

# Steps to consider when looking at any childcare settings for your child.

nursery / child minder / school



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**Contact the setting to arrange to meet with the nominated person/people to discuss your child's needs. (This may be with a specific child minder, the head teacher, class teacher, Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) /Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCo) and/or pastoral support.)**

**It is best to be prepared and initiate this contact well in advance of any intended start date.**

At the meeting, be prepared and share the information below. This will help to build the child's health care plan with the school:

## Information to share

- Evidence, videos, or scenarios are important to show staff, to help them understand what happens in worse case scenarios.
- Download these TOFS guidance sheets (or order hard copy for free from the TOFS shop):
  - [About OA/TOF/VACTERL](https://tofs.org.uk/product/about-oa-tof-and-vacterl-booklet/)
  - [Key points for early years staff](https://tofs.org.uk/product/oa-tof-key-points-for-early-years-staff/)
  - [GP fact card](https://tofs.org.uk/product/gp-fact-card/)
- Your child's medical history
- Letters from any of your health care team/ consultants
- List safe/unsafe foods for your child, drinks they use in emergencies

Make the school staff aware that not all 'choking' needs action. It is important to make them aware of the difference. Some appear to choke because of a 'stickie' (food lodged in the oesophagus) but are still able to breathe. Some appear to choke due to unsafe swallow or aspiration – would your child need to calm down, take a sip of drink until it passes or need physical intervention?

Clearly if a child is unable to breathe, then physical intervention is necessary. Sharing evidence, videos and scenarios will help with this.

Suggest training on choking for the school staff, including the kitchen team, with first aid information posters placed in key areas. (This advice may be different for children who have had stomach pull ups)

[St John Ambulance – choking child guidance](https://www.sja.org.uk/get-advice/first-aid-advice/choking/child-choking/)  
<https://www.sja.org.uk/get-advice/first-aid-advice/choking/child-choking/>

When settled, and where relevant, make the class aware of your child's condition. Your child's peers will in time, become their army of support when needed.

Remember that you are your child's advocate and their voice in the early years, so do speak up, share information, and ask questions, so that you feel confident leaving them in that childcare setting.

As your child's health care plan will need updating annually, do resend updated guidance and information from TOFS every year too. Offer to meet with new staff to explain your child's condition and needs.

If ever in doubt, contact TOFS Facebook groups, TOFS Local Contacts or your team of health care professionals.