



<b>STOP</b>	Our babies and toddlers are unable to express their experience at childcare. We need to ensure they are treated with kindness and respect by trained child care professionals.
<b>STUDY</b>	Read through our checklist and work out your top priorities when choosing a centre.
<b>ACT</b>	Use this checklist as a prompt when you talk to your prospective care centre. Ask around for good centres in your area. Facebook can be good place to start for reviews.

The importance of choosing the right care environment for your child cannot be over exaggerated. Children are not only vulnerable, they are impressionable. They need a safe and happy environment surrounded by care givers who are adequately trained and who care about their physical and mental well-being. The first five years of your child's life is critical to brain development. While connections in the brain are made throughout our lives, the rapid pace of brain growth and development in the first five years is never repeated.

AVAILABILITY	Rec. Requirements	Comments
Is there currently a place available for my child?	Yes	
What are the drop off and pick up times?	-	
What happens if I am late? Is there a fee? What public & term holidays are taken?	No Fee	

REGISTRATION	Rec. Requirements	Comments
Has the centre been registered with the government?	Yes, check your governmental requirements.	
Is the centre audited annually to ensure best practice? Who regulates the practices at the centre?	Yes	

COSTS	Rec. Requirements	Comments
What is the cost of care? Are there any additional charges?	-	
Is there a charge when children are sick or away?	-	
What school supplies do I need to purchase?	-	
Do I need to purchase a uniform or a school bag?	-	

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	Rec. Requirements	Comments
What policies and procedures are in place? Can you see them?	Examples include health and safety, security, first aid, hygiene, child protection, excursions, emergencies, infection control, immunisation and nutrition.	



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	Rec. Requirements	Comments
What is the entry and exit procedure for my child?	Clearly defined to ensure safe transfer of your child.	
Will the staff welcome you into the centre any time you want to see your child?	Yes – <u>always!</u>	

SAFETY	Rec. Requirements	Comments
What health, safety and first aid training is provided to the staff?	Sufficient training and yearly renewal	
If my child hurts him/herself seriously (falls off equipment) and you can't reach me on the phone, what do you do? How do you rectify the safety issue?	Proper procedures followed	
Are high hazards areas separated from children by lockable safety gates? I.e. Kitchen – burns/electrocution, bathroom – drowning or poisoning, car parking area – child gets hit by a car while playing.	Installation of safety gates to keep children out of high risk areas	
Are there non slip mats in wet areas?	Slips, trips, falls	
Do they have smoke (and gas) detectors, fire blankets, and an emergency management plan? Can you see it? Are there fire drills?	Installed and working	

HEALTH	Rec. Requirements	Comments
What steps are put in place to prevent infectious diseases?	Regular hand washing, daily cleaning of toys	
Do staff use gloves to change nappies and clean up any bodily fluids (urine, vomit, faeces, blood)	Infectious disease prevention	
Are children who are sick isolated in order to protect other children from getting ill?	Yes. Designated area or staffroom.	
Does the centre take a child's temperature upon arrival? What does the centre do if they have a temperature?	Yes, sent home with high temp.	
Do you have a first aid kit and first aid manual?	Available and sufficient	
What is the name and phone number of the doctor (and other emergency contacts) that the centre will call in a worst case scenario?	List provided	
How does the centre know when to call a doctor?	Plan or procedure	
Is there a swimming pool? How is access and safety controlled?	Gated and secured.	



HEALTH	Rec. Requirements	Comments
What is the strategy on sun safety? Are a children required to wear hat outside? Is sunscreen provided?	Yes, hats required.	
How does the centre approach toilet training? How is a child treated if they have an accident?	Patience, never any punishment.	
Do children (& staff) have to be immunised in order to attend?	<u>YES!</u>	
What is the procedure for a child who has an allergic reaction?	Proper procedures followed	
How does the centre prevent the spread of germs? Do you clean with soap or bleach and how often?	Toys cleaned daily.	
What dengue and malaria controls are used? Are children given effective mosquito repellents when playing outside (see our Dengue Prevention and Mosquito Repellents document)	Good procedures and proven mosquito repellents used	

