

# Choosing a Childminder



Falkirk Council

## Falkirk Childcare Information Service



Falkirk Council

### Useful Links

Care Commission	● Regulation of care services & inspection reports	<a href="http://www.carecommission.com">www.carecommission.com</a>
Care Standards	● What to expect from care services	<a href="http://www.infoscotland/nationalcaresstandards">www.infoscotland/nationalcaresstandards</a>
Child Protection Line	● Worried about a child? Call 0800 022 3222	<a href="http://www.infoscotland.com/childprotection">www.infoscotland.com/childprotection</a>
Disclosure Scotland	● Criminal records check organisation	<a href="http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk">www.disclosurescotland.co.uk</a>
Falkirk Council	● Local authority, information & leaflets available	<a href="http://www.falkirk.gov.uk">www.falkirk.gov.uk</a>
Fire Safety	● Fire Law in Scotland	<a href="http://www.infoscotland.com/firelaw">www.infoscotland.com/firelaw</a>
SCMA	● Scottish Childminding Association	<a href="http://www.childminding.org">www.childminding.org</a>
Scottish Government	● Government information and Care Standards	<a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk">www.scotland.gov.uk</a>

### How do I find a Childminder?

Falkirk Childcare Information Service can provide you with full details and also a wide range of information on childcare provision, pre-school education and childcare issues.

Phone - 01324 506632

Fax - 01324 506604

Email - [childcare@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:childcare@falkirk.gov.uk)

Website - [www.scottishchildcare.gov.uk](http://www.scottishchildcare.gov.uk), [www.falkirk.gov.uk/childcare](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/childcare)

### What is a registered childminder?

Registered childminders are professional daycarers who work in their own homes to provide care and education for other people's children in a family setting. They are inspected and registered by the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care (commonly known as the Care Commission) and must have an enhanced disclosure.

Registered childminders are self-employed and take care of their own tax and national insurance. They are not 'employed' by parents/carers but negotiate a contract for their service for which they charge a fee.



Written in conjunction with the Scottish Childminding Association.

August 2008



## Benefits of choosing a registered childminder

Registered childminders offer a flexibility of service that is difficult to find in other provision. Because they look after only small groups of children, their daily routine is very adaptable. Individual dietary requirements, sleeping patterns or homework projects can be catered for with ease. Their flexibility makes childminders ideal care providers for children whose parents work shifts as, unlike most nurseries, childminding services are often open outside standard opening hours.

Being cared for by a childminder gives youngsters the opportunity to learn from real life experiences. Everyday activities, like shopping trips, school runs, family mealtimes and visits to the park, teach children valuable life skills that they might not acquire so readily in centre-based care. These activities also educate children about their local environment.

With childminders working in every area in Scotland, most families are able to find one who lives in, or close to, their own community.

It is illegal for an unregistered person to look after children under 16 for reward though people do not need to register if they are a close relative of the child or if they are working in the child's own home.

## How many children will there be with a childminder?

Childminders can care for up to six children aged under twelve at any one time, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and no more than one is aged under 1. The childminders own children would be included within these ratios. In the case of twins or triplets the Care Commission can alter a childminders registration certificate so the childminder can accommodate these families, contact Care Commission for more advice. Childminders who work with an assistant may look after larger groups of children.

## What age range are the children with a childminder?

Children can go to a childminder from a few months old right through until they finish secondary school (16 years).

## When are childminders open?

Childminders are self-employed and so they decide on their working hours. Most childminders will provide you with childcare between the hours of 8am and 6pm. Some childminders will work early mornings, evenings, overnights and weekends as well. You will need to negotiate hours, terms and conditions with the childminder and SCMA recommend that a contract is in place.

## What about part-time childcare?

Many childminders are happy to provide families with part-time places for children. They often drop children off at school and pick them up. Childminders can also take your child to a playgroup or nursery as part of the routine.

## How much does a childminder cost?

Childminders set their charges themselves. Charges vary in different areas. There is no national rate but the average charges are £3.00 - £3.75 per hour and £150 - £190 per child per week for full-time care. Many childminders will offer a discount for a second child from the same family. The Scottish Childminding Association produces a guide to pay and conditions for registered childminders that would give an idea of rates of pay. The

guide is free to members and available to non-members for a minimum fee. Contact SCMA Head Office for further details.

## Is there anyone I can talk to regarding choosing a childminder?

Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) provides advice, information and support to parents regarding choosing a childminder and maintaining a good relationship. For further advice please contact the SCMA Helpline on 01786 449063, e-mail [information@childminding.org](mailto:information@childminding.org) (the Helpline is open Monday to Friday 10am - 4pm).

## Tips and Information

Further details regarding Registration & Inspection, Questions to ask and other Top Tips can be found in Falkirk Childcare Information Service Making Choices leaflet, please phone and ask for a copy or download from Falkirk Council website. This leaflet is also available in Cantonese and Urdu.