

Registration not required

A childcare factsheet

The Childcare Act 2006 says childcare is 'any form of care for a child including education or any other supervised activity'.

Most childcare providers caring for children under eight years old must register with Ofsted unless the law says they do not need to.

We register childcare providers on the following two registers.

- The Early Years Register
- The Childcare Register

Introductory reading is in *Registering childcare providers from September 2008*, which is on our website (www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080043).

Introduction

This factsheet explains the types of childcare that do not need to register with us.

If you do not need to register with us, because you are exempt from doing so, you may still choose to do so by joining the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, as long as you meet the requirements for registration on the voluntary register. The requirements are that:

- the childcare is provided for a particular child for a continuous period of at least two hours per day, or
- the childcare is provided for a period that ends at the start of normal school hours (in the morning, before school begins), or begins at the end of normal school hours (after school).

If you want more information on registration, visit our website (www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Care-and-local-services/Childcare) or call us on 0300 123 1231. (Please call if you are not sure if you need to register.)

The next section outlines when you are not required to register on either the Early Years Register or on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. If you need to contact us to discuss whether the childcare you provide is exempt from registration,

please quote the relevant number from the table below to tell us which one you think applies to you.

You do not have to register with us in the following cases:

1	If you care for children who are aged eight and over.
2	If you provide care where a child does not stay with you for more than two hours a day, even if your childcare service is open for longer than two hours.
3	If you only care for a child or children aged under eight who you are related to. A relative means a grandparent, aunt, uncle, brother or sister of a child (or half-brother or sister) or someone you are related to through marriage or civil partnership.
4	If you care for children aged under eight on domestic premises as a childminder without receiving any payment or reward for your services. Domestic premises can be your own home or someone else's home.
5	If you are a foster carer for the children.
6	If you only care for the children of one or more friends in your own home or someone else's home and no money or payment changes hands. Payment is defined as a 'payment of money or money's worth' which means payment for or towards the costs involved in the childcare such as a contribution to heating and lighting, or paying for food or repairs to the place where the childminding happens. However you will need to register as childminder if your friend pays you for looking after their child.
7	If you provide care for children in their own home. This includes caring for children of up to two sets of parents completely or mainly in one or both sets of parents' homes. However, you need to register as a childminder if you look after the children of three sets of parents in any or all of the parents' homes.
8	If you only provide care between 6pm and 2am on domestic premises (babysitting arrangements). Domestic premises can be your own home or someone else's home.
9	If you are providing a home-education arrangement where a child of school age receives full-time education outside school, and is partly or completely taught by a person other than a parent of the child. Care provided to the child is incidental to (not the main focus of) the education offered.
10	If you provide no more than two activities from the following list. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ School study support or homework support ■ Sport ■ Performing arts ■ Arts and crafts ■ Religious, cultural or language study

	<p>This only applies if you care for children who are aged three and over, and you do not care for children aged under five for more than four hours in any one day.</p> <p>There is more information about this type of exemption later in the factsheet.</p>
11	<p>If you provide care as part of your organisation's activities in any of the following places.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A children's home ■ A care home ■ A hospital in which a child is a patient ■ A residential family centre ■ A young offenders institution or secure training centre
12	<p>If you are a school that provides education or care for children aged three and over, where at least one child being cared for is a pupil of the school. Children who are two years old when they start school but are three by the end of their first term at school (known as rising threes), may count as age three when deciding whether you need to register.</p>
13	<p>If you care for children under eight for four hours or less each day and the care is for the convenience of parents who plan to stay on the premises where you are providing care or within the immediate area. This type of provision has no long-term commitment to provide care for children – for example, a shoppers' crèche, a crèche attached to a sports centre or adult learning centre, or an exhibition – and covers services where children do not necessarily attend every day. There is more information about this type of provision later in the factsheet.</p>
14	<p>If you provide an open access scheme for children. An open access scheme allows children not in the early years age group¹ to leave on their own. Childminders are not allowed to provide an open access scheme.</p>
15	<p>If you care for children under eight from specific premises for 14 days or less in any year, and you let us know in writing at least 14 days before starting the service.</p>
16	<p>If you care for children between 6pm and 2am in hotels, guest houses or similar places. The care is for children of no more than two different clients, staying at the same place at the same time (babysitting arrangements).</p>

¹ The early years age group is children aged from birth until the 31 August following their fifth birthday who go to early years settings that deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Further information on items 10 and 13 above

Providing no more than two activities (10)

This exemption applies where the main purpose of what you intend to offer is to give instruction or tuition in the activities, such as football coaching or art classes. We would not necessarily expect all those working with children to be specialist coaches, but we would expect them to have particular skills in the activities they were providing that would help children get better at them. For example, we would make a distinction between sports and physical activity for children. If you offer a bouncy castle or activities like racquets and balls, bikes or roller skates for children to choose from then we would normally decide that these offered children physical exercise rather than being a sports activity. Similarly, the provision of pens, paints and paper do not in themselves fall under the exemption for arts and crafts. We look for specific tuition or coaching to help children improve their skills.

Providers cannot claim this exemption where the main purpose of what they provide is childcare for working parents. Clearly if children are present for longer periods of time we would expect them to have a break or rest time or if children have learning difficulties or disabilities we would expect them to have their needs met. But this must not be the main reason that the scheme or club exists. There is no reason why the specific care needs of children with learning difficulties or disabilities cannot be met by attending sessions where the prime purpose is instruction. Those providing such activities may wish to give extra support and instruction to children with learning difficulties or disabilities or make arrangements for them to have their own carer present with them.

Care where parents remain in the immediate area (13)

The law sets out that this type of provision does not need to register with us, but it does not explain what is meant by the immediate area. We interpret this as meaning premises where care is provided and where parents can be summoned immediately. Examples include crèches in a college where parents are taking part in adult learning classes, in a sports centre where parents are playing sports, or in a purpose built shopping centre in enclosed premises. It does not apply to care where parents are away from the premises such as a shoppers' crèche in a town centre or where parents return to their home even if this is close by. If you want to offer this type of care and not register with us you will need to make sure no child stays in care for more than four hours.

More information from Ofsted

There is more information about registration on our website (www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Care-and-local-services/Childcare). If you are not sure whether you have to register for childcare on domestic premises, please contact us on 0300 123 1231.

There is more information on the requirements for registration on the Early Years Register in the *Guide to registration on the Early Years Register: childcare providers on non-domestic or domestic premises* (www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080017) and on the Childcare Register in the *Guide to registration on the Childcare Register* (www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080032).

The law that sets out our responsibilities is the Childcare Act 2006 and linked regulations. The specific order setting out exemptions from compulsory registration is the Childcare (Exemptions from Registration) Order 2008 (2008 No. 979) (www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2008/uksi_20080979_en_1). The references to regulations and our policy on registration and inspection are included in our *Framework for the regulation of those on the Early Years and Childcare Registers* (www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080024).

Further information

Your local family information service will help you. You can get their contact details from www.familyinformationservices.org.uk/index.php?option=com_comprofiler&task=userslist&listid=7&Itemid=72, or from your telephone directory.

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No. 080134

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