

# CHOOSING A PRE-SCHOOL PLAYGROUP



**Playgroups provide sessions of play and education for children.**

You will find playgroups in most areas across the country, often wherever parents or voluntary groups have set them up, in city centres and in most rural villages. Parents help the staff normally on a rota basis and many parents learn about child development through their involvement. Gaelic playgroups may also be available in some areas. A Playgroup may also be known as Croileagan in Scotland.

#### **Plus points**

- **Your child can enjoy learning and playing in a small group**
- **You can meet and get to know parents in your area.**

CCL18

Childcare Link (Scotland)

08000 960 296



childcare

### **How do I know my child will be safe and secure?**

First of all you know your child best - look for a playgroup you feel will suit your child. Help in making this decision is provided in the fact sheet *Top Ten Questions*.

Playgroups are registered with the Care Commission. A check on the premises is carried out to make sure the building is safe and suitable for children.

In addition, many playgroups can deliver pre-school education under contract to their local authority. As of 01 April 2002, playgroups are required to register with the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care.

You can ask to see the playgroups registration certification and latest inspection report.

### **What age range are the children in playgroups?**

Children in playgroups are usually between two and a half and five years old.

### **How many staff are there in playgroups?**

The number of staff required is set out in the National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare. Where children in a playgroup are aged three years and over, there must be one member of staff to every eight children. However, where children aged 3 and over receive daycare for a session, which is less than a continuous period of 4 hours, as is common in playgroups, there may be 1 member of staff to every 10 children.

### **When are playgroups open?**

Playgroups are usually open for two to five sessions per week, and each session is likely to be for about two and a half hours.

### **What about full-time childcare?**

Playgroups have developed because parents want their children to have some time in a group setting to play and be with new adults and children, before they start nursery or school. Although they have not been geared to the schedules of working parents, in some areas extended hours playgroups are open all day. Some parents prefer to combine childminding with playgroups to meet their needs.

### **How much does a playgroup cost?**

Playgroups cost on average about £3.50 per session.

### **How do I find a playgroup?**

Ask your local Children's Information Service to tell you more about playgroups near to your home.