

# Information for prospective landlords of childcare providers



[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/childcare](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/childcare)

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## Introduction

Letting your premises to a 'high quality' childcare provider can be a valuable source of regular income for you, and can also help towards improving the life chances for children and families in the local area.

### **Before letting your property you should consider the following:**

1. Does the property meet the requirements for high quality childcare?
2. Is there a well-evidenced need for additional childcare provision in your area?
3. How will you identify and select the right childcare provider?

## 1. Does the property meet the requirements for high quality childcare?

You will need to consider the following:

- What are the legal requirements for childcare premises? *\*See below for further details.*
- Does it have 'free flow' access to a secure outdoor area?
- Does it have the correct planning permissions?
- Is there sufficient storage space?
- Is there secure storage for cleaning materials?
- Are there facilities available for doing laundry (not required in all circumstances)?
- Are the premises easily accessible by local parents and children?
- Is it available at the times required?

<b>Provider Type</b>	<b>Typical Hours of Operation</b>
Sessional Care	8.30am – 12pm and/or 12 – 3.30pm (term time only)
Full Day Care	7.30am – 6.30pm (all year)
Breakfast Club	7.30 – 9am (term time only)
After School Club	3 – 6.30pm (term time only)
Holiday Club	7.30am – 6.30pm (school holidays only)

### **\*Legal requirements for childcare on non-domestic premises**

- There must be an area which is adequately equipped to provide healthy meals, snacks and drinks for children as necessary. There must be suitable facilities for the hygienic preparation of food for children.
- Providers must ensure that their premises, including outdoor spaces, are fit for purpose. Spaces, furniture, equipment and toys, must be safe for children to use and premises must be secure. Providers must keep premises and equipment clean, and be aware of, and comply with, requirements of health and safety legislation (including hygiene requirements).
- Providers must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, staff and others on the premises in the case of fire or any other emergency, and must have an emergency evacuation procedure. Providers must have appropriate fire detection and control equipment (for example fire

alarms, smoke detectors and fire extinguishers) which is in working order. Fire exits must be clearly identifiable, and fire doors must be free of obstruction and opened easily from the inside.

- The premises and equipment must be organised in a way that meets the needs of children. In registered provision, providers must meet the following indoor space requirements\*:
  - Children under two years: 3.5m<sup>2</sup> per child
  - Two year olds: 2.5m<sup>2</sup> per child
  - Children aged three to five years: 2.3m<sup>2</sup> per child

*\*These calculations should be based on the net or useable areas of the rooms used by the children, not including storage areas, thoroughfares, dedicated staff areas, cloakrooms, utility rooms, kitchens and toilets.*

- The provider must ensure that, so far as is reasonable, the facilities, equipment and access to the premises are suitable for children with disabilities. Providers must provide access to an outdoor play area or, if that is not possible, ensure that outdoor activities are planned and taken on a daily basis.
- Provision must be made (space or partitioned area) for children who wish to relax, play quietly or sleep, equipped with appropriate furniture. There should be a separate baby room for children under the age of two.
- Providers must ensure that there is an adequate number of toilets and hand basins available (usually one toilet and one hand basin for every ten children over the age of two). There should usually be separate toilet facilities for adults. Providers must ensure that there are suitable hygienic changing facilities for changing any babies or children who are in nappies.
- Providers must also ensure that there is an area where staff may talk to parents and/or carers confidentially, as well as an area in group settings for staff to take breaks away from the children.

## 2. Is there a well-evidenced need for additional childcare provision in your area?

Milton Keynes is one of the fastest growing areas of the country, experiencing an increasing birthrate in established areas, as well as growth from new housing. In addition to this, as part of a national drive to reduce child poverty, the statutory entitlement to early education has increased over recent years, and is now available to children from the age of 2 (subject to criteria). The effect of this demographic increase and changes to statutory entitlement means there is an unprecedented demand for sessional childcare throughout Milton Keynes.

Milton Keynes Council's Settings and Schools Sufficiency and Access team will be able to provide information regarding the supply and demand for childcare provision across the borough. They can be contacted on 01908 258035 or email [Sufficiency&Access@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:Sufficiency&Access@milton-keynes.gov.uk).

## 3. How will you identify and select the right childcare provider?

A poor quality childcare provider which fails to meet the needs of the local community is unlikely to sustain a stable rental income. Selecting the right childcare provider is therefore vital. The following step-by-step guide has been created to assist you:

### **Step 1 – Create an advert for the opportunity**

This should include details of the following:

- Type of childcare provider you are seeking to accommodate
- Location of the property
- Hours of availability
- Your contact details

### **Step 2 – Advertise the opportunity**

Milton Keynes Council provides an opportunity for prospective landlords to advertise their property to local childcare providers within the 'Childcare' section of Milton Keynes Council Website. Please contact [Sufficiency&Access@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:Sufficiency&Access@milton-keynes.gov.uk) for further information.

Other methods of advertising the opportunity may include:

- Direct mail to local childcare providers (details can be obtained from the 'search for childcare' facility on the Milton Keynes Council Website [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/childcare](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/childcare))
- Local publications (e.g. local papers, newsletters, etc.)
- National publications (e.g. Nursery World, Netmums etc.)

### **Step 3 – Invite interested parties to visit the property so that they can consider whether it meets their requirements**

### **Step 4 – Request a 'proposal' from interested parties, which provides you with further information to help you to establish the following:**

- What type of childcare provision are they seeking to operate?
- What hours/days will they require the premises?
- Who will be their target market and what will their fees be?
- What market research have they carried out to demonstrate that their proposal meets the local need?
- How closely does their previous childcare experience relate to their proposal, including:
  - type of provision;
  - age of children?
- What are their current, and what were their previous, Ofsted inspection results and when was their last inspection?
- Do they have experience of running a financially sustainable business?
- How much rent are they proposing to pay?
- Are there any additional items that are required from you, including:
  - storage units;
  - tables and chairs etc.?
- Can they provide a reference from an existing landlord?

### **Step 5 – Review the proposals and shortlist your preferred providers**

Milton Keynes Council's Setting and School Effectiveness team may be able to provide you with a FREE half-day consultation to help you review your proposals. Please contact the Early Years Improvement Partner on 01908 254509 or email [EYBusinessSupport@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:EYBusinessSupport@milton-keynes.gov.uk) if you would like to discuss this option.

### **Step 6 – Meet with your short listed providers to discuss their proposals in greater detail and decide on your preferred provider**

### **Step 7 – Complete letting agreement – provider to commence Ofsted registration process**

## Contact information

For further clarification on any of the above points, please contact Milton Keynes Council's Settings and Schools Sufficiency and Access team on 01908 258035 or email [Sufficiency&Access@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:Sufficiency&Access@milton-keynes.gov.uk).