

**Greenwich Families Information Service** publishes a list of current or forthcoming registered childminding vacancies across the Borough. These lists are updated on a monthly basis and are available from the first day of the month. The information is accurate at the time of publication; however, a vacancy can be filled within a couple of days.

In accordance with our Confidentiality Policy, childminders' addresses are not given in full. However, lists indicate the general area in which the registered childminder lives and a map of the borough is enclosed.

Contact **Greenwich Families Information Service** on **020 8921 6921** to receive a current list of registered childminders in the Borough.

### **Finding the right registered childminder – what to consider**

You know your child best and you have to decide who cares for your child. This can be a difficult decision. Use the guide below to help you to make your choice.

## **A Greenwich guide to choosing a registered childminder**

1. **What is a registered childminder?**
2. **Why choose a registered childminder?**
3. **What does it mean to be registered?**
4. **How will the quality of care provided by registered childminders be checked? Registered childminder quality assurance schemes**
5. **How can I find a registered childminder in Greenwich?**
6. **How many children can registered childminders look after?**
7. **Finding the right registered childminder – what to consider**
8. **Choosing a registered childminder for a baby or child with disability or special needs**
9. **Settling your child in**
10. **Encouraging a successful partnership between parent and registered childminder**
11. **What do registered childminders cost?**
12. **Assistance with your childcare costs**
13. **What can I do if I have concerns about the childminding care or arrangements?**
14. **Where else can I get information about registered childminding?**

## 15. Other information...

### 1. What is registered childminding?

Registered childminding is one person, who can work with up to two other people, looking after children aged from birth to 7 years on domestic premises. These premises must not be the home of any of the children being cared for. Registered childminding is also where the individual(s) providing the care receive a reward when at least one individual child attends for a total of more than two hours a day. This reward is usually money, but can be any form of payment including goods. Childminders providing care as described above must register their services with **Ofsted** and will be placed on the **Ofsted Early Years Register** and the compulsory part of the **Ofsted Childcare Register**. This is a legal requirement under the **Childcare Act 2006**. Registered childminders must ensure that their childminding provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the **Early Years Foundation Stage**. Registered childminders also frequently care for children aged over 7 years, but this will not be stated anywhere on their **Ofsted** registration certificate. Sometimes two or even three childminders may be registered to the same premises; joint childminding may mean that they can offer care to a larger group of children.

You can obtain a copy of the **Early Years Foundation Stage** from **DFE** publications, tel. 0845 602 2260, or at **DFE** website [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education) (ref: 00267-2008BKT-EN).

You cannot become the register childminder for a child if you:

- are the parent, step-parent or relative of the child
- have parental responsibility for the child
- are a foster parent to the child
- only care for children for two hours or less per day
- care for the child between the hours of 6.00 pm and 2.00 am only

Parents will only be able to qualify for assistance with funding their childcare costs through the Childcare Element of the Working Tax Credit or other childcare funding options if their childcare is registered by **Ofsted** (ie a childminder, day nurseries, pre schools, and breakfast or afterschool clubs.)

### 2. Why choose a registered childminder?

Your child will be cared for in a childminders home where they can easily enjoy real-life learning experiences like cooking, shopping, gardening, sharing meals and going out to the park and library. A registered childminder provide individual, consistent care for your child within a family environment. Most are flexible and can provide full or part-time care to suit your individual needs. It may also be possible to have continued extended day care when your child starts school.

### 3. What does it mean to be registered?

From September 2001, **Ofsted** have been responsible for the registration and inspection of providers of childcare services, for children up to the age of eight - assessing people who apply for their suitability to look after young children. If any **Early Years Foundation Stage** requirements are not met at the time of

inspection, providers will be told to make improvements within a defined timescale – or risk having their registration cancelled. **Ofsted** will also investigate complaints about childcare practice, or other information, which give it reason to believe a childminder is not meeting **Early Years Foundation Stage** requirements and take appropriate enforcement action where necessary.

Registration includes taking health, character and police references on the applicant and conducting checks on all members of their household age 16 and over. The home must be considered safe for children.

Registered childminders must hold current and suitable public liability insurance. Childminders must display their **Ofsted** certificate of registration. In order to become registered **Ofsted** will assess the childminders understanding of the Statutory Framework and Practice Guidance for the **Early years Foundation Stage**. Prior to registration childminders must also complete a paediatric first aid course. They must also undertake periodic renewal of this paediatric first aid training to ensure that they are up-to-date with current practice.

To confirm that a Greenwich childminder is registered, ring the **Greenwich Families Information Service, tel. 020 8921 6921**.

#### **4. How will the quality of care provided by registered childminders be checked?**

**Ofsted** check registered childminders to ensure that they continue to meet the **Early Years Foundation Stage** requirements. Newly registered childminders are given their first inspection within 7 months of being registered. At this first inspection they are given an overall grade.

