

# Parents say childcare quality is falling <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

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## EXCERPTS

In 2016 82.5 per cent of parents rated the nursery they use as good or excellent for quality of service, compared to 88.7 per cent in 2012.

Reviews rating nurseries as 'poor' or 'bad for value for money' had increased from 9.3 per cent in 2012 to 12.8 per cent in 2016.

The Good Care Guide is the only website where families can rate and review registered childcare (such as nurseries, and nanny and babysitting agencies) and eldercare services (such as care homes) in England, Scotland and Wales, and where positive and negative reviews are published.

UK families say that care services for children and older people have got worse in the last five years, but are more critical of the care of older people, particularly home care services.

The site features over 65,000 registered providers of childcare (nurseries and other group childcare) and adult care (care homes and home care agencies).

Visitors can give an overall rating on the quality of care and staff, and then on the facilities and cleanliness. The star ratings run from 1(bad) to 5 (excellent).

A statement on the website says, 'We believe that families in the UK should be able to make informed decisions about care, and that these shared experiences will ultimately help improve the quality of care, for everyone.'

The company's latest research is based on an analysis of 9,000 reviews left by families on the Good Care Guide website between 2012 and 2016.

The analysis further showed that 89.8 per cent of parents using nanny agencies rated them as good/excellent in 2012 compared to 86.5 per cent in 2016.

Reasons for why parents rated their nurseries negatively include:

- staff not complying with parents' specific instructions in regard to dietary requirements;
- staff members speaking 'poor English';
- nurseries being 'money oriented' rather than caring;
- children not learning enough at nursery;
- staff refusing to potty train children;
- high turnover of staff;
- poor hygiene;
- small rooms and limited stimulation.

Often, parents are upset about specific incidents as well, such as staff's lack of compassion in cases of bereavement or illness, rudeness or failures in regard to safety.

The Good Care Guide was launched in 2012 by My Family Care and United for All Ages and has had more than three million visitors.

Stephen Burke, director of Good Care Guide and United for All Ages, said, 'Once again families rate childcare as better than eldercare. There are a lot of changes ahead for childcare in 2017. The Government is extending free childcare to 30 hours for three- and four-year-olds and is introducing childcare tax breaks.

'These changes will create challenges for childcare providers and for parents. The extra government funding for childcare must be used to

help more parents get into and stay in work. Feedback from families will show what difference is being made.'

-reprinted from Nursery World

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