



Types of childcare to choose from





Did you know?

If your child is aged 3 or 4, you can get up to 15 hours a week of free childcare for 38 weeks of the year!

Please contact us or your chosen childcare provider for more information.



About Childcare

High quality childcare can give your child a better start in life. It can also give you the freedom to return to work or education or simply to take a break from your everyday routine, safe in the knowledge that your child is in good hands and a stimulating environment.

There are many different types of childcare available, each of which offers different advantages and flexibility. You'll need to work out what suits you and your family's needs best, based on the hours you work, your budget and where you live.

This booklet will guide you through the options and provide further points of contact for more information. Don't forget that you can combine several types of childcare to find the solution which best meets the needs of you and your child.

We've also produced a financial guide to childcare. Please contact us if you'd like more information on this subject.





What's the difference between registered and unregistered childcare?

Registered childcare

Ofsted is the Government Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. It regulates childcare for children from birth to 18 years of age.

Ofsted operates two registers

The Early Years Register

All childcare providers must register with Ofsted on the Early Years Register and meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage if they are providing care for children from birth to age 5 for more than two hours a day on more than five days a year. This includes childminders, day nurseries, pre-schools, private nursery schools and, in certain situations, schools.

The Childcare Register

The Childcare Register has two parts: a compulsory part and a voluntary part.

The compulsory part of the register

A childcare provider must register on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register if they provide care for children age 5 to 8 for more than two hours a day on more than five days a year.

A childcare provider will be on both the Early Years Register and the Childcare Register if they care for children under and over the age of 5.





The voluntary part of the register

If a childcare provider does not have to register on the compulsory part of the register, they may be able to join the voluntary part of the register if:

- they only look after children aged between 8 and 18;
- they look after children for fewer than two hours a day, five days a year (for example, some crèches);
- they provide care in a child's home (for example, as a nanny or home child-carer); or
- they only provide activities such as sports coaching or tuition.

Unregistered childcare

A childcare provider does not need to or will not be able to join the voluntary part of the register if:

- the parent or carer stays with their child during childcare (such as at a parent toddler group); or
- they are a relative of the child, such as a grandparent, uncle, aunt, brother or sister.

Unregistered childcare can also include nannies, au pairs, some babysitters and babysitting agencies. However, babysitting is also offered by some registered childminders, in which case they will have a certificate of registration.





If you want to claim the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit, you will have to use a registered childcare provider.

For more information on tax credits, please see our financial guide to childcare.

How will I know my child will be safe?

All Ofsted-registered childcare providers must display their certificate of registration. To get a certificate of registration, providers have to meet certain legal requirements and safety measures.

You should always make sure you visit a childcare setting to get a feel for the environment and the way care is provided. You need to be comfortable that the staff know what they are doing and have suitable systems in place – for example for vetting staff and carrying out health and safety risk assessments.

Concerns about a childcare provider

Most things are best dealt with by talking to your provider. Unless you think children are at risk of harm, it is usually best if you discuss your concern with the childcare provider or the person in charge of the setting. If you cannot resolve matters, then you should contact Ofsted by phoning 0300 123 4666 to make a formal complaint.

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

This organisation now carries out the roles of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). It oversees the requirement that all Ofsted registered childcare providers must get a CRB check for adults who look after children or have unsupervised access to them. (In the case of childminders, this includes other people living in the house over the age of 16.)

It also makes sure that ISA regulations which help prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults are followed. This means that a person who is barred from working with these groups will be breaking the law if they try to work or volunteer. (An organisation which knowingly employs someone who is barred from working with these groups will also be breaking the law.)

Types of childcare available

The table below is a guide to the types of childcare available depending on the age of your child and your needs. Don't forget, you can use more than one type of care – for example, you might use a pre-school playgroup for part of the day and then get a childminder to pick your child up and look after them until you finish work.

Age of child		Childcare options
Birth to 3 years		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crèche • Childminder • Day nursery • Nursery units of independent schools • Home child carer/nanny/au pair
3 to 5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crèche • Childminder • Day nursery • Home child carer/nanny/au pair • Pre-school playgroup • Nursery units of independent schools • Lancashire County Council maintained nursery or class
5 years and over		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childminder • Day nursery • Home child carer/nanny/au pair • Holiday scheme • Out-of-school care (breakfast and after-school clubs)

Did you know?

