



Making the best decision for your child: a parent checklist

This checklist will help you make an informed decision when visiting La Petite Academy or other child-care and learning centers. The list covers topics relevant to programs, teachers, facilities and other topics.

Keep in mind that our checklist doesn't cover basic health and safety standards that all licensed programs must meet, because these vary by state. Nor does it cover whether nutritious meals and snacks are provided. Be sure to inquire about these topics during your visits.



Center 1

Center 2

About the Learning Process

Questions to ask:

Is the program based on age-appropriate development objectives?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the curriculum prepare children for kindergarten based on the state standards for school readiness?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the curriculum provide opportunities for children to explore topics in detail, and in multiple ways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the curriculum take into account the various learning styles, cultures, disabilities and languages of the children and their families?.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the program based on age-appropriate learning objectives?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do activities change regularly so the children have a chance to learn new skills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the class follow a daily routine that offers a variety of activities throughout the day?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are critical pre-writing and pre-reading skills practiced every day?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the program emphasize school readiness skills, such as phonemic awareness, vocabulary building, pre-writing and math?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the school provide a record of growth and progress for the your child?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Things to look for:

Do you see evidence that the teachers use a variety of methods to teach letters, numbers, shapes and new vocabulary words?.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Is an activity and lesson plan posted, and is the teacher following it?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do the children appear to be happy and engaged in activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the program based on age-appropriate development objectives? (Including Basic Motor Skills, Senses Development, Self-Help Skills, Listening-Responding and Game Play).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do the children seem to be sharing, playing cooperatively and working well with one another?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

About the Teachers

Questions to ask:

Is an activity and lesson plan posted, and is the teacher following it?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do the teachers participate in 12 hours or more of in-service training each year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the teacher use a well-known, quality curriculum to guide what children are taught?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do teachers receive program training, support and ongoing training?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do teachers use educational resources like curriculum guides, lesson plans and child-development resources?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Things to look for:

Are you introduced to teachers on your tour?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the teachers warm and caring with the children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do teachers have one-on-one conversations with children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do teachers work with children individually and in small groups of three or four?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When the children are outside, are the teachers engaged and encouraging the children's play?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



About the Facility

Questions to ask:

Do the children have outdoor unstructured playtime every day with access to age-appropriate playground equipment? Are there inside play areas in the case of extreme weather?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Do rooms have separate learning centers (reading, art, dramatic play, writing, etc.) with interesting equipment and materials?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Things to look for:

Is the furniture and playground equipment clean and in good condition?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Are the toys age appropriate?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Do display areas on walls contain children’s artwork and writing and photographs of class projects or activities?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Does each child have enough room indoors and outdoors to move around without interfering with other children’s play space?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Is there an abundance of age-appropriate children’s literature?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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About the Parents

Questions to ask:

Are parents welcome to drop in without making an appointment?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Does the teacher have face-to-face or phone contact with parent(s) or provide regular e-mail or written reports at least twice a month?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Does the program hold parent/teacher conferences at least twice a year?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Are there suggested involvement activities for parents?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Are there daily and/or weekly progress reports sent to parents? Ask for examples.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Things to look for:

Do you feel welcome?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Do the program’s stated goals match your own goals for your child?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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