We have seen a steady increase in the demand for childcare in recent years. In Scotland, childminding is the most commonly used form of daycare.

Childminders provide care where children benefit from the high proportion of individual attention, in a home based family environment.

Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) firmly believes that childminding is a largely untapped valuable community resource which has a primary function of providing local, affordable, quality childcare across Scotland. Childminding though it is still largely seen by both the public and peer workers purely as childcare provision to support parents/carers in employment.

This resource has been designed to help childminders demonstrate the quality of the service they provide. Recent gradings by the Care Commission (now the Care Inspectorate) show that childminders receive a higher level of grades 5 and 6 than any other form of daycare.

"Childminding is the most commonly used form of daycare"

A childminder’s curriculum* reflects that daily tasks like eating, dressing and toileting are all important opportunities to help children develop. Routines are planned as learning experiences to help children become skilled and independent.

By providing an atmosphere of trust and security, childminders enable children to become confident and happy by helping them to feel safe to experiment, take risks, and make mistakes.

Note: within the text to this booklet, whenever the word “parent” or “child” occurs, this may be taken as meaning “parents” or “children” in some instances.

*See Glossary (page 20)
The purpose of Attitudes and Values: Code of Practice for Childminders is to identify certain key principles which underpin good practice in childcare and education. These principles reflect both the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 and the National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare.*

These principles can be displayed in practice by:

- Recognising that parents know their children best
- Developing with parents a shared sense of purpose and mutual respect
- Creating the continuity of care that helps children to feel happy and secure
- Providing appropriate and varied experiences to meet all aspects of children’s development
- Treating and valuing children as individuals
- Showing respect for the family’s religious persuasion and cultural background
- Ensuring the health and safety of children and others

The key principles outline practices, which if upheld and publicly supported by members of Scottish Childminding Association, will raise the quality of family-based childcare.

*See Glossary (page 20)
Job Description

Job Title: childminder

Location: the childminder’s own home which should be safe, warm and child-centred at all times while children are in his/her care, allowing opportunities for outdoor experiences.

Hours: flexible, worked to meet the needs of working/studying parents.

Role: being aware of the commitment required to deliver a reliable, quality service working within the framework of current legislation, and promoting childminding as a unique childcare service.

Childminder Tasks:

- Maintain safety, personal hygiene, and healthy activities of the children.
- Provide meals, taking into account the parents’ wishes and cultural background.
- Observe and assess* the needs of the children in your care.
- Help the children develop emotionally, physically, intellectually, and socially.
- To encourage confidence in all life skills.
- Provide, within daily domestic routines, a curriculum which encourages healthy development.
- Provide and use a plan for managing children’s behaviour.
- Provide and use a Fire Escape Plan (forms can be purchased from SCMA).
- To have a knowledge of First Aid.
- Have knowledge of local Child Protection procedures, and to be aware of your responsibility regarding child protection.
- Regularly share and liaise with parents.
- Negotiate with parents a business contract, the terms and conditions of which meet the requirements of childminder, parents and children (SCMA members can purchase contracts by calling Marketing Services on 01786 445377/option 1).
- Establish a self-evaluation procedure which helps improve your childminding service.
- Develop written policies in-line with the National Care Standards.
- To be aware of and comply with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Codes of Practice.

Childminder Responsibilities:

- Making a commitment to childminding and the children in your care including the continuity of that care.
- Keeping within the requirements of your registration certificate.
- Providing for the health, safety and happiness of the children in your care.
- Treating each child as an individual.
- Sharing with parents in the care and education of their children and keeping confidences about circumstances concerning the life of the family.
- Respecting the child’s family circumstances and your role in those.
- Being responsible for your own health and personal development.
- Keeping up-to-date with current practice and childcare legislation.

