

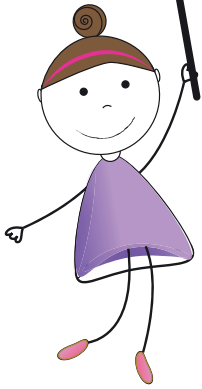


Guidance Pack

on the Minimum Standards
and Inspection Process
For Childminders

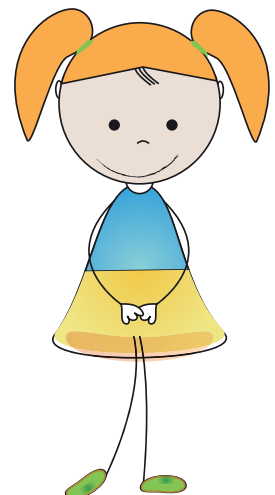


Funded by the Childcare
Partnership Early Years
Development fund
April 2016



Contents

Introduction	3
- Childminding and Day Care for Children under age 12 - Minimum Standards	3
- Childminding and Day Care for Children Under Age 12 Minimum Standards - Implementation Guidance	3
- The User Guide for Childminders	3
Section 1 - The Inspection Process	4-5
Section 2 - Quality of Care – Part 1	6-12
- Records to be evidenced at Inspection for Quality of Care - Part 1	12
- What your Inspector will observe and comment on	12-13
- Self-evaluation for Quality of Care – Part 1	13-16
Section 3 - Quality of Care – Part 2	17-24
- Records to be evidenced at Inspection for Quality of Care – Part 2	24
- What your Inspector will observe and comment on	24-25
- Self-evaluation for Quality of Care – Part 2	25
Section 4 – Quality of the Physical Environment	26-29
- Records to be evidenced at Inspection for Quality of the Physical Environment	29-30
- What your Inspector will observe and comment on	30
- Self-evaluation for Quality of the Physical Environment	30
Section 5 - Quality of Staffing Management and Leadership & Quality of Monitoring and Evaluation	31-37
- Records to be evidenced at Inspection for Quality of Staffing Management and Leadership & Quality of Monitoring and Evaluation	37
- What your Inspector will observe and comment on	37
- Self-evaluation for Quality of Staffing Management and Leadership & Quality of Monitoring and Evaluation	38



Introduction

In 2012 the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety issued the Childminding and Day Care for Children Under 12 years - Minimum Standards. The aim of the Standards is to provide assurance of a consistent level of quality in childcare services and also to ensure a consistent regional approach to registration and inspection.

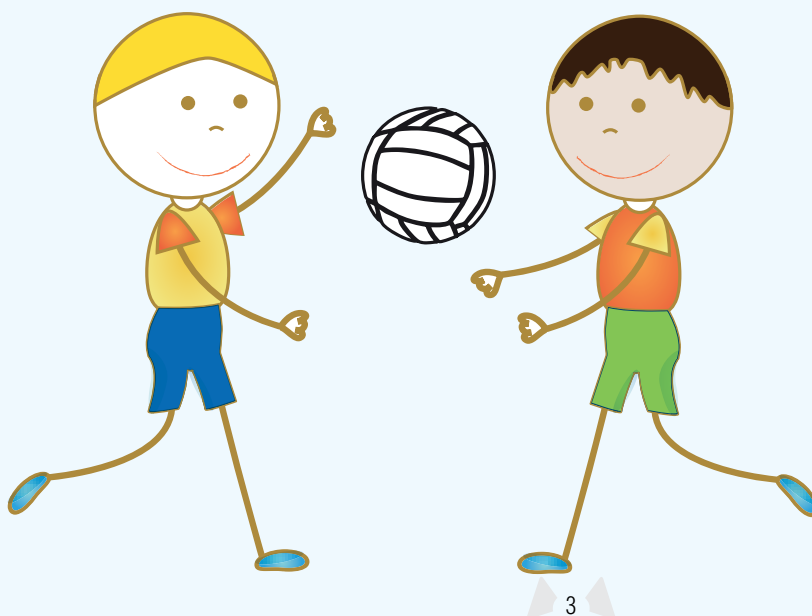
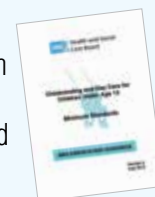
Following the Standards, the Health and Social Care Board produced the Childminding and Day Care for Children Under Age 12 Minimum Standards - Implementation Guidance. The Guidance helps to explain how the Minimum Standards should be applied to your particular setting. For example, the Guidance explains exactly what training you need and what the roles of an assistant(s) are.

In February 2014 NICMA worked in partnership with the Health and Social Care Board to develop a "User Guide" on the Minimum Standards specifically for registered childminders. The guide is based on the Childminding and Day Care for Children Under Age 12 Minimum Standards. It is not a replacement for the Minimum Standards but does cover each Standard, how it applies to the childminding setting and the minimum childminders need to provide for inspection.

NICMA have been awarded funding from the Childcare Partnerships Early Years Development fund to develop this **"Guidance Pack on the Minimum Standards and Inspection Process for Childminders."** This provides **step-by-step instructions as to what childminders need to do before and during each inspection visit and what we believe to be good practice.** We have also included **tips to help you improve the quality of your childminding service** and hopefully receive an excellent inspection report from your Health & Social Care Trust.

The guidance pack is divided into five sections. Sections 2-4 are based on the four "Quality Areas" stated in the Minimum Standards. These are:

- **Section 1: The Inspection Process**
- **Section 2: Quality of Care – Part 1**
- **Section 3: Quality of Care – Part 2**
- **Section 4: Quality of Physical Environment**
- **Section 5: Quality of Staffing Management and Leadership & Quality of Monitoring and Evaluation**



Section 1

The Inspection Process





The inspection process involves:

1. Self-Evaluation Form - You will be sent a letter informing you when your inspection will be taking place along with a self-evaluation form for a specific quality area. You need to complete this form and forward it to the inspecting Social Worker by a given date. As part of this self-evaluation you will be asked to forward your Safeguarding and Child Protection policy to the Trust. If the Self-Evaluation form is not returned it will not be possible to carry out a full inspection.
2. The Trust will gather all pre-inspection information e.g. Access NI checks, parental questionnaires. They will also check that those who are recorded on the Self-Evaluation form as having been vetted have been cleared.
3. The Inspector will look for evidence of vetting for household members.
4. The Inspector will check to see if any complaints or concerns have arisen since the last inspection.
5. The Trust will carry out an inspection visit to directly evidence a specific Quality Area and Safeguarding and Child Protection. The evidence will be gathered through;
 - discussion;
 - observation of practice;
 - examination of written records, policies and documents;
 - self-evaluation form; and
 - staffing information.
6. During the inspection visit the requirements for compliance will be identified and any recommendations for improvement given.
7. Any serious issues that arise from the inspection visit will be followed up immediately and may need a follow-up letter, visit or action plan.
8. The Inspector will then write a report which will be shared in draft format with the childminder.
9. If the childminder is unhappy with factual accuracy of the inspection report they need to contact their Inspector.
10. If the childminder is unhappy with conduct of the Inspector they need to contact a Senior Social Worker in the Trust.
11. A final report will be agreed and forwarded to the childminder.
12. The report will then be submitted online to Family Support N.I.



SECTION 2

Quality of Care – Part 1





What is this section about?

This section deals with all aspects of care that children receive in the childminding setting.

There are four standards to be inspected in this section. These are:

- Standard 1 - Safeguarding and Child Protection (this will be inspected at each inspection).
- Standard 2 - Care, Development and Play.
- Standard 3 - Children's Health and Wellbeing.
- Standard 4 - Health and Safety in the Setting.

Standard 1 Safeguarding and Child Protection

Children are safeguarded through systems and practices that are consistent with the Regional Child Protection Policies and Procedures

As a registered childminder you have a duty of care to protect all children in your care.

What do you have to do?

- Develop a **Safeguarding and Child Protection policy**.
- Attend Safeguarding Children training (to be updated every three years).
- Develop an **Intimate/Personal Care policy**.
- Develop an **ICT policy**.
- Develop a policy on **"Taking or Using Photographs and Recordings of Children"** (state clearly what photography will be used for).
- Develop a **CCTV policy** (if required).
- Ensure that the collection of children arrangements are in place.
- Ensure that assistant(s) and parents are aware of all policies
- Ensure that the children you care for are brought to your home and collected by their parents, or those who act for their parents and are aged 18 or over unless they are the parent.
- Develop a **Whistleblowing policy** (Whistleblowing is when you report a concern about something you know to be wrong. This is not just for situations where you are concerned about the child in your care, it may also be to report concerns about any assistant(s) you employ or any member of the public you are concerned about outside of your childminding duties). Ensure the numbers for the Trust, Gateway and Out of Hours Regional number are stated on the policy.

Questions your inspector will ask:

1. What does Safeguarding and Child Protection mean to you?

What do you say?

- Explain that as a registered childminder you aim to keep all children in your care safe by adopting the highest possible standards and taking reasonable steps to protect them from harm.
- Explain that child protection is specifically about protecting children and young people from suspected abuse by being aware of the signs and symptoms of the categories of abuse (sexual, neglect, physical and emotional).
- Explain that safeguarding children goes much wider than this. It is about promoting children's welfare and ensuring that the care they receive in your setting is safe and effective to enable them to reach their full potential.
- Explain that you do this by:
 - putting children's needs first at all times and encouraging children to be confident and assertive;
 - providing a safe learning environment where children can talk and are listened to and where their confidence and self-esteem is promoted;
 - supporting children in making good choices about a safe and healthy lifestyle and encourage them to discuss any concerns they have about their health and emotional well-being;
 - ensuring that every child feels accepted and included in your setting; and
 - keeping all children safe which includes minimising the risk of harm and accidents and taking action to tackle health and safety concerns.
- Explain that it is about staying within registered numbers as over minding compromises supervision and therefore safeguarding child protection.

2. What would you do if you had a child protection concern?

What do you say?

- Explain that you have a duty to report any concerns to the Gateway Team within your Health and Social Care Trust; the contact details should be on your Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Describe how you would do the following:
 - follow the Regional Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures set out by the Health and Social Care Trust.
 - record all accidents or incidents involving injury to a child in your care, no matter how minor. This information should be shared with the parents; both the childminder and parents should sign the accident/incident record.



- Record any injuries that a child has upon arrival at your childminding setting in your accident/incident book. You will ask parents to give you a brief explanation of how the injury occurred and ask them to sign your accident/incident book. Explain that you will also sign.
- You ask parents to notify you of any concerns that they have about their child.
- If you are concerned about a child's welfare you will contact the Gateway Team in your local Health and Social Care Trust to seek advice.
- If information is in relation to parent/carer/household member/person due to collect child and is of significant concern contact Gateway immediately to pass on information. Gateway will give directions as to what to do next.
- If information of concern is in relation to a household member of the childminder or their assistant(s) then this should NOT be discussed with the person until Gateway have been informed and their advice with regard to that person should be followed from that point on.
- If information is in relation to a non-household member, contact the parent of the child to share the information and if it is necessary contact Gateway.
- Where relevant, Gateway will forward the allegation to the Early Years Team.

3. What do you do on a day to day basis to keep children safe?

What do you say?

- Explain how you ensure all children feel safe and secure within your setting and that their individual needs are being met.
- Show who is vetted in your setting.
- Discuss how you supervise the children in your care.
- Discuss how you manage visitors to your home during childminding hours.
- Describe how children learn your rules and boundaries.
- Describe how you encourage children to talk to you and express how they feel.
- Explain that you observe children as they play and record any concerns you have.



4. How do parents know what your procedures are for safeguarding children?

What do you say?

- Describe how you share all relevant policies with the parents during contract negotiations.
- Explain that parents are asked to read the policies and sign to say they agree with all procedures stated.
- Explain that you will share any updated policies with parents and assistant(s) and review all policies on a regular basis.

STANDARD 2 Care, Development and Play

Children's well-being is promoted and their care, development and play needs are met. A broad range of play and other activities is provided to develop children's physical, social, emotional & intellectual abilities.

What do you have to do?

- Have a **Play policy** for your setting that parents and assistant(s) (if applicable) have signed and agreed to.
- Provide a wide range of play opportunities for ALL children both indoors and outdoors.
- Talk to parents about their child's likes/dislikes.
- Provide a selection of sensory activities/natural and man-made and bought materials to encourage children to explore and investigate materials themselves.
- Ensure all children feel welcomed and valued.
- Provide opportunities for children to rest and relax.
- Encourage children to participate in planning.
- Listen to children and respond to their individual needs.
- Observe the children and plan activities around their interests.
- Ensure that the children are given the opportunity to play at their own pace and have fun.
- Encourage friendships and teamwork depending on the age of the children.
- Let the children display their artwork to help promote their confidence and self-esteem.
- Continually promote speech, language and communication.
- Build and maintain relationships with parents and regularly share information about their children.



Questions your Inspector will ask:

1. How do you make sure that your home is welcoming and child friendly?

What do you say?

- Discuss what you do to show you are interested in the child.
- Describe how you ask the children to tell you about anything they did in school/playgroup at the weekend or on holiday etc.
- Explain how you provide a range of toys and activities based on each child's individual interests.

2. In a typical day describe what you would do with the children?

What do you say?

- Describe your daily routine with the children. Discuss what school/playgroup runs you do each day.
- Discuss the activities and experiences you offer the children on a daily basis i.e. indoors and outdoors, library, parent and toddler groups, arts and crafts, stories, songs and rhymes, quiet time etc.

3. When you care for children of different age groups and additional needs, how do you make sure that all their needs are met?

What do you say?

- Explain how you observe the children to see what toys and equipment they like to play with and how they use it.
- Describe how you provide a wide range of toys and equipment and you ensure it is age appropriate.
- Talk about how you always consider extending the children's learning by adding to activities they enjoy.
- Explain how you always seek the children's views on activities in the setting.
- Describe how you consult with parents about their wishes and ensure that they feel included in their children's care and education.
- Describe how you ensure that every child has opportunities for physical activity every day both indoors and outdoors.
- Talk about how you make sure that children have the opportunity to rest and relax if they need it. Talk about how you ensure you follow a child's natural body rhythm and let them rest or sleep when they need it.
- Discuss what you do to promote language and communication between the children and with you e.g. talking/singing to children, actively listening to them, encouraging two way communication and asking open ended questions to extend learning and promote speech, language and communication.

4. How do you help a child develop their confidence, independence and self-esteem?

What do you say?

- Describe what you do to encourage children to play together and learn new skills i.e. do you provide team games and encourage children to work together during activities? If yes, explain how this encourages children to share and take turns.
- Explain what you do in your setting to show the minded children that they are valued and respected.
- Explain that you encourage children to come up with play ideas and suggestions and how you encourage them to make choices and decisions.
- Explain that you will follow through on children's suggestions to help build their confidence and self-esteem.
- Describe how you encourage children to build on their own natural curiosity.
- Explain that you allow the children to use materials in their own way and not concentrate on the end product.
- Explain what you do when the child wants to lead the play or activity.
- Describe how you encourage younger children to do things for themselves such as toileting, feeding and putting on their shoes and coat.
- Explain that you give children praise for their efforts and not for an end product. When giving praise it is important to remember:
 - don't concentrate on the end product, praise children for their efforts;
 - be clear what you are praising the children for;
 - be sincere as children will know when you aren't;
 - encourage new activities and motivate children to take part in activities;
 - don't praise the obvious as it becomes meaningless when praise happens all the time; and
 - say it when you mean it.
- Describe how you encourage children to talk about their feelings and consider the feelings of others.

5. How do you make sure that you have a good understanding of children's needs and their home circumstances?

What do you say?

- Describe how you always talk to the children about things they are doing both in your setting and at home.
- Discuss what you do to share information with parents on a daily basis which helps share ideas of what their child has done both at home and within the setting.
- Discuss what you do about sharing concerns with a parent and how you share these concerns with parents at a time that suits.



STANDARD 3 Children's Health & Wellbeing

The overall health and wellbeing of the child is promoted and safeguarded.

What do you have to do?

- Follow good hygiene procedures.
- Develop an **Infection Prevention & Control Policy**.
- Complete a risk assessment on the pets in your home.
- Complete a risk assessment if your childminding setting is on a farm.
- Ensure you have written permission from parents for their children to have contact with animals.
- Ask parents to provide sunscreen for their child and ensure you have their written permission before applying it on their child.
- Develop a **Management of Medicines Policy**.
- Ensure that all medicines are inaccessible to children.
- Ensure that medicines are only administered to children after discussion with parents and with written permission.
- Develop a policy for **Dealing with Medical Emergencies**.
- Provide a first aid box which is out of reach to children but easily accessible to you.
- Register with Environmental Health within your local Council.
- Ensure that you or any assistant(s) does not smoke during the working day even if the children are not in your home at that time.
- Provide clean bedding for children who sleep in your setting.
- Ensure you have up to date paediatric first aid training.

Questions your Inspector will ask:

1. How do you keep your home and equipment infection free?

What do you say?

- Discuss your routine for ensuring good hygiene practices i.e. explain that all equipment is kept clean and that children are encouraged to follow good hygiene procedures.
- Discuss how you manage situations where minded children are sick i.e. tell the Inspector that in order to minimise the spread of infection, sick children do not attend the setting.
- Describe how you use anti-bacterial products in your setting.
- Explain how each child has their own bed linen and hand towels.

2. How do you encourage the children to have good hygiene practices?

What do you say?

- Explain how you encourage children to wash their hands before and after eating and going to the toilet.
- Explain that you encourage children to brush their teeth after eating if required by parents.
- Discuss with your inspector that you have registered with the Environmental Health Service in your local Council.

3. Do you have any pets/farm animals? If so, how do you make sure children are safe and good hygiene practices are followed?

What do you say?

- Explain that you carry out a risk assessment for all pets/farm animals and ensure that their food is kept out of children's reach.
- Explain that written parental permission is given before children have contact with pets and you ensure that children wash their hands after any contact with any animals.
- Explain that a detailed risk assessment is carried out if you live on a farm and that you will receive written parental permission before children have access to any animals.

4. How do you provide physical activity for children of different age groups?

What do you say?

- Explain how you ensure children have regular physical activity both indoors and outdoors. The British Heart Foundation guidelines state that children over five should have a minimum of 60 minutes each day and under fives should have at least 180 minutes each day.
- Describe the types of activities and equipment that you provide for children.

5. How do you protect children from different kinds of weather?

What do you say?

- Discuss what you do for the children in the different times of year when it is cold, wet or sunny i.e. explain that you ask parents to send warm coats, wellington boots, hats, scarves, gloves etc. for children during winter so they can play outside and sunhats and sunscreen for the summer months.
- Tell your Inspector that you obtain written parental permission before applying sunscreen to a child.



STANDARD 4 Health and Safety in the Setting

Children's safety is promoted at all times ensuring that proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents and minimise risks to them.

What do you have to do?

- Ensure you are compliant with fire arms regulations if relevant.
- All visitors must be known to you and not be left alone with minded children.
- Complete a written health and safety risk assessment.
- Complete a written fire risk assessment.
- Carry out regular fire drills in your setting.
- Check any fire equipment regularly and record this in a fire log book.
- Smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors should be provided and checked regularly. A record of this should be kept in your firelog booklet.
- Ensure that your boiler is serviced and that chimneys are swept regularly (if relevant).
- Ensure all glass conforms to BS EN standards.
- Where possible ensure that all soft furnishing e.g. settees are flame retardant and meet BS EN standards.
- Ensure that gas and electrical appliances are safe.
- Have policies on the following:
 - Health and Safety;
 - Transport (written parental permission required to transport children); and
 - Managing Emergencies
- Ensure you have Public Liability Insurance & Employers Liability Insurance (where relevant).
- Ensure all cleaning materials are safely stored and out of sight of children.
- Ensure you have locks or restricted openings on windows.
- Make sure the areas of your home inside and out are secure and children are supervised.
- Ensure that children are kept away from boiling water.
- Fire exits should be known to everyone and not blocked.
- Ensure you have a fire blanket meeting BS EN standards in your kitchen.
- Ensure that new internal window blinds comply with the child safety requirements and meet BS EN standards, or make your existing blinds safer by following the advice given by the British Blind and Shutter Association. See www.bbsa.org.uk for further information.

- Ensure that floor coverings are in good condition and even.
- Ensure that all alcohol is out of reach and view of the children.
- Ensure that ponds, pools and septic tanks are made safe or inaccessible to children.
- Provide records of vehicles in which children are transported to include insurance details, tax, MOT, list of named vetted drivers and written parental permission for children to travel in the vehicles.

Questions your Inspector will ask:

1. What steps do you take to manage visitor's access to the children in your home?

What do you say?

- Provide evidence that all household members over the age of 10 within your house have had an Access NI check carried out.
- Discuss any regular visitors to your setting and what vetting checks have been completed.
- Provide evidence of a visitors book which records anyone who visits your setting.
- Discuss how you supervise the children.

2. How do you make sure that all ponds, pools, septic tanks or any water is inaccessible to children (this question will be extended if you live on a farm)?

What do you say?

- Show how the area has been risk assessed and depending on the safety precautions in place ensure: it has been fenced off (if relevant)

Or

- the pool/pond/septic tank has a rigid cover.





3. Tell me what you know about fire safety

What do you say?

- Discuss if you have attended core training in Health and Safety (or downloaded the Health and Safety app) and understand how to meet Minimum Standard requirements by using the Health and Safety checklist in your self-evaluation form.
- Discuss if you have completed written risk and fire risk assessments and keep a firelog book. Show the Inspector copies of these.
- Explain that you have all the relevant policies in place that have been discussed, agreed and signed by yourself and the parents. Show these to the Inspector giving a brief explanation to show your understanding of all procedures listed.

4. How do you make sure that your home and garden are safe and secure and that children can play safely?

What do you say?

- Discuss what checks you carry out and when to the indoors and outdoors. Describe what you see as potential hazards to children and how these are managed.

