

## REGISTERED CHILDCARE CHOICES

Over the years your family may use a range of childcare service. As your family grows they will have different needs and your employment commitments may change also. We hope that this fact sheet may help you choose the childcare that is best suited to your needs and those of your child.

**Childminders** are professional day carers who work in their own homes to provide care and learning opportunities for other people's children, in a family setting. They can be registered for early years education. They can give individual attention and be flexible about feeding and sleeping and parents work patterns. Childminders are usually registered to look after up to 3 children under 5yrs and 3 children aged 5yrs to 8yrs, including their own children. They may also look after older children up to the age of fourteen.

**Crèches** are run in a variety of premises and provide occasional care. Parents are usually involved in a parental activity such as shopping or training and are expected to remain within close proximity to the provision. Crèches must be registered if it takes children under 8yrs, runs for 2 hours or more per day and for 6 or more days per year.

**Day Nurseries** can be run by community or voluntary groups, local authorities and some are privately run. Most are open from Monday to Friday generally from 8 a.m. until 6p.m. They can be registered for early years education. They provide full day care, stimulating educational and fun activities for babies and children up to the age of 5yrs. Some nurseries provide a pick up and drop off service providing wrap-a-round care for school age children.

**Out-of-school clubs** are for school aged children. Activities are planned so that your

child can, relax, learn, play and have fun in groups and with their friends. Usually based in or near schools.

**Breakfast clubs** open in the morning before the school starts. Your child can enjoy breakfast with their friends.

**After school clubs** open in the afternoon after school finishes and usually finish around 6 p.m. Some services offer **Before and After clubs** opening both in the morning and in the afternoon.

**Holiday play schemes** open during the school holidays.

**Playgroups and Cylch Meithrin's** provide for children are aged between 2 ½yrs and 5 yrs. They can be registered for early years education. Most pre-schools have the same term dates as local schools. Children learn and play in small groups. Staff work with young children and offer lots of opportunities to learn through a wide range of fun activities. Their aim is that children will enjoy a safe and stimulating play environment and so learn to develop socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically.

**Holiday Play Schemes\*** usually cater for older children, although children as young as 5 and 6 can often attend. This means that if they are providing care for children under the age of 8 then the scheme will have to be registered with the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales.

Where play schemes have no prior arrangement with parents and children are free to come and go at will, then the scheme will be

registered for Open Access Play provision. Where parents drop off their children and can be assured that the play scheme will supervise them until the end of the session, the scheme should be registered as and Out of School Care provision.

**School Nurseries** are provided by the local authority and are open during term-time only. They are registered for early years education for children from the term following their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.