

Childminders working with assistants or other childminders



All childminders **must meet** the requirements of the *Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage*.

If you intend to employ other childminders and assistants it is your responsibility to ensure they have the necessary knowledge, skills and induction training to fulfil their role and responsibilities.

Childminders are accountable for the quality of the work of any assistants, and must be satisfied that assistants are competent in all areas of work they undertake. (3.24)

The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements¹ explains:

Child Protection and safeguarding

- Childminders must take lead responsibility themselves in relation to child protection and must train all staff (assistants) to understand their safeguarding policy and procedures and ensure that all staff (assistants) have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. (3.5 & 3.6)

Checking suitability of staff

- Ensure anyone living or working on the premises (whether on domestic or non-domestic premises) are suitable to do so and that Ofsted have been informed and undertaken their suitability checks. An enhanced DBS check will need to be obtained and an EY2 declaration form completed (online) and forwarded to Ofsted. (3.10)
- You must tell staff (assistants) that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children. You must not allow people whose suitability has not been checked, including through a criminal records check to have unsupervised contact with children being cared for. (3.11)
- You must ensure that any staff (assistant) taking medication should have sought medical advice that confirms it is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children. Staff medication on premises must be securely stored, and out of reach of children, at all times. (3.19)

¹ Section 3 of the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage



- A health check may also be carried out on a childminder assistant if there are concerns about his or her health that might affect their suitability to look after children. ²

Staff induction and supervision

- You must ensure that your staff (assistant) receives induction training to help them to understand their role and responsibilities; and put appropriate arrangements in place for supervision of staff (assistants). You must support assistants to undertake appropriate training and professional development opportunities. (3.20 & 3.21)
- Childminders are accountable for the quality of the work of any assistants, and must be satisfied that assistants are competent in the areas of work they undertake. (3.24)

Training

- At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate must be on the premises and available at all times when children are present, and must accompany children on outings. Childminders and any assistant who might be in sole charge of the children for any period of time, must hold a full current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate. PFA training must be renewed every three years and be relevant for caring for young children and where relevant, babies. (3.25)

Managing staff: child ratios

- If a childminder employs an assistant or works with another childminder, each childminder (or assistant) may care for the number of children permitted by the ratios. But in all circumstances, the total number of children under the age of eight being cared for must not exceed six per adult caring for the children. Children may be left in sole care of childminders' assistants for two hours at most in a single day. Childminders must obtain parents and /or carers' permission to leave children with an assistant, including for very short periods of time. (3.42-3 & CR1.6)

Suitable environment

- The premises and equipment must be organised in a way that meets the needs of children. Space requirements must continue to be met when increasing the number of children being cared for. (3.57)

² Ofsted Early years and childcare registration handbook (Ref:150150)



- Childminders must always inform Ofsted if they decide to increase the number of children they care for when working with an assistant or another childminder. The law requires childminders to inform Ofsted about all people living or working on the premises where childminding is provided to enable them to check if they are suitable to be in contact with children. (3.77)

Childminders also need to consider the following:

- Make enquiries regarding the local authority's rules for planning permission to run a business and work with other people from your home.
- Consider any tenancy or leasehold arrangement that might apply.
- Check your public/employer liability insurance to ensure it allows you to have extra children before deciding to do so and that you are covered to work with an assistant on the same premises.
- Ensure your assistant has read and understood all your policies and procedures.
- It is advisable to maintain a staff register on a daily basis. This should include all staff (childminder, co-minder and assistant) together with their exact start and finish times. This will demonstrate you are maintaining ratios at all times.