

Registration for childminders

What you need to know if you want to be a childminder



Ofsted's role

- register applicants
- inspect childminders within 30 months of registration and subsequently within a prescribed period (find information on inspection arrangements - <http://bit.ly/2LKirdu>)
- consider information that suggests childminders aren't meeting legal requirements
- take action where necessary to ensure providers comply with the requirements, or remove them from the register(s).

The local authority's role:

- provide information for those interested in becoming childminders
- support and advise applicants and registered childminders
- help parents find local childcare.

Purpose of regulation

- protect children
- ensure good outcomes for children
- promote high quality provision of care and early education
- provide reassurance for parents
- to ensure that childcare providers are meeting the government requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' (EYFS) and the Childcare Register.

Childminding: definition

A childminder is a person who receives payment for working in their own home, looking after at least one child for more than two hours a day.

Childminding and the law

- you must register with Ofsted or with a childminder agency if you are paid to look after any children under eight for more than two hours a day, in someone's home
- there are some exceptions to this
- if you aren't registered and you provide childcare services that need to be registered, you could be prosecuted.

You don't have to register if you: (1/2)

- only look after children aged eight and over
- look after children for fewer than two hours a day
- are the child's parent, step-parent, foster parent or relative
- care for children in their own home.

You don't have to register if you: (2/2)

- look after a friend's child for free (or paid, but only for up to three hours per day)
- only look after a child between 6pm and 2am (ie babysitting)
- provide home education or you're tutoring children aged three and over in only one or two activities eg maths and/or sports.
- You can choose to register, even if you don't have to.

Why register if you don't have to?

- you could get a childcare business grant to help with setting-up costs
- professional development, advice and support network
- details listed online by Ofsted (if you agree)
- reassurance for parents, and they may be able to claim childcare costs.

Which Ofsted register to join

- Early Years Register (to look after children from birth to 31 August after their 5th birthday)
- compulsory part of the Childcare Register (to look after children aged five to a child's 8th birthday)
- both registers to look after all ages up to age eight
- If caring for children aged eight and over, and for nannies - voluntary part of the Childcare Register.

Can I register?

Can I register?

In order to register you must:

- have the right to work in the UK
- be suitable to work with children
- be physically and mentally capable of caring for children
- have a completed an enhanced DBS application (for you and anyone age 16 or over who lives or works on the childminding premises)

You are disqualified from registration if:

- you've been convicted of a serious offence or are barred from working with children
- your children have ever been taken into care
- you've been refused registration before
- your registration has been cancelled for a reason other than not paying your annual fee
- you live with someone who is disqualified from registration.

Before you register – what you need

Certificates and forms

- completed criminal records (DBS) application for you and everyone aged 16 or over who lives or works with you
- health declaration form signed by your GP
- paediatric first aid certificate

Enhanced DBS (criminal records) check

- apply online (<http://ofsteddbapplication.co.uk/home>)
- separate application for everyone who lives or works in your home aged 16 and over
- each check costs £48.10

DBS Update Service

- Ofsted strongly recommends joining the DBS Update Service (£13/year) to keep your details up to date. You must sign up within 30 days of your certificate being issued.

If you're not on the DBS Update service, we cannot accept:

- Ofsted DBS checks older than 3 months
- DBS checks obtained via a different organisation

Health declaration form

- download the online booklet from GOV.UK
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/become-a-childcare-provider-health-declaration>
- take completed form to GP to fill in and sign
- your GP might charge for this
- post it to Ofsted.

First aid and other training

You'll need to:

- complete a paediatric first aid course
- attend a child protection course

Optional:

- training which helps you to understand and implement the EYFS (if you'll be looking after children under 5). This is no longer a legal requirement as of 4 January 2024. Applicants will still need to demonstrate they understand and can implement the EYFS.

The cost of these will depend on the courses and who are providing them. Talk to your local authority for more information and advice on any training courses.

You'll also need:

- the details of two references
- your full employment history

One reference must be from your most recent childcare employer, if you have worked with children within the last five years (either employed or voluntary).

The reference request will ask referees for information about your suitability to work with children. For example, their view of your ability to care for children, why your employment ended if applicable, and where relevant provide details of any disciplinary matters.

Costs and timescales

Cost to register – set fees

- £48.10 for each DBS check
- £13 annual fee for DBS Update (optional but recommended)
- £35 to join both registers or £103 to join Childcare Register only (annual fee).

Other costs

These vary, but you should budget for:

- GP fee to sign health declaration form (current recommended fee is £91)
- public liability insurance
- any courses you need to do (child protection/EYFS, first aid)
- equipment or materials you might need
- membership body fees (optional) and ICO registration.

How long will registration take?