There are 4 grades:

Grade 1 is Outstanding: This applies to exceptional provision which is way above the norm.

Grade 2 is Good: This applies to strong provision in which children are well cared for.

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: This applies to provision which is sound but could be better.

Grade 4 is Inadequate: This applies to provision which is weak. The standard of care is not good enough

A childminder given a satisfactory, good or outstanding grade will be inspected in a 3 to 4 year cycle, unless a complaint is made against the childminder, this may trigger an earlier inspection.

Following the Inspection, **Ofsted** will send the childminder an inspection report. The childminder is required to give you a copy of the **Ofsted** report. However, this cannot replace the need for you to talk regularly with the childminder about the way they are looking after your child.

#### **Registered childminder quality assurance schemes**

Greenwich runs a childminding quality assurance scheme which is called a 'Children Come First' childminding network. 'Children Come First' is a quality assurance scheme developed by the **National Childminding Association (NCMA)**, **Department of Education (DFE)** and **Ofsted**.

Childminders who join a network have to meet additional standards to show they are offering the high level of care needed to become a network member. The childminders are assessed by a childcare development officer, who visits the network childminders regularly, at least 3 times a year, to ensure they maintain 'Children Come First' standards.

If you would like further information or advice about the childminding network please contact the **Greenwich Families Information Service, tel. 020 8921 6921**

### **5. How can I find a registered childminder in Greenwich?**

- By contacting the **Greenwich Families Information Service, tel. 020 8921 6921** for details.
- By looking for advertisements in shops and local papers and by asking other parents (in this instance, however, you will be responsible for checking that these childminders are registered).

### **6. How many children do registered childminders look after?**

- This varies, but up to a maximum of 3 children aged from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday. And three children aged from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday to seven years old. These numbers include the childminders own children aged under eight.

Normally a childminder can only mind one child under one year old\*, again including the childminder's own children. Childminders may look after additional children over 8 years old.

*\*some registered childminders may have been approved by Ofsted to look after more than one child under the age of one year. The childminder may be registered for additional children if they have a registered assistant. Always check the childminder's most recent Certificate for details of the number of children they are registered to care for. The registration certificate must be displayed.*

### **7. Finding the right registered childminder – what to consider**

You know your child best and you have to decide who cares for your child. That can be a difficult decision. We suggest you visit more than one childminder to find one that you and your child feel comfortable with. Look around, ask questions and carefully consider your decision.

Ask yourself, how the childminder responds to your child and to you? Can you talk to them easily about the things that matter most to you?

Use the checklist below to remind you of the things you might like to consider and be prepared to discuss the needs of your child with them.

- Is the childminder registered? Remember that their registration certificate must be displayed. The childminder should offer to show you their latest inspection report. If they don't, ask to see it but remember newly registered childminders may not have been inspected by **Ofsted** and therefore will not yet have an inspection report.

- Who else lives in the childminder's home and do they have regular visitors? Can you meet them?

- Has the childminder previous experience of working with children?

- How many other children does the childminder look after and what are their ages?

- Does the childminder have a registered assistant or assistants? Please check the information and detail on the registration certificate.

- Can the childminder look after your child for the hours you need?

- Who will care for your child if the childminder is ill or unable to work?

- Is payment required when the child is unable to attend through illness or holiday? Is payment required if the childminder is ill or on holiday?

- What will happen if you are late collecting your child? Will you be expected to pay overtime charges?
- Who will your child be left with if the childminder has an emergency?
- Ask the childminder to show you their current first aid certificate. Ask to see certificates of attendance for other relevant training they may have undertaken.
- Is the house or flat warm, comfortable and safe for your child?
- Are there pets?
- Has the childminder explained their responsibility to report concerns if they believe a child is being mistreated or neglected. This is called Safeguarding procedures.
- What is likely to be the child's daily routine? How will you be kept informed?
- Are you planning to provide your child's own food? If not, what sort of food will your child be given? Discuss your child's preferences.
- Where there is no outdoor play area registered childminders should take children out on a daily basis. Where do they go? What safety precautions will the childminder follow when taking children out? Childminder should carry out a risk assessment. Will the childminder drive a car? If so, who will provide the car seat? Check the car insurance cover is adequate.
- Where will your child rest or sleep? Discuss your child's sleep patterns.
- How does the childminder encourage good behaviour?
- Is there space to play and does the childminder have books and toys suitable for your child?
- Has the childminder discussed with you the requirement for them to keep written observations of your child and that they will undertake written plans and assessments? This information will need to be shared with you and with other childcare settings that your child may attend or move onto.
- Before your child starts with the childminder she should be asking you for information about your child's learning and development.
- Has the childminder shown and discussed with you their written policies and procedures including their complaints procedure?

