



NICMA

Childminding as a profession

A guide to registration



**Earn a living by caring
for other people's children
in your own home.**



If you enjoy working with children and can provide a safe, stimulating, positive environment in your home, then childminding could be for you?

Childminding as a profession

Childminding can offer you an opportunity to:

- Earn a living by caring for other people's children in your own home
- Become a self-employed day care provider
- Stay at home and care for your own children as well as caring for others
- Share in the care and development of children from birth to 12 years of age
- Eligibility for the Childcare element of working Tax Credit
- Meet other registered Childminders in your area and to get to know your local community.

For further information or a NICMA membership application form please contact:

NICMA

the Childminding Association
16 - 18 Mill Street
Newtownards
BT23 4LU

T: 028 91811015

E: info@nicma.org

F: 028 9182 0921

W: www.nicma.org

NICMA – the Childminding Association is a charity and membership organisation. Our Purpose is to “promote quality home-based childcare and learning for the benefit of children, families and communities.”



Looking after young children provides opportunities to share in their development.

Why not consider becoming a registered Childminder?

Registered Childminders are self employed day care providers who work in their own homes to provide care and learning for other people's children in a family setting on a full or part-time basis.

As a Childminder, you may be able to care for 6 children under 12 (including your own) of whom no more than 3 are under compulsory school age.

Looking after young children gives opportunities to share in their learning and development and to help and support their parents. It provides a means by which you can earn an income whilst caring for your own children at home.

Childminders need wide knowledge about children's development and how to meet the needs of children of a wide variety of ages, cultures and family backgrounds.

**“ When we go the
Childminder, it feels like
we're going home”**

(Boy, 6)

All **prospective Childminders** are required to attend:

- 1. A Pre-registration Briefing Session** –which provides information on Childminding as a career and the subsequent registration process.
- 2. Core Training** – the new **Minimum Standards** require Childminders to hold core training in the following areas:
 - Health & Safety in a Childminding setting
 - Safeguarding Children
 - Introduction to Paediatric First Aid

Childminding is not just about looking after children – you need skills in working with adults too. Childminders need to develop and extend their skills and knowledge acquired through parenting and previous experience with children.

NICMA PROVIDE :

**Training Opportunities
Childminding Vacancy service**

**Every child should be treated
as an individual.**



Parents need reliable childcare arrangements which will last. Children may experience a lot of disruption moving from one day care situation to another, so you should only think about childminding if you are prepared to provide a reliable service over a reasonable period of time.

Childminding is a job that requires a professional approach – the hours may be long and working with small children is often tiring. Flexibility is essential to be able to respond to children’s changing needs as they grow and develop.

Each child should be treated as an individual, and understanding is needed about offering equal opportunities to all children.

The skills required involve not only meeting the individual needs of children and making sure they are safe, but also forming relationships with parents and understanding the difficulties and emotions they may encounter on returning to work.

It is important to set up a clear business relationship with parents at the onset of the childminding arrangement. The use of a written contract as well as regular communication of information about the children is essential.

“I personally prefer a registered Childminder because it is one person. She gets to know your child so well.....they develop a relationship with that Childminder”

(Parent, Western HSCT)

NICMA PROVIDE :

**An Information and Advice service.
Childminding Business Pack.
Business Training.**

Childminding is a job which requires a professional approach.



If you are ready to take on the challenge and the commitment and demands of looking after other people’s children, then childminding may be the job for you.

To look after other people’s children in your own home, you **MUST**, by law, be registered with the local Health & Social Care Trust and hold appropriate insurance cover.

The purpose of registration is:

- To protect children
- To provide reassurance to parents using childcare
- To ensure that your childminding service meets acceptable standards

Advantages of registration include:

- ‘Peace of Mind’ knowing that you are childminding within the law
- The opportunity to join NICMA as your professional organisation

How to become a Childminder:

Contact your local Early Years Team in the Health and Social Care Trust. In legislation you should be registered within a 3 month timeframe. When you have submitted your childminding application you should:

1. Attend a pre-registration briefing session
2. Ask about the likely timeframe for completion of your registration
3. Complete and return all documentation promptly
4. Don’t give up a current job until your registration is being processed
5. Carry out some local research on parental demand
6. Estimate start up costs
7. Submit application
8. Attend introductory core training to meet the requirements of the minimum standards
9. Regularly contact the Early Years teams for an update on your application
10. Contact your local Childminding Development Officer for support
11. Advise the Early Years team if you have a family waiting
12. Ensure you have policies in place

Failure to register as a childminder is an offence under the Children (NI) Order 1995 and could lead to legal action.

“I would recommend that anyone interested in becoming a registered childminder would join NICMA as they are very supportive and helpful”



NICMA Membership offers:

- Information and Vacancy service (including 'on line' vacancy profiles)
- Full business pack to help with running your self employed business
- Tailored insurance cover to protect your childminding business
- Legal advice line
- Local support from other Childminders, through the peer support groups
- Support from Childminding Development Officers and Network Co-ordinators
- Access to subsidised training courses and recognised qualifications
- Childminding discounts
- Publications
- An opportunity to voice your opinions in policy development and new childminding initiatives
- Access to Members Only area of NICMA website

“I came to this course looking for a few play ideas and have come away with so much more - knowing what the children are learning, how it benefits their development and being able to explain this to the parents. I am a better Childminder because of this”



When you first set up your childminding business you must register immediately with HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) otherwise you may be liable to a penalty

You can register by:

- Phone – the self employed helpline number is 0300 200 3504
- Download CWF1 online www.hmrc.gov.uk/forms/cwf1.pdf print, complete, sign and post

Food Safety:

It is a legal requirement for registered Childminders to register as a food business with the Environmental Health Service within your local council.

