

PRE-MOVE RESEARCH - QUICK REFERENCE

Childcare, nursery and preschool research checklist

Use this from home to identify the exact legal service, verify the premises and people, test safeguarding and daily care, and compare a complete usable year before paying.

MOVING FROM	DESTINATION / CITY	PLANNING CURRENCY	LAST CHECKED
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HOW TO USE

Read the linked SettleHappy guide first. Tick an item when the answer or evidence is saved in your own move folder. Recheck volatile facts before paying or applying.

1 Define the child and the care week

- ☐ Record each child's date of birth, intended start date, days and complete arrival-to-collection hours; identify every birthday or stage change during the contract.
- ☐ Write feeding, sleep, toileting, medicine, allergy, disability/additional-needs, language, faith and comfort requirements without minimising them for admissions.
- ☐ Name the intended next school/system and the developmental, language, attendance or completion record it will require.
- ☐ Set the maximum complete annual budget and two realistic collectors; map home, work, siblings and an appropriate child-capable hospital.
- ☐ Distinguish full childcare, nursery, playgroup, formal preschool/kindergarten, school early years and in-home care before comparing brands.

2 Prove the legal identity and exact premises

- ☐ Obtain the official local-language name, operator, address, coordinates, legal category, issuing authority, certificate/licence/permit number, validity, authorised ages and capacity.
- ☐ Search the destination's official register where available and save the result/date; ask the responsible authority to resolve any name, branch, address, level or status mismatch.
- ☐ When one operator serves several ages or combines care and preschool, verify every required approval rather than accepting one certificate for the whole offer.
- ☐ Confirm that transport, food preparation, swimming, extended care, school-linked classes and any additional curriculum sit within the evidenced operation or have their own authority.
- ☐ Set a no-pay condition when the provider cannot identify the legal category, exact premises, current authority or verification route clearly.

3

Audit the people and safeguarding system

- ☐ Request the actual age-room register: enrolled and normally present children, qualified lead, assistants, relief staff, breaks, mixed-age periods, extended-day cover and transport duties.
- ☐ Record qualifications, required local training or certification, identity and background-check process, paediatric first aid, safeguarding training, staff turnover and references/oversight for agency staff.
- ☐ Obtain child-protection, behaviour/discipline, intimate-care, allegation, whistleblowing, visitor, camera/privacy, missing-child and complaint procedures.
- ☐ Test authorised collection, custody restrictions, ID/PIN checks, late pickup, non-collection, no-child-left counts and how an incident is recorded and disclosed.
- ☐ Ask the named safeguarding lead to talk through a realistic concern involving a colleague, parent, child disclosure or unexplained injury; save the response.

4

Follow one complete nursery day

- ☐ Record adult-to-adult arrival, attendance and wellness checks; trace medicines, bottles, comfort objects and custody information into the room.
- ☐ Inspect or view food sourcing, menus, allergy/cross-contact controls, drinking and washing water, safe sleep, nappies/toileting, hand hygiene, cleaning and daily records.
- ☐ Request the real weekly programme, language deployment, outdoor-play practice, screen use, developmental observation and approach to inclusion-not only the philosophy statement.
- ☐ Check first-aid availability, emergency medicines, illness/outbreak rules, evacuation/fire drills, transport, pools/water, severe weather, air quality, power/water loss and receiving hospital.
- ☐ Follow lunch, staff breaks, room changes, late care and final collection to prove the advertised staffing and safeguards survive every transition.

5

Price, stress-test and decide

- ☐ Itemise application, registration, deposit, tuition, meals, nappies, materials, uniform, transport, activities, tax, late pickup, holiday care and likely annual increase.
- ☐ Map term dates, public holidays, training days, provider closures, weather/outbreak rules and the cost of all care gaps; compare usable coverage rather than brochure hours.
- ☐ Write place/start guarantees, settling, refunds, notice, suspension/termination, closure treatment, fee credit, complaints, records, privacy and photograph consent into the contract file.
- ☐ Run four scenarios in a video call: severe allergy or injury, parent delayed by traffic, staff shortage and local hazard/utility closure; require named roles and communication steps.
- ☐ Keep two verified providers until the final visit; set no-go conditions for unverifiable authority, weak safeguarding, unstable staffing, no emergency route, unworkable handovers or unaffordable backup.

Information, not regulated immigration, legal, tax, financial or medical advice. Verify current requirements with issuing authorities, providers and appropriately qualified advisers.