

Become a registered childminder





A rewarding career

If you would like to have a rewarding career, be your own boss and run your business from your own home, then childminding could be an ideal career for you. As a registered childminder you will:

- offer the children you care for a secure and stimulating environment
- provide early years education and watch the children develop
- work in your home, choosing the hours you work and the services you provide
- care for your own children at the same time if you have a family
- have a career where no two days are the same
- meet other childminders in your area and get to know your local community
- join over 60,000 childminders in England and Wales providing quality childcare.

“The right career choice”

“I have been childminding for over five years, since the birth of my second son. I’m certain that I have made the right career choice as these have been the best years. I absolutely love childminding.

I have taken advantage of training opportunities and, as well as caring for a number of children, I also work as a support childminder giving new childminders help and advice. I find that childminding is so rewarding – I can’t stop telling people how good it is!”

Fiona, registered childminder, Doncaster





What does a registered childminder do?

As a registered childminder you will look after one or more children under the age of 8 for more than a total of two hours a day, usually in your own home, for payment. You will deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – a play-based framework for children up to the age of 5 that will enable you to meet a child's individual development needs. You will be inspected against the requirements of the EYFS by Ofsted. Although every day will be different, a typical day may include:

- visiting a park, local shops, library, playgroup or children's centre
- arranging fun and stimulating learning activities, observing each child's development and planning future activities
- providing meals and snacks for the children
- taking children to and from school, pre-school or clubs
- working with other local childminders to organise group activities.

“Childminders are true professionals”

“When I gave up my job to look after my daughter, I decided that childminding could be the career for me. I already had some experience in childcare from volunteering at my daughter's playgroup, and this helped me to get my first childcare placements.

I have found working as a childminder a positive experience. My area has a lot of single parents, so I may be a consistent male influence in that child's life. I have found childminding to be a great career, and it fits in with my family life. Childminders are true professionals who provide care and early education, as well as running a business. It can be a very rewarding career.”

**Tim, registered childminder,
Medway**



Becoming registered

In England, before you can work as a childminder caring for children under 8 you must register with Ofsted. There are two registers maintained by Ofsted.

- the Early Years Register, for childminders caring for children from birth to 31 August following their 5th birthday. These childminders will have to show that they meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- the compulsory part of the Ofsted Childcare Register, for childminders caring for children from 1 September following their 5th birthday up to and including the age of 7.

The vast majority of childminders will want to be included on both registers as this then gives them the chance to care for children of all ages.

- 1** To become registered, first you'll need to attend a pre-registration session where you will find out more about becoming a childminder. You can find out when the next session is being held near you by contacting your local authority. You'll receive lots of information at the session, including an application pack and information about the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- 2** Once you've submitted your application and paid a registration fee, Ofsted will advise you on how to apply for a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure, which is a check to make sure there's nothing in your history to prohibit you working with children. All people aged 16 and over who are regularly in your home must also have a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure (this includes members of your family). From July 2010, you will also have to be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) as part of the Vetting and Barring Scheme.
- 3** You'll need to complete a paediatric first-aid course (before you are registered) and an introductory childcare course (within six months of registration).
- 4** An Ofsted inspector will arrange a convenient time to carry out a registration visit where you will need to show how you meet the requirements of the EYFS.
- 5** If you're successful you will receive a registration certificate and be able to start work as a registered childminder. **Congratulations!**



Some frequently asked questions

Do I have to be registered?

If you care for children under the age of 8 in your own home, you must register with Ofsted, the body that inspects childcare in England.

Is it expensive to get started?

As a newly registered childminder in England, you may be able to apply for a grant to help cover the costs of setting up your childminding business. Childminder start-up grants are managed by your local authority. You'll find out more about this during the registration process.

How many children can I look after?

Ofsted will set a number of children you can care for, up to a maximum of six children under 8 years old, of which usually no more than three may be under the age of 5. These numbers will include any children of your own.

Do I have to live in a big house?

