

Finding a Nursery Place For Your Child

This fact sheet can be made available in other languages or formats where appropriate by contacting 0161 770 6666 for further information please see our detailed fact sheet Information for all.

How can I find a nursery place for my child?

If you are looking for a nursery place for your child, you can simply call Sure Start Oldham Children's Information Service free on 0800 731 1518.

The Children's Information Service will send you an up-to-date list of all nurseries with vacancies near to your home and/or near to your place of work. This list will also include details of costs, opening hours, ages catered for as well as any additional facilities the nursery provides.

How can I be sure that it is a quality nursery?

All nurseries are regularly inspected by Ofsted (Office for standards in education).

The Ofsted inspector writes a report which includes general information about the setting, a comment about how good the care is and what is being done well as well as what needs to be improved and details of any complaints received.

The nursery has to provide you with a copy of this report if you ask for it. You can also view Ofsted reports on the Internet by going to www.ofsted.gov.uk or simply phone Oldham Children's Information Service who will print them for you and send them in the post.

As well as Ofsted reports, Oldham Early Years have a quality assurance award called 'Quality For All', which is linked to the national award of Investors in Children. This award is only given to nurseries to meet a strict set of standards. The Children's Information Service will include details of nurseries that have achieved this award when you request a list of nurseries in your local area.

At what age can my child start nursery?

Your child can start at a school nursery the September after their third birthday. However, this is different for private day nurseries, they will usually take children from the age of six weeks old.

What financial help is available?

All three and four year old children are eligible for a free part-time nursery education place the term after their third or fourth birthday (each session is two and a half hours in length, and up to five sessions can be claimed each week). This is called the nursery education grant. Everybody is entitled to receive this grant (which is paid directly to the nursery) regardless of your family's income or address.

The table below gives you the dates when your child will be able to access this grant.

Your child must be age 3 or 4 years old on or before:	Term when you can start claiming the grant:
31 st March	Summer Term (will start in April)
31 st August	Autumn term (will start in September)
31 st December	Spring term (will start in January)

Where can I access this nursery education grant?

The nursery education grant can be claimed at any private day nursery, pre-school or playgroup, as long as the childcare provider is registered with Sure Start Oldham.

Your chosen registered nursery, pre-school or playgroup will have all the forms that you will need to complete.

Parents/carers are entitled to their free nursery place for their child immediately and should not be asked to pay any fees upfront. Children attending a school nursery will claim their free early education place at the school and cannot make a claim for Nursery Education Grant.

If your child is attending more than one nursery, pre-school or playgroup, you can decide to split the grant between the two providers (eg you could claim 2 sessions at one provider and three sessions at another provider). You need to complete a claim form at each provider indicating how many sessions you need to claim.

Where can I find out more information?

For more information about finding a nursery place for your child, call the Sure Start Oldham Children's Information Service helpline free on 0800 731 1518 (Monday-Friday, 9am – 5pm) or email ecs.childrensinfo@oldham.gov.uk.

We want to provide good quality services for people in Oldham and as we are a public service you have a say in what we do. We want you to be completely satisfied with our services but to ensure this we need to know what you think. What we do best? Where could we improve things? Do you have any ideas or suggestions? Only by listening to you can we give you the service you deserve.

If you wish to make a comment about our services you can email us on customer.feedback@oldham.gov.uk or you can phone us on 0161 770 4191 or you can write to:

Complaints Officer
Chief Executives Department
PO Box 160
Civic Centre
Oldham
OL1 1UG

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