Ofsted registered childcare providers can provide care for children over the age of 8.

However, this must not affect the standard of care provided to the younger children.





Creches

Crèches provide short periods of care to cover things such as shopping trips, meetings or training sessions. They provide a play area for a small group of children whose parents are busy doing other things but are still on the same premises.

Crèches do not have to register with Ofsted but may choose to go on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register.

When is this type of care available?

They may be open all day, but a child cannot stay for more than 4 hours. Parents do not usually use them regularly – more as a one-off as necessary.

How much will it cost?

The cost varies from free to about £4.50 an hour. Some training courses provide a free or subsidised crèche to support adult learning.

Childminders (can offer 2,3 & 4 free childcare places)

Childminders are registered by Ofsted to look after children from birth to age 8, although most will offer care for children aged up to 11 or over. They are usually based in the childminder's own home. They can look after up to six children under the age of 8 at a time, although only three of those children should be under 5.



In their care, your child will experience learning and development activities suitable for their age and stage of development. Childminders follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework when caring for under-5s.

When is this type of care available?

Because they are self-employed, childminders set their own working hours, but most are willing to work flexibly, which could include early mornings and evenings. Some even work weekends and provide care overnight. You can use their services full time or for just a few hours a week. Most are open 48 to 51 weeks a year.

How much will it cost?

You should expect to pay between £2.50 and £4 an hour, or up to £50 a day, but it will really depend on:

- where the childminder lives;
- the number of children they care for;
- any special requirements your child has; and
- how many hours care you need them for.

It's a good idea to agree a price before you accept a childcare place, and we always recommend that you have a contract with your childcare provider so that you both know what's expected.

The contract should cover hours, pay, sickness, holiday pay and cancellation notice. You should also agree things such as actions for managing your child's behaviour, what happens in an emergency and anything else that's important to you.





Day nurseries (can offer 2,3 & 4 free childcare places)

Day nurseries are registered by Ofsted to provide care and early education for children from birth to age 5, although some will care for children aged up to 11 at breakfast, after school and during school holidays.

The number of children they can care for depends on the space in the building and the number of staff working there. Ofsted have set clear guidelines about the number of staff required to make sure children are safe and that their needs are met. These guidelines are listed below.

For children under 2

- There must be at least one member of staff for every three children.
- At least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification, and must be suitably experienced in working with children under 2.
- At least half of all the other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.
- At least half of all staff must have received specific training in the care of babies.
- If there is a separate room for the under-2s, the member of staff in charge of that room must have suitable experience of working with under-2s.

For children aged 2

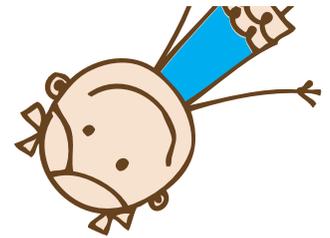
- There must be at least one member of staff for every four children.
- At least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
- At least half of all the other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

For children aged 3 and over

- There must be at least one member of staff for every eight children.
- At least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification;
- At least half of all the other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

Day nurseries follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework when caring for under-5s.





When is this type of care available?

Day nurseries in Lancashire are usually open from 7.30am to 6pm, although some open earlier and close later to meet parents' needs. Most are open 48 to 51 weeks a year.

How much will it cost?

You should expect to pay between £3 and £4.50 an hour, or up to £45 a day, but it will really depend on:

- where the nursery is;
- the number of children they care for;
- any special requirements your child has; and
- how many hours of childcare you need.

It's a good idea to agree a price before you accept a childcare place, and we always recommend that you have a contract with your childcare provider so that you both know what's expected.

The contract should cover hours, pay, sickness, holiday pay and cancellation notice. You should also agree things such as actions for managing your child's behaviour, what happens in an emergency and anything else that's important to you.

Pre-school playgroups (can offer 2,3 & 4 free childcare places)

Pre-school playgroups are registered by Ofsted to provide a wide range of experiences for children to play and learn and to help them develop relationships with other children and staff.

