

## Access to Childminding – Referral Information

### Background

SCMA is piloting a new service which supports the key aims of the Access to Childcare fund, building on the learning from our Community Childminding services and expanding and further developing our Wellbeing Service.

Working in partnership with local authorities, community childminding placements provide nurturing childcare to small groups of children in home learning environments, addressing children's social, emotional and physical development needs. Building strong, trusting relationships with parents, community childminders provide a listening ear, guidance on parenting routines and offer respite for those who may be dealing with issues such as poor mental health, bereavement or are struggling on their own.

A Childminding Development Officer (CDO) is responsible for coordinating the service. Liaising with key stakeholders and partners, they match referrals with Community Childminders who are best placed to meet the needs of the child and family. Community Childminders are experienced childminders who have undergone additional training to carry out this more specialised activity.

### Access to Childminding Model Outline

We have developed a pilot service to support access to school age childcare. It is based on providing funded childminding placements to support children and families over a period time, parents would be able to access out of school care with the intention that parents accessing the service would continue to use childminders for out of school care provision once the funding had ended, ensuring sustainability in the longer term.

## Strands of the Service

In relation to school aged childcare, two key strands have been identified which would benefit from funded school aged childcare childminding placements.

### Strand One

#### Support for Employment – Low-Income Families Accessing Work

Parents starting employment or returning to work and in need of flexible, affordable and quality childcare to ensure they can sustain employment. Through the provision of childminding placements, parents would be able to access childcare to support the transition into employment, in particular where they may not be in a position to pay for childcare in the absence of wages and until they have transitioned from 'unemployed' to 'employed'.

By providing access to childcare which is flexible around the timings of the working day (from early morning until early evening) and affordable in the future, parents can be supported to sustain employment and will be able to pay for the ongoing costs going forward.

The eligibility criteria for this service would address the priority groups within Every Child, Every Chance and would include:

1. Lone Parents
2. Families which include a child with Additional Support Needs
3. Larger families
4. Minority ethnic families
5. Families where the mother is under 25 years of age

## **Strand Two**

### **School Aged Childcare for Families who have Children with Additional Support Needs**

Childminders are well equipped to provide support to children with Additional Support Needs (ASN). Childminding settings have a low number of children, providing consistency, routine and a tailored, individual approach to childcare and many have specific experience in caring for ASN children. However, many parents are unaware of the benefits of childminding. The provision of out of school care for families experiencing ASN can provide challenging in relation to sourcing nurturing, tailored and affordable childcare which best meets their needs.

By raising awareness of childminders and the flexible, quality childcare they are able to offer, parents would be supported to consider this option to meet the needs of their children and also to support them in the balance between childcare and work. By providing funded out of school care placements, parents would be able to access suitable school aged childcare with the intention that this would continue after the placements had finished, providing sustainability on an ongoing basis.

It is anticipated that this second strand would be on a reduced scale, providing a small number of placements to specifically address support needs for parents who have ASN children and require individualised specialist support on a one to one or very small group setting. Identifying school aged childcare of this nature can be challenging for parents. By paying childminders an enhanced rate, they could further limit numbers in their setting in order to tailor one to one support directly to the child's individual needs. This would be in addition to the placements provided within the first strand, where ASN children would be supported within more typical childminding provision in relation to numbers of children.

### **Key elements of provision:**

- There is opportunity for 100 placements in total for strand one and approximately 20 for strand two, across the four local authorities involved in the pilot.
- Placements will be offered up to a 12-week period, up to 15 hours per week to enable both before and after school care to be accessed. This could be available during holiday periods as well as term-time (childminders work all year round).
- A full-time Childminding Development Officer will coordinate the service - recruiting, training and supporting childminders to deliver placements. They will coordinate referrals, matching the needs of the family to childminders as appropriate. Her contact details are below.
- Childminders will be required to attend an information session, complete an application to deliver the service showing they meet the required criteria and attend training.
- Childminders will be paid £6 per hour and £9 for more complex placements in strand two.
- Payments to the childminder will be made by SCMA for an initial agreed period and then responsibility for payments will transfer to the parent.
- The service will be delivered across 4 local authority areas. Dumfries & Galloway, Edinburgh, Fife & North Lanarkshire Council.
- The service will be promoted with both third sector and statutory partners to ensure suitable referrals were targeted and received. These will be targeted towards those organisations funded by Parental Employability Support Fund.
- A referral form can be accessed via our website at [childminding.org/access-to-childminding](https://childminding.org/access-to-childminding)

**For Administration Enquiries:**

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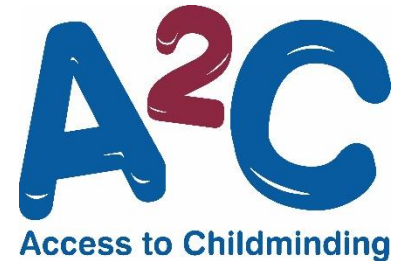
**For Placement Support and Quality Assurance:**

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SCMA Helpline: 01786 449063 (Monday-Friday, 10am-4pm)



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