*see Glossary (page 20)
Key Principles

The key principles of the code of practice for childminders are ‘professional approach’, ‘meeting the needs of children’, ‘providing a safe environment’ and ‘partnerships with parents’. Childminders should consider the following principles when providing a childminding service:

**Professional Approach**

Be aware of and work within the guidelines of current legislation concerning childcare and child protection at national and local Government level.

Recognise the commitment required to deliver a reliable quality service.

Promote childminding as a unique childcare service.

Reflect on practice to improve the childminding service.

Recognise the need to record a child’s development, health and behaviour progress.

**Environment**

Provide and maintain a safe and secure environment for children.

Have an awareness of the vulnerability of young children.

Recognise that child protection underpins all areas of your work.

Maintain a supervised environment which ensures the health and safety of children and others.

Provide a framework for the positive management of children’s behaviour by setting clear rules and limits, and using them firmly and consistently to help children feel more secure and confident.

**Meeting the Needs of Children**

Provide stimulating home-based care with a curriculum which acknowledges the need for, and presents opportunities for, learning through play and daily routines.

Recognise that the welfare of the child is paramount.

Develop an equal opportunities policy in line with the National Care Standards and apply the policy to childminding practice.

Be aware of children’s rights, needs and development milestones for ages 0-16.

Recognise that every child is an individual with differing and changing needs.

**Partnerships with Parents**

Recognise the parent as the prime carer of the child and keep the parent fully informed of the child’s progress.

Build a supportive partnership by working co-operatively and planning future activities to ensure a consistent approach between the home and care settings.

Use a childminding contract for mutual benefit.

Communicate clearly your role and responsibilities within the child protection context, including following up absences from your service.
Professional Approach
Providing a professional childcare service is different from raising your own children

Supporting the learning and development of children from family backgrounds and cultures which are different from your own will require new knowledge and skills. Experienced childminders will benefit from reviewing their knowledge and methods. A greater awareness of child development is necessary to be able to meet all children's needs.

In order to maintain a professional approach childminders will need to be aware of current legislation and registration requirements.

Registration
The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010* gives Scottish ministers the power to publish standards which the Care Inspectorate must take into account when making decisions about applications for registration. In addition, it gave Scottish ministers the power to make regulations imposing requirements in relation to early education and childcare services.

The key areas for consideration are:

- Fitness of person
- Fitness of premises
- Fitness of provision

The Care Inspectorate also imposes certain registration requirements and must have the discretion to impose others.

The Care Inspectorate use the National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare* to provide a framework for assessing the quality of childcare services and their compliance with the Act and associated regulations.

The Standards are written from the point of view of the user and consider:
- How they are welcomed/cared for
- Their confidence in the service
- Their confidence in management

As well as inputs such as adult:child ratios and space standards.

Annual Inspection
The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 gave the Care Inspectorate statutory power to inspect childminders and the premises in which they work.

The main purposes of inspections are:

- To enable the Care Inspectorate to be satisfied that services are provided to an acceptable standard.
- To ensure that the terms and conditions of childminding registration are being met and maintained.
- To encourage the raising of standards.
- To ensure SSSC Codes of Practice are taken into account.
- To reassure parents that childminding services are being monitored and standards are being maintained.
- To grade the service against national themes.

Prior to inspection, the childminder completes a self-assessment form and grades themselves against national themes linked to the Standards. These grades will subsequently be considered at inspection by the Care Inspectorate and grades awarded. The grades together with the inspection report will be posted on the Care Inspectorate website.

