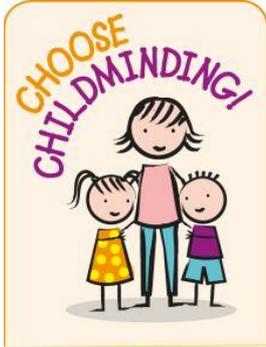


Thinking About Becoming a Childminder?



Childminding can be a rewarding career offering some great benefits, including flexible hours, work-life balance and an opportunity to run your own business.

But becoming a childminder isn't something that can be done overnight. There are expectations from the Government that all childminders be trained, inspected, registered and regularly vetted to ensure safety of children.

What is Childminding?

A childminder is one person who can work with up to two other people at any time, looking after children on a domestic premises for reward, where one individual child attends for a total of more than two hours a day.

- Domestic premises means that someone lives there; it is usually the home of one of the childminders
- Reward is usually money but can be any form of payment including goods, vouchers or money's worth

You will deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which is a play based statutory framework. The EYFS helps all people working with young children aged 0-5 years to provide a secure, inclusive environment for play, learning and development. It also promotes partnership working with parents, carers and other professionals to ensure the individual needs of all children are supported.

As a registered SCA childminder, you will be self-employed but will have the support of the Suffolk Childcare Agency.

Things to Consider

First steps

One of the first things to think about is the impact that childminding will have on you and your family. As you will most probably be childminding in your own home, you need to consider the following:

- Are you physically fit enough to be a childminder? You will be lifting, children and toys; childminding is a physically demanding job
- What effect will this have on other members of your household? Talk to them first. Everyone over the age of 16yrs will need to have a DBS (Disclosure & Barring Services) check. Ask if there is anything you should be aware of before you put them forward for a

check. All DBS checks must come back clear, otherwise we are unable to register you with the SCA

- How suitable is your house and garden? You must provide a secure, inclusive environment for play, learning and development (indoors and outdoors)
- Do you have the relevant safety equipment in place – smoke detectors/fire blankets?
- Do you have additional storage for toys and equipment?
- Pets – the impact this will have on them and how they might affect the children in your care (your pets must be registered with a local vet)
- You must ensure that you (and anyone who works with/for you) has sufficient understanding and use of English to ensure the wellbeing of children in your care – you must be able to keep records in English, be able to summon emergency help, understand written and verbal instructions in English

NB: if you rent, YOU MUST talk to your landlord to request their approval for you running a childminding business from the premises. If you have a mortgage you must inform the mortgage company that you are going to be self-employed, they might charge you more if you are working from home – check this out in advance.

What would an Average Day be like as a Childminder?

You might:

- Visit the local community – children’s centres, childminding groups, libraries
- Do the school/nursery run

You will need to spend time:

- Playing, observing, planning and recording children’s learning and development
- Promoting partnership working with parents, carers and other professionals to ensure the individual needs of all children are supported

This will only be a small part of your time but you do need to make sure you:

- Keep your accounts in order and be aware of self-assessment and National Insurance records¹

Qualifications Required to Become a Childminder

There are four main trainings that we request before you are able to register with our Suffolk Childcare Agency (SCA). Don’t worry if you have not completed this training as the SCA will be offering courses on a regular basis, please speak to us

1. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
2. Paediatric First Aid
3. Safeguarding
4. Food Hygiene

¹ The SCA can provide help with this

If you choose to register with the SCA we will provide you with Continuous Professional Development (CPD), ensuring your qualifications stay current and giving you access to other supplementary training to further your skills and knowledge in this sector.

How Can I Develop My Career As A Childminder

There are a number of ways to develop as a childminder. You may wish to:

- Gain a higher level qualification
- Offer respite care or emergency childcare for families with temporary difficulties;
- Offer care for children known to social care
- Provide funded early education



How Many Children Can I Care For?

You must adhere to the ratios set out in the EYFS Statutory Framework which sets out the ages and maximum numbers of children up to the age of eight that childminders can look after. The overall number depends on the following factors:

- If there are any other children under eight years of age that you regularly care for, including your own children, any foster children, children of relatives
- How many older children over the age of eight you care for
- If you have children with particular needs that may require extra care
- The space you have available for childminding
- Any health or other difficulties that might prevent you from caring for some children (such as difficulties in lifting)
- Sleeping arrangements if you provide overnight care for some children

What Are The Benefits Of Childminding?

- It is an enjoyable and rewarding career working with children and families
- It offers you the satisfaction of running your own business
- It means you can choose when you work to maintain a balance between work and other commitments

How Much Money Can I Earn?

Although you will be operating under the umbrella of the Suffolk Childcare Agency, you are self-employed and can charge your own rates and work the hours to suit you. Therefore the earning potential for each childminder will vary quite a lot.

Currently childminders are charging between £3.50 to £5.50 an hour per child, depending on what services you are offering. Services might include providing lunch/dinner/snacks, transporting to school, pick up from nursery etc.

Childminder Agency Vs Ofsted

So why register with a Childminder Agency (CMA) rather than with Ofsted?

Childminding can be an isolating and stressful job. It requires strong business acumen alongside an ability to allow children to develop to their fullest potential.

Childminders need a reliable network and the ability to benefit from high-quality support from knowledgeable professionals. The Director of the Suffolk Childcare Agency personally has over 18 years' experience in this industry, as well as raising her own four children and now two grandchildren! Plus she has the support of a team who together have many years of experience within the childcare sector.

The Suffolk Childcare Agency will help you with:

- Finding children
- Training
- Raising the quality of your provision
- Ongoing support including regular visits
- Marketing and business advice
- Administrative support (helping with paperwork)
- Providing a supportive network of other childminders
- Keeping you up to date with any changes in legislation
- Applying for any grant funding

A quality assurance visit from a member of the SCA team will not cause you any stress but will be a welcomed visit. We are here to support all our registered childminders. We want to improve the quality of provision locally so parents can have choices.

We aim to ensure that parents make the SCA their first port of call when investigating childcare provision for their children. We will have a selection of childminders for them to choose from and will match parents and the children to the most appropriate childminder.

The parent will feel secure in the knowledge that their childminder is having regular communications with the agency. Their child/children will be cared for in an environment in which the childminder is also looked after.

I Am Interested, How Do I Register?

- Complete the SCA application form
- Apply for a DBS check (for you and any member of your household who is over 16yrs) AND register for the Update Service
- Complete a Health Declaration
- Ensure you have completed the appropriate training
- Register with HM Revenue & Customs as self-employed
- Purchase Public Liability Insurance **prior** to starting your business (SCA childminders get preferential rates with Morton Michel)
- Inform your motor insurance company that you are a registered childminder and require business cover
- Inform your house insurance that you are running a childminding business from your home

As an SCA registered childminder we will help you with the paperwork, providing appropriate templates but just so you are aware, these are some of the documents you need to run your business:

- Contracts
- Child record form
- Accident, Incident & Medication books
- Accounts book
- Attendance register
- Risk assessments
- Policies and procedures

We look forward to welcoming you to the Suffolk Childcare Agency. We are here to help so if you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

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Forever In My Heart
Although I'm not their mother
I care for them each day.
I cuddle, sing and read to them
and watch them as they play.
I see each new accomplishment,
I help them grow and learn.
I understand their language.
I listen with concern.



They come to me for comfort,
and I kiss away their tears.
They proudly show their work to me,
I give the loudest cheers!



No, I am not their mother,
But my role is just as strong.
I nurture them and keep them safe,
though maybe not for long.



I know someday the time may come
when I will have to part,
but I know each child I cared for
is forever in my heart!

