

UAETHrive / FAMILY BUYER GUIDE

The UAE Nursery Selection Guide

Choose with confidence. A practical parent's guide to comparing nurseries across the Emirates, including a printable visit scorecard.

INSIDE • Key questions • Nursery visit scorecard • Comparison planner

1. Start with your family's non-negotiables

- Location and journey time: morning traffic, drop-off access and pick-up flexibility.
- Child's age and needs: accepted age range, developmental support and settling-in arrangements.
- Timetable: term dates, daily hours, holidays and late collection rules.
- Real cost: tuition, registration, deposits, meals, transport, uniforms and refund terms.
- Language and learning: teaching approach, play, communication and cultural fit.

2. Verify before you shortlist

Ask to see the nursery's current operating licence or permit, and confirm details through the relevant official authority. Requirements and oversight can differ by emirate. Dubai parents can consult KHDA; Abu Dhabi parents can consult ADEK. Do not treat a directory profile or marketing statement as proof of licensing.

Ask how the setting handles child protection, staff background checks and training, accidents, first aid, illness, medication and emergency evacuation. Request policies in writing where possible.

3. Watch the setting in action

Observe the interaction between carers and children. Look for calm, responsive staff; children engaged in age-appropriate play; secure and clean rooms; shaded outdoor activity where available; and routines for meals, naps and toileting.

A beautiful building is not a substitute for attentive care. Visit at a normal operating time, not only during a staged tour.

Explore nursery and other business profiles: uaethrive.com/businesses

NURSERY VISIT SCORECARD

Take this on every nursery visit

Nursery: _____ Emirate / area: _____

Visit date: _____ Child's age: _____ Contact: _____

Score each criterion from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). Use N/A where you cannot assess it. Safety or licensing concerns are red flags, not merely low scores.

CHECK	WHAT TO OBSERVE / ASK	1-5
Licensing and transparency	Permit details shown; clear ownership and policies	___
Safeguarding and child protection	Staff know reporting and supervision procedures	___
Security, hygiene and first aid	Controlled entry, clean spaces, trained staff	___
Warm, responsive care	Staff listen, comfort and engage children	___
Staffing and continuity	Ask ratios for your age group and turnover	___
Learning through play	Age-appropriate materials and activities	___
Communication with parents	Updates, language, escalation and feedback	___
Inclusion and individual needs	Practical support explained without assumptions	___
Food, sleep and daily routines	Safe storage, allergies, naps and toileting	___
Practicality and full cost	Hours, location, extras and refund clarity	___

Total (maximum 50 if all ten criteria scored): ____ / ____ Overall impression: ____ / 5

Three questions I still need answered

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Red flags or concerns: _____

COMPARE BEFORE YOU COMMIT

Make a confident final choice

4. Ask these questions during the tour

- ☐ Can I see the current licence or permit, and which authority supervises the centre?
- ☐ What are the staff-to-child ratios for my child's age group, and who covers absences?
- ☐ How do you respond to distress, behaviour concerns, accidents and illness?
- ☐ What qualifications, first-aid training and safeguarding checks do staff hold?
- ☐ How do you manage allergies, medication, feeding, naps and toilet training?
- ☐ How is my child's progress shared, and can parents raise concerns privately?
- ☐ What is included in the quoted fee, and what are the deposit/refund conditions?
- ☐ What does a normal day look like, including outdoor and free-play time?

5. Compare up to three nurseries

FACTOR	OPTION A	OPTION B	OPTION C
Name / location	_____	_____	_____
Licence checked?	_____	_____	_____
Total monthly cost (AED)	_____	_____	_____
Hours / commute	_____	_____	_____
Scorecard total	_____	_____	_____
Key advantage	_____	_____	_____
Main concern	_____	_____	_____

My choice: _____ Next action: _____

Before paying: request the fee schedule, written terms, enrolment requirements, start date and confirmation of places directly from the nursery. Availability and fees may change.

Discover local nursery profiles

Explore UAETHrive's directory, compare available public information, and contact nurseries directly for current details: <https://uaethrive.com/businesses>

Official starting points: [KHDA \(Dubai\)](#) • [ADEK \(Abu Dhabi\)](#) • [UAE Government overview](#)

UAETHrive is an independent business discovery directory, not a nursery regulator or an endorsement of any provider. This guide is general information; check official requirements and the nursery's current documentation. Prepared October 2026.