You don't need to have a big house and garden to become a childminder. You don't even need to own your own home.

How much will I earn?

It will be up to you to set your fees, and how much you earn will depend on the number of children you look after and the hours you work. The fees charged by childminders also tend to vary regionally. Before you decide how much to charge for a placement, it's a good idea to do a bit of research to find out what other local childminders charge.

“It's great to see the children progress”

“I have been childminding for 25 years now, and I belong to a local network that recruits and trains childminders to care for disabled children. I fell into childminding because it suited my family life. As my children got older I felt I needed a challenge, so I joined the local childminding network. I really enjoy the work, and it's great to see the children progress.”

**Brenda, registered childminder,
Bromley**



The sky's the limit

One of the most rewarding things about caring for children is watching their excitement as they learn something new, or achieve something for the very first time. Childminding is a dynamic and evolving career, and there are plenty of courses and training opportunities that will help you develop your knowledge and confidence.

All childminders must take an introductory course in home-based childcare and hold a paediatric first-aid certificate as part of their registration. Once you have started childminding, there are many training courses available, right through to degree-level qualifications.

Training may be offered locally by NCMA tutors, through colleges and training centres, or via distance learning providers.

Community involvement

There are a vast number of local projects where childminders help local families. These include childminders offering respite care to families with disabled children; and caring for the children of teenage parents to allow them to return to education, training or employment. Involvement in a community project will allow you to add a new dimension to your career and learn something new.

Quality Start

As a new childminder you may be able to take advantage of a special NCMA membership package that includes:

- A year's NCMA membership
- 12 months' public liability insurance
- A complete set of business paperwork, including contracts
- A case to keep your paperwork together.

If you are eligible for a start-up grant from your local authority then the Quality Start package can be paid for directly by the grant. Your local authority will be able to tell you if you are eligible.



Join NCMA

Almost two-thirds of registered childminders in England and three-quarters of registered childminders in Wales belong to the National Childminding Association (NCMA), which has been supporting childminders since 1977. NCMA is a membership organisation, and as a member we can support you in so many ways.

Develop your career with NCMA training delivered by experts; raise the quality of your practice by becoming part of a childminding network offering support for childminders and families.

Get **support** from NCMA with a dedicated information line and access to the resources you need to run a successful business. You will also receive *Who Minds?*, NCMA's bi-monthly membership magazine absolutely free.

Save up to 50 per cent on NCMA products and publications with our discounts for NCMA members. As an NCMA member you can also access NCMA Saver – a website dedicated to giving you discounts at high street stores.

Protect yourself as a childminder with NCMA's legal support and insurance.

NCMA also has an emergency legal helpline offering legal advice to members.

NCMA offers immediate cover with its public liability insurance, underwritten by Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance plc, which is a requirement for all registered childminders.

NCMA is keen to **promote** your work, giving you a respected voice at local, regional and national level, making sure that decision-makers understand the work that childminders do. As an NCMA member you can get involved by joining regional or national committees and making your voice heard.



Where next?

Registered childminders work in their own homes, caring for children and young people, and NCMA offers support throughout your childminding career, whether you are starting out or have been childminding for several years.

If you know that childminding is the career for you, you can use the following contacts for help and information.

National Childminding Association

NCMA is the professional association for registered childminders and can give you lots of help and information as you start out.

Tel: 0845 880 0044

Web: www.ncma.org.uk

NCMA, Royal Court, 81 Tweedy Road, Bromley, Kent BR1 1TG

Ofsted

Ofsted is the national government body responsible for registering and inspecting childminders in England.

Tel: 08456 404040

Web: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Directgov

Directgov can give you details of your local family information service, which can help you as you start your childminding career.

Tel: 0800 234 6346

Web: www.direct.gov.uk

The information contained in this leaflet applies to England only. For more information on childminding in Wales call NCMA's Wales office on 0845 880 1299. Please note all information is correct at time of going to press (Jan 2010) but is subject to change

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