

I would like to offer some tips to those parents who want to choose homebased care:

* You need to trust your child's carer 110%. You will know if you feel this way, if you have ANY doubts my advice is to walk away, choose another carer or childcare centre. Don't wait to see if things 'get better'. Even if your child is unsettled and crying when you leave, you should still have a comfortable type feeling knowing that although your child is upset they will be nurtured, cared for and loved. If you have the slightest gut feeling something isn't right, don't just leave it. I truly believe mothers and fathers know best

* Visit lots before your child starts in care. This will allow your child to become familiar with their new environment and carer. I would encourage at least 3 settling visits, more if you can! Drop in at any time of the day, turn up without notice as this will ensure things are not just set up 'perfectly' for your visit.

* If your child will sleep while in care, ask about sleeping arrangements, where will they sleep? Will they share with other children or be in a room by themselves? Ask how they will be put to sleep, how will they fall asleep. Will they be left in an unfamiliar environment?

* Does your carer take the children out and about into the community? Do they visit the local park or join in with local playgroups?

* What type of activities will be provided for your child?

* How does the carer manage with the babies and older children? How does the carer ensure the older children are stimulated enough while ensuring the babies are receiving enough nurturing and care (bottles/nappies/sleeps/cuddles etc)?

* Where will your child go if your carer is sick or away?

* What are the fees like compared to other homebased carers or a centre (remember you often pay for better quality, but this is not always the case with homebased care)

* What other children are already with that carer, are they the same as as your child? Same sex?

* Will your carer drop your child at Kindy or pick your child up from Kindy?