Records to be evidenced at Inspection for Quality of Care – Part 1

You will need to have the following documentation for your inspection as well as all of your policies:

- Code of Conduct for childminder and assistant(s) (if applicable) on the use of mobile phones and social networking websites – explain that you do not need a separate Code of Conduct if you use NICMA's **"ICT and Internet Safety"** and **"Taking or Using Photographs and Recordings of Children"** policies as all the information is covered. Explain the procedures you follow using these policies.
- Record to show your assistant(s) (if applicable) has signed and agreed to this policy – ask your assistant(s) to sign the "Childminding Assistant(s) Agreement on Policies" form.
- Written parental consent for photographs – if you are using NICMA policies, ask parents to sign the form included in the **"Taking or Using Photographs and Recordings of Children"** policy.
- Evidence of a signed and dated record (by the childminder and the parent) of anything which causes a childminder or assistant(s) concern about a child or any allegations made by the child.
- A risk assessment for any animals kept as pets, or on a farm if relevant (this will be included in your risk assessment documentation).
- Parent's written permission for children to have contact with animals.
- Parent's written permission for administering medicines.
- Parent's written permission for sun screen to be used.
- Records of fire drills and evidence that any relevant equipment had been serviced (including your boiler and/or chimney). This should be kept in a fire log book.
- Car insurance, licence, tax and MOT certificate.
- A list of named and vetted drivers.
- Parent's written permission for children to travel in the vehicles. If you use NICMA policies this is asked for in the Transport Policy.

What your Inspector will observe and comment on

- Interactions with children e.g. hugs, smiles, eye contact, tone of voice.
- Is your setting welcoming and child-centred?
- Is children's artwork displayed?
- If you value and respect all children in your care.
- If you provide suitable equipment and materials.
- Are medicines all inaccessible?
- If there is a good level of cleanliness in your setting.
- If you follow good hygiene practices.
- If there is good management of pets.
- If you provide appropriate physical activity.
- If you have a first aid box (accessible to carer but inaccessible to children).
- If you have written permission for contact with animals (if you use NICMA policies this will be in the **"Pets and Animals"** policy).
- If you have written permission for the administration of medicines (if you use NICMA policies this will be in the **"Management of Medicines"** policy).
- If you have written permission for the application of sunscreen (if you use NICMA policies this will be in the **"Health and Safety"** policy).
- Are ponds, pools, septic tanks made safe and inaccessible to children?
- Are cleaning materials safely stored out of sight and reach of children?
- Is alcohol kept out of reach and view of children?
- Are all hazards minimised?



- Do the windows have restricted openings?
- Is your house and outside play area secure and children are appropriately supervised?
- Are hazardous substances stored safely in a cupboard inaccessible to children?
- Are children kept away from boiling water?
- Is there a fire blanket which conforms to BS EN Standards in the kitchen?
- Are cords on blinds shortened and inaccessible to children.
- Are floor coverings sound and even and has action been taken to reduce the risk of slipping?
- Do you have records of fire drills and checks of the servicing of relevant equipment in a logbook?
- Do you have records of vehicles in which children are transported to include insurance details, tax, MOT, list of named and vetted drivers and written parental permission for children to travel in the vehicles?

Self-evaluation for Quality of Care - Part 1

As mentioned on page 5 of this guidance pack you will be required to complete a self-evaluation form prior to your inspection visit and forward this to the Trust.

Pages 1 – 5 of the self-evaluation form require you to tick “yes” or “no” regarding information on:

- yourself and your family;
- regular visitors;
- any changes within your household;
- all the minded children;
- training that you have attended;
- your assistant(s) if relevant;
- structural changes to your home;
- Public Liability Insurance;
- Employer's Liability Insurance (if relevant);
- guidelines for smoking and the use of alcohol within your setting;
- medication you may be taking; and
- any involvement with Social Services over the last year.



You will also need to tick “yes” or “no” to the following questions on page 6 of the self-evaluation form relating to the Minimum Standards.

These are:

Standard 3

- **Are you registered with Environmental Health?**

You need to ensure that you have registered with Environmental Health within your local Council.

- **Do you have a First Aid Box that is compliant with the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations (NI) 1992?**

You are required to ensure you have first aid equipment that is adequate and appropriate for your setting. You should make an assessment of the hazards and risks in your childminding setting and establish an appropriate level of first-aid provision.

- **Does your First Aid Box contain the suggested list of contents as described in Section 5 of the Minimum Standards?**

There is no mandatory list of items to put in a first aid box. It depends on what you assess your needs to be. As a guide the Health and Safety Executive recommends the following:

- a leaflet giving general guidance on first aid;
- individually wrapped sterile plasters (of assorted sizes), appropriate to the type of work (you can provide hypoallergenic plasters if necessary);
- sterile eye pads;
- individually wrapped triangular bandages, preferably sterile;
- safety pins;
- large, individually wrapped, sterile, unmedicated wound dressings;
- medium-sized, individually wrapped, sterile, unmedicated wound dressings; and
- disposable gloves.

- **Do you regularly check your First Aid Box and replace items as necessary?**

The Health and Safety Executive state that although there is no specified review timetable, many items, particularly sterile ones, are marked with expiry dates. They should be replaced by the dates given and expired items disposed of safely. In cases where sterile items have no dates, it would be advisable to check with the manufacturers to find out how long they can be kept. For non-sterile items without dates, it is a matter of judgement, based on whether they are fit for purpose.



Standard 4

- **Are you compliant with relevant health and safety regulations and guidance?**

Guidance can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/firstaid.htm>

- **Are you compliant with firearms legislation (if applicable)?**

Guidance can be found at www.hseni.gov.uk

- **Is your Health and Safety Risk Assessment updated on an annual basis and do you have a written plan saying what you would do to reduce any risks?**

As a registered childminder you will be carrying out informal risk assessments, indoors and outdoors on a regular basis. However, you need to formally record any potential hazards that you find within your setting and state how and when they were removed. Remember that you also need to carry out a risk assessment before taking children on outings.

- **Are you aware that the Health and Safety Risk Assessment should be updated if you make any changes to your home?**

You may make changes to the furniture, purchase new play equipment and resources or start looking after new children. When changes like this occur you will need to re-do your risk assessment.

- **Is your Fire Risk Assessment updated on an annual basis and all recommendations carried out?**

If all information is recorded on your risk assessment form then tick "yes" to this question.

- **Does any safety glass used meet with BS EN standards or is purpose-made film fitted to doors, windows or furniture that are accessible to children?**

Before you answer this question you will need to check all areas within your setting to ensure that you meet these requirements.

- **Are all your cleaning materials used in compliance with COSHH Regulations?**

COSHH stands for Control of Substances Hazardous to Health. As a childminder this means that you need to ensure that all bleaches, medicines etc. are stored away in a cupboard that is inaccessible to children.

- **Are all your soft furnishings and textiles flame retardant and do they comply with BS EN guidelines?**

You will need to check this within your setting and if they aren't you need to add them to your risk assessment.

- **Do your gas and electrical appliances and their fittings conform to safety requirements?**

Guidance can be found at www.hseni.gov.uk

You will also be asked the following questions on your self-evaluation form.

1. **Children are safeguarded through systems and practices that are consistent with Regional Child Protection Policies and Procedures (if you do not have a copy of these please contact your local Early Years Team).**

Please show how your care of children meets the criteria/points as set out in the Standards.

What do you write?

- I have a **Safeguarding and Child Protection policy** in place that is based on the Regional Child Protection Policy and Procedures. My policy clearly states my (and my assistant(s) if relevant) responsibilities with regard to the reporting of suspected or actual child abuse or neglect and includes relevant contact names and telephone numbers.
- I (and my assistant(s) – if relevant) have undertaken safeguarding children training and will refresh this every three years.
- All parents are made aware of and sign in agreement, my setting's procedures for safeguarding and child protection. This includes the need to pass information without parental consent if I have a reasonable concern that a child may be at risk of or is suffering abuse or neglect.
- I have a written policy and procedures for **Intimate/Personal care**. All parents have read and signed in agreement with the procedures stated in this policy.
- I have a written policy on the use of **Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Taking and Using Photographs and Video Recordings of Children**. This covers information on the use of cameras or video capability, and participation in social networking websites. All parents have seen and signed in agreement with the procedures stated in these policies.
- Using the image consent form parents have given written permission for their children to be photographed and the use of these photographs is clearly explained (e.g. displays, child records, promotional material etc).



- I have a written policy and written procedures on the use of CCTV (if relevant).
- Children are only collected from my setting by parents or those with parental responsibility or persons authorised by them to do so. If parents give other people permission to collect their children, such as aunts or uncles, these people must be over 18. They can only be under 18 if they are the child's parents.

2. Tell us about any criteria/points you are not meeting

What do you write?

Consider the points above. If you are not meeting any of these write them in this box and explain to your inspecting social worker that you aim to put these in place.

Policies and Procedures

This section of the self-evaluation form requires you to tick "yes" or "no" as to whether or not you have the required policies in place and if these have been shared with parents and assistant(s) (if applicable).

Views of Parents & Children who use your service

This section of the self-evaluation form asks you to give information on how you obtain feedback from the parents and children who use your childminding setting.

In this section you will need to give information on:

- **What do the minded children and their parents think of your service?**
- **How do you know this?**
- **Have you changed your practice after hearing their views?**

Think about how to get feedback from parents and children. Do you do this? If not, why not? Ask parents to give you verbal/written feedback on the service you provide. You can do this face-to-face or you could develop a very simple questionnaire that the parents can take away and complete in their own time. Constructive feedback allows you to reflect and continually improve the quality of the service you provide.

It is important to get feedback from children to ensure that they are enjoying the activities and experiences that you offer. Ask the children what they enjoy about activities and experiences in your setting and if there is anything they are unhappy with or would like to change. You can do this by asking children questions or by giving them happy/sad emotions pictures and allow them to place around your setting. Or, you could design a very simple picture questionnaire for them to complete. This helps you find out if you are meeting their needs and if the activities and experiences you offer are based around a child's interests. Use this feedback to reflect on your practice and make any changes if required

How do you know this?

Explain the methods you use to gain feedback as mentioned above.

Have you changed your practice after hearing their views?

If you have made any changes, list them here. Examples might include:

- You make time to give parents more detailed feedback on what their child has done each day as the brief conversation when parents collect their children wasn't enough.
- You are going to start a daily diary for a young child so the parents have detailed information on their child's feeding, sleeping and play routine.





Your views on the care you provide:

What do you think you are doing well as a childminder and is there anything you feel you should do differently?

Think about all aspects of the childminding service you offer and if there is anything you feel you need to change or improve upon. i.e. do you need more training in a particular area, do you need to be more flexible in your working hours, should children be outdoors more, do you need to promote positive images more, how do you feel about the standard of care you offer to all children, do you need to consult with children more, do you need additional toys, play equipment to meet children's individual needs etc?

Example:

I feel that I am doing the following well:

- providing age and stage appropriate activities and experiences for children;
- ensuring that all children feel welcomed and valued;
- listening to children; and
- allowing children to make choices and decisions.

What could I do differently:

- give children responsibility in my setting;
- involve children in planning activities; and
- encourage children to be independent rather than doing everything for them.