* see Glossary (page 20)
**Principles into Practice – Professional Approach**

I will develop a professional approach and deliver a quality childminding service by ensuring:

(a) **A Quality Service**
- Working within the constraints of my registration certificate
- Working in partnership with parents, sharing information on a regular basis
- Providing a warm, caring and stimulating environment
- Providing a safe and hygienic environment
- Providing appropriate support and supervision
- Providing a curriculum to meet the needs of all children in my care
- Helping children to progress to the next stage of development by supporting learning
- Making a personal plan for dealing with accidents and emergencies
- Respecting the rights of working parents
- Recognising the need for varied activities – to encourage good adult/child and child/child interaction
- Never abusing children either physically or emotionally

(b) **Reliability and commitment**
- Realising the nature of the commitment that childminding requires
- Acknowledging that young children benefit from continuity of care
- Providing proper back-up cover for broken continuity*

(c) **Confidentiality**
- Respecting the relationship between carer and child and developing trust
- Maintaining confidentiality about information concerning the family’s affairs
- When meeting with other childminders, being aware of the line which divides information from gossip

(d) **Review and Development of Practice**
- Developing appropriate policies and procedures in line with the National Care Standards
- Operating a self-evaluation procedure
- Regularly reviewing and reflecting on practice
- Regularly reviewing and reflecting on practice values
- Keeping abreast of current development in the childcare field
- Being aware of local authority Child Protection procedures
- Ensuring that activities incorporate opportunities for children to develop their skills in: confidence, communication, co-ordination, concentration, and co-operation
- Undertaking training opportunities to develop skills and knowledge
- Evaluating equal opportunities aspects of practice
- Observing children in my care to ensure that their needs are being met
- Sustaining links with colleagues and other professionals

*see Glossary (page 20)
(e) **Use of Contracts**
- Always using a contract
- Negotiating terms of contracts with parents

(f) **A Professional Approach to:**
(i) **Inspection**
- Operating within the requirements of my registration certificate
- Maintaining the necessary up-to-date records concerning children in my care
- Actively participating in my inspection and seeing it as a positive means of maintaining and raising quality care
- Acting on reasonable recommendations, but having the confidence to question any aspects with which I disagree
- Respecting the role of my Inspector
- Paying the continuation fee within the required timescale

(ii) **Childcare Records**
- Keeping accurate records of children in my care
- Regularly reviewing and updating recorded information
- Maintaining daily attendance records
- Maintaining care plans for each child and reviewing them every six months.

(iii) **Accidents / incidents**
- Recording time, date and details of any accident
- Recording action taken
- Notifying parent of the incident and requesting parent to sign accident sheet (Accident/Incident Report forms can be purchased from SCMA)
- Recognising the need to be aware of my own health and safety

(iv) **Business Records**
- Notifying Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC) offices of self-employed status
- Maintaining appropriate income and expenditure accounts
- Submitting self assessment forms to HMRC as required
- Dealing with National Insurance Contributions as required
(v) Medication
- Notifying parents that childminders require written consent from parents before administering medication
- Obtaining parent’s written authorisation for the administration of medication
- Recording date, time and dosage of medication given (Permission to Give Medication forms and Record of Medication Given forms are available to purchase from SCMA)
- Ensuring the parent receives this information and countersigns the record sheet
- Ensuring that parents administer the first dose of any new medication

(iii) Public Liability Insurance
- Being in possession of SCMA Public Liability Insurance
- Being aware of the cover offered
- Renewing insurance annually
- Ensuring that insurance cover is adequate

(iv) Home and Motor Insurance
- Informing insurers of your intention to childmind
- Ensuring that insurance cover is adequate
- Renewing insurance annually

(vi) Health and Safety
- Ensuring a safe environment
- Undertaking regular risk assessment procedures

Unregistered Childcare
- Being aware of my responsibility as a childminder to report any unregistered childcare
- Being aware of the procedures for reporting unregistered childcare
- Promoting the benefits of registration

Legal Support
- SCMA members are protected by free legal support for matters arising from childminding duties. SCMA members also have access to a legal advice line where they can speak to an advisor who has been specifically briefed to deal with childminding issues.

“SCMA members are protected by free legal support.”
Children develop as complete individuals and quality family day care should provide the framework for this. Care should be given in a warm and consistent way. It should be acknowledged that play makes an enormous contribution to development in early years and should be part of a childminder’s curriculum at every opportunity. Rest and relaxation are also important factors in children’s health and development, children should be allowed opportunities for both when necessary.

