What should I check?

It is important that you know as much information as you can about a service or organisation. It is the responsibility for the parent/carer to be sure that a service or organisation is right for their child and family.

Important questions you should consider asking depending on individual circumstances/situations i.e. group activity/one to one/play scheme/sports and leisure activities

What is a CRB Check?

A CRB check is a background check that is performed by the Criminal Records Bureau. It is essential that all people working with children or vulnerable adults are able to produce a current clear ‘enhanced disclosure’ before commencing work.

A CRB check is only valid for the organisation that requests it.

Why are there two levels of CRB Checks?

The different levels of Disclosure reflect the amount of contact with children or vulnerable people or the amount of responsibility taken by the post holder, for those children or vulnerable adults.

Standard CRB Check

These are primarily for posts that involve working with children or vulnerable adults. The Standard check contains details of all convictions held on the Police National computer including current and 'spent' convictions as well as details of any cautions, reprimands or final warnings. If a position involves working with children, the CRB check will indicate whether information is held on three government lists of those who are banned from working with children or the vulnerable.

Enhanced CRB Check

This is the highest level of check available to anyone working in regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults that involve a far greater degree of contact with children or vulnerable adults. In general the type of work will involve regularly caring for, supervising, training or being in sole charge of such people. Examples include a Teacher, Scout or Guide leader.

Enhanced CRB checks contain the same information as the Standard Disclosure but with the addition of;
• any relevant and proportionate information held by the local police forces.
• a check of the new Children and or Vulnerable Adults barred lists where requested.

The CRB recognises that the Standard and Enhanced Disclosure information can be extremely sensitive and personal, therefore it has published a Code of Practice and employers’ guidance for recipients of Disclosures to ensure they are handled fairly and used properly. A copy of the Standard or Enhanced Disclosure will be sent out to the applicant as well as the Registered Body.

**For how long is a CRB check valid?**

Each CRB check will show the date on which it was printed. CRB checks do not carry a pre-determined period of validity because a conviction or other matter could be recorded against the subject of the CRB check at any time after it is issued.

**What is the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)?**

• The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Home Office.
• They Maintain the two new barred lists, the ‘Children’s and Vulnerable Adults’ lists that replace the Protection of Children Act, Protection of Vulnerable Adults and List 99 lists from the 12th October 2009.
• They will act as the decision making element of the Vetting and Barring scheme.

**What is the Vetting and Barring Scheme?**

The Vetting and Barring Scheme has been established to reduce the risk of harm to children and vulnerable adults. It will do this by preventing individuals who are unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults from gaining access to them through their work or voluntary activities.

From 26 July 2010, new entrants to, and those changing activity provider, in positions working with children or vulnerable adults’, whether paid or voluntary, will be able to apply to register with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

From November 2010, it becomes a legal requirement for these same individuals to be registered with the ISA before they start work.

Employees or volunteers already working with children or vulnerable adults will be phased into the scheme over a five year period and will be required to register between 1 April 2011 and 31 July 2015.
What does the ISA do?

The ISA will:

- Assess the risk of harm that an individual would pose if they were to work with vulnerable groups, based on information held about that individual.
- Use information from a number of sources including the Police, Local authorities and employers.
- Consist of trained case workers, who will decide on a case-by-case basis whether a person poses a potential on-going risk and if necessary, bar an individual from working with vulnerable groups.
- Support the case workers with a continuous training and support programme and a board of public appointees with many years experience in the field of safeguarding.

What does being ‘ISA-registered' mean?

ISA-registered means:

- No information is held that demonstrates the person poses a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults.
- A person’s registration status is continuously monitored, and
- if any new information such as a relevant caution or conviction, or information from employers comes to light, the ISA is informed, they will re-assess the person’s potential risk to vulnerable groups and they may chose to bar the individual.

ISA-registered does not mean:

- That someone is “safe” or has been “cleared to work”
- That the ISA has scrutinised all information held on them, and because new information will be coming in all the time.

What is the difference between the service offered by the ISA and the CRB?

- The ISA will prevent the most unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults by making it a legal requirement for everyone who is working with children or the vulnerable to be registered with the ISA.
- The CRB will continue to support employers by providing them with access to an individual’s full criminal record and other information so that they can assess the individual’s suitability for the particular post or position.
What is OFSTED?

**OFSTED** is the Government department which inspects schools throughout England. It aims to help improve standards of achievement and quality of education in schools.

OFSTED stands for Office for Standard in Education. OFSTED is a government department that inspects and regulates institutions in England providing education to learners of all ages and providers of care for children and young people.

OFSTED inspect or regulate the following services:

- Childminders
- Full and sessional daycare providers
- Out of school care
- Crèches
- All state maintained schools
- Some independent schools
- The overall level of services for children in local authority areas (these are called Joint Area Reviews).