The number of children they can care for depends on the space in the building and the number of staff working there. Ofsted have set clear guidelines about the number of staff required to make sure children are safe and that their needs are met, these guidelines are listed below:

For children aged 3 and over

- There must be at least one member of staff for every eight children.
- At least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
- At least half of all the other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

Pre-School Playgroups follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework when caring for under-5s.



When is this type of care available?

Pre-school playgroups provide a variety of childcare sessions. They do this in the morning or afternoon, usually during term-time, although some now offer full time places.

How much will it cost?

You should expect to pay between £5 and £19 a session, with an average of around £9 a session. However, it will really depend on:

- where the playgroup is;
- the number of children they care for;
- any special requirements your child has; and
- how many hours of childcare you need.

It's a good idea to agree a price before you accept a childcare place, and we always recommend that you have a contract with your childcare provider so that you both know what's expected.

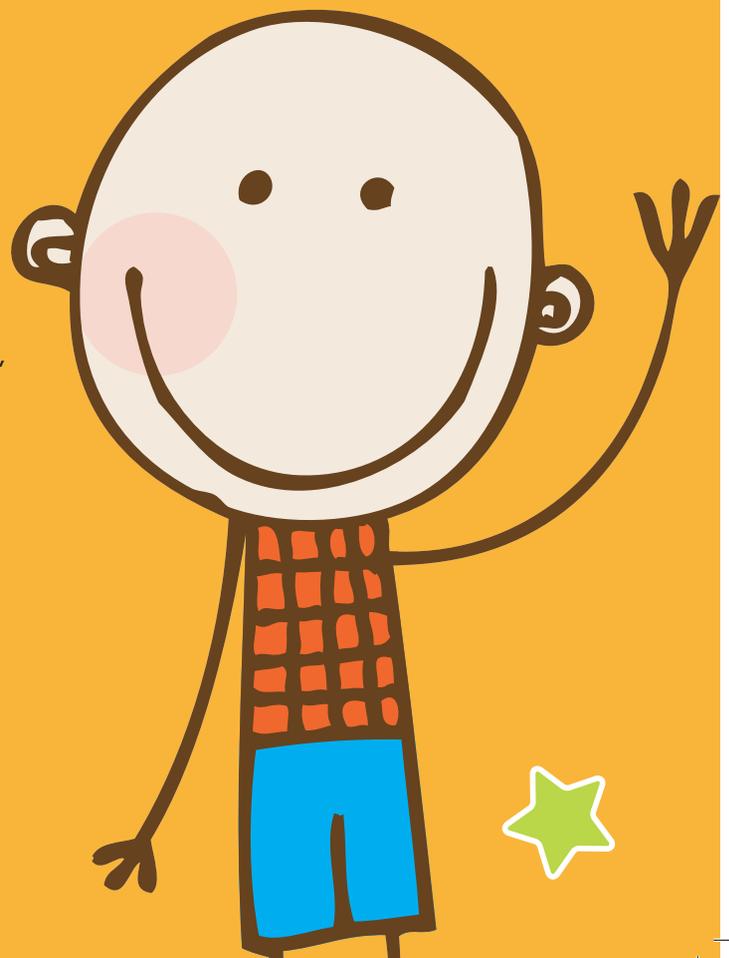
The contract should cover hours, pay, sickness, holiday pay and cancellation notice. You should also agree things such as actions for managing your child's behaviour, what happens in an emergency and anything else that's important to you.

Nursery units of independent schools (can offer 2,3 & 4 free childcare places)

Independent schools do not depend on national or local government funding. Instead they are financed by tuition fees and gifts. They are inspected by the Independent Schools Inspection Service, and can also opt to be inspected by Ofsted.

Nursery units in these schools can take children from a few months old up to age 5, although most in Lancashire offer care from age 2 to 3.

Places at some independent schools are in great demand and there can be long waiting lists.





When is this type of care available?

Many of these nursery units have extended their childcare hours to meet the needs of working parents.

They usually provide childcare from around 7.30am to 6pm in term time, and can offer full or half-day sessions. Some also offer childcare during school holidays.

