

## Preschool Tours

Once you have selected a group of preschools in which you are interested, you will want to visit them. Most preschools offer tours; however, some might ask you only to visit during an open house. If possible, visit the school during the school day when classes are in session. You will learn a great deal about the school by simply observing the classrooms, facilities and school walls as well as the sounds from the students and teachers. The following are a list of questions to ask during the tour as well as a survey to complete after each visit.

### *General Questions*

- On average, how much free time is there for children to play?
- What happens when a child is sick?
- Are children required to join activities?
- What is the racial and economic makeup of the families enrolled at the school?
- Does the school provide lunch? (day care centers)
- Does the school provide transportation?
- What kinds of snacks are served?
- Are naps mandatory or can the child just rest quietly? (day care centers)
- Are there workshops for parents?
- What does the school see as the role of the parent?
- At which schools do students typically enroll after they graduate?

### *Separation*

- Do teachers make home visits before school starts?
- Does the school allow parents in the classrooms?
- How many days or weeks does the school have parents in the classroom or standing by in the school?
- At what point do teachers usually begin suggesting that parents leave?

### *Education*

At what age does the school introduce:

- Phonics
- The alphabet
- Numbers
- Formal lessons

### *Teachers and Administration*

- How long has the director worked at the school?
- How long is the average tenure of a teacher?
- Is professional development available for teachers?
- What is the student/teacher ratio?
- How often during the year are parent-teacher conferences scheduled?
- How long do parent-teacher conferences last?
- What does the school see as the role of the parent?
- What happens when children misbehave? How are parents informed about their children's behavior?

## Observations

After you have completed each tour, it is often helpful to reflect on your experience. By completing this questionnaire, you will have stored some thoughts about this nursery school and can later compare your impression about this school to your satisfaction with various aspects of other preschools that you will visit. Please indicate the extent that you agree/disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The children look happy.	1	2	3	4	5
The children seem involved in the class.	1	2	3	4	5
The classrooms are too noisy.	1	2	3	4	5
The school's atmosphere is too formal.	1	2	3	4	5
The teachers seem to be well qualified.	1	2	3	4	5
The teachers are very involved with the students.	1	2	3	4	5
The teachers seem approachable.	1	2	3	4	5
The teachers are in control of their classrooms.	1	2	3	4	5
The children seem to like their teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
There is a good student/teacher ratio.	1	2	3	4	5
The classroom walls are covered with nice examples of the students' work.	1	2	3	4	5
The school is safe.	1	2	3	4	5
The facilities are adequate (i.e., toilets, outdoor space, temperature).	1	2	3	4	5
The facilities are clean.	1	2	3	4	5
There is sufficient space inside and outside for the children to be active.	1	2	3	4	5
The school's director is approachable.	1	2	3	4	5
The school director's presence is evident.	1	2	3	4	5
The school is at a good location.	1	2	3	4	5
The class sizes seem appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
The school size seems appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
I like the school's educational philosophy.	1	2	3	4	5
The school's schedule meets our needs.	1	2	3	4	5
The school has a good after-school program.	1	2	3	4	5
The school has a good summer program.	1	2	3	4	5
I would be comfortable sending my child to this school.	1	2	3	4	5

*Other Impressions:*

---



---