

How to  
become a  
registered

# Childminder



National Childminding Association



# Would you like to...

- **care for children** *and offer them a happy and inspirational environment?*
- **have a rewarding career** *and benefit from generous tax allowances?*
- **work in your own home** *and do something you love for a living?*
- **start your own business** *and get help with the set-up costs?*

If the answer to these questions is “yes” then registered childminding could be the ideal career for you.

You’ll be joining around 75,000 registered childminders in England and Wales – men and women of all ages and from all walks of life – caring for other people’s children.

Childminding gives you the chance to work in your own home doing a really worthwhile job. You’ll be helping children develop with lots of activities and sharing their successes as they grow.

*“The years I’ve been childminding have been the best years. It’s hard work, but fun. I love the kids around me.”* Berni Taylor, registered childminder.

*“I absolutely love childminding and don’t regret leaving my old job at all. Childminding is so rewarding.”* Fiona Crane, registered childminder.

# Getting started

Before you can start working in your own home caring for children under 8 years old, you must be registered as a childminder.

To be registered in England you must meet the national standards for childminding. Ofsted is responsible for registering and inspecting childminders to make sure they meet these standards.

During registration, an Ofsted inspector will visit you to make sure that you are suitable to care for children and that your home is a safe, child-friendly place.

New childminders must also pass a paediatric first-aid course and complete introductory training in childminding. And all childminders should be insured, have a health check and an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure.



# How do I register?

**Go** to a childminding pre-registration briefing session. This session tells you more about becoming a childminder. Find out when the next session is by contacting your local children's information service. You can find its contact details by visiting [www.childcarelink.gov.uk](http://www.childcarelink.gov.uk) or by calling ChildcareLink on 0800 096 0296.

**Read** the national standards and complete the Ofsted childminding application pack which you will be given at the briefing session.

**Return** the form to Ofsted.

**Use** Ofsted's instructions to apply to the Criminal Records Bureau for a disclosure for yourself and anyone else in your home aged over 16.

**Have** an Ofsted home inspection and suitable person interview, based on the national standards for childminding.

**Complete** an introductory childminding training course and first aid course. You must do this within six months of starting childminding.

**Pay** Ofsted the £18 registration fee.

**Receive** your registration certificate and start work as a registered childminder!

# What else will I need to know?

## **Will this cost me a lot of money?**

Most new childminders receive a start-up grant to help with the cost of setting up their childminding business. This funding is distributed by your local authority. You'll find out more at the pre-registration session.

## **How many children will I be able to care for?**

Depending on the space you have available, Ofsted can register you to care for up to six children under 8 years old, of which usually no more than three may be under the age of 5. These numbers will include your own children.

## **How do I decide on fees and hours?**

As a childminder you will be self-employed and running your own business. This means you can set your own working hours and fees. You will also need to organise your own tax and National Insurance contributions, but childminders benefit from generous tax allowances and benefits. NCMA members get advice on tax, benefits and National Insurance.

## **How long will it take to get registered?**

Ofsted aims to complete all new registrations in three months.



# How can I develop my career?

Childminding offers lots of opportunities to develop your career.

Childminders must attend an introductory course in home-based childcare as part of their registration as a new childminder.

Introduction to Childcare Practice (Home-based) (ICP) is the first unit of the nationally-accredited Diploma in Home-based Childcare (DHC). There are a further four units of DHC which go together to make the full level 3 qualification. This then provides the underpinning knowledge for the level 3 NVQ in Children's Care, Learning and Development.

Some experienced childminders go on to tutor on these courses as well.

You may also find that your local authority or childminding group offers training on topics ranging from child protection to messy play.

Your local authority may give you the opportunity to complete NCMA Quality First – a quality assurance scheme that gives you a way to show parents you are offering quality care.

You may also get the chance to join an NCMA Children Come First quality-assured childminding network, that offers you the support of a network coordinator (who





can help you with training, filling vacancies and so on) and other childminders on the network.

If you belong to a network, you may be able to train as a community childminder offering care to children in need, or as an accredited childminder who can claim funding for providing early years education to 3- and 4-year-olds.

