

Childminder

Childminders care for babies and children, aged up to 16. They usually work in their own homes.

The Work

You could be:

- making sure the children you care for are safe and well looked after
- changing nappies, cooking, feeding and washing the children
- giving emotional support to children, making sure they are secure and happy
- encouraging children to learn through books, toys and games
- taking young children to parks, toddler groups and playgroups, and encouraging them to play with other children
- taking older children to nursery and school and collecting them at the end of the day
- respecting the wishes of children's parents about daily routines, diet and religion
- negotiating contracts and fees with parents.

You might specialise in looking after children with special needs.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the demand for the job.

Childminders are self-employed and therefore negotiate their own rates of pay and working conditions. They are responsible for their own tax and National Insurance (NI) payments.

There is no national rate for fees but across Scotland current rates advertised are between £4.76 and £6.03 per child per hour. Most childminders offer a reduced rate if they look after more than one child from the same family.

Conditions

- You would be self-employed, usually working from your own home, so work arrangements vary.
- Young children need a lot of physical care such as feeding and toileting.
- Children can be noisy and demanding.
- You would probably have pre-school children all day and school age children before and after school, so hours can be long, including early mornings, afternoons and evenings.
- To some extent, you can set your own hours of work but you might need to be flexible and negotiate with the parents of the children you care for.
- Depending on your home, you can care for no more than 6 children under 16 (including your own children). No more than 3 of these may be of pre-school age and no more than 1 should be under 1 year

old.

- If you provide a food service for the children, you will have to register with the local authority's environmental health department.
- You could choose what ages of children to care for – some childminders do not take babies under 2, some do not take children over 12.

Getting In

- You do not always need formal qualifications but previous experience with children is very desirable.
- If you want to study, you could take an NC in Early Education and Childcare (SCQF Level 6) or SVQs in Social Services (Children and Young People) (SCQF Level 6 and 7) (see [Early Years Practitioner](#)).
- The Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) run a Childminding Induction Support Programme. This costs £200, but you may be able to fund this with an [Individual Training Account \(ITA\)](#).
- You must be registered with the [Care Inspectorate](#) to work as a childminder. Registration can take between 3 and 6 months.
- The Care Inspectorate will interview you and visit your home to check that it is safe for children. They may ask you to put in, for instance, stair gates. You have to meet fire regulations.
- You will require a satisfactory criminal record check from Disclosure Scotland to show that you are suitable for this type of work. Contact [Disclosure Scotland](#) for details on the type you would need. This applies to all members of your household aged 16 and over. The Care Inspectorate will do further checks each year.
- You must be at least 18 years of age.
- You must be fit and healthy to supervise and care for children.

What Does It Take

You should be:

- practical and well organised
- aware of the needs of young children
- warm and friendly – to give children emotional support
- interested in the education and development of young children
- able to get on well with children
- able to multitask and look after several children at once
- able to remain calm and have lots of patience
- responsible
- confident.

You should have:

- imagination and initiative for planning activities
- common sense
- the ability to stay calm in an emergency
- an understanding of different cultures and parenting styles.

Training

- The SCMA runs approved short courses, usually in association with local authorities or colleges.
- The SCMA also offers a continuous professional learning (CPL) programme to keep your skills and knowledge up to date. Contact the SCMA for details.

Getting On

- You may wish to do further training to get a full qualification in childcare and education (see [Early Years Practitioner](#)). This will develop your skills but will not change the work you do as a childminder.
- You may choose to be a childminder if you have young children and then move into work as a nursery nurse when your children are older.

More Information

Remember that when you set up as a childminder you will have to pay for:

- your registration with the [Care Inspectorate](#)
- insurance to cover you in case of any accidents
- possible alterations to your house or garden to make them safe
- equipment, including high chairs, toys, games, books, smoke alarms, fire guards and fire blankets
- first aid training.

Total start up costs could range from £80 to £500, depending on how much you need to do to comply with regulations. Depending on where you live, you may get a grant to help with some of these items.

Contacts

Early Learning and Childcare Careers

Website: childcarecareersscotland.scot

Website (2): childcarecareersscotland.scot/joy-search

Scottish Childminding Association

Tel: 01786 445377

Tel (2): 01786 449 063

Email: information@childminding.org

Website: www.childminding.org

X: @ScotChildmind

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ScotChildmind

Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)

Tel: 0345 60 30 891

Website: www.sssc.uk.com

Website (2): learn.sssc.uk.com/careers

X: @SSSCnews

Facebook: www.facebook.com/thesssc

Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.