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Becoming a childminder
Childminding offers plenty of fantastic career opportunities – from making a difference to a child’s life, to being your own boss and working from home. When you’re working with children, no two days will be the same.

It is worth thinking about the impact that being a childminder can have on your day to day life as this can help you decide if it is something that will suit you and your family.
What is a childminder?

A childminder provides childcare for children in their own home for more than two hours a day, and charges a fee.

Childminding requires a considerable time commitment. You will not only work directly with children during your hours of operation but will need to set aside time to complete paperwork, accounts information and training.

Childminders can choose to look after children of any age from:

- **Birth to five years**
- **Five to seven years**
- **And/or eight to seventeen years**

Each age group requires a separate registration with Ofsted and has different responsibilities when it comes to training and record keeping.

**Ofsted inspections**

Ofsted inspect and regulate all services that care for children, including childminders. They will visit you at home as part of the registration process to check your knowledge of the role and to look at the environment where children will be cared for. They will carry out inspections regularly and produce reports on the quality of the service you provide. Ofsted also investigate complaints and concerns and take enforcement action where necessary.
There are several things you need to consider before becoming a childminder:

- Check if you need planning permission or agreement from your landlord to run a childminding business from your home.
- Think about the hours you will work (weekdays, evenings, weekends).
- Will you offer school drop-offs/pick-ups?
- Will you provide and charge for meals?
- Do you plan to use your car for outings?
- Do you have any specialist knowledge that will appeal to families, such as experience in working with children who have special educational needs or disabilities, or being able to speak languages other than English?

How many children can I care for?

- At any one time childminders may care for a maximum of six children under the age of eight years old.
- Of these six children, a maximum of three may be young children (under 5) and there can only be one child under the age of one.
- Your own children, or any others you are responsible for, must be included in these numbers.
- Whilst there is no prescribed limit on the number of children over the age of eight, childminders must make a judgment according to the space and their ability to meet all children’s needs.
What support is provided?

Portsmouth City Council’s early years and childcare team have a wide range of experience and offer training, telephone support and home visits to help with all aspects of childminding.

This includes help with:

- Registering as a childminder
- Marketing your business
- Preparing for inspections
- Undertaking assessments and planning
- Reviewing policies and procedures.

There are also weekly childminder led ‘stay & play’ sessions at various Family Hubs across the city where you can take the children in your care to play in a safe environment, speak to other childminders, and gain useful advice and ideas.

The Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY) also offers a membership package through which they provide a wide range of guidance and training.
How much will it cost to become a childminder?

A guide to start-up costs is provided below*, however costs may change over time. Please see ‘useful websites’ at the back of this leaflet to check current start-up costs.

Registration

- £35* to join the Early Years Register
  (to care for either 0–5 or 0–7 year olds)
- £103* to join the Childcare Register
  (to care for children aged 5–8 only)

If you only intend to care for children over eight years, registration with Ofsted is voluntary.

Enhanced DBS check

You will need an enhanced DBS check for yourself and anyone over 16 who lives or works with you, this currently costs £52.50*.

Information Commissioner’s Office

As you will be holding personal data in relation to the children you care for, you will need to register with the information commissioner’s office, which currently costs £35* per year.

Health declaration

Prior to registration you must have a health declaration signed by your GP, who may charge you for this.
**Other costs**

You will need age-appropriate resources and equipment in your home for the children to support their learning and development. You also need to budget for business insurance, car insurance, essential training courses (childminder training, paediatric first aid, food hygiene, safeguarding children), support from the local authority or membership fees if you choose to join a professional body.

**I’m interested! What do I do next?**

If you are interested in caring for children aged 0–5, it is vital that you become fully familiar with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and Working Together to Safeguard Children (see links on the back of this booklet).

**Childminder recruitment event**

If you haven’t already attended a childminder recruitment event, please contact Portsmouth’s Family Information Service to book onto the next one. This is an opportunity to find out more and ask any questions you may have.

**Portsmouth Family Information Service:**

phone 023 9268 8830  
email fis@portsmouthcc.gov.uk  
www.portsmouth.gov.uk/childminding
Useful websites

Portsmouth City Council
www.portsmouth.gov.uk/childminding

Portsmouth Safeguarding Children’s Board
www.portsmouthscb.org.uk

Start-up costs
https://www.childcare.co.uk/information/what-are-the-startup-costs-to-becoming-a-childminder

Links to publications

Working Together to Safeguard Children

Quick guide to registering as a nanny/childminder
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-register-as-a-childminder-or-nanny-quick-guide

EYFS and supporting documents:
https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/eyfs-statutory-framework

Contact us

Portsmouth Family Information Service:
phone 023 9268 8830
email fis@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
www.portsmouth.gov.uk/childminding