There are also innovative projects that make the most of childminders' unique skills. For example, childminders in some areas are:

- offering childcare for families working shifts;
- working with fathers and encouraging them to become registered childminders;
- offering care for children whose parents are attending training or hospital.

# How can NCMA help me?

Almost 50,000 registered childminders in England and Wales belong to the National Childminding Association (NCMA). Joining NCMA gives you all the following benefits:

## ■ Tailored advice

NCMA provides its members with regularly updated information and advice on all aspects of being a registered childminder – from working out your tax allowances to negotiating a childminding contract.

## ■ Free legal representation

For peace of mind, as an NCMA member you will be entitled to free legal representation on childminding matters and to free advice on professional and legal matters.

## ■ Who Minds? magazine

NCMA's colourful quarterly magazine will keep you up to date with news and issues affecting childminders, features on child development and offers and giveaways.



## ■ Money saving offers

Members get up to 50 per cent off NCMA's range of publications and products, specially developed for childminders, including childminding contracts, accounts book and child record forms. Plus exclusive products available only to members.

## ■ Specialist services

You can benefit from many special offers and discounted services from companies including the Co-operative Bank and Britannia Rescue.

### ■ **Low cost insurance**

NCMA offers home and car insurance tailor-made to childminders' needs.

### ■ **Professional respect**

Belonging to childminding's professional association lets you easily show parents and other childcare professionals your commitment to your career.

### ■ **Public liability insurance**

As a registered childminder you must hold public liability insurance. NCMA's insurance policy has been designed by people who understand childminding.

### ■ **A campaigning voice**

NCMA speaks on behalf of all registered childminders and home-based childcarers in England and Wales and campaigns on issues its members feel strongly about.

### ■ **Vacancy scheme**

NCMA members can join an online vacancy scheme and advertise their vacancies to parents who use Care-4 childcare vouchers.



# Where can I get help starting out?

## Early years team

Each local authority has an early years team, which is responsible for training, information and support for childminders. It also distributes start-up grants for new childminders. You can find your local early years team's number by visiting [www.childcarelink.gov.uk](http://www.childcarelink.gov.uk) or by calling ChildcareLink on 0800 096 0296.

## Children's information service (CIS)

Again, every local authority has a CIS. The CIS gives out local childcare information to parents. It holds a list of every childminder in the area and can help you promote your business. You can also find the details of your CIS by contacting ChildcareLink.

## Ofsted

Ofsted is the national government body in charge of registering and inspecting childminders in England to make sure they meet the national standards for childminding. You can call Ofsted on 0845 601 4771 or visit [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## Childminding groups and associations

There are hundreds of childminding groups and local associations that always welcome new members. As well as providing services such as equipment loan schemes, childminding groups hold social events and drop-in sessions where you can meet up with other childminders.



# Joining NCMA

Most new childminders receive a start-up grant from their early years team to help give their business the best beginning possible. Many early years teams offer NCMA's Quality Start package, created to support the grants.



As part of your Quality Start package you will receive:

- 12 months' NCMA public liability insurance
- an NCMA Accounts Book
- an NCMA Accident, Incident and Medication Record Folder
- a pack of NCMA Childminding Contracts
- a pack of NCMA Child Record Forms
- a fire blanket
- plus, an attractive, lockable case to keep your contracts, registers, accounts and accident books and all your other important papers securely.

To receive all this you won't have to part with a penny as it is directly paid for by the start-up grant. To see if you are eligible for a start-up grant and the Quality Start package, call your early years team. You can find its number by calling 0800 096 0296.

If you aren't able to take advantage of NCMA's Quality Start package, you can still benefit from all the services featured on pages 8 and 9, including public liability insurance, by joining NCMA.

Call 020 8290 2410 to join NCMA today.



# Come and join us!

NCMA's Information Line can offer you advice on all aspects of childminding, whether you want to find out more about publicising your business or how to find training in your area.

**Call free on 0800 169 4486**

Open 10am – 4pm weekdays (except bank holidays)

NCMA's website – [www.ncma.org.uk](http://www.ncma.org.uk) – is also full of useful information about registered childminding.

## **National Childminding Association**

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The information 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 (January 2007) but is subject to change.

Code: RC01

01/07