to make sure it can meet your requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask whether you can change your days of care if your work situation changes and ask how much notice you will be required to give.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Think about how you will travel to the centre and whether it is in a good location. Would you prefer it closer to home, work or a family member's home and is it close to public transport or car parking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask what the hours of operation are and which days of the year the centre is closed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What are the daily fees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the centre offer occasional or sessional care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you claim the Child Care Subsidy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask what the procedure is if you are running late to pick up your child and what fees will be charged.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Find out whether the centre can meet your religious and/or cultural requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Find out whether the centre offers an induction program which you and your child can participate in.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

During your Visit - Initial impressions	Yes	No	n/a	?
Is the atmosphere relaxed and happy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you hear laughter and the sounds of children playing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you and your child feel welcome?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do staff members seem interested in your child and did they make an effort to talk to him or her?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the reception area clean, tidy and organised?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do the rooms seem well organised, clean and tidy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Were you offered introductions of all staff and a tour of the centre?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Accreditation	Yes	No	n/a	?
Has the service been assessed under the National Quality Framework?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If so what was the rating?				
Does the service have a Quality Improvement Plan? Can you view the plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Security	Yes	No	n/a	?
Does the centre seem safe and secure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did a centre employee greet you at the door and sign you in?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you notice restricted areas and security access areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are centre staff easy to identify and do they wear name badges?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Health and safety	Yes	No	n/a	?
Are there procedures in place to document any accidents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there an established fire drill and are exits clearly marked?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How will you be advised if your child is sick or has an accident?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What action are you required to take if you child is sick or has an accident?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are staff members who can administer CPR and first aid available at all times?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are centre staff able to administer medication?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the centre have a sun protection policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are children required to wear hats and sun block whenever they are outside?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where do children sleep? What sort of mattresses and coverings are used? Are you required to purchase a set of sheets?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are nappies changed? Does the area look clean and hygienic?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What is the centre hand washing policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How does the centre ensure No Jab No Play is enforced?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What is the procedure in case of a breakout of a communicable illness?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Lines of communication	Yes	No	n/a	?
Were you given a copy of the centre's operating policies and procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you agree with the centre's philosophy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you understand what your responsibilities and obligations will be?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you understand what the centre will take responsibility for?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you required to provide authorisation or permission to administer medications, attendance at extra-curricular activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How will you receive feedback about your child's day? Information may include preferred activities, food eaten, children played with and so on.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there regular newsletters to keep parents informed about what's going on in the centre?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How should you contact the centre if you need to talk to staff about something? Should you call, make an appointment, email or drop in?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Management, staff and supervision	Yes	No	n/a	?
Who manages the child care centre? Can you meet him/her?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the manager also supervise the staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What are the child to carer ratios at the centre?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What background checks are completed on staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What qualifications do staff members hold?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What is the staff turnover rate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a balance between older and younger carers and men and women?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the centre have staff members from a range of ethnic backgrounds?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What is the centre's procedure for dealing with complaints against staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the centre hold adequate insurance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do staff members interact with children or have a minding role?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are children supervised at all times?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How do staff members deal with behavioural issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the staff warm and engaged in what they are doing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you feel comfortable in approaching staff to chat and ask questions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Food and mealtimes	Yes	No	n/a	?
Are standards for food preparation and cleanliness high?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is all food cleaned up after snack and meal times?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What time is food offered? Is food available outside of these times if children are hungry?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are children allowed to eat at their own pace?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What happens if your child doesn't eat at the designated time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is water offered and available all day?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What food/beverages are you expected to provide?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How does the centre cope with food allergies and intolerances?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can the centre accommodate individual dietary requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a weekly menu on display, does it look interesting and varied?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the centre have a nutrition policy and do you agree with the policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What is the centre's approach to cakes/birthday treats?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Daily timetable	Yes	No	n/a	?
Does the centre have a daily timetable which you can see?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can your child's individual needs be accommodated if necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What is the procedure for putting children down at sleep time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What is the procedure for children who don't want to sleep?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Environment	Yes	No	n/a	?
Is the building light and pleasant to be in with good ventilation and/or air conditioning?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the building seem well maintained?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there plenty of space for the children to play?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the outside play equipment accommodate children of all different ages?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there an outside area with plenty of shade?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there places where children can go for quiet play?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the toilets and sinks clean and easy for the children to use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the sleeping areas separate to the play areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do children of different ages have separate areas to play or do they interact?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Toys and equipment	Yes	No	n/a	?
Is there a wide range of toys and books provided for the children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the toys at the right height for children to reach?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you see a range of toys suitable for children of all age groups?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do the toys look clean and intact?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can parents and children get involved in decisions about the purchase of new toys and equipment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do staff members help children play with the toys?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Planned activities and programs	Yes	No	n/a	?
Does the service follow the Early Years Learning Framework?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the service offer documented diaries or learning stories where parents can view the activities of the day?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there online/social networking forums where parents can keep track of their children during the day?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Planned activities and programs - Cont.	Yes	No	n/a	?
What percentage of your child's day will be spent on planned programs and what percentage will be spent on free play?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the centre enable children to participate in activities they might not be able to do at home such as painting, water play, collage making and playing in a sand pit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the centre do excursions? If so, what is the cost and how are they managed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a set daily routine?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the centre offer a range of programs for the children to participate in?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do these programs cater for all ages?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How are these programs developed? Are they designed to be educational? Do they take into account the cultural and religious diversity in the group?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes
