

# SCMA BRIEFING SHEET

## Policies and Procedures

Potential childminders are required to have draft policies and record keeping procedures in place outlining how their service meets the requirements outlined in the Care Inspectorate's registration and inspection procedures.

At the application stage it is sufficient to have a basic statement showing you understand each area of responsibility, however as you become more experienced you should be revisiting your policies and developing your policy statements giving more detail in how your service meets the needs of families and children.

The Care Inspectorate registration form asks for written information on the following:

- **Aims and objectives of service**
- **Child protection**
- **Complaints procedure**
- **Emergency procedures**
- **Accident and incident recording**
- **Children's records/contact details**
- **Administration of medication**
- **Fire safety risk assessment**
- **Whistle blowing**

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE**

This should include factual details about the service you aim to provide, for example the hours and days you will be working, ages of children you can care for, where you will be providing the service and with whom. It should go on to say something about what you are hoping to provide for the children and families you will be working with. You will need to ask yourself what you feel is important in your particular service; you might come up with things like:

- a warm, welcoming, homely and safe environment,
- what resources and experiences you plan to provide for the children,
- learning through play, outings and activities,
- flexibility and reliability,
- healthy eating, outdoor play,
- catering for individual needs,
- working in partnership with parents,
- your admissions policy including your settling-in procedures: how you help new children to settle in both to your home and to new situations like playgroup, nursery or school.

Each service will be individual; depending on what you feel is important to your service, and your aims and objectives statement should give a "feel of what you are about." Try thinking "if I were a parent looking for childcare what would I want to know?"

### **CHILD PROTECTION**

This topic will be covered in session 5 of the Induction training and the handouts from this session should help you put together a child protection statement which makes your role and responsibility clear to the parent. This written statement should be provided to all parents and include:

- How you will ensure the children in your care are protected from abuse, for example, all adults who will have regular contact with the children in your home will be vetted through Disclosure Scotland, risk assessments are carried out and reviewed when necessary, supervision of children.
- What you will do in response to the non-attendance of a child using your childminding service.
- The procedure you will follow for recording and reporting any concerns.

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

What would you do if someone was not happy with your service? You would probably try to discuss the problem and reach a mutual agreement, but what would you do if that didn't work? You need to decide how you would deal with a complaint if the person making the complaint was still not satisfied after you had tried to talk things through. Read the regulations here, they are quite specific about what is required, the main points are:

- You need to give everyone that uses your service a copy of your complaints procedure.
- You need to include the name and address of the local Care Inspectorate office so that they know they can complain to the Care Inspectorate if they want to.
- You need to ensure that every complaint is fully investigated within a 28 day period.
- You need to keep written records of any complaint made, what was done about it and the outcome, and show this to the Care Inspectorate if they ask to see it.
- You can also include SCMA address and Helpline number (01786 449063) as parents can contact SCMA for information too.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

This will be covered in session 4. You will need to state what your procedure is in the event of fire or any other emergency. You should think about:

- How you keep emergency contact details to hand at all times.
- Plans for the safe supervision of minded children in any emergency situation, for example do you have an emergency agreement with another registered childminder, will they have emergency contact numbers for your children, where would you take them if you couldn't get back into the house and how would you arrange for children to be collected.
- What kind of information do you carry in case the emergency is you? How about a card stating that you are a registered childminder, in the event of an emergency the children with you might not be your own and including your emergency back up person's phone number.
- First Aid, it is recommended that you undertake a child carers First Aid course, speak to your local Childminding Development Officer or local authority for more information.
- First Aid box, do you regularly review/renew the contents, do you take it with you on outings?

## **ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTING**

This will be covered in session 4 of the Induction training. Remember, there are forms that you can buy from SCMA for this purpose. You can use the same form for recording accidents, incidents (for example a child biting another child or if a child has a bad shock or fright in your care) and any occasions where you have had to restrain a child to prevent harm (for example grabbing their arm to stop them running in front of a swing, holding them if they have a bad tantrum and might hurt themselves or others). This protects you from allegations of abuse and allows you to share this information with the parent in a professional way. You should:

- Record the time, date and details of any incident.
- Record the action taken.
- Tell the parent what happened and ask them to sign the accident/incident form.
- Keep the completed form confidential, for example in the child's individual file.

## **CHILDREN'S RECORDS/CONTACT DETAILS**

This will be covered in sessions 2 and 4 of the Induction training. Remember, you can buy the forms from SCMA. The regulations are again quite specific here; you need to keep records of:

- Each child's name, address, date of birth.
- Name, address and telephone number of child's next of kin, emergency contacts.
- Name, address, telephone number of child's Doctor.
- The date the child started with you.

In addition to this you should add things like allergies, medical conditions, dietary requirements, who can pick the child up, other emergency contact numbers, school, nursery, grandparents etc. You will also be keeping a daily attendance register. If you employ any assistants (who themselves must be approved by the Care Inspectorate and police checked) you will need to keep written details of these people too.

## **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINE**

This will be covered in session 4 of the Induction training. Childminders should not administer medication without parental permission. You will need to have parent's written permission to give medication. You will need to record the date, the dosage and the time medication was given and when parents collect their child, always ask parents to sign the record sheet. You should also think about storage of medicine, i.e., at the correct temperature, clearly marked with the child's name and out of reach of the children.

## **FIRE SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT**

You need to provide a fire risk assessment in addition to completing the general risk assessment for your home. The fire risk assessment should include:

- A plan of your home showing the escape route/s in case of fire.
- Where you and the children will meet once the house is evacuated.
- Where you will take the children until they can be collected or you can get back into the house.
- Details of your smoke detectors (and heat detectors if you have them).
- That you will practice a fire escape drill regularly and check smoke alarms regularly and record these practices and checks (remember SCMA forms for this).
- Where you keep your fire blanket.
- That you follow Fire Office guidance for fire precautions in domestic childminding premises, a copy can be provided by the Care Inspectorate if you don't already have one.

## **WHISTLE BLOWING** (Standard 14)

If you intend to work alongside another childminder or use an assistant (paid or voluntary) you will need to provide them with a written statement which explains they can contact the Care Inspectorate if they have any concerns about the quality of care provided to children.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The application form also mentions the need for confidentiality. You could add a short written statement about this too; something for the parents' benefit along the lines of "*I would like to reassure parents that I will not share any personal and sensitive information including written records with anyone other than the family it concerns except where I feel the welfare of the child is at risk. You are also entitled to see any written records I keep about your child.*"