

## Childminder

- A registered childminder looks after children at home. They cater for children's physical, educational, social and emotional needs by providing a warm, caring environment, with stimulating play and learning activities. They give affection and security to the children in their care, and build a trusting relationship with them and their families.
- Most full-time work is with babies and children under five. Childminders might also look after older children.
- The daily routine can include periods of play, exercise, naps, and meals, which the childminder prepares and serves.
- A childminder may deal with children from different backgrounds and must not discriminate.
- Childminders also deal with parents and carers, and keep records relating to the children and business matters.



Childminders negotiate their working hours, but need to cater for working parents, so hours are likely to be long. Some childminders offer a weekend or overnight service. Normally, childminders work in their own home. The work can involve a lot of bending and lifting.

Childminders get at least £7,000 a year; top earners make around £25,000.

A childminder needs to be:

- caring, and love children
- a good communicator
- patient, but firm and consistent
- committed to providing long-term care for children.

Childminding is the most popular form of childcare for working parents. The number of childminders is likely to increase as a result of government initiatives to promote good quality childcare.

More important than qualifications is a suitable personality and experience with children. Entrants need to be at least 18, but most childminders are older, often with their own families. They need to be registered to practice as a childminder. Before they register, candidates must take an introductory training programme and first-aid course.

Childminders can move into related areas of work such as working in a nursery or family centre, playwork, working as a teaching assistant, or running an after-school and holiday club.