



Running a crèche

Information for community groups about providing childcare at a one-off community event.

Providing childcare is an important way to help parents and carers to access your event. However, a bad crèche is worse than no crèche at all! If you plan to have a crèche at your event, you need to plan it well, and make sure you create an environment that is pleasant, safe and well managed. People need to feel confident that your crèche is going to look after their children well.

If you are planning to set up a regular crèche, or are organising childcare that is not attached to a community event, you will need to follow different guidelines. See page 4.

Running a crèche at your community event

Staff / Volunteers

You need to make sure there are enough adults in your crèche to look after all the children properly. This will depend on the age of the children, and also the environment you are in. The law says you need one adult for every eight children aged over 3, every four children aged 2, and every three children aged 1 or under. However, in an environment that is unfamiliar to the children, and when the children don't know the volunteers, you should have a higher number of adults to make sure there are enough people around to help every child feel safe and secure. Babies and young toddlers need constant care and supervision, so it is best to aim for a one-to-one ratio for children who are under 3.

Have at least one person who is responsible for planning and organising the crèche. You might choose to have a rota of volunteers helping out during the day, but it is important to have someone who knows what's going on and is taking responsibility for making sure that the childcare happens properly. You need to know who the children are, which volunteers are helping when, and have a point of contact for parents who have questions or concerns.

A suitable space

Decide where your crèche will be, and make sure the space is suitable. If your event is outdoors, you may want to set up a specific tent or marquee. If it is an indoor event, you should designate a specific room. This needs to be big enough to allow the children to play. It also needs to be close to toilets and hand washing facilities, and there should be drinking water available.

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Think about how to make the space as pleasant and as safe as possible. This includes making sure it is clean and warm. It is useful to split up the space a bit, so that not everyone has to do the same thing at the same time. For example, have a cosy corner with blankets and cushions for quiet play and reading, and a specific area for noisy or messy play.

Think about possible hazards, and how to reduce the risk of accidents. Some things that could be hazardous are:

- ♦ power points
- ♦ steps and stairs
- ♦ unsteady furniture
- ♦ loose carpets, uneven floors
- ♦ electric or gas fires
- ♦ swinging doors
- ♦ hazardous substances such as cleaning products.

Have a look at our information on *Risk Assessments* for more advice about reducing the risk of accidents.

Information about the children in your care

It may sound obvious, but is important to keep track of which children have been left in the care of the crèche. You should:

- ♦ Know when a child is dropped off, and when they are picked up
- ♦ Have the name and contact details of the child's parents
- ♦ Know if the child has any medical conditions or allergies that you need to be aware of
- ♦ Get parental consent for emergency medical treatment.

Ask parents to complete a short form when they leave their child with you, to give you the information you need. There is a sample child registration form on page 5 which you can adapt to suit your needs.

Keep a list of the children who are in the crèche, and tick them off when they are collected. This way, you know which children the crèche is responsible for at any given moment.

Toys and other equipment

Think about the ages of the children who will attend your crèche, the space you are providing, and how you can create a relaxing environment for children to play.

It's a good idea to have some organised activities, such as a group game or a specific craft activity. Try to think of activities that are fun but not too complicated, that children can drop in and out of.

Also offer the children the opportunity to do their own thing. Provide toys and books that are suitable for the ages of children you are expecting, and make sure there is enough space for the children to use these.

While it is important to provide enough equipment, it can also create a stressful environment if there is a lot of mess and chaos. Think about what you actually need, rather than just putting out every toy you can find!

The Resource Centre has items of indoor and outdoor play equipment for hire. We also have information about where to get artwork materials, and places where you can borrow toys. You can borrow children's books from local libraries.

Food and drink

Be clear with parents about whether you will be providing food or not. If you are providing food, you must make sure that the food you provide is safe to eat. You can get information and advice about this from the Council's Food Safety Team¹.

Remember that some children may be allergic to some foods, and you should find out before giving children anything to eat.

If you are not providing food, ensure that parents know that they need to make sure that their children have had enough to eat.