Reflect on your own practice and think about your strengths and weaknesses. Try to improve your strengths and work on your weaknesses.



SECTION 3

Quality of Care – Part 2





What is this section about?

This section deals with all aspects of care that children receive in the settings.

There are six standards to be inspected in this section. These are:

- Standard 1 - Safeguarding and Child Protection (this will be inspected for each quality area)
- Standard 5 - Food and Drink
- Standard 6 - Promoting Positive Behaviour
- Standard 7 - Working in Partnership with Parents
- Standard 8 - Equality
- Standard 9 - Additional Needs

Prior to inspection you will need to send the following to the Trust:

- Completed Self-evaluation form
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

STANDARD 5 Food and Drink

Children are provided with a variety of nutritious foods and drinks that will contribute to their health, growth and development

What do you have to do?

- Ensure you have a **Food and Drink policy** in place.
- Register as a food business with Environmental Health within your local council.
- Ensure that all special dietary requirements in relation to preferences, disability, allergies, cultural or religious requirements are met.
- Ensure that all meals prepared come from the five main food groups.
- Always provide fresh drinking water.
- Follow the Public Health Agency (PHA) guidelines on storing and preparing baby formula.
- Ensure that all meals provided meet the advice given in PHA Nutrition Matters in the Early Years.
- Keep written records of the food and dietary requirements of all children and evidence that you have discussed this with parents. If you are a NICMA member this information will be recorded on a "Child's Personal Record Form."
- Encourage children to eat together to develop their social skills and gain independence during meal and snack times.

Questions your Inspector will ask:

1. How do you make sure that the food and drink you provide is nutritious and properly prepared?

What do you say?

- Discuss with parents what food and drinks you provide if relevant. If you provide the food explain that you design and discuss a weekly/monthly menu based on the PHA Nutrition Matters guidelines with the parents to agree on the meals you will provide.
- Discuss how you are registered with environmental health and that you follow all relevant hygiene requirements when storing and preparing food.
- Discuss how you talk to children about the food/snacks they like/dislike.

2. Does the food and drink you provide meet the dietary, cultural and religious requirements of the children?

What do you say?

- Discuss how children's individual requirements are discussed in detail with the parents to ensure that their needs are met.

3. How do you make sure that any assistant(s) understand these needs?

What do you say?

- If relevant explain that children's individual food and drink requirements are clearly discussed with your assistant(s).

4. How many meals and snacks do you provide each day?

What do you say?

- Discuss what you provide depending on the number of children that you care for and the length of time they are in your setting.

5. What types of food do you include?

What do you say?

- If relevant discuss how you provide the food explain that all menus designed include bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods, fruit and vegetables, milk and dairy foods, meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein. Give examples of the types of meals you provide and explain that they are all based on the PHA Nutrition Matters guidelines. Details for guidance include:



- 0-5 years - <http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/getting-good-start-healthy-eating-one-five-english-and-translations>
- 5 years plus - <http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/enjoy-healthy-eating-0> and <http://www.enjoyhealthyeating.info>
- Details on the new Eatwell Guide launched by Public Health Agency England (in Northern Ireland the Food Standards Agency is the lead agency) can be found at: <https://food.gov.uk/northern-ireland/nutritionni/eatwell-guide>

6. How do you make sure that meal and snack times are a social occasion and encourage children's development of social skills and independence?

What do you say?

- Discuss how eating together at the table and making it a social occasion is the perfect opportunity for children to learn appropriate table manners, meal etiquette, and social skills.
- Discuss how eating together provides the opportunity for conversation and how it lets you teach healthy communication without distractions. By engaging the children in conversation, you teach them how to listen and provide them with a chance to express their own opinions.
- Discuss how conversations at the table expand the vocabulary and reading ability of children and allow every child to discuss and share any exciting news;
- Describe how the sense of security and togetherness provided by eating together helps nurture children into healthy, well-rounded adults and how eating together can have a positive impact on children's values, motivation, personal identity and self-esteem.
- Discuss how you encourage children to plan their snacks and meals.
- Discuss how you talk to children about the importance of a good diet.
- Describe how you encourage children to help with the preparation of meals/snacks.
- Describe how you make the food look attractive.
- Discuss how you provide choice for the children and encourage them to serve themselves.
- Discuss how you are a positive role model for the children during meal and snack times.

7. How are infant bottles prepared and stored?

What do you say?

- Explain that if you are bottle feeding a child away from the childminding setting the PHA guidelines state that it is safest to take an individual pre-sealed carton of ready-made formula milk. The next safest alternative is to carry a measured amount of milk powder in a small sterilised container, a flask of hot water which has been boiled and an empty sterilised feeding bottle. The flask used should be kept solely for this purpose. The formula should then be made up immediately before it is needed. The water must still be hot when you use it, otherwise any bacteria in the milk powder may not be destroyed. Always put the water in first and then add the milk powder. Cool the formula to the required temperature in a jug of cold water;
- Explain that the guidelines also state that all feeds should be freshly made up to reduce the risk of infection. If you have no choice and need to store a feed, it should always be stored at the back of the fridge for no longer than 24 hours. Any infant formula left in the bottle after a feed should be thrown away. Infant formula that has not been used and has been kept at room temperature must be thrown away within two hours. Bacteria multiply very fast at room temperature. Even if a feed is kept in a fridge, bacteria can still survive and multiply, although they do this more slowly. The risk of infection increases over time so that is why it is important to make up the feed each time your baby needs it.
(You will need to read through the Public Health Agency Booklet on Bottle feeding (www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/birth-five) to give you detailed understanding of preparing and storing bottles and explain the procedures to your Inspector).





STANDARD 6 Promoting Positive Behaviour

There is consistency in the use of positive strategies to establish acceptable patterns of behaviour and to promote children's well-being, self-esteem and development.

What do you have to do?

- Have a **Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy** in place.
- Promote positive behaviour in an age appropriate way.
- Interact with the children and other adults in a positive way to show how you promote children's self-esteem, confidence and self-control.
- Inform parents of their children's behaviour.
- When dealing with behaviour never use physical punishment, threaten, smack, slap or shake a child.
- Only use physical restraint if a child is a danger to themselves or others.
- Be a positive role model for children.
- Record incidents of unwanted behaviour and maintain confidentiality.

Questions your Inspector will ask:

1. How do you make sure the care you provide encourages children to behave well and promotes good all round development?

What do you say?

- Explain that you are a positive role model and set a good example as young children take more notice of how you are and what you do rather than what you say.
- Explain how you empower children to manage their own behaviour because they need to learn to take responsibility for their own actions and to understand how to conduct themselves even when there is no one to tell them what to do.
- Explain that you make children aware of what is expected of them and encourage them to give their views on how they should behave.
- Describe how you work together with the children to develop clear rules and boundaries for your setting.
- Explain how to promote children's self-esteem as shaming, scolding; hurting and humiliating children can lead to even worse behaviour.
- Explain how you use attention, approval and praise to build children's self-esteem as a child who feels valued is more likely to behave well.
- Describe how you work with parents to ensure consistency of boundaries and expectations.

- Explain that you set realistic boundaries according to the children's age and stage of development because as children grow and develop our expectations of them change.
- Describe how you encourage children rather than give orders or instructions because "do as you are told" teaches nothing for next time. Positive discipline involves explaining why to children.
- Discuss how you are consistent in your approach to managing challenging behaviour as children need to understand acceptable boundaries and it helps if they know that you mean what you say.

2. Tell me what methods you use to manage children's behaviour according to their age and development.

What do you say?

- Describe how you give praise, appreciation and attention because when children are used to getting attention for good behaviour they won't need to seek it by misbehaving.
- Discuss how you give children responsibility consistent with their age and stage of development.
- Explain how you help children to recognise and deal appropriately with their feelings.
- Explain that you do not tolerate bullying in any form within your setting and if bullying occurs you will contact parents immediately.
- Explain that you will never humiliate, isolate or frighten a child when dealing with unwanted behaviour.
- Explain that when dealing with behaviour you never use physical punishment, threaten, smack, slap or shake a child.
- Advise that you will only use physical restraint if a child is a danger to themselves or others.
- Explain how you promote positive behaviour in an age appropriate way by doing the following:
 - when children display unwanted behaviour state that you speak to them clearly and firmly to keep control;
 - explain that you make it clear it is the behaviour that is not acceptable, not the child;
 - describe how you do not use a naughty step/chair but will ask the child to sit quietly beside you for a few minutes to calm down and think about their behaviour;
 - explain that you will ask the child to offer an apology where appropriate;
 - describe how you will offer the child an opportunity to re-join the activity or re-direct them to another activity when they have calmed down; and
 - describe how you ensure that after the incident has been dealt with a fresh start is made and children do not get labelled as being the "naughty child".



STANDARD 7 Working in Partnership with Parents

Providers work in partnership with parents to meet the needs of children both individually and as a group.

What do you have to do?

- Ensure that you have a **Partnership (Participation) with Parents Policy** in place.
- Develop a **Statement of Purpose**. Your Statement of Purpose tells parents who you are, the quality of care that you hope to provide and how you hope to run your business. A Statement of Purpose should include as a minimum the following information:
 - Aims and objectives;
 - Ethos;
 - Admissions policy;
 - Hours of opening;
 - Contact information;
 - Routines;
 - Charges and fees;
 - Registration and insurance information;
 - Policies on Safeguarding and Behaviour Management;
 - Any policy on excluding children from the setting;
 - The Complaints policy;
 - How to access the other policies within the setting and what they are;
 - Information about activities provided for children;
 - Information on how children with additional needs are accommodated within the setting;
 - The range of resources available;
 - Activities provided;
 - The inspection role of the Health and Social Care Trust Early Years Team; and
 - Recording practice and access to these records by the HSC Trust.
- Exchange information with parents regularly and share any concerns you have. It is important that you talk to parents so you have plenty of information about their child and can take action about any wishes or concerns they have about their child's care. Children will benefit from their carer and parents working together in partnership.
- Information should be shared with parents about the day their child has had in your care - this can be written or verbal.
- Consider how you will share information about your setting with parents if English is not their first language and consider access to your setting if parents have a disability.
- Parents need to know and agree with the methods you use to deal with their children's behaviour and agree with these.

- If suitable, parents should be involved in their children's care e.g. help with a planned outing.
- You must keep written records about all children in your care. This must include:
 - Name and address;
 - Name by which the child prefers to be known;
 - Age and date of birth;
 - Names of parents/those with parental responsibility;
 - Emergency contact details for above;
 - Any health problems (including allergies) and medication required;
 - Any special dietary requirements;
 - Details of those authorised to collect the child from the setting;
 - Any written information provided to a parent about their child's day;
 - Examples of any information relating to how parents are informed about and support the approaches used to address different aspects of a child's behaviour in a positive way.

Questions your Inspector will ask:

1. What arrangements do you make with parents about sharing information with them about their child?

What do you say?

- Explain that you take parent's wishes into consideration about when, where and how information is shared. This may be written or verbal and will be done on a daily basis and when issues may arise.
- Explain that you ensure all information that parents share with you remains confidential unless you have safeguarding concerns about a child.

