SCMA MANIFESTO 2017

We love... childminders, childminding and children.

83% of all childminders in Scotland, equivalent to over 4,500 childminders, are members of SCMA. Our professional childminding workforce in Scotland provides care for over 32,660 children. However, childminding is probably the least understood service in the childcare sector, often thought of as little more than complimentary to all the other more recognised services. We need to protect our professional childminding services in Scotland.

We believe... Scotland is the best place in the world to grow up and the best place in the world to bring up children.

Together with our membership we strive to achieve this high level aspiration, focussing on how childminders fit within current national policy and strategic developments. However, funded childcare in Scotland is changing and alarmingly childminders are starting to disappear across Scotland as children are moved to funded provision. At the moment most local authorities in Scotland are not allowing parents the choice of using a childminding service for their funded hours of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). We need the Scottish Government to take action on this to ensure it changes.

We are committed to... Quality childminding...building confident children within a family childcare experience.

Our Vision is ‘Quality childminding…building confident children within a family childcare experience’. Possibly one of the least known facts about childminding is that it grades more highly than other childcare services (which includes nurseries). Published in November 2016, the Care Inspectorate Early Learning and Childcare Statistics Report highlight that 94% of childminders rate as good, very good or excellent across all quality measures – a true endorsement of the high quality services they provide. In addition research has shown that good quality ELC helps a child’s development, giving children the chance to learn and play with friends in a natural family-style setting. To ensure this quality service continues we need to make sure that parents, particularly of eligible two year olds, are given childminding as an option for their funded hours of ELC. Childminding is for all not just for working parents.

Join with us to MAKE the DIFFERENCE
We call on action for change to ensure that families have access to high quality childminding services within their local community. Children thrive best if their childcare is local and within a family setting. Childminding provides that service and ensures that children grow up within their neighbourhood and link with their local services. We believe this is also best for parents as it ensures they have continuity of care for their children from a service that will work in partnership with them. At the moment it is a lottery if a childminding service is available for families.

Support

Our concern: We give childminders all the support they need to provide services when and where they are needed from experienced staff who understand childminding in Scotland. Yet we know that parents struggle to easily access financial support to allow them to use childminding services.

We are campaigning for change: We call on action for change to ensure that parents can easily access financial support to allow them to use childminding services. Currently the ability of parents to afford a childminding service is not equal. The help available depends on a number of factors and for many that simply rules out choice. Action needs to be taken to remove this real barrier to ensure that families are not denied access to childminding services.

A voice

Our concern: We give a national voice to childminders in Scotland. All childminders are running independent businesses within their own communities and our role is to ensure that representation is made at the highest levels of government and other national bodies. On a national level we acknowledge and support that funded Early Learning and Childcare is changing. Yet we know that most local authorities are not allowing parents the choice of using a childminding service.

We are campaigning for change: We call on action change to ensure that families have real choices, with the ability to choose to use a childminding service for their free ELC. At the moment most local authorities in Scotland are not allowing parents the choice of using a childminding service for their free hours of ELC. The Scottish Government needs to take action to make this change and make childminding a real choice for all families whether they are working or not.
PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Our CONCERN: We provide a range of learning opportunities and materials for our members which supports their learning pathway. Yet we know that the childminding workforce and their skills base are often overlooked or not understood by parents, carers and other professionals working in the sector.

We are CAMPAIGNING FOR CHANGE: We want this to change and call on the Scottish Government to ensure a fully accessible learning pathway for childminders is put in place which takes into account accreditation of prior learning and improved access to fully funded training and qualifications. SCMA will work with the Scottish Government, the Care Inspectorate, the Scottish Social Services Council and other key delivery partners to ensure the necessary infrastructure is in place to make this happen. However before implementation, an agreement needs to be reached on flexible training options, financial support arrangements and accreditation of prior learning.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Our CONCERN: Our ultimate goal is to Make a Difference to the wellbeing and development of Scotland’s children. We understand that many families go through difficult times and may need a helping hand to get them through. Yet we know this doesn’t always happen and more costly, formal, intervention takes place.

We are CAMPAIGNING FOR CHANGE: We want this to change to make sure that an early intervention service provided by a SCMA Community Childminder is available in every local authority. Research tells us that getting that support through an experienced Community Childminder consistently makes a difference for both the child and the support received by the family. In the long term this will prevent more costly formal interventions. We call on the Scottish Government to take action and work with SCMA to ensure this happens.

Join with us to MAKE the DIFFERENCE

MAKE the DIFFERENCE to our campaigns