

- What activities do you do with the children?
- Are they kept occupied?
- Are the children happy?
- Are they taken care of individually?
- Is there a good supply of toys and materials?
- How do staff talk to children?
- Are staff warm and friendly?
- Are staff qualified? What are their qualifications? Check that it is a recognised qualification and not membership of a professional organisation.
- Ask other parents what they think
- If you don't know any other parents ask staff for a contact number of parents you can talk to
- How long has the "boss" been in his/her current position?
- Can I meet the staff who will work directly with my child?
- What is the routine for an average day?

Other useful publications:

NCMA – Guide for parents – Choosing a Home-based Child carer

SURE START – Guide to help you make the right choices – Looking for Childcare?

DCMS – child protection leaflet for parents – Help keeping your child SAFE IN SPORT

CONTACT NUMBERS

Warrington Safeguarding Children Board Policy & Practice Manager	01925 457081
Access to Social Care, Poll Tax House, Ryland Street Warrington	01925 444239
Out of Hours Service	01925 444400
Principal Officer (Safeguarding Children)	01925 457013
Children's Safeguarding Unit	01925 457015
Warrington Police Station	01925 652222
Police Public Protection Unit	01244 614878
Designated Nurse - Safeguarding Children	01925 251514
Designated Doctor - Safeguarding Children	01925 405712
Consultant Paediatrician or Senior Registrar	01925 635911
Senior Education Welfare Officer	01925 442928
Senior Probation Officer	01925 650613

For further information visit our website
www.safeguardingwarringtonchildren.org.uk

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QUESTIONS PARENTS SHOULD ASK

A guide for parents when choosing someone who will spend time with his or her child alone

Questions Parents Should Ask

This guide is for parents who are employing an adult or young person to look after their child or provide instruction, coaching, therapy or an activity. It is important to ensure the person you are asking to help your child is trustworthy, reliable and honest. Unfortunately, people who prey on children often place themselves in positions where they have easy access to children, often with their parents' blessing. It is a parent's responsibility to ensure their child is safe from harm and this leaflet is to help you ask the questions needed to protect your child.

- **Do you have a CRB check?**

Anyone who has contact with your child in a work or voluntary capacity should have been CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) checked. You can not see their certificate but you can ask when it was issued. It should be no more than three years old. If they have not been checked, this should concern you.

- **Do you have any criminal convictions?**

If so, what are they and when did you get them? Remember that not everyone is truthful.

- **When you are with my child will anyone else be present?**

Use your judgement. Is it appropriate for anyone else to be there? Do not think there is safety in numbers.

- **What activities will take place when you are with my child?**

This sets the agreement between you and the adult who will be with your child and what will be normal activity. If anything new is to be introduced the adult must inform you first and get your agreement. If your child reports an activity that has not been agreed, question the adult about this. If you are not happy with the answer, stop the contact.

- **What do you expect of me as a parent?**

Remember an agreement is a two way contract and you must ensure you understand and agree what is expected of you, for example: payment, when and how the child will be collected after the session/lesson, what equipment you must provide etc.

- **What safety arrangements are there?**

Your child may be transported in the adult's car or club's bus. Ensure the vehicle is checked regularly, whether the driver is suitably qualified. Ask if there is a first aider available. What arrangements are in place in the case of an emergency? Make sure they have a contact telephone number for you.

- **What do you do about bad behaviour?**

We all expect our children to behave when away from us but at times they can let you down and behave in a silly or dangerous manner or refuse to take instruction. You and the adult need to agree what will happen if such a situation arises.

- **Is there a discipline policy? If so can I have a copy?**

In clubs or children's nurseries there should be a policy and you have a right to read it and ask questions regarding any issues that concern you.

- **How do you measure achievement/success?**

All parents want to see their children do well but you need to know that they are enjoying this activity and are making progress. Agree a consistent system of reporting how the sessions are going and ask your child how they feel they are doing and if they enjoy going, does this match up?

IN SPORT/ ACTIVITY SITUATIONS ASK:

- Who is in charge?
- Is there a ruling body i.e. Football Association, Lawn Tennis Association?
- Who can I contact if there is a problem?
- Do you have written guidelines
- How long is a session?
- Is protective equipment or other equipment needed? Who provides this?
- Have you had training in its use?
- Is a medical necessary to participate?
- Is the playing area safe?
- Do you have insurance?
- Are coaches trained? Who by? Ask to see certificates.

CHILDREN'S NURSERIES, CHILD MINDERS, BREAKFAST AND AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS ASK:

- Is the carer registered? Ask to see their registration document.
- When were they registered?
- Can I see the last inspection report?
- What have they done to put recommendations from the inspection into action?
- How many children are registered and their ages?
- What is full occupancy? Needs to be about 90% to 100%
- Do you supply meals?
- Is it clean and safe?
- What is the ratio of caregiver to children? Is this appropriate?
- What is the rate of turn over in staff?
- What training do staff receive? When does it take place?
- What injuries have children had in the last 2 years?