

NURSERY SPECIAL...NURSERY SPECIAL...NURSERY... SPECIAL...

child...choosing a nursery

How do you

Choose a Nursery ?

We asked the experts who run the nurseries!

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Frances Whiteside, Nursery Manager at **Kiddi Caru** in Northampton said:

"When looking for quality childcare look for happy children in a friendly, warm, interesting and safe environment. Are the playrooms interesting? Can you see the children's work on display?"

"This decision is very important and staff should be welcoming and able to answer any questions you may have."

Vicki Fowkes of **Stonewell Cottage Day Nursery** in Moulton said:

"If you are choosing a nursery visit as many as you can with your child. See where your child feels secure and if they go off and play happily, they feel comfortable there."

Robert Barnes of **Wings Nursery, Great Houghton Preparatory School** said:

"Look for a warm, stimulating and creative play-based environment in which children are viewed as independent thinkers and learners. Check that it is OFSTED registered to ensure that the National Standards for Day Care are being met."

Andrea Carvell of **Caring Kindergartens** said:

"I would read what Ofsted has said about the nursery and any accreditation it has achieved. I think cleanliness would be something to be aware of too. When you are having your tour look closely at how clean the toys, the kitchen and bathrooms are."

Jenny Wickham, owner of **Totstop Nursery** in Brackmills said:

"When choosing a nursery for their child a parent should look for dedicated, caring staff who respond to individual children's needs. The nursery should aim to make sure the children are happy and confident and are offered activities which stimulate and stretch their abilities. The nursery should also provide a balanced diet with lots of fresh fruit and vegetables."

Olive Rack, of **Tresco Day Nursery** in Kettering said: "A good indicator to look for when choosing a nursery is the quality of staff employed. Dedicated, caring, experienced staff provide the foundations for a good nursery."

Angela Evans of **Alphabet Day Nurseries** said: "It's such an important decision you are making so you have to be sure.

"Think about it before you go to visit the nurseries and write a list of questions you want answered.

"Also I believe parents need to have that gut feeling that the nursery is right for their for child - and for them. They need to be comfortable and have confidence."

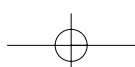
Melissa Banford of **Rhymetime Nursery** said: "We also believe when you leave your children in a nursery you should feel like you're leaving them with friends.

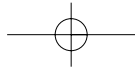
"We believe you should look for approachable staff in a friendly welcoming environment."

Roberta Simpson, Senior Operations Manager for **Leapfrog Day Nurseries** said, "As mums and dads you will have any number of considerations such as the size of the Nursery, whether it's an old or new building, the location, affordability and if the opening hours suit their needs. However, the most important thing of all of is the happiness of your child – make sure they feel comfortable and the environment suits them.

"Visiting the Nursery and meeting the Manager and staff is absolutely critical. Try and visit at a time when a session is in full swing to see how the children are interacting with the staff, whether they look happy and are having fun."

Acorn Nursery's Group Childcare Manager said: "A good nursery is run by committed staff who are child focused. It is important for staff to establish and maintain good relationships with parents / carers and involve them in activities throughout the child's time. A good nursery should be fully inclusive and provide for each child's individual needs, whilst encouraging their personal development within the age appropriate curriculum framework."





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Choosing a nursery

Choosing a nursery is a big decision as this is often the first time you are entrusting your precious child to the care of somebody else.

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Here are some tips to consider.

Decide What You Want

Word of mouth and recommendation is always a great way to hear about a nursery. However it is important to remember that what suits one person, may not suit another.

Decide what you want before start looking - for example, a small nursery with a cosy, homely feel, or a larger nursery with a wider range of facilities.

Look at where the nurseries are, and decide how easy it will be for you to drop off and collect your child.

Know what hours, or sessions you want, so you can check that the nursery can meet your needs.

Look Around

In this day and age there are plenty of nurseries to choose from and it is worth looking at as many as you can before making your decision.

Look at the children in each nursery and see if they are relaxed, happy and busy.

Bear in mind seasonal changes - look outside and imagine what the outdoor play facilities will be like in the winter.

Have a good look around, take your time, and don't be afraid to ask questions.

Nursery & Parent Liaison

Find out what arrangements there are for parents to find out how their child has been throughout each day.

Will a member of staff have a special interest in your child?

Practical Issues

Look at practical issues which may arise from your child going to a particular nursery.

Visit it at drop off and pick up times - is parking a problem?

Also if you have or are planning more children, will the nursery accommodate a baby too, so you can have both children at the same nursery?

Check prices and what the rate quoted includes. Is there extra costs of lunches, snacks, etc

Ofsted

Look at Ofsted reports - they are public documents and every nurseries should let you see it.

Some

nurseries may also have

accreditation which you can also ask about.

Gut Feeling

Often parents get a gut feeling when a nursery is right for their child.

Remember that although it is the child who will go to the nursery, the parents have to feel comfortable and confident about leaving their child there - so make sure it feels right.

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