

A guide for quality care for your baby

Choosing childcare for your baby is one of the most important decisions you'll make as a new parent. The process may seem overwhelming, and you may be uncertain of what questions to ask or what to look for. To help, a group of new and expecting parents have created a list of suggested questions to ask your potential childcare provider.



Quality Childcare Guide

What to ask:

- Will my baby be held a lot and have lots of “conversation” and physical nurturing?
 - How will that happen without a one-to-one ratio?
 - What if my baby cries?
- What kind of experience and training will the staff in my baby’s room have?
 - How do I know that they will be loving, competent and caring people?
 - How long have the caregivers been at the nursery?
- What precautions have been taken to limit the spread of germs?
- How will I know what my baby’s routine – feeding, sleeping and changing – has been for the day?
- Will I get an update of what my baby has done that day?
 - How will you communicate with me so I don’t miss any milestones?
- How do you manage a wide range of ages/abilities in one room?

What to look for:

- Does the nursery have a secure entrance?
- Are all families and visitors greeted?
- Do the babies seem happy and comfortable in the room?
- Do the staff seem happy and engaged with the babies?

My baby’s day

	Provider 1	Provider 2	Bright Horizons
Will you adjust to my baby’s routine or are all of the babies on the same routine?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Will you take the babies outside every day?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do the babies get time on their tummies each day?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is there time set aside each day for babies to be held, sit on an adult’s lap, have cuddle time, etc?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are there additional activities for babies, such as signing, storytelling, music and singing?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Can I call or visit any time I want?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Can I bring items from home, including blankets and stuffed toys, to comfort my baby?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Quality Childcare Guide

Health and hygiene

	Provider 1	Provider 2	Bright Horizons
Is the nursery professionally cleaned?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are changing mats cleaned and gloves and aprons worn during nappy changing?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are nappies, wipes, and cream labelled for each child?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you clean the toys after they have been in a child's mouth?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do staff hold current first aid certificates?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you label/mark breast milk and formula?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Can I bring frozen breast milk?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Caregiver

	Provider 1	Provider 2	Bright Horizons
Will my baby have one Key Person or many different caregivers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do staff attend continuing professional development training and courses?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do staff have access to educational resources e.g. curriculum guides, activity books and professional journals?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are staff involved in an annual system of performance evaluation and goal setting?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is there an opportunity for formal feedback through a parent satisfaction survey?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Parent support

	Provider 1	Provider 2	Bright Horizons
Is there a process for preparing my baby and me for our first day at the nursery?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is there a quiet place to feed a baby?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you provide cot sheets and bibs etc?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is there a system for answering or addressing my questions or concerns?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you offer any parent education?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is there a parent information area or notice board?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are there opportunities for parents to meet as a group?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Quality Childcare Guide

General things to look for

	Provider 1	Provider 2	Bright Horizons
Do you feel comfortable with the Key Person for your baby? <i>(You will be working together with this caregiver to create a positive experience for your baby. It is important that you feel you can have a good, open relationship.)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does the room sound and smell pleasant?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does the nursery feel comfortable when you walk in? <i>(reception by staff, interactions between staff and parents, staff and children, etc.)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do the staff seem happy together?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do they work well together?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is there a variety of materials and toys – including natural and everyday home materials – for babies of all ages to explore?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are indoor and outdoor environments child-sized and designed specially for children of all developmental abilities and needs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you see evidence of reading to babies and toddlers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are children happily and busily engaged in interesting and diverse activities and projects?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you see displays of what the children are doing and learning?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is the nursery actively involved in the community?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Notes