



# Childminders



Registered childminders provide care in their own home for other people's children. They are registered with Ofsted – the Office for Standards and Education and are inspected every three years.

Childminders can often be flexible about the hours they work and they will provide your child with lots of fun, play and learning. They can make the most of local parks, playgrounds, toy libraries, drop-in groups and community centres. Children have the chance to make good friends with other children who go to a childminder.

Plus points:

- Your child will be in a home environment.
- Childminders can support families for years as children grow up.
- Flexible hours.

Every childminder is different so look for someone who will suit your children. It is important to choose a childminder whose views on childcare are broadly similar to your own.

## FAQ's

### ***How do I know my child will be safe and secure?***

You know your child best; look for a childminder you feel will be suitable for your child. Childminders must be registered before they begin work with children; they are then inspected every three years to make sure they continue to provide a good service. Childminders are not allowed to smack or shake a child, or smoke in front of children. You should discuss with your childminder how your child's behaviour will be managed, for example what methods do you use at home?

You should ask to see the childminder's registration and insurance certificates as well as the latest inspection reports. A check is made on the childminder's home to make sure it is safe and suitable for children. People living in the childminders household are also checked to make sure they have not carried out any offence against a child. It is illegal

for an unregistered person to look after children for reward. An unregistered person who is a close relative of the child is not officially a childminder.

### ***How many children will be with a childminder?***

Childminders can care for up to six children at any one time, including their own children. Childminders are usually registered to look after up to three children under 5 and three children aged 5 to 8, including their own children. They may also look after older children up to the age of 14. They are limited to one or two babies at one time. Childminders who work with an assistant may look after larger groups of children.

### ***What age range are the children with a childminder?***

Children can go to a childminder from a few months old right up until they reach secondary school.

### ***When are childminders open?***

Childminders are self-employed and so they decide on their working hours. Most childminders will take children between the hours of 8am to 6pm; some may work early mornings, evenings and weekends as well. Many childminders are happy to provide part-time care. You will need to negotiate hours, terms and conditions with the childminder.

### ***How much does a childminder cost?***

Childminders set their own charges; these can vary in different areas. There is no national rate however the average in London for a childminder is between £6-£7 per hour. It is important to draw up a contract with the childminder which you both sign, to cover payment, working hours, meals, notice periods, sickness and holidays – both yours and those of the childminder.

## Useful questions to ask your childminder

- Where will the children spend the day?  
Make sure you see the rooms and the garden to be used.
- What will the children do during the day – play activities, meals, going out, stories, and naps?
- What food snacks and drinks will be provided?
- Attitudes to bringing up children e.g. setting limits to behaviour equal opportunities for all children.
- Safety equipment used – including restraints used if children will be travelling by car.
- What plans are there in the event of an emergency – details of registration and insurance.
- Arrangements for nappies, bottles, food, change of clothes etc.
- How many other children are minded and their ages.
- What sort of pets are kept in the house, and the children's access to them.
- Smoking in the home?

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We will contribute to the well being, happiness and achievement of children, young people, families and their communities.

Family Information Service, City of Westminster, First Floor, 215 Lisson Grove  
London NW8 8LF

t: 020 7641 7929 e: [fis@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:fis@westminster.gov.uk)

w: [www.westminster.gov.uk/children](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/children) [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)