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Choosing childcare

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Childcare offers key benefits for your child, but which is the right choice for you?

There are lots of differences between types of childcare, early education or pre-school services and also between individual childminders, nurseries, nursery classes or out of school clubs.

When choosing childcare try and give yourself enough time to visit several possible options in your area to get a good idea about what would suit your child.

The following childcare options are available:

- Childminders
- Pre-school playgroups
- Day nurseries
- Out of school care
- Nannies
- Maintained nurseries

Please visit the FYi Directory for information on [available childcare](#).

Important information for parents

The government recognises that childcare is an issue facing many working parents. The new entitlement to 30 hours free childcare is intended to support working parents with the cost of childcare.

The government are committed to continuing the universal entitlement for free early education for all 3 and 4 year old children. This is 15 hours funded early education per week term time or 570 hours taken throughout the year.

In addition from September 2017 they are introducing a new entitlement that will provide an **additional** 570 hours of free childcare for the children of working parents making 1170 hours in total.

The new entitlement to [30 hours free childcare](#) is intended to support working parents with the cost of childcare and enable parents, where they wish, to return to work or to work additional hours. It can, where early years providers can offer it and if parents would like, be taken all year round and the hours allocated pro rata. See who is [eligible](#).

Early years providers are funded directly by government through their local authority. There are a range of high quality providers who are able to offer funded early years education and childcare and meet the needs of individual children.

This includes:

- Childminders
- Private day nurseries,
- Pre-schools
- School nursery classes
- Children's centre nurseries

You can use your extended entitlement over more than one provider if you wish to, if your preferred provider can't offer all the hours you require.

You may wish to look at solutions such as shared care and wrap around care to enable you to take up the extended entitlement.

You can find details of all early years and childcare provision on the [FYi Directory](#). You can search on the bar at the top for your nearest provider by entering your postcode or by provider type.

You can then contact them directly to ask about availability. If you need further assistance you can call the FYi Directory Team on 0800 092 2332.

[Tax-free childcare](#) is a scheme which will be available to around 2 million households to help with the cost of any additional childcare you may need over and above the free entitlement hours that the government funds.

Additional information

[Gov.uk](#)

[Help with childcare costs](#)

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