2. What do you do when the parent's first language is not English or they have a disability?

What do you say?

- Explain that if possible you will seek advice from the Trust about the use of an interpreter.
- Discuss how you will ensure, as far as reasonably possible, that parents with a disability have easy access to your premises.
- Discuss that you will try to learn simple words of the parent's home language to help with communication and to help them feel welcomed and valued in your setting.
- Explain that if necessary you will use another bi-lingual parent or a child to translate for you.



STANDARD 8 Equality

The setting actively promotes equality of opportunity and inclusion for all children and their parents and staff and positively values diversity.

What do you have to do?

- Develop an **Equal Opportunities Policy**.
- Ensure your Statement of Purpose includes information on how you promote inclusion and diversity in your setting.
- Ensure that ALL children are included in the activities and experiences offered in your setting.
- Ensure that all parents, children and assistant(s) are treated with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that when exchanging information with parents you respect any cultural or religious requests.
- Treat children, parents and any assistant(s) equally regardless of their race, gender, culture, religion, ability, disability, age, marital or civil partnership status or sexual preference.
- Promote positive images within your setting to help children develop positive attitudes towards others and help them understand and respect others.
- Ensure that all children have access to all toys and equipment whether they are boys or girls.
- Ensure that admission of children to the setting and their access to its resources, activities and facilities is based on criteria which comply with equality legislation. As a childminder you do not need to know the law inside out. It is about complying with the broad principles of equality of opportunity which is not the same as treating everyone the same. It is about:
 - Not refusing to take on children because of their race, religion, sexual orientation of the parents etc.
 - Not stopping boys from playing with dolls or girls playing with the construction type toys;
 - Enabling children with an additional need to access the same range of activities and experiences as all other children;
 - Ensuring there are alternative things for children of different ages and abilities to do. This means the ten year old doesn't have to do the same things as the two year old.



Questions your Inspector will ask:

1. What does equality and diversity mean to you?

What do you say?

- Discuss how it is about treating everyone equally regardless of religion, culture, gender or disability.
- Describe how everyone in your setting is entitled to the same access to information, play equipment and opportunities.
- Explain that you understand everyone is different and they should be treated with respect.

2. How do you make sure that all children and their parents and any assistant(s) are treated equally?

What do you say?

- Explain that you have a general understanding of equality legislation and you do not behave in a discriminatory way towards anyone within or outside of your childminding setting.
- Discuss how you help children become aware of and promote an understanding of differences and similarities between themselves and others.
- Discuss how you respect children and parents / guardians for who they are and encourage the children to respect others.
- Describe how your childminding environment positively reflects the background and differing races, cultures, gender, abilities and experiences of children and families.
- Describe how you try to ensure that the toys/books etc. that you provide reflect positive images of children and adults from different cultures and with different abilities.
- Describe how you celebrate festivals within the childminding setting to raise awareness of practices and customs of differing races, religions and cultures.

3. How do you take the needs of each individual child into account?

What do you say?

- Explain how you actively listen to each child and take their wants and needs into consideration.
- Describe how you obtain information from parents about their child's needs and exchange information on a daily basis to ensure consistency for the child.
- Discuss how you informally observe children which enables you to focus on the child and their specific needs.
- Discuss how this allows you to plan appropriate care and play opportunities.



- Describe how you are committed to encouraging each child of every social class, religion, culture, race, gender and ability to achieve his/her full potential.
- Describe how you provide a range of play equipment to suit all children's individual needs.

4. How do you make sure that boys and girls are treated equally?

What do you say?

- Explain that you ensure all children are given the same opportunities within the childminding setting and any barriers identified are appropriately addressed according to individual needs.
- Describe how you ensure that girls and boys have access to the same play equipment
- Describe how you encourage the children to respect and value each other and discourage them from making hurtful and unkind remarks.
- Describe how you ensure that children are helped towards understanding that it is wrong to judge someone because of their gender, colour, beliefs, disability or social background.
- Explain how you ensure that you and any assistant(s) demonstrate through your language, attitudes and behaviours that you positively value diversity in race, culture, religion, gender, ability, disability, age, marital or civil partnership status and sexual preference.
- Explain how you provide opportunities using appropriate resources and activities to help children develop positive attitudes towards others.

5. How do you make sure that any assistant(s) are provided with training opportunities and are treated with equal worth, respect and value in compliance with equality and anti-discriminatory legislation?

What do you say?

- Describe how you have a general awareness of equality legislation and treat any assistant(s) with equal worth, respect and value.
- Explain that you have regular support and supervision sessions with your assistant(s) to facilitate their development and identify any issues and training needs.
- Explain how you set realistic, achievable standards of work for individual assistant(s) which meet with the aims and objectives of your childminding setting.

STANDARD 9 Additional Needs

The inclusion, welfare and development of children who have additional needs are actively promoted, based on appropriate assessment.

What do you have to do?

- Develop an **Additional Needs policy** - the policy should address how the setting responds to children with additional needs. This includes special educational needs, disability, autism and children in need.
- Observe children and share any concerns you have with parents and encourage them to seek help from the relevant professionals.
- Ensure your setting can meet a child's additional needs before agreeing to care for the child.
- Consider the needs of other children in your setting before agreeing to care for a child with additional needs.
- With the parents written permission, share relevant information with Health Professionals when required. You should treat this information confidentially.
- Have an individual care plan in place for a child if relevant. This should be provided by Health Professionals and be discussed in detail with the parents.
- Consult with parents about their child's additional needs. This discussion should take place at the initial interview or if you have concerns about a child.
- Consider how the childminding arrangements meet the needs of all children within the setting – you would discuss your daily routine within your setting and explain how all children are involved in activities.

Questions your Inspector will ask:

1. If you identified a child in your care who possibly had additional needs, what action would you take?

What do you say?

- Explain how you informally observe each child on a daily basis and share this information with parents regularly. Explain that you discuss your observations with parents in a way that encourages them to contribute their knowledge and understanding of their child and allows them to raise any concerns they may have about their child's needs and the provision that is being made for them. If your observations highlight areas of concern about a child and suggest that the child may possibly have additional needs, explain that you will encourage parents to seek the relevant help.



- Explain how you ensure that all information about children is kept confidential and only shared with other professionals if you have safeguarding concerns.

2. What do you feel you would need to put in place to manage to care for a child with additional needs?

What do you say?

- Explain that should any other professionals be involved with a child with additional needs that you would request that relevant information is shared with you so that you can provide the appropriate support to help meet the child's needs. If required you will have an individual care plan in place for a child. This should be provided by the relevant specialist services and will be discussed in detail with the parents.
- Explain that you are happy to liaise with the relevant specialists if required and will only do this with written permission from the parents.
- Describe how you give all children in your care the opportunity to reach their full potential. Sometimes this may mean adapting an activity to the child's ability and stage of development, providing additional resources or giving one child more attention and support than others during a particular activity or routine.
- Explain that if additional resources/equipment are required for a child you will discuss this with the parents.

Records to be evidenced at Inspection for Quality of Care – Part 2

- Code of Conduct for childminder and assistant(s) (if applicable) on the use of mobile phones and social networking websites – explain that you do not need a separate Code of Conduct if you use NICMA's **"ICT and Internet Safety"** and **"Taking or Using Photographs and Recordings of Children"** policies as all the information is covered. Explain the procedures you follow using these policies.
- Record to show assistant(s) (if applicable) has signed and agreed to this policy – ask your assistant(s) to sign the "Childminding Assistant(s) Agreement on Policies" form.
- Written parental consent for photographs – if you are using NICMA policies, ask parents to sign the form included in the **"Taking or Using Photographs and Recordings of Children"** policy.

- Evidence of a signed and dated record of anything which causes a childminder or assistant(s) concern about a child or any allegations made by the child.
- Children's personal record forms – to show that these include information about children's dietary requirements and evidence to show that assistant(s) are aware of these requirements.
- Records to show that parents are informed of their child's behaviour and development.
- Records to show incidents related to the management of a child's behaviour that have been shared with parents and signed and dated.
- Confidentiality is maintained at all times when keeping records.
- Records of the following are kept
 - name and address of child;
 - age and date of birth;
 - name of parents or those with parental responsibility;
 - emergency contact details for above;
 - any health problems including allergies and medication required;
 - any special dietary requirements;
 - details of those authorised to collect the child from the childminder's settings.
 - where appropriate, any written information provided to a parent about their child's day;
 - where appropriate, examples of any information relating to how parents are informed about and support the approach used to address different aspects of a child's behaviour in a positive way;
 - if available, any written information provided to parents; and;
 - recruitment information (if applicable).

What your Inspector will observe and comment on

- If you are providing nutritious food and drink that meets dietary, cultural and religious needs of the children in your setting (if applicable);
- If the social value of eating together is being promoted (if applicable);
- If you provide fresh drinking water to the children;
- If at break times you encourage children's social skills and independence (if applicable);
- If there is positive communication between you (any assistant(s)) and the children which encourages their self-esteem, confidence, self-control and tolerance;
- If you are managing children's behaviour appropriately;
- Interactions with parents (if applicable);
- If appropriate play equipment and resources are in place;



- If children have easy access to play equipment;
- If you (and your assistant(s)) use appropriate language in relation to treating children and parents equally;
- If there are suitable resources and materials available for children with additional needs;
- How you relate to the child with additional needs.

Self-evaluation for Quality of Care - Part 2

As mentioned on page 5 of this guidance pack you will be required to complete a self-evaluation form prior to your inspection visit and forward this to the Trust.

Pages 1 – 5 of this form require you to tick “yes” or “no” regarding information on:

- yourself and your family;
- regular visitors;
- any changes within your household;
- all the minded children;
- training that you have attended;
- your assistant(s) if relevant;
- structural changes to your home;
- Public Liability Insurance;
- Employer's Liability Insurance (if relevant);
- guidelines for smoking and the use of alcohol within your setting;
- medication you may be taking; and
- any involvement with Social Services over the last year.

You will also need to tick “yes” or “no” to the following questions relating to the Minimum Standards on your self-evaluation form.

Standard 5

- **Are you registered with Environmental Health?**

You need to ensure that you have registered with Environmental Health within your local Council.

- **Do you follow any guidance given to you by Environmental Health about the safe handling and preparation of food?**

If you have received any information from Environmental Health tick “yes”. If not, NICMA would recommend that you download “Safer Food: Better Business for Childminders” from the Food Standards Agency website as guidance. www.food.gov.uk/northern-ireland

Standard 6

- **Are you aware that when dealing with challenging or difficult behaviour, children must never be restrained, isolated, degraded, humiliated or frightened and that physical punishment or the use of negative/derogatory comments must never be used?**

Read the information given on page 20 of this guidance pack.

Standard 7

- **Do you have a Statement of Purpose which provides information for parents and is in compliance with the one that is set out in Section 5 of the Standards?**

See page 22 for details of the information that your Statement of Purpose should include.