Opportunities for learning should meet the needs of social, physical, intellectual, communicative and emotional development. To be able to take their place in society, children need to:

- Learn how to relate to other children and adults
- Learn what their bodies can do and how they move
- Develop thinking and listening skills
- Develop ways to solve problems
- Learn to communicate effectively with other children and adults
- Learn about feelings in relation to themselves and others
- Have opportunities to experience a sense of achievement

Parents have a right to know what information is recorded about their child. Sharing and discussing this information with parents will help to build a supportive relationship, and recognises the value of a consistent approach between the home and care setting.

The process of observing, assessing, recording and reporting helps to build a comprehensive picture of the children in your care. By this process childminders can reflect, evaluate and review their provision.

Supporting the development and learning of children requires a multitude of skills. Childminders should constantly review their methods and take every opportunity to extend their knowledge.

**Children with Special Needs**

Children with special needs have the same basic needs as all other children in terms of care and education. As a childminder, you provide a service and since October 2004 the Disability Discrimination Act* and now the Equality Act 2010* requires that you have taken all reasonable steps to open your service to disabled people. Depending on whether a child has a learning or a physical disability, additional help, support and stimulation may be required.

Childminders are encouraged to consider carefully offering placements to children with special needs. Before offering placements, childminders should investigate the full range of services that can contribute to providing support for children with special needs and identify local provision in their area.

Childminders must consider the implications of a special needs placement upon the quality of care for other minded children.
**Child Protection**

Childminders have a significant role to play in a child’s health and well being.

In their work with children and young people, childminders may have concerns about a child’s welfare. The term ‘child protection’ is a proactive approach used to protect children from the harm of abuse. Childminders need to be aware of what constitutes child abuse and recognise their particular roles and responsibilities within the current legislative framework and local authority guidelines.

SCMA’s Child Protection Good Practice Guide, Safe and Secure helps childminders understand how they can protect children from the harm of abuse, to work towards prevention and to react appropriately to concerns / allegations.

---

**Equal Opportunities**

Childminders should develop their own equal opportunities policy in line with the National Care Standards* and apply the policy to childminding practice.

Putting equal opportunities into practice is as much about creating the right kind of positive atmosphere as it is about tackling negative attitudes. It is not enough to provide the materials, children must be given opportunities to explore, understand and value similarities and differences, between themselves and others.

*see Glossary (page 20)
Principles into Practice – Equal Opportunities

To enable children to learn and progress in each aspect of their development, my practice will provide opportunities for:

**Social Development**
- Learning to share, taking turns
- Giving praise and encouraging independence
- Providing opportunities to share in choices/decisions (e.g., what will we have for lunch, which book will we read?)
- Helping each other (e.g., clearing the toys, laying the table)
- Taking the feelings of others into account
- Helping children to resolve their own disagreements and intervening when necessary
- Providing support and supervision at an appropriate level
- Providing opportunities for children’s social contact with their peer group at childminders’ drop-in-group, playgroup or nursery
- Preparing children for moving to new settings (e.g., nursery, school)

**Physical Development**
- Gross manipulative skills
- Providing play opportunities to include skills of movement (i.e., climbing, balancing, running, kicking, jumping, stretching etc.)
- Providing space and equipment, or outings to include skills of movement

**Fine Manipulative Skills**
- Dressing and undressing, e.g., fastening buttons
- Providing activities and material to incorporate use of paint brushes, pencils, scissors, threading and lacing toys
- Encouraging children but not doing their activities for them
- Admiring, but not demanding, end products
- Providing adequate support and supervision

**Intellectual Development**
- Providing activities which help build a child’s attention span
- Providing praise, explanation and assistance when appropriate
- Allowing time and quietness for uninterrupted play
- Playing memory games
- Talking about what has happened, recalling details of past events
- Talking about what the child hears, sees, touches and smells
- Providing activities which help children express imagination and creativity, including role play
- Providing opportunities for sorting, matching, counting and comparing
- Supporting activities with appropriate adult conversation
- Sharing discoveries
Communication and Language Development