You may worry about asking too many questions. Registered childminders are expected to work in partnership with parents and to address their questions and concerns. Registered childminders should involve you in your child's learning and development. Good communication between you and the childminder is essential so that the everyday difficulties of sharing the care of your child/ren can be dealt with as they happen. If a childminder is unwilling to answer your questions, they may not be the best person to care for your child.

The childminder will ask you questions about your child and their needs including any special and additional needs your child may have. Share information about your child's sleep patterns, food preferences, favourite activities, special words or names for things, fears or anxieties, toilet training progress etc to make the new arrangement easier for everyone, and to maintain some continuity of care. Also, discuss aspects of your religion or culture, which influence how your child is cared for at home.

### **8. Choosing a registered childminder for a baby or child with a disability or special needs**

This can be a very difficult choice. However the Integrated Support, Children and Families Childcare Development team may be able to help you. Our specialist

services coordinator's role is to ensure a suitable match between the registered childminder and the child with special needs. They will ensure that the childminding arrangement is carefully monitored and that appropriate support, advice and information are given to both parent and childminder, in the initial stages and throughout the match. For more information please contact **Greenwich Families Information Service tel. 020 8921 6921**

### **9. Settling your child in**

If possible, introduce your child to the new childminder and the new arrangements gradually. Usually this will involve several visits of increasing length so your child can get used to the new surroundings. Bring along your child's favourite toy or any special comforts.

### **10. Encouraging a successful partnership between parent and registered childminder**

A written contract is the best foundation for a good relationship. Parents should not assume they will think the same way as the childminder. If you are unclear about anything, do ask.

Be on time whenever possible, or ring to advise if you will be delayed otherwise your child may be worried and the childminder may be prevented from undertaking planned activities.

Pay promptly and on the day(s) specified by the childminder. It is normal to expect to pay in advance. You may also be asked to pay a retainer to secure the place for your child. Expect to pay overtime payments if you work extra hours or are late.

Do not take an obviously unwell child to their childminder.

Above all, share information about your child with the childminder and take the time to allow the childminder to share information about your child's day with you.

### **11. What do registered childminders cost?**

This is a private arrangement between the childminder and you.

### **12. Assistance with your childcare costs**

Financial assistance may be available to help towards your childcare costs. The childcare element within the **Working Tax Credit** may help towards the costs of registered or approved childcare. **New Deal for 18-24 year olds** and **New Deal for Lone Parents** can both help with costs towards childcare as part of a pre-agreed to work programme. Students attending both further and higher education may also be able to access funds set aside specifically for students' childcare costs and should clarify this with their college or university.

You can contact the following for further advice:

**Greenwich Welfare Rights Advice Line, tel. 020 8921 6375**

**Tax Credit Helpline, tel. 0845 300 3900**

**Greenwich Families Information Service, tel. 020 8921 6921**

### **13. What can I do if I have concerns about the childminding care or arrangements?**

**Ofsted** recommends that you and the childminder establish a contract of what you agree when you set up the childminding arrangement, and that you both retain a copy. This can be useful in sorting out misunderstandings or disagreements later on. Talk to your childminder about any difficulties or worries you have as soon as they arise and try to find a solution between you. You can contact the **Greenwich Families Information Service** or **Ofsted** for advice on the requirements for childminders. If you think the childminder is not providing good care, you can make a complaint, which **Ofsted** will investigate (however, please note that **Ofsted** will not investigate contractual disagreements). If you feel that things cannot be resolved, you may choose to find another childminder for your child but, in this circumstance, you should generally expect to have to fulfil any contractual arrangements eg paying for any agreed notice period.

Childminders agree not to discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, disability, age, religion, culture, sexual orientation or linguistic background. If you believe you are experiencing discrimination, please contact **Ofsted**.

**Ofsted complaints helpline: 0845 640 4040**

#### **14. Where else can I get information about registered childminding?**

The Integrated Support, Children and Families Childcare Team can advise childminders and parents on all aspects of childminding care and practice. To speak to the team, please contact **Greenwich Families Information Service tel. 020 8921 6921**. For additional information, the **National Childminding Association (NCMA)** offers advice about all aspects of childminding to both parents and childminders. Contact the NCMA information line, tel. 0845 880 0044, Monday-Friday between 10am-4pm.

#### **15. Other information...**

##### **Greenwich Families Information Service**

Helpline: 020 8921 6921  
Email: [fis@greenwich.gov.uk](mailto:fis@greenwich.gov.uk)  
Web: [www.greenwich.gov.uk](http://www.greenwich.gov.uk)

##### **Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education)**

Helpline: 0300 123 1231  
Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
Web: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)