Your child should experience learning and development activities suitable for their age – as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

How much will it cost?

Charges are usually paid once a term and vary from school to school. Some nursery units offer the free early years entitlement for 3 and 4 year-olds. Financial support may also be available in the form of scholarships and bursaries. (Please contact the individual school for more details.)

Lancashire County Council maintained nurseries and classes

Maintained nurseries and classes are attached to a school and are registered and inspected by Ofsted as part of the school's inspection. They provide early education and care for children from age 3 to 5, usually in morning or afternoon sessions.

Children that attend a maintained nursery or class are not guaranteed a place at the school once they reach school age.

When is this type of care available?

Lancashire's nursery schools and classes offer up to 15 hours a week of childcare. However, some may be able to deliver this flexibly rather than all mornings or afternoons.

For more information, please ask your nursery school or class for the 'Nursery School Admissions in Lancashire' booklet or download the booklet at the nursery schools page of www.lancashire.gov.uk.

How much will it cost?

Your child can receive up to 15 hours of childcare a week in a maintained nursery school or class free of charge until they start school.



Home-based child-carers, nannies and au pairs



These people can provide childcare and some other domestic services in your own home. Some will have registered on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, in which case you can be sure that:

- they have an awareness of the common core skills of childcare;
- they have had a Criminal Records Bureau check to make sure they're safe to work with children; and
- they meet other relevant requirements such as holding a first aid qualification and suitable public liability insurance.

However most of these carers may not be registered and you will have to assess for yourself whether they're suitable.

One of the most common ways to find a home-based child-carer, nanny or au pair is through a recruitment agency. They will usually have already carried out checks on the nannies on their books. But make sure you ask them this so that you know what you need to check for yourself.

If you do not go through a recruitment agency, you will be responsible for paying your employee's tax and national insurance payments.

When is this type of care available?

Most will work flexible hours to suit you. This includes evenings, weekends and holidays.

How much will it cost?

The cost will depend on the individual childcare provider, how many hours you want them to work and, in some cases, what domestic chores you want them to carry out. You may also need to consider the cost of their accommodation, income tax and national insurance payments.

Out-of-school care (breakfast and after-school clubs and holiday schemes)

Many schools and private childcare providers offer a variety of care arrangements and activities for children outside standard school hours. These range from formal childcare in primary schools to study support groups, music, art and sports clubs.





Activities are usually based in the school, although some may be in youth clubs, community centres or day nurseries. They are usually run by the schools themselves, although local voluntary groups, private organisations and childminders may also be involved.

When is this type of care available?

Breakfast clubs usually run from 8am until school starts, although some will open from 7.30am to help meet the needs of working parents. After-school clubs open at the end of the school day until 6pm onwards depending on the childcare provider.

Holiday schemes offer sessions or full-day childcare during school holidays. Not all of them are open for the whole of the holidays, so you may need to make other arrangements if you need full-time care for your children during the holidays.

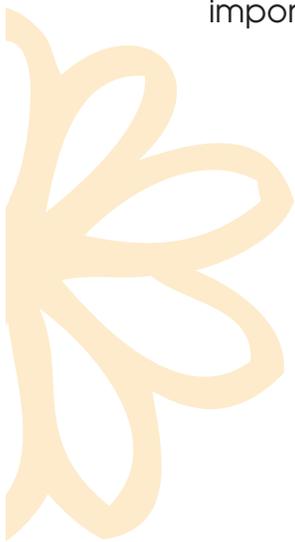
How much will it cost?

You should expect to pay:

- between £1 and £4.50 for a breakfast club session;
- between £4 and £10 for an after-school club session; and
- £20 to £35 a day for a holiday scheme.

It's a good idea to agree a price before you accept a place for your child, and we always recommend that you have a contract with your provider so that you both know what's expected.

The contract should cover hours, pay, sickness, holiday pay and cancellation notice. You should also agree things such as actions for managing your child's behaviour, what happens in an emergency and anything else that's important to you.





