

Pay and Conditions Survey 2016

Each year SCMA publish a 'Pay and Conditions' booklet that acts as a best practice guide for our childminder members. SCMA would never set out 'rules' for childminders, however many childminders find our Pay and Conditions guide helpful and useful when applying conditions to their own childminding service.

We had a positive response to this year's Pay and Conditions survey with 583 members taking part, which is a 13% response rate.

SCMA's Pay & Conditions Survey result are detailed below:

Rates of Pay

Each member who responded to the survey was asked to give details of their hourly rate; for pre-school children and term-time and holiday rates for school-age children. From the results, we calculate the overall average hourly rate that childminders charge (per child) for each local authority area.

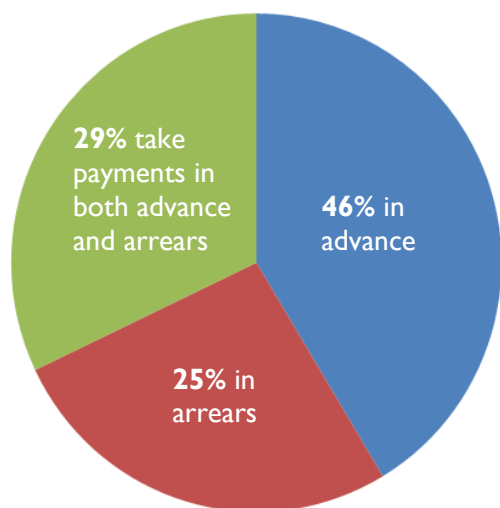
Aberdeen City	£4.40	Inverclyde	£4.45
Aberdeenshire	£3.89	Midlothian	£4.55
Angus	£3.78	Moray	£4.19
Argyll and Bute	£4.06	North Ayrshire	£3.98
City of Edinburgh	£4.99	North Lanarkshire	£3.89
City of Glasgow	£4.42	Orkney	£3.83
Clackmannanshire	£3.69	Perth and Kinross	£4.04
Dumfries and Galloway	£4.07	Renfrewshire	£3.90
Dundee	£4.10	Scottish Borders	£3.93
East Ayrshire	£3.67	Shetland	£4.00
East Dunbartonshire	£3.74	South Ayrshire	£4.15
East Lothian	£4.32	South Lanarkshire	£3.88
East Renfrewshire	£3.56	Stirling	£4.30
Falkirk	£4.07	West Dunbartonshire	£4.29
Fife	£4.16	West Lothian	£3.85
Highland	£4.37	Western Isles	£3.84

	Pre-School	School (term-time)	School (holidays)		Pre-School	School (term-time)	School (holidays)
Aberdeen City	£3.60	£4.84	£4.76	Inverclyde	£4.44	£4.75	£4.16
Aberdeenshire	£3.15	£4.34	£4.19	Midlothian	£4.61	£4.69	£4.36
Angus	£3.78	£3.85	£3.71	Moray	£4.15	£4.18	£4.23
Argyll & Bute	£4.00	£4.10	£4.10	N. Ayrshire	£3.89	£4.03	£4.02
Edinburgh	£5.06	£5.03	£4.89	N. Lanarkshire	£3.37	£4.36	£3.94
Glasgow	£4.27	£4.75	£4.24	Orkney	£3.83	£3.83	£3.83
Clackmannanshire	£3.80	£3.80	£3.47	Perth and Kinross	£4.03	£4.05	£4.05
D&G	£3.98	£4.23	£4.00	Renfrewshire	£3.86	£4.05	£3.80
Dundee	£4.08	£4.15	£4.08	Scot. Borders	£3.98	£4.02	£3.78
E. Ayrshire	£3.11	£4.25	£3.66	Shetland	£4.00	£4.00	£4.00
E. Dunbartonshire	£3.92	£3.93	£3.38	S. Ayrshire	£4.22	£4.24	£3.99
E. Lothian	£4.17	£4.46	£4.34	S. Lanarkshire	£3.79	£4.06	£3.79
E. Renfrewshire	£4.01	£3.27	£3.40	Stirling	£4.37	£4.23	£4.31
Falkirk	£3.98	£4.30	£3.93	W. Dunbartonshire	£4.33	£4.27	£4.27
Fife	£4.07	£4.35	£4.06	W. Lothian	£3.94	£4.10	£3.51
Highland	£4.40	£4.38	£4.32	Western Isles	£4.00	£3.75	£3.75

The overall average hourly rate for a childminder in Scotland is **£4.08**. This is the same average rate as 2015, therefore the average cost of a childminder not changed.

