



**Are you thinking of using an
out-of-school setting in Luton?**



**Make sure your child
is safe – ask the right
questions**



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Luton

What is an out-of-school setting?

An out-of-school setting, sometimes referred to as an OOSS is an institution/ setting which provides tuition, training, instruction, or activities to children in England without their parents' or carers' supervision. This does not include schools, academies, colleges or providing care for children under eight years old which is registered with Ofsted.

Some examples of OOSS are:

- extracurricular clubs or settings eg ballet, music, drama or sports classes
- uniformed youth organisations such as Scouts, Guides, Cadet services
- youth providers eg centre-based and detached youth work
- private language schools, including those for children coming from abroad
- religious settings which offer education in their own faith
- tuition centres and supplementary schools (sometimes called complementary schools)

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Please note this is a not an exhaustive list and there are other types of out-of-school settings.

What do out-of-school settings do?

Many out-of-school settings do a great job providing children and young people with a range of activities in many subjects including arts, language, music, sport and religion. Some of the many benefits include improving cultural awareness, building self-esteem, and encouraging children to become active citizens within their community.

These may be delivered in a range of venues from residential settings to larger and formal environments such as community and youth centres, sports clubs and places of worship.

We want to ensure that all OOSS are a safe place for children regardless of whether they are doing karate, playing football or learning a language or getting some extra tuition to support their school work.



Keeping children safe

This simple guide will help you as a parent or carer to know what to look out for when deciding if an out-of-school setting is a safe and suitable place for your child. The check list will help you to ask the right questions.

We want to ensure all premises are safe and all staff including volunteers are suitable to work with young people.

1. Suitability of staff

- Have staff had a DBS check?
- Are they experienced / qualified to work with children?
- Are staff trained in health and safety, first aid and child protection/safeguarding?

You need to check if the adults looking after children are suitable to work with them.

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) issues criminal record certificates to help employers determine the suitability of staff. These certificates will disclose unspent convictions and cautions, some spent convictions and cautions and other information that the police believe is relevant to the role and ought to be disclosed.

Do not assume that a provider has had its staff DBS checked, so always ask.

All staff should have good working knowledge of and be appropriately trained in health and safety, first aid and child protection as a minimum.

2. Policies and procedures

- Do they have written policies and procedures that you can read or access that explains how they protect children such as a child protection/safeguarding policy?
- Does the setting have a code of conduct policy for staff, volunteers and for children that you can view?

As a minimum the OOSS provider should be able to discuss their policies on health and safety, safeguarding and child protection (including online and digital safety), as well as procedures on checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and young people.



3. Physical environment

- Is the building safe and secure? How do people access the facilities, is there a secure entry?
- Are exits and entry points monitored? Are fire exits clearly marked?
- Is the room organised safely so that space is accessible and free from hazards?
- How do they organise collection procedures to ensure only authorised people can collect children?



4. Look, listen and note

- Can you stay to observe the session/activity?
- Observe how staff interact with children who are in the setting/club/group
- Watch how they manage children's behaviour
- Does your child feel safe? Do they feel comfortable with the staff and the environment?
- Who do you speak to if you have any concerns?



A well-run group or club will be happy to answer questions about their activities and policies. If you have any concerns regarding the safety of children at an out-of-school setting you should discuss this with the setting or in the case of immediate harm to a child contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on **01582 547653**, or if out of office hours call **0300 3008123** and in an emergency ring **999**.

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