

# 7 Vital Things...

## You should know before choosing a childcare centre

Choosing a childcare centre for your child is an important decision. Your child's child care experience can shape their social, emotional and intellectual development in fundamental ways.

But that doesn't mean choosing the right centre has to be an overwhelming and daunting task. Use the following 7-point checklist to ensure you're making the right decision for your child and your family.

### 1. Are you greeted warmly and genuinely as you enter?

They say first impressions count, and entering your child's potential centre is no different. Consider how both the administration staff and the educators welcome you. Are you greeted warmly and genuinely? What you're really looking to understand is the extent to which staff care about you and your needs. A warm greeting is a sign that to them, you matter. Of course, feel free to raise any questions or concerns that you have to get a feel for their response. And don't forget to talk to current and past parents to ensure families feel understood and heard.

### 2. Do educators address your child at eye level?

It's one thing for staff to adequately welcome you. More importantly though, take note of their response to children. One way to assess the way the educators respond to children is whether they address children at eye level – especially when welcoming them. This demonstrates that they're taking their feelings and concerns seriously and signals a crèche that's infused with genuine care and warmth.

### 3. Can the centre accommodate your child's needs?

No two children are the same. That's why it's important that the centre is ready and able to meet your child's unique needs. The centre should proactively request information such as allergies, food preferences, sleep routines, toilet-training progress and personal interests. But they should also be willing to go further. Ensure you specify the unique needs of your own child and watch to see if they're open to accommodating those needs.

### 4. Does the centre meet your cultural needs?

When selecting a centre, ensure it meets your cultural needs. Don't be shy to ask questions to fully clarify these details to guarantee you're selecting the most suitable environment for your child and yourselves. Is it important for your children to learn about their rich Jewish heritage? If so, ask about the cultural program to ensure that it's thorough, interesting and well-designed.

### 5. Do the educators seem happy at work?

You'll discover a lot about a centre by paying attention to its staff. Do the educators seem happy to be at work? Are they inspired and motivated? Enthusiastic and encouraging teachers are integral to your child's learning *and* wellbeing. Crèche should be a fun and exciting introduction to preschool education. The educators – and their approach to their work – will have a significant impact on this journey.

### 6. Is there evidence of high-quality learning?

While crèche is intended to be an informal introduction to learning, it's still a learning environment. For most children, this experience will be the first structured learning setting, with a routine for daily activities such as food, play, rest and mat time. While it all may seem, and should feel, like fun, ensure there's evidence of actual learning

taking place. This can be as simple as the predictable day-to-day tasks of hand washing before eating and sunscreen before outdoor play, or more age appropriate lessons of early literacy and numeracy. It is in this preschool environment that many children learn predictability and how to follow rules like sitting for mat sessions and sharing – the very skills that will set them up for success in school and in life.

**7. Is the centre committed to following the highest standards of quality, as per the National Quality Standards (NQS)?**

Be aware of the Australian educational standards in place across the country. State and territory governments have implemented the National Quality Standard (NQS) to ensure high level, national benchmarks for early childhood education and care. Services are rated against these benchmarks. Ask your centre how they were rated in their most recent independent assessment. Did they score highly across all areas? If not, why not?

*If you'd like a crèche that's dedicated to the highest standards of care, warmth and educational excellence in a Jewish environment, contact our dedicated educators at Chabad Glen Eira Creche to request a complementary tour. You can contact us on (03) 9532 7299 or book a tour online.*

*Wishing you and your child all the best,*

*Esther Malka and the Chabad Glen Eira team*

