



15 WAYS TO FIND THE BEST CHILDCARE FOR YOUR CHILD

YOUR QUICK AND EASY GUIDE



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Why are you looking for childcare?

Is it because you are working or studying, need some downtime for yourself, or want your child to socialise with other children their age? Your reason for childcare will be very different from other parents or caregivers considering childcare.

2

How often will you need childcare?

Each centre offers different types of childcare. For example: casually (childcare only when you need it), part-time (a certain number of hours a day or a certain number of days per week) or full-time (from the time the centre is open to the time the centre closes).

3

Have you spoken to friends and family members who have children in childcare?

It's always good to ask for feedback from people you know. They will be honest with their answer, and this will be your proof. We highly recommend asking at least 2-3 people to provide you with feedback so that you receive a 'rounded' point of view.

4

Make a list of childcare centres in your area.

Are they in walking distance or driving distance to your home, work or study? Do they offer a pickup and drop-off service that will eliminate your travel time or walking time?



Insider's tip:

Take your child with you when you visit childcare centres. Your child will let you know if they like a centre (or not).

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Go and visit the centres.

Ideal centres to visit, are centres you don't need to make an appointment to visit. By visiting centres without an appointment allows you to experience centre life in action.

Visiting a centre provides you a small glimpse into their environment, the teachers, children and learning, as well as an opportunity for you to know if this childcare centre is right for you.

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Observe, observe, observe. Watch everything unfold in front of you.

How do children react when you are in their centre? How does your child react? Watch the interaction between your child and the children in the centre.

7

Notice how children interact with teachers, with other adults in the centre and other children.

Children already enrolled in the centre are the best 'salespeople' to show you what centre life is like for them.

Children's behaviour mirrors their emotions. What do you see and hear from children? How do teachers respond, how do their voices sound?



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Children need space to play.

Movement helps with developing children's thinking and growing minds.

Is there are a large area for children to play? Are children happy playing, either on their own or with other children? What challenging play equipment can you see children playing?

Monkey bars, trampoline, flying fox, a bike track or maybe there are some quiet spaces for reading and eating, or creative spaces for painting or messy play. Children learn through challenging themselves in their learning environment. What can you see that challenges children?

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Inside the centre (or even in the outside environment) can you see children's artwork displayed, or children engrossed in art?

Research tells us that the creative brain is instrumental in developing children's critical thinking, what they need for decision making. Being creative is a huge part of learning in early childhood education.

Look around when you visit childcare centres, do you see children's artwork displayed?

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What can you hear?

How do teachers and children interact with each other?

Open-ended questions with children help children to think, and problem-solve, conversations between their friends and teachers help build their social skills.

For example, social skills help children to be able to speak to one another, ask questions, talk to adults. So, social skills are about how well they get along with others.



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As adults, we've learnt a lot from our lifetime of experiences, but it doesn't help children if we provide the answers for them.

Teachers roles are to guide children and not provide answers for them. Instead, we use open-ended questions so that children can come up with answers rather than replying with a "yes" or "no."

Open-ended questions could be "what would you do if...", "what do you think about...", "how would you find out about....". Can you hear open-ended questions being asked to children?

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When you visit childcare centres on your list, watch the teachers and how they engage and interact.

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What projects are happening in the centre?

Children learn through real-life experiences, and these experiences take time to learn. Find out what long-term projects are happening in the centre.

Projects could be "what can we do as a centre to reduce plastic?" Projects help children to understand the world around them.

For instance, a project started in our centre from an interest in walking past cows in a paddock. Which started conversations around "why is a cow always chewing?" then there was a discussion around the number of stomachs a cow has, to then visiting a working farm where children were able to try their hand at milking a cow and making cheese.

These projects went on for months and were driven by children's interests.



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Talk with the new entrant's teachers at your local primary schools.

Their feedback is essential. They will be able to tell you their professional opinion based from their professional interactions and professional relationships with childcare centres.

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Your child's special friend.

Before you make your decision, ensure that the childcare centre has key teaching. Key teaching means that a teacher supports you, your child and your family to help settle into the centre.

Your key teacher is your 'go-to' person, who will help you and your child to become part of centre life. They be there for your child until your child has built relationships with other teachers. Key teaching is about kindness, aroha (love), listening, caring, nurturing and patience.

Insider's tip:

You will know if your child loves the childcare centre you're visiting - as they won't want to leave.

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Sometimes a little inside knowledge can make a difference.

We are excited that you are considering childcare for your child. Learning through play is an exciting and fun way for children to learn.

We've been in early childhood education (ECE) since 2005 and have so much knowledge we want to share with you.

Whether you live in New Zealand or in another part of our globe, we hope that this guide supports you to find the best childcare for your child.



Hi, I'm Shona

of Giggles Educare Ltd,
Director & Licensee

Did you find this quick and easy guide helpful?

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Arohanui,

Shona and the Giggles Team

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