

Become a
registered childminder



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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:

- care for your own children at the same time if you have a family
- offer the children you care for a happy and stimulating environment
- provide learning opportunities and see the children develop
- work in your home, choosing the hours you work and the services you provide
- have a career where no two days are the same
- meet other childminders in your area and get to know your local community
- join around 75,000 childminders in England and Wales providing quality childcare.



"Childminding is so rewarding"

"I have been childminding for nearly five years. Before that I used to work long hours as a motorway services manager, but I decided on a change after my second son was born. I'm certain that I have made the right career choice as these have been the best three 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

"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, and generally parents are not surprised to see a male childminder. My area has a lot of single parents, so I may provide 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 that provide care and early education, as well as being a business. It can be a truly rewarding career."

Tim, registered childminder



* 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. As a registered childminder you will work to national standards, and be inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to ensure you provide a safe and stimulating environment for the children that you care for. You will usually be self-employed and running your own business. Although every day will be different, a typical day may include:

- visiting a park, museum, library or playgroup
- arranging fun and stimulating learning activities, such as dressing-up, creative play, reading and exploring cultural events
- providing meals and snacks for the children, involving them in food preparation and menu choices
- taking children to and from school or clubs
- working with other local childminders to organise group activities.



* Getting started

Before you can start working as a childminder caring for children under 8 years old in your home, you will need to be registered by CSSIW*.

Registration – a step-by-step guide

- 1 Attend childminding pre-registration briefing sessions to learn more about becoming a childminder. You can find out when the next session is being held near you by contacting your local CSSIW office (see contact details on page 8).
- 2 Read all the information you're given at the session, including the national standards for childminding, as you will have to explain to a CSSIW Inspector how you intend to meet the requirements before you can start childminding.
- 3 Complete your Introduction to Childcare Practice (Home-based) course (before you are registered) and your first-aid course (within the first six months of starting childminding).
- 4 Attend an NCMA mentoring session for advice on writing your policies and procedures which will help you complete part two of the CSSIW application form.
- 5 Complete and return both parts of the CSSIW application pack. CSSIW will then give you information on how to apply for a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure for yourself and anyone else in your home aged over 16.
- 6 CSSIW will contact you to arrange for an inspector to visit your home. They will need to make sure that you are suitable to care for children and that your home is safe and child-friendly.
- 7 Receive your registration certificate and start work as a registered childminder. Apply for a start-up grant if you are eligible (you will be informed of this during the registration process).

Congratulations!

* It's illegal to care for children under the age of 8 in your own home for more than two hours a day without being registered (unless you are a blood relative of the child).



"It's great to see the children progress"

"I have been childminding for 25 years and now, and I belong to a local network that recruits and trains childminders to care for children with additional requirements. 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 network to look after disabled children. I really enjoy the work, and it's great to see the children progress."

Brenda, registered childminder

* Some frequently asked questions

Do I have to be registered? If you care for children under the age of 8 in your own home and the children aren't your blood relatives, you are required by law to be registered and inspected by CSSIW*.

Is it expensive to get started? Not at all. As a new childminder in Wales you will get up to £300 worth of equipment (at the discretion of your Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership); and a year's free membership of NCMA – turn to page 8 to see what benefits NCMA membership will offer you.

How many children can I look after? CSSIW 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. Find out what local childminders charge by contacting NCMA or the Children and Families Division (see page 8).



* What does the future hold?

Childminding is a dynamic and evolving career so, once you've got your new business up and running, there are plenty of courses and training opportunities that will help you develop your knowledge and confidence. Here are just some of the options available to you:



Qualifications There are lots of childcare qualifications you can work towards, from basic introductory training right up to degree level!

When you start out, you will need to attend an introductory course as part of your registration. This will be the Introduction to Childcare Practice (Home-based) (ICP), and it forms the first unit of the nationally accredited Diploma in Home-based Childcare (DHC), specifically written for childminders and nannies. There are four further units which form the level 3 Diploma in Home-based Childcare.

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 to 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 lockable case to keep your paperwork secure.

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. You can find its number by calling NCMA on 0800 169 4486.

* Join NCMA

Almost 50,000 registered childminders in England and Wales belong to the National Childminding Association (NCMA), which has been supporting childminders since 1977. NCMA is a membership organisation, and as a member you'll get the following benefits:

Specialist advice and legal representation NCMA will provide you with regularly updated information and advice on all aspects of being a registered childminder, whether you need help with working out your tax allowances or negotiating a childminding contract. For peace of mind, as an NCMA member you may 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, useful features, offers and giveaways.

Money off products As a NCMA member you will get money off NCMA's range of publications and products, specifically developed for childminders. Plus you'll be able to buy exclusive products available only to members, such as car and home insurance designed for childminders.

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, and is only available to NCMA members.

Vacancy scheme NCMA members can join an online vacancy scheme and advertise their vacancies to parents.



* 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 contact the following for help and advice.

National Childminding Association – Wales Office

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

Tel: 0845 880 1299

Web: www.ncma.org.uk

NCMA, Ocean Buildings, Bute Crescent, Cardiff CF10 5AY

Children and Families Division

Offers details of children's information services in Wales, which can help you as you start your childminding career.

Tel: 029 2082 6802

CSSIW

CSSIW is the national government body responsible for registering and inspecting childminders in Wales.

Tel: 01443 848450

Web: www.csiw.wales.gov.uk

The information contained in this leaflet applies to Wales only. For more information on childminding in England call NCMA's Information Line on 0800 169 4486. Please note all information is correct at time of going to press (April 2008) but is subject to change.