- Talking to babies, labelling everyday objects, singing, establishing the two-way pattern of conversation
- Talking to toddlers about everything around them
- Encouraging questioning, introducing books and stories, playing listening games
- Encouraging pre-school and school children in two-way conversation, using open-ended questions
- Reading books and looking at pictures, showing how to handle and care for books
- Recognising that television, videos and computer games are not replacements for human interactions
- Listening to children, not interrupting, giving them time to express themselves
- Hearing what children say
- Not criticising their mistakes in grammar or pronunciation, but instead repeating what has been said in the correct form
- Developing an awareness of non-verbal communication

“Encouraging questioning, introducing books and stories, playing listening games”

Emotional Development

- Providing a caring, loving, secure environment
- Praising what children can do
- Respecting each child’s family background and culture
- Understanding children’s anxieties
- Talking about feelings so children can learn words to describe how they feel (e.g., sad, angry, happy, afraid)
- Having reasonable expectations about children’s ability to deal with new situations
- Acknowledging children’s feelings and comforting them when emotions overwhelm them
- Building self-esteem by respecting the child as an individual
**Equal Opportunities**

I recognise that:
- Children learn negative attitudes and beliefs from people around them
- The setting and surroundings have as much effect as the spoken word

I will demonstrate Equal Opportunities principles in my practice by:
- Identifying and avoiding stereotypes*
- Presenting a positive image of people from ethnic minority communities, and people with disabilities
- Respecting children and adults as individuals
- Caring for children in accordance with their families’ values and practices
- Enhancing self-esteem and self-worth
- Respecting various ways of life

I will encourage children:
- To show respect and understanding for one another
- To challenge prejudiced attitudes
- To support and comfort children who are victims

I will:
- Reassess material/toys and discard offending items
- Choose non-sexist toys and materials
- Choose books and pictures which portray positive images of men and women in various roles
- Show respect for multi-cultural festivals
- Choose toys and play materials which positively reflect the multi-cultural and multi-racial nature of British society
- Focus on the child’s individuality
- Set rules to ensure that children are not teased or excluded because they are different
- Never excuse or ignore behaviour that is discriminatory*
- Praise positive attitudes and behaviour
- Provide missed gender-play opportunities
- Develop my own Equal Opportunities policy

*see Glossary (page 20)
Environment

Childminders are required to maintain high standards of care and safety as regards their premises, equipment and practice.

To ensure good practice, childminders should regularly review all areas used for childminding in relation to the stages of development of the children in their care. All activities should be carefully planned and supervised. Childminders should provide a range of quality experiences allowing for stimulation and relaxation. Childminders should set aside an area where children’s creative productions and things of interest may be displayed.

To minimise health risks, childminders should operate to high standards of hygiene.

Legal Requirements for Registered Childminders in Domestic Premises Operating as a Food Business

“The Food Standards Agency in Scotland (FSAS) and the Scottish Food Enforcement Liaison Committee have been working together to provide guidance for registered childminders in domestic premises providing a food service to those in their care.

To register as a food business operator you will need to complete the form sent to you by your Local Authority. Registering is free of charge. The completed form should be returned to your local authority (Environmental Health department). To find the contact details of your nearest Environmental Health Department please see the Food Standards Agency website at: http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/enforceessential/yourarea/”

Particular care should be taken when working with very young babies. Careful attention to food storage and preparation should be reflected in practice. Childminders should give serious consideration to the effects of passive smoking and that children learn by example. Children should experience a smoke-free environment at all times while in your care.

The management of children’s behaviour requires a clearly structured framework. Children need clearly defined boundaries to make them feel safe and secure and reduce frustration and tension.

