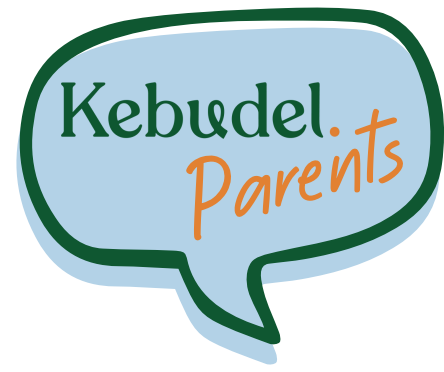


# Checklist for Parents:

## Choosing a childcare service for your child

Written by Angela Bush  
at Kebudel



Use this checklist as a guideline when you are choosing an early childhood service for your child. Always book to visit and look at a few different options before choosing a place. Remember to trust your instinct and choose the service that feels the best for your child and your family.

### Before you visit research your options online and find out;

- ☐ Location: proximity to your home or work place
- ☐ Size of the service and facilities offered (look through the photo gallery)
- ☐ Opening hours and options for attendance (sessions, all day, some may have minimum requirements to attend)
- ☐ Ownership: is this a community based, association operated, home based or privately owned service?

**What are the important non-negotiables in childcare for your family?** Make your own notes here

## When you visit the service: LOOK and LISTEN FOR

- ☐ How are the staff interacting with each other?
- ☐ How well do the children seem to be engaged in play?
- ☐ Are staff attending to any crying children kindly and reasonably quickly?
- ☐ How are the staff interacting with children?
- ☐ Does there seem to be enough equipment and resources for the number of children here without having to wait for long periods? What is the quality or condition of the resources and equipment like?
- ☐ How does it feel here?
  - Welcoming?
  - Loving?
  - Attentive?
  - Clear limits and boundaries for children's behaviour?
- ☐ Does the environment look clean and hygienic but not overly sterile?
  - Some mess from children playing is a good sign. If things are too tidy or the environment does not look played in, chances are children are not being given the opportunity to play and explore as much as they should be.
- ☐ Look to see the service's license (this should be displayed and include the license conditions)



## When you visit the service: Ask the following questions;

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> How many children are you licensed to care for here?   | <input type="checkbox"/> What are the age groups you cater for? Are these age groups separated or cared for together?               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> What is your philosophy on play and learning? Do you have any particular curriculum here?  | <input type="checkbox"/> What are the fees and terms of payment?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> What is the settling process? How many visits will my child be able to have here?  | <input type="checkbox"/> How long have your staff been here for?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is there a key teacher or primary care system here?  | <input type="checkbox"/> What are the staff ratios? (how many children per staff member?)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How many staff have a first aid certificate?   | <input type="checkbox"/> How many of the staff are qualified and to what level?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> What opportunities will my child have to explore all areas of the curriculum?  | <input type="checkbox"/> What are the rules about choosing to play inside or outside?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> What food is provided if any? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do meal times operate?</li><li>• What can my child do if they are hungry outside of meal times?</li><li>• How do children access drinking water?</li></ul> | <input type="checkbox"/> Are the staff required to clean the centre more than cleaning up after meals, play and bathroom incidents? |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Will I be required to pay for any absences for illness and family holidays?                                |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> How is children's behaviour managed here?  |





## Check what is provided by the ECE service and what you will need to provide for your child:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infant formula or milk     | <input type="checkbox"/> Food and drink    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wet bag for dirty clothing | <input type="checkbox"/> Nappies/diapers   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen and sunhat       | <input type="checkbox"/> Linen and bedding |

## Ask to see;

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Where children sleep  | <input type="checkbox"/> Information about the learning program and philosophy. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nappy changing and toilet facilities (it is usual for these to be a bit smelly as a child may have only recently been changed. But it should be reasonably tidy and clearly cleaned). | <input type="checkbox"/> Fees information                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A copy of the positive guidance policy.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Qualifications information                       |