Whether you are providing food or not, make sure there is fresh drinking water available for the children and volunteers.

First aid

You should have a well-stocked first aid kit, and a named first aider who has been trained in emergency first aid.

Safeguarding

Think about how you will keep children safe whilst they are in your crèche.

There are some types of childcare that require staff and volunteers to have a criminal records check (a DBS check). If you are in Brighton and Hove, the easiest way to work out whether you should get DBS checks for your volunteers is to discuss your activities with Safety Net¹. They will be able to give you specialist, tailored advice over the phone about your specific circumstances.

Whether or not you are required to have DBS checks for your volunteers, you should put simple safeguarding measures in place. These include

- ♦ Don't be alone with a child, or leave another volunteer alone with a child.
- ♦ Don't let a child leave with someone if you don't know who they are.
- ♦ It is a good idea for the volunteers to have an understanding of safeguarding. You can access online child protection training for free via the council's Surf2Learn² service, or from Safety Net. Also see our list of other organisations that provide information and training about safeguarding³.

Think about how to keep the space safe and secure throughout the day. If possible, make sure the room is shut so that the children cannot leave by themselves. If this is not possible (e.g. at an outdoor event), you need a system to make sure each child is accounted for at all times. The easiest way to do this is for each volunteer to have a small group of children that they are responsible for, and they should know those children's whereabouts all the time. This requires a high adult-to-child ratio, even for older children.

¹ www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/business-and-trade/food-safety

² brighton-hove.learningpool.com/

³ www.resourcecentre.org.uk/service/information-and-training-about-safeguarding/

Informing Ofsted

Some childcare facilities need to be registered with Ofsted.

If you are running a one-off crèche at a one-off event, you won't need to inform Ofsted if:

- ♦ You only look after children who are aged over eight
- ♦ Or, if you plan to look after younger children:
- ♦ You look after no individual child for more than two hours, or
- ♦ The children's parents/guardians stay very close by all the time, and you look after no individual child for more than four hours.

If you are looking after the same children aged under eight for more than 2 consecutive hours, or 4 consecutive hours if their parents are close by, you still don't have to register if your crèche will be running for fewer than 14 days over one year. However, you do have to inform Ofsted by writing to them at least two week's before your crèche happens.

Setting up other kinds of childcare provision

Some crèches and other childcare services are covered by the Childcare Act 2006 and are regulated by Ofsted.

Ofsted have produced a factsheet giving all the circumstances in which registration is not required⁴. All other crèches have to be registered.

If you think your crèche may need to be registered, you should contact the City Early Years and Childcare teamⁱⁱ for advice about how to proceed. You will need to work within the Early Years Foundation Stage framework⁵ (if you are looking after children aged under 5).

For your crèche to become registered, an Ofsted inspector will come and inspect your premises and interview you and any staff/volunteers who will be working with you, to see if your crèche meets the requirements of the EYFS.

For some kinds of childcare provision, it is a legal requirement that the staff or volunteers have criminal records checks. For more information, see our sheet on *DBS checking*.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/factsheet-childcare-registration-not-required>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/improving-the-quality-and-range-of-education-and-childcare-from-birth-to-5-years/supporting-pages/early-years-foundation-stage>

Sample child registration form

This is a sample form for a one-off crèche at a one day community event. You should think about what particular information you will need, and change the form to suit your needs.

Child's name	
Child's date of birth	
Your name and mobile phone number	
Your relationship to the child	
Your address	
Where will you be whilst your child is with us? (Where can we find you if we need to?)	
What time will you be returning to collect your child?	
Does your child have any medical conditions that we should know about? Please explain.	
Is your child allergic to anything? Please list.	

In the event that I cannot be reached in an emergency, I agree to medical treatment being given to my child

Signature of parent/guardian _____

Name of parent/guardian _____

Date: _____

Useful contacts

i **Safety Net**

01273 411613

www.safety-net.org.uk

info@safety-net.org.uk

ii **City Early Years and Childcare**

01273 294260

<http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=b1146864>