SECURITY	Rec. Requirements	Comments
Are there CCTV cameras installed at all entrances / exits? Does the centre use security guards?	Recommended	
How do you ensure that only authorised persons pick up my child? Am I required to provide photos? How do you know who is/is not authorised?	Photos required	
Does the centre ask for three emergency contacts?	Yes	
Are age appropriate car seats used for the children? Are bus drivers trained in defensive driving skills? Do they agree not to use their phone while driving?	Yes	
How does the centre ensure kids don't get lost on excursions?	1 teacher per 7 kids from 3 years, counting on/off	

STAFF NUMBERS, QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING	Rec. Requirements	Comments
Is the staff to child ratio adequate?	International Standards recommend; 1:3 for infants under 1 year, 1:5 for children aged 1 to 3 years and 1:7 for children aged 3 to 6 years.	
How does the centre plan staffing for school breaks in order to maintain required staff/child ratios?	Ensure required ratios are kept	
Are all people working at the centre police checked?	Police checking	



STAFF NUMBERS, QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING	Rec. Requirements	Comments
Ask to meet the staff that your child will have contact with during their day to day activities.	Acceptable to your requirements.	
Who monitors the children during naptime?	Carers only	
What are the minimum qualifications for teachers and teaching aids?	Diploma or University	
Is there a separate area for the care of babies? Are the carers trained to care for small infants?	Separate area	
What in house training programs do you conduct for staff?	Additional training provided	

ENVIRONMENT	Rec. Requirements	Comments
Does the centre lock all chemicals (e.g. cleaning, pest control) away from children? Are there MSDS sheets for chemicals in case of poisoning?	Locked away, MSDS available	
How often does the centre audit and rectify hazards in the centre?	Checked weekly	
Does the centre have good ventilation? Is the centre away from traffic and dust?	Away from heavy traffic	
Does the centre look well maintained? No mould, clean air-cons, no dust, no flaking paint.	Well maintained.	

PLAY AREAS	Rec. Requirements	Comments
Are there enough toys for the children to play with? Does it look bright and happy?	Sufficient for child	
Does the playground equipment meet safety standards? Does it look safe and well maintained?	Soft ground under equipment	
Does the centre have a safe, enclosed outside play area (never near cars) that encourages gross motor skills (climbing, running and jumping)?	Outdoor play area available	
Is there room to run? Is there outdoor play in a safe area as well as a place for quiet play?	Mix of play areas	
Check for jagged edges and rusty or poorly maintained play equipment.	Well maintained	

CURRICULUM	Rec. Requirements	Comments
What activities are there to encourage imagination? Do the children look happy and engaged?	More imaginative play then rote learning	
Are there opportunities to experience art, music, group/individual play and indoor and outdoor play?	Art and music available	



CURRICULUM	Rec. Requirements	Comments
How does the centre accommodate special needs children?	Specialist teachers	
What is the education philosophy? How does the centre train your staff in this?	Philosophy clear and followed	
Does the centre have a television? How much television do the children watch per day?	Not recommended	
What is the primary language spoken at school?	Your requirements	
How is physical activity promoted in the curriculum?	Daily activity	
How does the centre report my child's progress? Is it done on a weekly basis?	Reporting as per your requirements	
What is the discipline policy? What is the theory behind the method? Offer "what if" scenarios, "what if my child throws a toy at another child's head"	No hitting, caning or corporal punishment	
Look for evidence of positive caregiving, especially the language used by the caregivers. This is linked to high quality care and positive feelings for your kids.	Acceptable to your requirements.	
How do carers calm or comfort a child if they are stressed?	Acceptable to your requirements.	
Do caregivers handle conflicts without losing patience, shaming a child, or displaying anger?	No anger or shaming	

NUTRITION	Rec. Requirements	Comments
Where is food prepared? Is it fresh? What are their fresh food and hygiene procedures? Does the kitchen and fridge look clean?	Clean, healthy and hygienic	
Does the centre provide formula? Check the nutritional value, is it in date, how is it prepared?	As required	
Is there a no nuts/seeds policy?	Yes	
Does the centre meet food HALAL requirements?	As required	
Ask to see a sample menu for a week or two.	Healthy food	
Are extra helpings available for big eaters?	As required	
Who designs the meals? Are they balanced and nutritious? Are alternatives available?	Healthy food	
Can my child eat breakfast or dinner at the centre?	As required	
Is a late afternoon snack available for children who are picked up late? Or, children who start early?	As required	
Can you cater for allergies and food sensitivities? Are kitchen staff trained for this?	Yes	