Standard 8

- **Do you have a written admissions policy within your Statement of Purpose which complies with equality legislation?**

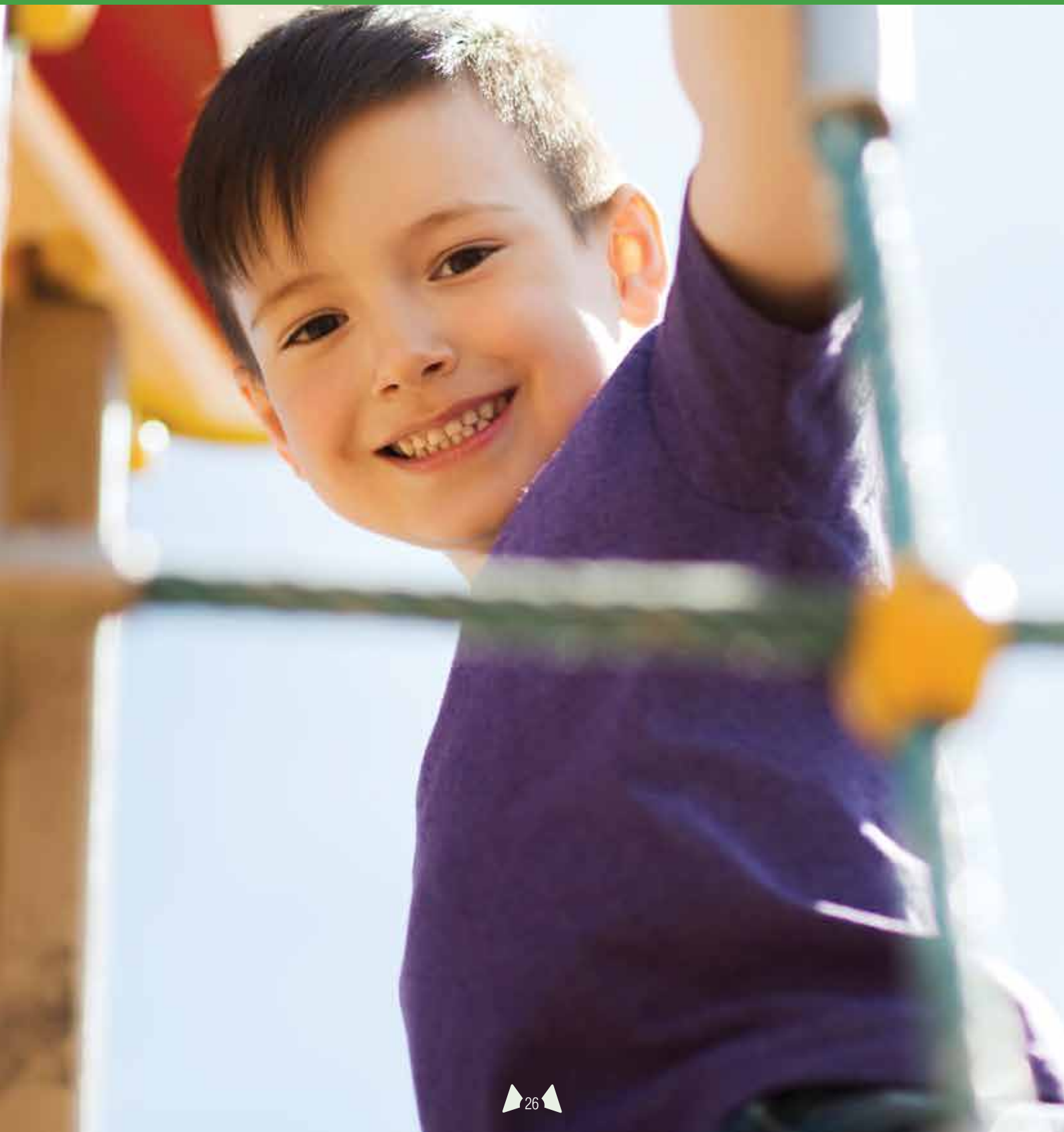
A written admissions policy within your statement of purpose should include information on the settling in process and how you welcome all families within your setting and will not discriminate against children or parents for reasons such as race, religion, sex or ability. You will also be asked questions on safeguarding and child protection. The suggested answers for these can be found under Self-evaluation for Quality of Care Part 1 on pages 13 – 16 of this guidance pack.





SECTION 4

Quality of the Physical Environment





What is this section about?

The quality of the setting's environment is an important influence on a child's reaction to the care he or she receives. This section explores what is expected as a minimum in terms of space, as well as expectations of indoor and outdoor play areas, toilet facilities, the kitchen or food preparation area and staff facilities.

There are two standards to be inspected in this section. These are:

- Standard 13: Equipment
- Standard 14: Physical Environment

STANDARD 13 Equipment

Sufficient furniture, play equipment and materials are provided. These are appropriate for their purpose and help create an accessible and stimulating environment.

What do you have to do?

- Have a **Health and Safety Policy** in place that covers the maintenance and replacement of play equipment.
- Have a Play Policy in place which states how you will provide many opportunities for play (both indoors and outdoors) available for the children throughout the day. It should also state that these play opportunities will be provided to promote and encourage a child's development and informal learning in an age and stage appropriate way.
- Provide a range of safe and suitable indoor and outdoor play equipment – these need to meet the individual needs of all children in your care. The equipment provided must help children's learning and development as well as being fun to play with. You are not supplied with a list of play equipment so you need to ensure that what you provide meets each child's individual needs. Consider their age and stage of development and if they have any additional needs. Observation of children will identify where they are at developmentally. You need to continually extend a child's learning through the activities you provide.
- The play equipment and materials are stored in a way that they are accessible to the children – children should be given the freedom to choose which toys they would like to play with rather than you setting toys out each day. What you think they might like to play with might not be what they will choose.
- Ensure where applicable, furniture and play equipment meets BS EN Standards or the Toy (Safety) Regulations.

- Where applicable, safety matting or soft surfacing is provided for under climbing equipment – you need to ensure that all health and safety procedures are followed.
- Ensure that high chairs have a five point harness and that buggies, safety gates and car seats are suitable for the size of the child and are safely fitted.
- Ensure you can access your play materials and equipment safely.
- Ensure that all furniture and play equipment are in good condition.
- Ensure that you seek advice on how to safely fit car seats and the type of car seat you need depending on the height/weight of the child?

Questions your inspector will ask:

1. What equipment and materials do you have for indoor play?

What do you say?

- Describe all the toys and equipment that you provide for children for indoor play i.e. construction toys, table top toys, floor toys, imaginative play, books, sensory play, junk art materials, water play, open ended resources etc. Explain that children have access to all materials (as much as possible) and are given a choice as to what they choose to play with.

2. What equipment and materials do you have for outdoor play?

What do you say?

- As above, describe all the toys and equipment you provide for outdoor play i.e. climbing equipment, swings, ride-on toys, balls, skipping ropes, sand pit, gardening materials, sensory play, open ended resources, imaginative play etc. Explain that you value the outdoor environment as just as an important learning environment as the indoors and you provide activities and experiences based around the children's interests. Describe how you allow children to choose freely what activities they would like when playing outside.





3. How do you make sure that the equipment and materials are suitable for the different age groups of children and for those with additional needs?

What do you say?

- Describe how you obtain information from parents on their children's interests and needs when deciding what equipment and materials to provide.
- Explain that you also informally observe children on a daily basis to ensure that they are enjoying the activities provided whilst ensuring that their learning and development needs are being met.
- Describe how to seek the views of all children in your setting using various modes of communication to assess if they are enjoying the activities and experiences provided. Explain that you use this feedback to amend or adapt activities.
- Explain that you follow guidelines when purchasing equipment and materials to ensure it is age and stage appropriate for the children in your care.
- Describe how attendance at training gives you new ideas for activities to provide and that you also use experience from your own children for ideas.

4. What action do you take to make sure that all equipment and play materials are safe for the use of children?

What do you say?

- Explain that you check all equipment and play materials meet the BS EN standards.
- Explain how you check they are age and stage appropriate before buying.
- Describe how (as stated in your Health and Safety Policy) you carry out regular risk assessments to check the condition of all toys and equipment and remove and replace broken materials immediately.
- Explain that you **DO NOT** use baby walkers and will use a five point harness on any highchairs you use.
- Describe how any outdoor play equipment is secured appropriately. Explain that all surfacing is safe and soft where required.
- Explain that you have sought advice on the safe and appropriate use of car seats.



STANDARD 14 Physical Environment

The premises are safe, secure
and suitable for their purpose and
meet relevant statutory requirements.

What do you have to do?

- Have a working telephone in your setting.
- Heat your setting to between 18 and 21 degrees at all times. It is necessary to monitor this on an on-going basis and it is useful to have a thermometer in each room.
- Ensure that equipment used to heat/cool the room/facility is risk assessed and any concerns addressed to ensure children are not exposed to direct contact.
- Ensure children do not come into direct contact with hot radiators and heating pipes.
- Ensure outdoor space is kept safe, secure and well maintained.
- Ensure fencing/walls are to a minimum of 1 metre high and non-climbable. It may be necessary for this to be higher depending on any risks assessed. This will be discussed and agreed by your Inspector.
- Explain that there will be no surface water lying and all septic tank/ponds will be made safe using a rigid cover/fenced off.
- As outdoor areas are required to be safe and suitable prior to registration you will be required to fence off a smaller area prior to registration if the outdoor area is too extensive to be fenced off.
- Ensure children are taken regularly to parks and playgrounds if no outdoor space is available.
- Ensure provision is made for children to sleep and rest.
- Ensure supervision when children are being cared for in the kitchen.
- Provide for any mother who wants to breastfeed her child.
- Ensure food is stored, prepared, cooked and served hygienically.

Questions your Inspector will ask

1. How do you make sure that children are safely dropped off and picked up from your home?

What do you say?

- Explain that parents will always drop off and pick up children directly from inside the home.
- Explain that it will only be the childminder or assistant(s) and no one else who receives or hands over the children.



2. How do you make sure that the home remains warm enough for children whilst making sure that children are guarded from hot surfaces?

What do you say?

- Explain the type of heating you use and that you will use a thermometer in each room that is used for childminding.
- Explain that you are aware that the temperature should be between 18 and 21 degrees.
- Explain that you will have thermometers/guards on radiators to ensure that children are not at any risk of burns.
- Explain that if required you will provide a fireguard.

3. What do you do to make sure that your outdoor play space is kept safe?

What do you say?

- Describe how you check all equipment on a regular basis as part of your on-going risk assessment.
- Explain that your outdoor play space is for the sole use of the minded (and your own) children.
- Describe how enclosed fencing/walls with unclimbable fencing/walls/hedges are 1 metre high and have been included in your risk assessment.
- Explain that any septic tanks/ponds etc. are covered appropriately.

4. How do you make sure children are kept safe in the kitchen?

What do you say?

- Explain that the kitchen is mainly used for homework/cooking activities/meal/snack times and that age appropriate supervision is provided at all times. If your living/kitchen area is open plan explain how you supervise children to ensure their safety.
- Explain that all necessary risk assessments are carried out before children are allowed access to the kitchen and that normal safety/accident prevention practices are followed at all times.

5. What activities do you provide to make sure that children have outdoor play? (Where there is no outdoor space)

What do you say?