Childminders have to make judgments in their day-to-day practice about the most appropriate methods of managing the behaviour of the children in their care, but corporal punishment must not be used to achieve this.

Hitting people is wrong, and children are people too! The National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare states:

“Staff will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote positive behaviour. Staff will challenge and respond to bullying and discrimination. This will be done in a caring and sensitive manner without threatening or using physical punishment or emotional or verbal abuse.”

It is a legal offence for childminders to smack children in their care. Childminders must make it clear to parents that regardless of parental permission, smacking is an unacceptable way of managing unwanted behaviour, and as such has no place in the provision of quality family day care.

Children need help to learn self-discipline to enable them to behave in an acceptable manner, to get on with others and to keep themselves safe.
To provide and maintain a safe and secure environment, I will:

- Recognise that supervision is the most important aspect of safety
- Ensure that children are supervised according to their stages of development
- Ensure the maintenance of the physical environment for young children is suitable in terms of safety, space, comfort and security
- Carry out risk assessments as required by the Care Inspectorate

**Safety (inside the house)**

I will ensure that:

- Stair gates are properly sited and securely fitted
- Highchairs are fitted with harnesses, and harnesses are always used
- Power points are fitted with child-resistant covers
- Household cleaners and dangerous substances are locked away
- Medicines are stored in locked cabinets
- Cooker guards are securely fitted
- Larger areas of glass at low level are fitted with safety glass or covered with safety film
- Fire guards are secured to the wall
- Exit doors are secured above child height to prevent children leaving premises alone

**Safety (outdoors)**

I will ensure that:

- Garden ponds are covered
- Garden areas are fully enclosed
- Access to roadway is restricted
- All garden tools and equipment are securely stored
- Large play equipment is securely anchored
- Outdoor play area is free of animal excrement
- Children are supervised according to their stages of development
- Children are dressed appropriately for weather and type of play

**Outings**

I will ensure that:

- Permission is obtained from the child’s/children’s parents for all outings outwith the normal routine (e.g., zoo, seaside etc.) (Permission for Extended Outings forms can be purchased from SCMA)
- Transport arrangements are adequate for the children’s needs
- Children travelling in cars are protected by restraints which confirm to BSI regulations
- Supervision arrangements are adequate for the children’s needs

“Ensure that children are supervised according to their stages of development”
Rest and Relaxation
I will:

- Allow children ample opportunities for rest
- Ensure that children are allowed a safe, quiet place to sleep when necessary
- Monitor sleeping children regularly
- Provide quiet activities when necessary or particularly after vigorous play

Pets
I will ensure that:

- Children are never left alone with pets
- Children are not allowed access to pets’ feeding bowls
- Litter trays are removed before children arrive

Fire Safety
I will:

- Comply with national Fire Safety guidance
- Ensure that smoke detectors are checked and maintained regularly
- Have a well-developed escape plan
- Practice the procedure with the children regularly

Health and Hygiene: Personal Hygiene
Personal hygiene sets a good example, therefore I will ensure:

- Children will be encouraged to wash their hands after playing with pets, after attending the toilet, and before eating
- Individual towels are provided for each child
- Hand towels and dish towels are changed at least once a day
- The toilet bowl and wash basins should be cleaned and disinfected regularly
- Disposable nappies should be wrapped and placed in outside bins as soon as possible
- Terry nappies should be placed in a lidded bucket in germ-killing solution. Always empty the waste down the toilet
- Potties should be emptied down the toilet bowl and disinfected regularly
- Toys should be cleaned regularly

Food Preparation

- Hands should always be washed before preparing food
- All food preparation areas and utensils should be cleaned and disinfected regularly
- Ensure hygiene procedures are sufficient to prevent contamination
- Food should be stored at the correct temperature
- Varied and nutritious diets should be provided in accordance with the parents’ wishes
- All fruit and vegetables should be washed
- Follow guidance from FSA on registering as a food business (see page 14)

