

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your recent enquiry in respect of becoming a Childminder's Assistant. Please find enclosed an enquiry form for you to complete and return to us in order to initiate the registration process.

Before your application can be progressed you will be required to attend a mandatory pre-registration briefing session by NICMA. This will inform you of the legal and Trust requirements in order for you to be approved and also provide some insight into the business aspect of childminding. Once we have received your enquiry form, your name will be added to a waiting list to attend this briefing session.

When you have attended this session and expressed your interest in continuing with the registration process, you will receive an application form and vetting forms. You must also then attend pre-registration training that is now mandatory for all applicants in three core areas of first aid, health & safety and safeguarding. If you already hold a relevant childcare course and you can show evidence of training in the core areas obtained within the last three years, it will not be necessary for you to attend the training course but you will still be required to attend the pre-registration briefing session before the vetting process and assessment of 'fitness' can commence.

Please note that there are two categories of Childminder's Assistant and you will need to decide which of these you wish to be registered as. Category One involves carrying out short, time limited tasks whilst Category Two involves working alongside the Registered Childminder on a consistent or substantial basis.

Once the vetting is complete an assessment of 'fitness' to care for children will be carried out by a Social Worker before you are given approval to commence working as a Childminder's Assistant. The Trust under Article 124 (i) and (ii) of the Childcare (NI) Order 1995 has to satisfy itself that you are 'fit' to be in the proximity of children under 12 years. Consequently the process of vetting includes:-

- A criminal records check carried out through Access NI
- A medical report countersigned by your G.P.
- Two references
- Completion of a form under the Disqualification for Disqualified for caring for Children Regulations (NI) 1996
- Social Services checks, including Family & Childcare, Clinical Psychiatry, Mental Health and Community Addictions.

- FIT person assessment (Category 2 only).

If issues arise from the above, which may have a bearing on your 'fitness', the matter will be brought before an Early Years Panel.

Please note that under the Disqualification for Caring for Children Regulations (NI) 1996, there are a number of offences which preclude an individual from caring for children. These include offences against children and/or involving injury or threat of injury to another person. Only in exceptional circumstances will this disqualification be lifted by the Trust.

The completed assessment report is submitted to a Senior Social Worker and if approved, you and the Registered Childminder will be informed that you can commence employment.

Please be advised that the new Childminding and Daycare Minimum Standards for <12yr and implementation guidance have been published by the Department. Available at www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/cmd-standards.

If you have any queries in relation to the above, please contact the Early Years Team.

Yours sincerely

Heather Craig

HEATHER CRAIG
Assistant Principal Social Worker

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