

Overnight Care



All childminders **must meet** the requirements of the *Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage* at all times. There is very little in the way of legal requirements specifically relating to overnight care that childminders have to adhere to other than the following points:

The safeguarding and welfare requirements¹ state:

- For childminders providing overnight care, the ratios continue to apply and the childminder must always be able to hear the children (this may be via a monitor). (3.43)
- Providers must take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises, and have an agreed procedure for checking the identity of visitors. Providers must consider what additional measures are necessary when children stay overnight. (3.62)
- Any proposal to change the hours during which childcare is provided; or to provide overnight care (notify Ofsted of any changes). (3.77)

Further consideration should be given to the following points by the childminder as a matter of good practice:

- If the security measures in place are appropriate in order to prevent intruders entering the premises at night. Provide additional methods as required.
- The fire safety measures in place are sufficient as fire risks are potentially greater at night when people are asleep. For example, alarm system working, gas and electrical appliances are turned off etc. The emergency evacuation will be different at night and the escape route, lighting should be considered.
- Any adults over the age of 16 that may stay on premises overnight when minded children are present must not have unsupervised contact with them.

¹ Section 3 of the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage
www.lancashire.gov.uk



- Ofsted will need to undertake checks on anyone who is 16 or over and lives or works in the home where the childminder cares for children. Ofsted will need to check adults even if they live there for some of the time e.g. study at university and back during the holidays, stay with the childminder regularly. The checks still apply even if the person lives elsewhere most of the time and are not present during childcare hours. For further guidance go to www.gov.uk/guidance/people-connected-with-ofsted-registered-childcare
- Requesting information from parents on the child's sleeping habits and any difficulties that may arise at night. For example, bedwetting, nightmares, bed time routines, use of comforters, eating and drinking preferences, cultural and religious practices etc. to ensure a consistent and sensitive approach is maintained.
- The privacy of minded children must be respected and no adults, other than the registered childminder should have contact with a minded child during bath time or when a child is undressing. Listening to the children's wishes and changing routines if necessary.
- The location of a child's bed or cot in relation to the ages and gender of other children. The use of light bedding or a lightweight, baby sleeping bag is comfortable and safe for sleeping babies.
- Check the heating system is in working order so that the room temperature is maintained at a comfortable level, not too hot or cold. Babies who get too hot have a greater chance of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). The ideal room temperature for a baby is 16-20°C. For further information and free publications visit www.lullabytrust.org.uk
- Any listening device used should be in working order and make sure a child can be heard without it. Sleeping children should be frequently checked.
- Risk assessing sleeping areas, particularly if not regularly used, to ensure they do not pose a health and safety risk.
- Check your public/employer liability insurance to ensure it allows you to provide overnight care before deciding to do so. Ofsted must also be informed if this is a change and was not agreed as part of the original childminder application.