First Aid

- Regularly update knowledge of First Aid procedures
- There should be a First Aid box
- There should be a contact number for the child’s/children’s doctor(s)
Infection Control

- Have a knowledge of signs and symptoms of infectious diseases
- Childminders should not normally care for sick children
- Wear disposable gloves and aprons when dealing with blood and other bodily fluids
- Cuts and grazes should be cleaned / covered with waterproof dressings
- Follow the guidance in the Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings (Day Care and Childminding Services) booklet

Smoking

- Childminders should refrain from smoking during their working day
- Children should not be subjected to passive smoking

Managing Children’s Behaviour

In partnership with parents, I will devise a positive approach to managing children’s behaviour:

- Setting clear and simple rules about what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
- Advising parents of the rules
- Using language that is appropriate to the child’s stage of development
- Being consistent in applying the rules
- Reminding children of rules when appropriate
- Explaining why certain behaviour is unacceptable
- Establishing set routines
- Always praising or rewarding good behaviour
- Ensuring sanctions used in response to unacceptable behaviour are given immediately
- Ensuring sanctions leave the child with self respect
- Never labelling the child as ‘bad’. It is the behaviour rather than the child which is unacceptable
- Dealing with unwanted behaviour in a calm and controlled manner
- Never smacking
- Never using sarcasm, belittling or excessive shouting at children
- Encouraging children to develop a sense of right and wrong
Partnerships with Parents

Looking after other people’s children is a responsible job and therefore requires a responsible and business-like approach.

Childminders are self-employed family day carers who negotiate their own terms and conditions with parents.

All parents care for their children and have concerns about leaving them in the care of others. The basis of a good working relationship with parents is communication. Starting a new placement is often a time of anxiety for parents and children. You need to be sensitive to the importance of initial contact and should arrange visits to allow the child to settle in. It is advisable to negotiate a period of time for the child to ‘settle in’ (between two and four weeks, when no notice payment is payable if either party wants to end the arrangement). Being able to meet with the parent and child before a placement and discuss openly what each other’s expectations are, helps build trust and opens the way for a sharing relationship.

Parents need to know that their child will be cared for in a warm, loving and stimulating environment but that childminders are not substitute parents. The parent will be respected as the prime carer and consulted as to the ways in which the needs of their child will be met. There is a need to share information regarding the structure and content of the curriculum. To enable children to develop physically and emotionally a varied and stimulating programme of activities will be included in daily routines.

Encourage parents to ask questions. Discuss and plan with parents for both emergencies and broken continuity. Set aside time to discuss whether the child’s, parents’ and childminder’s needs are being met. Using a contract and taking time to work through the contract together, ensures that the service on offer is clearly recorded.

An effective partnership depends on a shared understanding that the child’s welfare is of paramount importance. Open and honest dialogue helps prevent misunderstanding and reduces the likelihood of difficulties arising.

To enable the parent to feel confident in the service you provide, a resume of your service would highlight what is and is not included. This could include details of:

THE AIMS OF YOUR SERVICE

- Number of children (registration certificate)
- Number of children (in your care)
- Hours of opening
- Holidays
- Curriculum
- Routine outings
- Diet and nutrition
- Managing behaviour
- Public liability insurance
- Emergency procedures
- Commitment
- Payment i.e. method / frequency
- ‘Settling in’ procedures
- Complaints procedure
- Confidentiality clause
- Child protection statement
I will develop a supportive partnership with parents by:

- Having clear settling-in arrangements
- Encouraging open communication
- Setting aside a specific time for feedback on the child’s development and achievements, when children are not present
- Consulting with parents when problems arise
- Respecting the parents when problems arise
- Respecting the parent as the carer, but recognising my role in the child’s life
- Providing daily routines which support the child’s active learning
- Respecting the parents’ right to confidentiality concerning their family affairs
- Providing a safe, caring and stimulating environment
- Providing continuity of care
- Notifying parents of emergency plan
- Agreeing with parents a procedure for dealing with broken continuity
- Having in place a formal complaints procedure
Broken Continuity
This term has developed from a need to define the period when a childminding arrangement has for some reason had to be broken other than in an emergency.