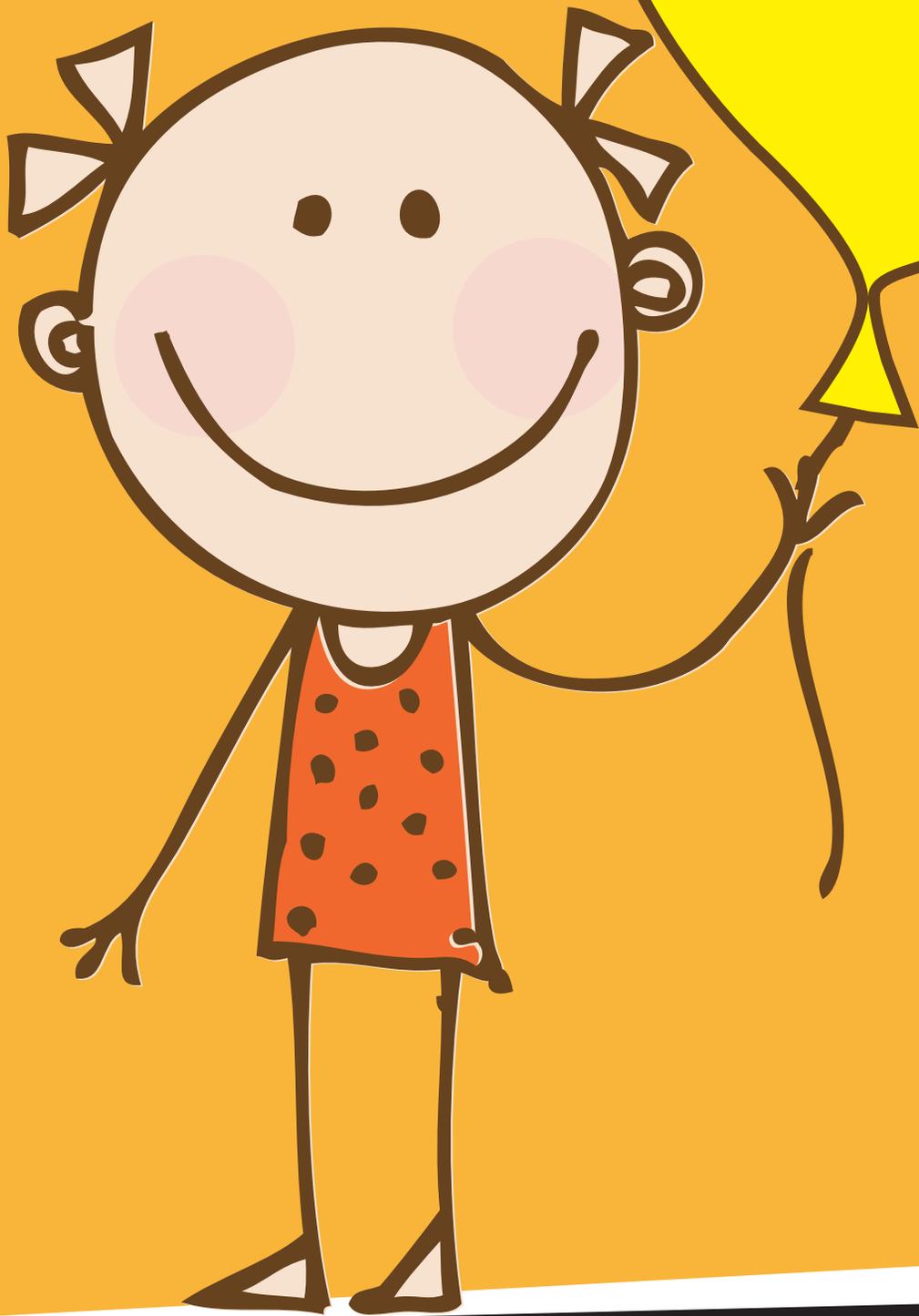
Did you know?

You can claim free childcare sessions for 3 and 4 year-olds from a range of providers including:

- childminders
- day nurseries
- nursery units of independent schools
- pre-school playgroups.

Please contact us or your chosen childcare provider for more information.





www.lancashire.gov.uk/family



0800 195 0137



lancsfis@lancashire.gov.uk