Food Standards Agency:

The Food Standards Agency has produced a 'Safer Food, Better Business' Pack especially for registered childminders.

Download a copy www.food.gov.uk

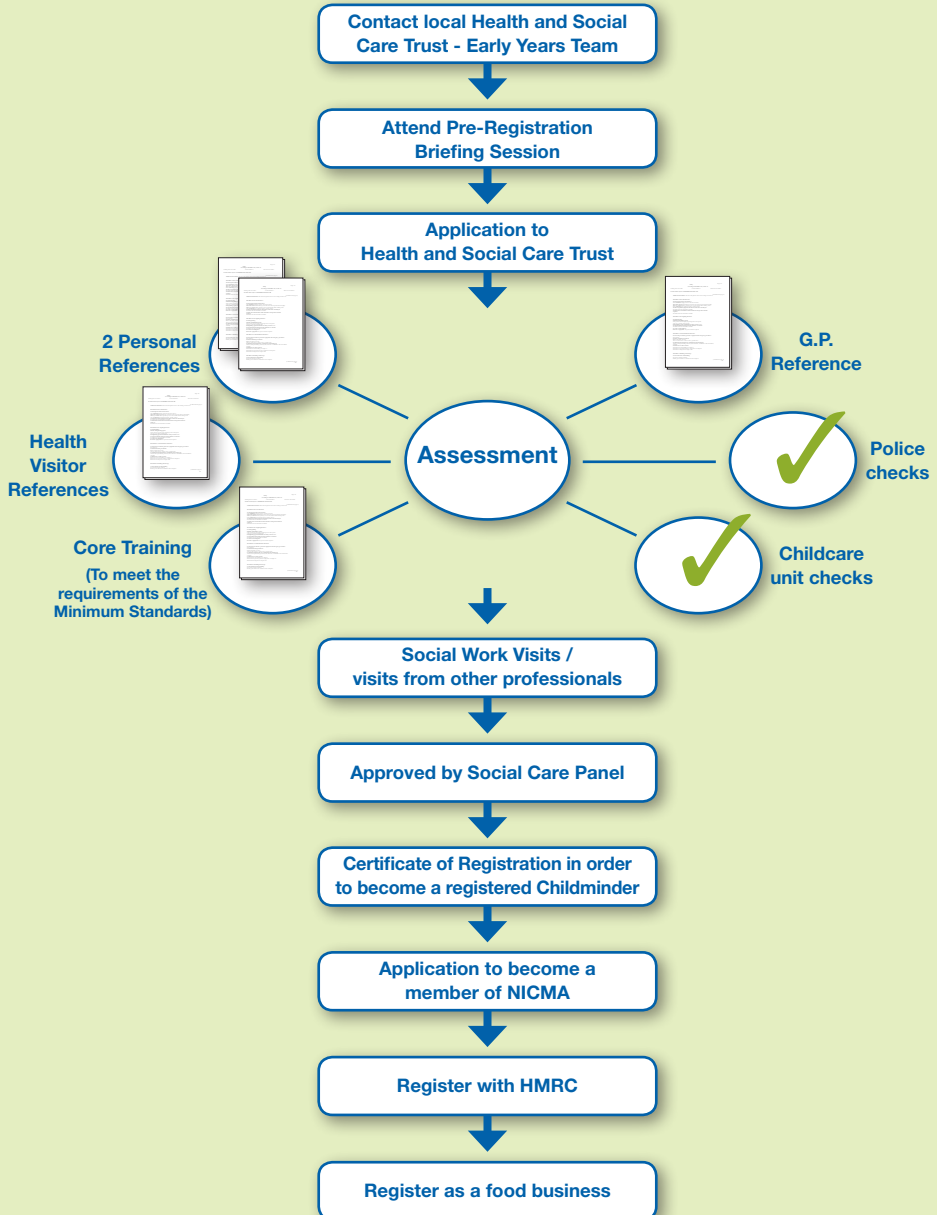
Contact the Food Standards Agency on 028 9041 7700

Email:

infosani@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

What Next?

Registration Process



Follow up Support

Once registered you can join NICMA as your professional organisation and make use of the full range of NICMA membership services on offer.

For a membership application form email info@nicma.org or telephone 028 9181 1015. Alternatively, you can join on-line by visiting www.nicma.org We look forward to welcoming you to NICMA and supporting you as you embark on your childminding career

Further Information

In July 2012, the Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety (DHSSPS) published 'Childminding and Day Care for Children under age 12 – Minimum Standards' which can be found at the following link:

<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/phealth/sqs/sqsd-standards/sqsd-standards-care-standards.htm>

The Minimum Standards have been developed to ensure that children receive good quality care and that their parents or guardians know what they can expect. They were also developed to ensure consistency in registrations and inspections.

What do the Standards Include?

In the current document there are **16 minimum standards** which are grouped under 4 headings:

1. **Quality of Care**
2. **Quality of Staffing, Management and Leadership**
3. **Quality of the Physical Environment**
4. **Quality of Monitoring and Evaluation**

A fifth section outlines **the policies and procedures required in all Early Years settings**. NICMA are able to provide Childminding members with '**My Childminding Policies**' – a full pack of policies to help them meet the minimum standards. The policies are also available to purchase by prospective members undergoing the registration process to help them comply with requirements.

Your local Childminding Development contact is:

Belfast Trust	Liz Brown	0751 7472271
Northern Trust	Liz Brown Clare McKay	0751 7472271 0773 9753188
South Eastern Trust	Fiona Clendinning	0783 7734825
Western Trust	Maria Magee	0773 9753187
Southern Trust	Michelle Grant	0773 8176199

NICMA acknowledge “Childminding in Northern Ireland: an exploration of practice, quality and the impact of vertical placements on children”

NICMA / NCB NI for some of the quotes featured



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