



Nottinghamshire
County Council

Nottinghamshire Families Information Service

Information for parents & carers

Childminders

Plus points:

- Offer flexible care.
- In a home environment.
- Children of different ages can be cared for together.
- Offer continuity of care whilst children grow up.
- Access services in the community.

Choosing a childminder:

First you will need a list of registered childminders in your area from Nottinghamshire Families Information Service (FIS) on 0800 7812168.

Next, give the childminders a call to check if they have vacancies. At this stage you can also ask about your basic requirements, i.e. opening hours, outside play space, pets. This will save you visiting too many childminders later.

Arrange to see several childminders and aim to visit when there are children around. This way you can get to know what you like and don't like. These are things to look out for:

- Is it clean?
- Is it safe for children?
- Is there a safe outdoor space for play?
- Are there plenty of toys, activities and books?
- Do the children seem happy?
- Is the minder caring and welcoming?
- How does the minder cope with the children?

If your child didn't come with you on the first visit you might want to arrange a second one to introduce the minder to your child. Don't be afraid to ask if you can contact other parents who use the childminder to find out what they think.

If you find a childminder you like, tell them as soon as you've made up your mind because you might lose the space. Remember to check all references.

The childminder would usually draw up a contract which should include a start date, agreed rate, overtime, holidays, period of notice, extras and space for signatures of both the childminder and parent or carer. It should also have a regular review date.

Top questions to ask a childminder:

- How long have you been a childminder?
- What are the ages of the other children you look after?
- What other adults will be in the house while the children are there?
- Do you have qualifications or professional training?
- What kind of behaviour management strategies do you use?
- How often do you take the children out?
- What arrangements do you have for meals and snacks?
- Do you have insurance?
- What arrangements do you have in emergencies?
- What are the fees?
- Do you use a vehicle to transport children? If so, does it have seat belts, appropriate seats, insurance and up-to-date tax and MOT?

There will be other questions to ask which are important to you - take time to think about these before you visit.

Help paying for your childminder