- you need an enhanced DBS check before you apply
- registering with Ofsted usually takes around 12 weeks, but timescales vary
- allow time for any courses you need to do before you register – e.g. child protection/EYFS, first aid.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

A set of government requirements that all providers must meet for looking after children up to 31st August following their fifth birthday, covering:

- age-appropriate learning and development
- early learning goals and assessment of children's starting points and progress
- safeguarding, child protection and health and safety.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

- to look after children in the early years foundation stage, you need to show an inspector that you understand and can follow the EYFS
- ask your local authority or a childminding agency about support in your area
- you need to demonstrate that you understand and can implement the EYFS requirements. Training is not a legal requirement for early years childminders as of 4 January 2024.

How to apply

How to apply

1. We have published guidance on how to apply to be a childminder here <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/providing-childcare-services-in-england>
2. You will need to provide an email address and mobile number. An email will be sent to you with a link to access the registration service.
3. If you need to leave the form part way through you will be able to return and carry on at a later date. When you return to the form a 5 digit verification code will be sent to the mobile number you provided.
4. You will need to enter this code to access your application.
5. You will pay your application fee when you submit your form.

Types of childcare

- Childminder
- Nanny (home childcarer)
- Childcare on domestic premises.

Childminder

- works in their own home (not the children's home), the home of another childminder or a relative of the childminder
- can work with up to 2 other people at a time (either other childminders or assistants)

Join both the Early Years and Childcare registers, unless you're only looking after children aged from 1 September following their fifth birthday up to their eighth birthday, or you're not required to register.

Nanny (home childcarer)

- cares for children from up to two families, at the home of one of the families
- no legal requirement to register
- can register on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register.

Childcare on domestic premises

- where four or more people work together in someone's home
- includes childminders and assistants working together
- must meet the particular legal requirements of 'childcare', not 'childminding'
- childminders who sometimes work with fewer than three others, and sometimes with three or more, must register as both 'childminder' and 'childcare on domestic premises'.

Submitting your documents

- send Ofsted your health declaration form
- send Ofsted the enhanced DBS checks for you and all the other adults who live or work with you if we request them
- you don't have to submit all your documents at the same time or in any particular order.

After you submit the form

- Ofsted acknowledges receipt of your application
- Ofsted checks your information and that of other adults who live with you
- if you've applied to the Early Years Register, Ofsted will ring to arrange a registration visit
- registration usually takes up to 12 weeks from submitting your application to Ofsted.

The registration visit

(only applies to Early Years Register)

The inspector will check:

- your identity
- your understanding of the ages and numbers you can care for
- documents about your car, qualifications and first aid
- suitability of your premises, equipment and toys
- your understanding of risk assessment, safety and security
- your understanding of the EYFS including the safeguarding, welfare and learning and development requirements
- that you speak English well enough to teach children and keep records in English.

End-of-visit feedback

- at the end of the visit the inspector will tell you whether they will recommend you 'suitable' or 'not suitable' for registration
- you can withdraw your application at this stage if you think everything is not yet in place.

After the visit

When all checks are complete, Ofsted will send you either:

- a letter and certificate of registration

or

- a 'notice of intention' to refuse registration

If you are refused registration you'll be disqualified from applying to be a childminder in the future.

After registration

Ofsted ...

- will publish your name, address and phone number on its reports website <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/> unless you ask us not to
- will inspect you (if you're joining the Early Years Register)
- may inspect you if you only join the Childcare Register
- will publish any inspection reports on its reports website

Keeping your details up to date

By law you must keep details up to date and report any changes within 14 days.

Contact Ofsted to report changes to:

- where you are working
- your contact details
- anyone aged 16+ who lives or works with you
- childcare hours.

Tell us about any serious incidents:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-a-serious-childcare-incident>

How many children can I care for?

- up to six children aged under eight
- no more than three children aged from birth to 31 August following their 5th birthday
- normally no more than one child aged under 12 months
- you can make exceptions to the ratios if you can show you're meeting all the children's needs (but you can't look after more than six children in total).

How many children can I care for?

- care for children aged eight and over is not allowed to affect the quality of care given to younger children
- you can look after more children if you work with an assistant or another childminder
- childminding assistants can only care for children on their own for up to two hours a day with parents' permission.

How many children can I care for?

Other factors affecting the number of children you can care for include:

- space available
- your own children and any others you look after e.g. for relatives
- children aged three to five who only attend before and/or after a school day and/or in the school holidays – they may be cared for at the same time as three other young children.

Contact Ofsted

- Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
- Phone: 0300 123 1231 (lines open Mon to Fri, 8am to 6pm)
- www.facebook.com/ChildcareRegistration
- www.twitter.com/ofstednews

