

What is a Day Nursery?

A day nursery provides care and learning opportunities for children aged six weeks to five years. They are usually privately owned and run.

How are they registered?

Day nurseries must be registered with OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education). They inspect the nursery to check that the standards relating to health and safety, equipment, care, learning and play are met.

Following registration, OFSTED will inspect the nursery every three years. Day nursery inspection reports are available to parents on the OFSTED website www.ofsted.gov.uk

How are they staffed?

Any person in charge of children under the age of eight must have a minimum of a level 3 qualification and two years' experience relevant to the post. A Deputy must hold a level 3 qualification in Childcare and Education. At least half of the remaining staff must hold a level 2 qualification.

The table below shows the ratio of staff to children stipulated by OFSTED.

Age of child	Number of children	Number of staff
0-2 years	3	1
2-3 years	4	1
3-8 years	8	1

What are the usual opening hours?

Most day nurseries are open 8am-6pm. However, you will need to check with the individual nursery for flexible opening hours and details of holiday closures such as bank holidays.

How much do they cost?

Most day nurseries will charge either an hourly, daily or weekly rate. The fee will be agreed between you and the nursery depending on the hours you want. It is best to contact the nursery for their up to date charges. Remember to check what is included in the overall cost and agree this before signing the contract.

What if my child has an accident or falls ill?

If your child has an accident at nursery, you must ask to sign their accident/incident book. All nurseries must have a policy about the exclusion of children who are ill or infectious, which is discussed with parents.

How do I choose a day nursery?

Choosing the right nursery for you and your child is a big decision and it is important that you visit as many as possible in order to make the right decision. The following notes are designed to help you to do this. It is a good idea to ask to see the nursery's registration certificate as specific conditions of registration imposed on individual nurseries may vary. OFSTED state that the registration certificate should be displayed at all times.

Questions to ask on a visit:

- What hours is the nursery open?
- What does the nursery charge and what is included in the price?
- What are the procedures around sickness and holidays, including charges?
- Will the nursery supply meals? Will they cater for any special dietary requirements?
- How many members of staff are there and are they suitably qualified and experienced?
- How does the nursery encourage positive behaviour?
- How will you be kept informed of your child's progress?
- Is there a settling in period available for your child?

Things to look for:

- Are you and your child welcomed into the setting?
- Are the other children happy, confident and having fun?
- Is the environment clean, comfortable and appropriate for your child?
- Do the staff appear to have a good relationship with the children?
- Are the staff observant and quick to respond to the children's needs?
- Are there plenty of books, toys, activities and play equipment available?
- Is there plenty of space to move about, both inside and outside?

Remember, you know what is best for your child. Ask questions and find out as much as you can on a visit and then follow your feelings!

Would you like to know what's happening in Solihull for children and families? Then join our Parent's Network for regular information at www.solihull.gov.uk/parentsnetwork

Solihull Family Information Service

Call: 0800 389 8667

Email: familyinfo@solihull.gov.uk

Web: www.solihull.gov.uk/familyinfo



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