Average rate of a childminder in Scotland (per hour/per child)	
Pre-school child	£4.00
School-age child (term-time)	£4.18
School-age child (during holidays)	£4.01
Combined average	£4.08

As an association, we must ensure that childminders are promoted as an affordable childcare option for parents. Families benefit from a quality, flexible home-based service, where professional childminders offer more one-to-one support and cater for each child's individual needs.



Payments and Deposits

It is very common for childminders to offer a discount, when they look after children from the one family. 38% of those who responded offer a discount and 19% answered "sometimes".

We would always encourage childminders to take payments in advance as a large number of calls to our Helpline are regarding non-payment of fees.

46% of the childminders we surveyed take payments in advance, which is 3% more than we recorded in 2015.

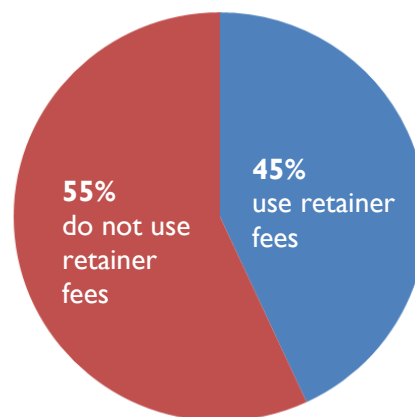
30% of members ask for a deposit to secure a childminding place. This figure has increased by 5% from the previous year, which is encouraging as a deposit can help secure the childminder's costs are covered if a parent fails to make a payment.

Retainer Fees

Retainer fees can be charged where a childminding place is being kept available for a parent, but is not actually being used.

From our results, 70% of members charge 'half fee' as a standard retainer. 6% charge full fee to keep a place open.

It is essential that childminders are aware that a retainer fee holds the place open, and therefore cannot be used by another child. A retainer fee should guarantee that the place is open and available to the parent, whilst securing an income for the childminder.



Holidays

Holidays are an important part of all our working lives. For childminders it is also good practice to plan ahead and incorporate holidays into their childminding contracts with parents.

28% of childminders take four weeks holiday each year and 25% take six weeks. 37 childminders (6%) also highlighted that they work term-time only.

SCMA recommends that if a childminder's service is open and available, a charge is appropriate and if the service is closed and not available, no charge should be made. This general theory is carried out by 54% of those who responded to the survey.

Working with families

To find out more about the range of childcare provision and the support childminders provide to families within their communities, including funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC), we asked members to highlight all of the additional or specialist services they provide.

Community Childminding (or a similar service)	58 (10%)
Funded ELC for two-year-olds	49 (8%)
Funded ELC for three and four-year-olds	26 (4%)
Funded childcare on behalf of the Local Authority or Social Services	50 (9%)
Funded childcare for a parent attending college	135 (23%)
None	405 (69%)

The key to a successful working relationship between a childminder and a parent is to establish a business footing and ensure both parties understand the contract to avoid disagreements in the future. However, one of the most common problems for the SCMA Helpline team is dealing with contract disputes and childminders facing non-payment of fees.

So far in 2016, 7% of the childminders who took part in the survey have experienced parents leave their service whilst owing them fees, which is a 43% drop from last year. This is a very positive step in the right direction, but we must continue to reinforce the importance of taking payments in advance and avoid this situation completely.

The survey results also revealed that 52% of childminders currently have vacancies within their service.

SCMA resources including the Childminder Search Service, Helpline, business aids, guides and publications have all been developed to provide childminders with the tools to ensure their business remains effective.

Moving forward, SCMA is continually reviewing its support services to ensure they meet the needs of our 4,500 members. We are always striving to give childminders a voice, promote the benefits of quality childminding and we work with our members to support the wellbeing of Scotland's children.

Every year SCMA publishes its updated Pay & Conditions guide - our negotiating guide for childminders, which outlines the average rate of a childminder in each of the 32 areas across Scotland, best practice guidelines for contracts and how best to sustain your business.

For peace of mind, SCMA members can download the Pay & Conditions guide from the My Membership Dashboard at **childminding.org**.