- Explain that you make use of recreational areas within and outside of your local community i.e. go to local parks/playgrounds/beach/zoo etc.
- Explain that you have received written parental permission before taking all children on outings and that you carry out risk assessments when and where necessary.

- Explain that you WILL be taking children out in all weathers as adverse weather is not necessarily a barrier to outdoor play as it provides spontaneous learning opportunities for children i.e. they learn about changes in seasons, snowfall, leaves falling on the ground, sunshine, rain, jumping in puddles etc.

6. How do you make sure that children can relax/sleep/play quietly?

What do you say?

- Describe the types of sleeping arrangements you have within your setting and that children do not sleep in buggies/rockers/car seats unless written parental permission has been given and this has been agreed with your Inspector.
- Explain that each child will have his/her own bedding provided and a separate room will be provided for them to sleep in if possible.
- Describe the types of activities you provide to help children to rest/relax after school/playgroup i.e. quiet time to read stories/play music, limited television time.
- Describe how children can lie up on the settee whilst relaxing or resting.

7. Have you a space available for a parent to breast feed?

What do you say?

- Explain that any mother who is breastfeeding will be accommodated in your setting.

Records to be evidenced at inspections for Quality of the Physical Environment

You will need to have the following documentation for your inspection as well as all your policies:

- Code of Conduct for childminder and assistant(s) (if applicable) on the use of mobile phones and social networking websites – explain that you do not need a separate Code of Conduct if you use NICMA's **"ICT and Internet Safety"** and **"Taking or Using Photographs and Recordings of Children"** policies as all the information is covered. Explain the procedures you follow using these policies.



- Written parental consent for photographs – if you are using NICMA policies, ask parents to sign the form included in the “Taking or Using Photographs and Recordings of Children” policy.
- Evidence of a signed and dated record of anything which causes a childminder or assistant(s) concern about a child or any allegations made by the child.

What your inspector will observe and comment on

- If you have sufficient and appropriate play equipment and materials for different age groups and those with additional needs.
- If your play equipment is safe and in good condition.
- If your play equipment is accessible to children and they can choose freely from it.
- If you and your assistant(s) (if applicable) have easy access to the toys and equipment.
- If outdoor play equipment is safely secured.
- If high chairs have a five point harness.
- If cots are provided (if applicable).
- If there is sufficient furniture and equipment i.e. highchairs, buggies, safety gates, car seats.
- If you have a working telephone.
- If you have thermometers in each room where children are cared for. The Minimum Standards document defines the temperature range for rooms in which children are cared for as 18 degrees – 21 degrees. It is necessary to monitor this on an ongoing basis and it is useful to have a thermometer in each room where children are cared for.
- If there is adequate, safe and accessible storage space.
- If there is the safe supervision of children in the kitchen.
- If play areas are large enough to provide a broad range of play opportunities.
- If there is hygienic storage, preparation, cooking and serving of food.
- If your setting is well lit, adequately ventilated and maintained in good repair.

Self-evaluation for Quality of the Physical Environment

As mentioned on page 5 of this guidance pack you will be required to complete a self-evaluation form prior to your inspection visit and forward this to the Trust.

Pages 1 – 5 of the Self-evaluation form require you to tick “yes” or “no” regarding information on:

- yourself and your family;
- regular visitors;
- any changes within your household;
- all the minded children;
- training that you have attended;
- your assistant(s) if relevant;
- structural changes to your home;
- Public Liability Insurance;
- Employer’s Liability Insurance (if relevant);
- guidelines for smoking and the use of alcohol within your setting;
- medication you may be taking; and
- any involvement with Social Services over the last year.

You will also need to tick “yes” or “no” to the following questions relating to the Minimum Standards on your self-evaluation form.

Standard 13

- **Does all your furniture and equipment meet the BS EN standards?**

You will need to check this within your setting and if they do not comply with the standards you need to add them to your risk assessment.

- **Have you sought advice on how to safely fit car seats and the type of car seat you need depending on the height/weight of the child?**

It is essential that you seek professional advice before fitting a car seat to ensure the safety of the child.

Standard 14

- **Is all your fencing non-climbable and vertical and is it of a minimum height of 1 metre and is included in your risk assessment?**

You will need to measure your fencing to ensure it meets the necessary height requirements and that you have included it in your risk assessment documentation. If there is still a risk to children you may need to replace this with higher fencing. This will be discussed with your inspector.

- **Are you aware that if planning or building control permission is required, recommendations from the Local Planning and Building Control Departments must be met?**

If you are working with an assistant(s) and caring for over six children you need to contact your local planning office to seek advice on planning permission guidelines.

SECTION 5

Quality of Staffing Management and Leadership & Quality of Monitoring and Evaluation





What is this section about?

This combines two sections of the Minimum Standards. You will be inspected against both during one visit.

Quality of Staffing Management and Leadership

As stated in the Minimum Standards the quality of staffing, management and leadership impacts directly and indirectly on children's care. Strong, competent and effective management means efficient running of a setting and high standards set for others. Staff who are happy in their role, secure in the knowledge of their responsibilities and well-trained to deal with all aspects of their job provide an environment where children can thrive. A culture of professional, reflective practice and a willingness to challenge practice is vital. A whole-team approach and ownership of the setting is key to ensuring a safe, high-quality service for children, parents and families.

Quality of Monitoring & Evaluation

As stated in the Minimum Standards this section sets out requirements for record keeping and documentation, and identifies notifiable incidents. These include records of any accidents or incidents which happen in the setting, or any complaints received. Sometimes things will go wrong, and it is important that if they do, that they are reported as required, any appropriate lessons are learned and steps are taken as far as possible to avoid any recurrence.

There are five standards to be inspected in this section. These are:

- Standard 10 – Management and Monitoring Arrangements
- Standard 11 – Organisation of the Setting
- Standard 12 – Suitable Person
- Standard 15 – Documentation
- Standard 16 – Complaints



STANDARD 10 Management and Monitoring Arrangements

There are effective and efficient management and monitoring arrangements in the setting to support the work of staff and the care of children.

This Standard only applies to those childminders who employ an assistant(s). If you work alone, this Standard does not apply to you.

What do you have to do?

- Develop Staffing Policies.
- Ensure you employ your assistant(s) according to equal opportunities and fair employment legislation.
- Ensure that all assistant(s) are over 18 years of age.
- Ensure you and your assistant(s) respect the privacy of children and parents.
- Identify the training and development needs of your assistant(s) and ensure these needs are met.
- Ensure your assistant(s) is aware of all procedures in your Staffing Policy.
- Ensure that your assistant(s) has a clear understanding of your Statement of Purpose.
- Work together as a team to meet the needs of children and parents.
- Be a positive role model in your childminding practice.
- Hold regular supervision sessions and a recorded annual appraisal.

Questions your Inspector will ask

1. How do you identify what training your assistant(s) need? (assistant(s) to be included in discussion).

What do you say?

- Explain that you discuss, during a support and supervision session, different topics of training and identify if there are any areas that your assistant(s) feels that would be of benefit to their practice.
- Explain that training needs would also be discussed during your assistant(s) annual appraisal.
- Explain that you would then try to source available local training.
- Explain that you would ensure that your assistant(s) core training is kept up to date.



2. How do you know if it's beneficial to them?

What do you say?

- Explain the benefits of training to your assistant(s) and to the setting. This would be identified and discussed periodically.
- Explain that you would observe any changes to your assistant(s) practice as a result of attending training and discuss the benefits of the training during support and supervision sessions or whenever necessary.

3. How do you make sure that they attend this training?

What do you say?

- Explain that if necessary you would contribute financially and book the training on your assistant(s) behalf and remind them when and where the training is taking place.
- Explain that you would ensure that the required childminding ratios are adhered to, to allow your assistant(s) to attend any daytime training.

4. How do you work together as a team to make sure you address all issues relating to the children?

What do you say?

- Explain how you plan for work ahead and discuss this informally and during support and supervision sessions with your assistant(s).
- Explain how to listen to each other's views and opinions on the daily running of the childminding setting and activities and experiences offered to the children.



STANDARD 11 Organisation of the Setting

Adult /child ratios, space and resources are organised to meet the children's needs effectively and to comply with the stipulations on the Registration Certificate.

Please note: This Standard applies to ALL Childminders. However there are some parts that only apply if you employ an assistant(s).

What do you have to do?

- Ensure you have attended core training in Health and Safety, Safeguarding Children and Paediatric First Aid (every three years).
- Have emergency arrangements in place that have been agreed by parents and the Health and Social Care Trust.
- Ensure that child: adult ratios are correct at all times.
- Record the time children arrive and leave your setting. This would be recommended as good practice.
- Ensure that space and equipment in the setting are organised to provide the children with a broad range of play and learning opportunities which enhance their continuing development.
- Make sure there are sufficient adults available to accompany children on excursions and outings in order to keep them safe and that this is done with the parents' written consent. This may mean asking parents to help out but no one can be left alone with the children. A risk assessment will be required to help work out how many adults are needed and if there are any issues that you might have to deal with on the outing that you need to consider in advance.
- Ensure that you inform parents of their children's daily activities - consider your verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

Additional things you need to do if you employ an assistant(s):

- Have arrangements in place for short periods for sick leave and annual leave if you employ a Category 2 assistant(s).
- Supervise the work of your assistant(s).
- Ensure that you and your assistant(s) are clear about your Statement of Purpose.
- Ensure that you and any assistant(s) are used in the best possible way to ensure that children's needs are fully met.
- You and your assistant(s) should plan the day around the children's needs and wishes and will decide what role you will each play.



- Demonstrate positive interactions between you, any assistant(s) and children and children with other children.
- Identify suitable induction training for your assistant(s) within one month of starting in your setting. This training must include:
 - the setting's policies and procedures;
 - safeguarding children, including whistleblowing;
 - management of children's behaviour;
 - recording information;
 - working with parents;
 - health and safety; and
 - equal opportunities.

Questions your Inspector will ask:

1. Do you hold any relevant child care training and if not would you be interested in becoming qualified?

What do you say?

- Show the inspector any certificates from training or qualifications you have undertaken and discuss any further training that you are keen to attend.

2. What arrangements do you have in place to make sure there are sufficient adults available to accompany children on excursions or outings in order to safeguard them?

What do you say?

- Explain that you carry out a risk assessment for outings.
- Explain that you gain written parental consent before taking children on outings.
- Explain that you may be accompanied by an assistant(s) (if applicable) and that parents may come on the outing but are not left alone nor provide personal care to children other than their own.

3. What arrangements have you in place to cover emergency situations and have you sought parental consent?

What do you say?

- Explain who your emergency back-up is and whether this person is another registered childminder.
- Explain that the parents have given written consent as to who the emergency backup is. Show them a copy of your Managing Emergencies Policies/consent form as proof of this.
- Explain that if you are the emergency back-up for another registered childminder and go over your numbers in an emergency situation you will contact the Trust immediately to inform them of the situation.

4. What arrangements do you make if you are on leave or become unwell and are unable to care for the children? (include assistant(s) in discussion)

What do you say?