Curriculum
The term “curriculum” is now widely used and no longer has an exclusively educational label. The word reflects appropriately that children from their earliest years are learning. A childminder’s curriculum includes all the activities and interactions from which young children learn, in fact their entire range of experience within their total environment.

Disability Discrimination Act
The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) aims to end the discrimination that many disabled people face. This Act gives disabled people rights in the areas of employment, education, access to goods, facilities and services, and buying or renting land and property.

Discriminatory
Making a distinction, especially on the grounds of race or colour.

Equality Act 2010
The Equality Act strengthens current equality law by extending the scope of who is covered by the legislation, by introducing a new Equality Duty on public bodies, harmonising definitions of discrimination and by introducing additional scope for positive action.

The principle aims of the Act are to:
• Harmonise discrimination law; and
• To strengthen the law to support progress on equality.

Additionally, the Act allows Ministers to amend UK equality legislation to comply with European law without the need for primary legislation.

Good Practice
The term “good practice” means carrying out the work of a childminder in the very best way.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare
These are the standards used by SCSWIS to assess the quality of a childcare service, including childminders.

National Occupational Standards
These are the standards of competence which have been developed for those who work with young children and their families. These standards were commissioned by the Care Sector Consortium in 1989.

Observe and Assess
This term means recording children’s progress and development and reflecting on these observations to plan a programme for children’s future development and learning.

Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010
This is the legislation which gives Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS) the responsibility for registering and inspecting childminders, where the child to be looked after is under 16 years.

Stereotype
This term means to form a standardised or generalised image of someone.
Useful Publications

These following items are available from SCMA’s Head Office

For Childminders

Combined Cashbook and Attendance Register
A method of keeping records of income and expenditure which includes a guide on how to calculate childminding expenses. It has been approved by Her Majesty’s Revenue & Customs (HMRC).

Record Binder
An A4 ring binder containing the following forms: Information on a Minded Child; Record of Child’s Individual Needs; Daily Diary; Accident/Incident Report form; Permission to Give Medication; Record of Medication Given and more. Record binder refills are also available separately. These forms cover all information needed to form a minded child’s ‘Care Plan’.

Contracts
Tailor-made agreement forms setting out all aspects of the arrangements between childminder, parents, and, where appropriate, employer or training agency.

Record of Information
Forms to be completed by the parent with the details about the child and contact numbers that may be required. (Included in Record Binder).

Tax & National Insurance Guide

Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings (Day Care and Childminding Settings)
This document provides guidance and advice on preventing and controlling infection in childminding services in Scotland.

Pre Birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland’s Children and Families
A national guidance and multimedia resource which reflects and supports Scotland’s shared vision and commitment to developing a strategic approach to prevention and early intervention.

Safe & Secure Guide
SCMA’s child protection good practice guide for childminders.

For Parents & Childminders

Guidelines on Pay & Conditions
A negotiating guide for use when discussing contracts and fees. Updated annually. (Free with SCMA membership).

Briefing Sheets
A series of information sheets, developed by SCMA in direct response to the main and frequent questions asked via the Helpline.
Bibliography
Throughout this publication we have consulted the following publications:

National Occupational Standards for Children’s Care, Learning Level 111
Care Sector Consortium

Making Assessment Work
Drummond, M; Rouse, D & Pugh, J: NES Arnold/National Children’s Bureau, 1992

Public Services Reform Act 2010
National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to age of 16
Scottish Government

Early Years Care and Education
Tassoni, P; Bulman, K with Beith, K; Burnham, L and Elridge, H: Heinemann, 1999

Safe and Secure – Child Protection Good Practice Guide for Childminders
Scottish Childminding Association, 2002