- Explain that you are aware that the assistant(s) can care for a maximum of six children; with no more than three under school age for up to three weeks and if you will be off longer than this you will contact the Trust to discuss future childminding arrangements.
- Explain that you are aware that the ratios of children will be adjusted accordingly.
- Explain that if your assistant(s) will be left alone with the children at any stage they will hold full paediatric first aid training.

5. Do you provide induction training for your assistant(s) and what does this cover? (include assistant(s) in discussion)

What do you say?

- Explain that you are aware of the need to provide an induction for your assistant(s) within one month of starting the setting and this must include:
 - the setting's policies and procedures;
 - safeguarding children, including whistleblowing;
 - management of children's behaviour;
 - recording information;
 - working with parents;
 - health and safety; and
 - equal opportunities.

6. Do you provide supervision for your assistant(s)? (Include assistant(s) in discussion)

What do you say?

- Explain how often you hold support and supervision sessions with your assistant(s) and that you cover all aspects of the childminding setting during these discussions.



STANDARD 12 Suitable Person

Those working with children in either a paid or voluntary capacity, or who have substantial access to them, are suitable individuals to do so.

What do you have to do?

- You, your family any assistant(s) and regular visitors must be vetted by the Trust. Where necessary this will include an Enhanced Access NI Certificate.
- You must keep an up to date record of anyone who assists you in caring for the minded children, all family members and regular visitors and when their vetting took place.
- If you employ an assistant(s) you must make sure that your recruitment arrangements safeguard children.
- You are in receipt of a letter of clearance/registration certificate from the Trust for those caring for the children and those who have regular contact with them.
- You have the knowledge and skills to carry out your role as a childminder. This should be gained through attendance at the core training and any other relevant training.

Questions your inspector will ask:

1. Do you feel you would benefit from any further training?

What do you say?

- Explain that you understand the importance of continuing your professional development and that you are constantly looking out for new training opportunities.
- Talk to your inspector about the training/qualifications that you have already undertaken and any other areas of training needed that you have identified and possibly sourced.

2. How do you make sure that your recruitment arrangements safeguard the protection of children? (This question is only relevant if an assistant(s) is employed).

What do you say?

- Explain that you have a robust recruitment policy in place and always recruit staff following all child protection guidelines.
- Explain that when recruiting an assistant(s) you will inform the applicant that an offer of employment is subject to a satisfactory Fit Person Assessment which is completed by the Trust. Explain that if your assistant(s) is deemed "not fit" you will be informed by the Health and Social Care Trust and that you will not employ the assistant(s) at this time.
- Explain that you ensure all assistant(s) attend the mandatory core training in safeguarding children on a 3 year basis.





STANDARD 15 Documentation

Records are managed in accordance with legislative requirements and the setting's records management policy.

What do you have to do?

Have the following records available for your Inspector to observe:

- Management of Records Policy;
- Records of any child looked after on the registered premises. This must include:
 - Name and address;
 - Name by which the child prefers to be known; age and date of birth;
 - Names of parents/those with parental responsibility;
 - Emergency contact details for above;
 - Any health problems (including allergies) and medication required;
 - Any special dietary requirements; and
 - Details of those authorised to collect the child from the setting.
 - Any person who assists in looking after the child.
 - Any person who lives, or is likely at any time to be living, at your premises.
 - Records regarding complaints, accidents, untoward events and children's records kept in secure storage for the time recorded in your settings management of records policy.
 - Children's records made available to parents and signed and dated by parents.
 - All records pertaining to staff and children available for inspection by Trust Staff.
 - Records of accidents/injuries and untoward incidents kept and signed and dated by parents as soon after event as possible.
 - Records of accidents and incidents recorded promptly and with confidentiality of any third party respected.
 - Certificate of Registration.
 - Certificate of Insurance.

STANDARD 16 Complaints

All complaints are taken seriously and dealt with promptly and effectively.

What do you have to do?

- Ensure assistant(s) know how to take and deal initially with a complaint.
- Have a **Complaints Policy** in place.
- Record all complaints and ensure you keep the person who made the complaint informed of any progress.
- Describe how you ensure the person making the complaint reads, signs and dates the records of the outcome of the complaint and record if they are happy with the steps taken to deal with the complaint.
- Understand how to use information from complaints to help improve the quality of your service.
- Evidence that you take complaints seriously and deal with them quickly and effectively.
- Keep the Early Years team informed of any complaints.

Questions your Inspector will ask:

1. How do you deal with any complaints made to you?

What do you say?

- Explain how you listen to parents and keep the lines of communication open at all times. Describe how you communicate with parents on a regular basis i.e. informal discussions, sharing of diary information, regular newsletters etc.
- Explain that you record any complaints from parents on your complaints policy and take all information on board.
- Explain that if necessary you will seek advice from NICMA or the Early Years team within the Trust.
- Explain how you follow all procedures stated in your complaints policy and provide reports to the complainant on the progress of the complaint.
- Explain that you make sure complaint records are signed and dated by the complainant.



2. How you have used the experience of complaints to improve the Quality of your service?

What do you say?

- Explain that if you feel, due to the complaint, you or your assistant(s) need training in a specific area you will avail of this as soon as possible.
- Explain that you will amend practice if deemed necessary to resolve the situation.

3. How do you make sure your assistant(s) knows how to deal with complaints? (The following question is only relevant if an assistant(s) is employed).

What do you say?

- Explain that you share the Complaints Policy with your assistant(s) to ensure that he/she is aware and understand all procedures stated.
- Explain that any complaints will be discussed with your assistant(s) at a relevant and suitable time and any training needs identified.

Records to be evidenced at inspections for Quality of Staffing, Management and Leadership and Quality of Monitoring and Evaluation.

- Staff files to include supervision, training needs, appraisals and staff details.
- Public Liability Insurance and Employers Liability Insurance (where relevant).
- Car insurance, licence, tax & MOT.
- Children's records.
- Daily register.
- Accident/Incident reports (if relevant).
- Statement of Purpose.
- Administration of medicines form.
- Records of self, adult household members, regular visitors, to include their vetting status.
- Records of any adults who assist with looking after the children to include vetting status.
- Records of all those adults living on the premises to include vetting status.
- Evidence that Statement of Purpose is made available to any assistant(s) and parents.
- Individual records on assistant(s) are kept securely, are available for inspection and contain their application form.
- Copies of birth certificate, core training and references.
- Declaration of Health.
- Confirmation of completed vetting.

- Any record of disciplinary action or any complaints referred to the Health and Social Care Trusts or police which did not result in action.
- Record of supervision and appraisal.
- Record of any training completed and training needs.
- Record of regular visitors to include vetting status.
- Records regarding complaints, accidents, untoward events and children's records kept in secure storage for the time recorded in the setting's Record Management policy.
- Children's records made available to parents and signed and dated by parents.
- All records pertaining to staff and children available for inspection by Inspector.
- Records of accidents/injuries and untoward incidents kept and signed and dated by parents as soon after an event as possible.
- Records of accidents and incidents recorded promptly and confidentiality of any third party respected.
- Certificate of Registration.
- Certificate of Insurance.
- Complaints register made available to the Trust.
- Reports on the progress of a complaint (if there have been any).
- Evidence that complaints have been signed and dated by complainant and that if they remain dissatisfied, that they have been informed of other channels available to them.

Your Inspector will observe and comment on the following.

- Childminder/child ratios.
- Childminder/child interactions.
- Childminder/assistant(s) interactions.
- Evidence that Statement of Purpose is made available to any assistant(s) and parents.
- Individual records on assistant(s). Ensure these are kept securely and are available for inspection and contain:
 - their application form;
 - copies of birth certificate, core training and references;
 - Declaration of Health;
 - confirmation of completed vetting;
 - any record of disciplinary action or any complaints referred to the Health and Social Care Trusts or Police which did not result in action;
 - record of supervision and appraisal; and
 - record of any training completed and training needs.



Self-evaluation for Quality of Staffing Management, and Leadership and Quality of Monitoring and Evaluation.

As mentioned on page 5 of this guidance pack you will be required to complete a self-evaluation form prior to your inspection visit and forward this to the Trust.

Pages 1 – 5 of the Self-evaluation form require you to tick “yes” or “no” regarding information on:

- yourself and your family;
- regular visitors;
- any changes within your household;
- all the minded children;
- training that you have attended;
- your assistant(s) if relevant;
- structural changes to your home;
- Public Liability Insurance;
- Employer's Liability Insurance (if relevant);
- guidelines for smoking and the use of alcohol within your setting;
- medication you may be taking; and
- any involvement with Social Services over the last year.

You will also need to tick “yes” or “no” to the following questions relating to the Minimum Standards on your self-evaluation form.

Standard 15

- **Are you aware that the Trusts Early Years Registration and Inspection Team and other appropriate agencies must be informed of the following immediately?**
 - Allegations of abuse by yourself or an assistant(s), or any abuse that is alleged to have taken place in your home.
 - Any other significant events, for example serious illness, injury or accident that needs medical attention or death of any child whilst in your care.
 - If you, any assistant(s) or anyone living in your home who is subject to Police and Social Services investigation, including allegations of abuse or domestic violence issues.
 - If you, any assistant(s) or anyone living in your home has received any new charges or convictions following your registration.

If you are aware of all the points listed above then tick “yes” to this question.

Standard 16

- **Have you shared your Complaints Policy with parents and are parents aware of the arrangements for dealing with complaints?**
- Your policy should be shared with parents at your contractual meeting.

Standard 10

- **Are all assistant(s) aged 18 and over?**
You should not employ anyone under the age of 18 as an assistant(s).
- **Are you aware of the need to respect the privacy of children and parents and only share information in line with the Information Commissioner's Data Sharing Code of Practice?**
- Explain that you are aware that under the Data Protection Act 1998 you are exempt from having to register with the Information Commissioner's Office as you follow the procedures stated below. State that you ensure that:
 - all personal information and data relating to your childminding business is kept as manual records ONLY ie. handwritten and stored securely;

OR

 - If typed onto a document on a personal computer eg. Contracts, Child's Personal record form, these will be printed and NOT saved onto your personal computer;
 - Any records on your personal computer will not be of a sensitive nature or detail more than names, addresses and telephone numbers;
 - Photos taken of children whilst in your care (for which written parental permission has been received) will only be used for the purposes for which they are intended and then deleted. They will not be stored on a personal computer, mobile phone or camera. A printed copy may be kept;
 - All information will be stored securely.

- **Does your practice in relation to recruitment, selection and retention of staff comply with equal opportunities and fair employment legislation?**

Explain that this is included within your Statement of Purpose. It is about complying with the broad principles of equality of opportunity (which is not the same as treating everyone the same). It is about not promoting and challenging stereotypical views and opinions and allowing all children to play with equipment. You also need to consider more broad issues such as not refusing to take on children because of their race, religion, sexual orientation of the parents etc. Your Inspector will only expect an understanding of the issues rather than a detailed knowledge of the law.





NICMA – the Childminding Association
16 – 18 Mill Street
Newtownards
BT23 4LU
Tel: 028 9181 1015
Email: info@nicma.org
www.nicma.org

Disclaimer: This information is
correct at the time of going to print.
April 2016