

Childminding Documentation Explained

Childminders have to keep certain records by law and others are recommended as good practice. This document aims to help you understand the different documentation requirements as you will be expected to read/complete/sign some of the records your childminder uses. You are likely to be given copies of some to keep for future reference. Your childminder may create all her/his own paperwork or may buy readymade forms to use.

Child Record forms - including starting points

Your childminder will want to know as much as possible about your child before an arrangement starts to help your child settle as quickly as possible and so that the childminder can begin to get to know them as a little person, know their likes and dislikes and provide activities and experiences your child will enjoy and learn from. This information is also important so that the childminder can keep your child safe, so information about medical conditions and allergies will need to be included in the information given. Part of this will involve talking to you and meeting them of course, but they will also need to complete documentation. They must record:

- Child's full name
- Child's date of birth
- Name and address of every parent/carer known to the childminder
- Information about anyone else who has Parental Responsibility for the child
- Which parent(s)/carer(s) the child normally lives with
- Emergency contact details for parents/carers
- Information about child's level of learning and development when they start with the childminder (this is sometimes called 'starting points')

You will be asked to keep the childminder informed of any changes to any of these details and the childminder may ask you to revisit the form annually to check for any changes needed.

Consent forms

Childminders must have written consent from parents/carers for different areas such as permission to put sun cream on the child, permission to take photographs etc. You will also need to give express consent for adults you authorise to collect your child.

Parental Responsibility

Childminders must record which adults have Parental Responsibility for each child. You are likely to be asked to produce some documentation to show that you hold Parental Responsibility.

Depending on your family structure it will be one or more of the following documents: (there is no legal requirement for your childminder to take copies of these documents).

- Birth Certificate- biological parents/ civil partners
- Residence Order (prior to 2014) – biological father/ step parent
- Child's Arrangement Order (since 2014) – biological father/ step parent/foster parent
- Parental Responsibility Agreement- -biological father/ same sex non civil partner
- Parental Responsibility Order – biological parent
- Adoption Certificate – adoptive parents (also known as an adoptive birth certificate)
- Parental Order – surrogate parent
- Special Guardianship Order – foster parents

Contracts

Although there is no legal requirement for childminders to have written contracts with parents it is considered good practice to do so. At the beginning of a childminding arrangement there is a lot to agree and remember and a written contract can avoid misunderstandings later. A good contract will include all the details about the hours and fees you agree with the childminder, who is responsible for payment and how payment will be made. It should also contain details about who will provide meals, spare clothes, nappies, notice for holidays etc. and details about settling in sessions and termination of contract details. Expect there to be a review date on the contract because the arrangements may change e.g. your child starts pre-school or school or your hours of work change.

Risk Assessment

Childminders must risk assess every situation the children are in. Childminders can choose whether to record all or some of the risk assessments they carry out. You may not be shown the risk assessments but do ask if you would like to see them.

Policies and Procedures

Childminders must have policies and procedures about all aspects of their childminding. The following are the only ones that are compulsory to have in writing.

- Safeguarding Children

- Complaints Procedure
- Staff Behaviour Policy if they employ others

Most childminders will have written copies of all their policies. Expect to be shown them or given a copy to keep. You may be asked to sign to say you have seen or received copies.

Accident and Incident records

It is a legal requirement to keep written records of all accidents and incidents that happen while the child is in the childminders care and any first aid treatment given. You will be asked to sign each record to show that you have been informed.

Childminders also have a responsibility to record existing injuries, so if your child goes to the childminder with an injury s/he will have to record this and will ask you to sign the record.

Medication records

Most childminders are happy to administer prescription medication providing it has been provided for the child. You will be asked to give written permission for each and every dose of medication you wish the childminder to give. (please note that there are some illnesses that mean your child will not be able to attend the childminders until they are better and that if your child is too poorly in themselves to join in activities and routines you will be asked to keep the child at home where s/he will be more comfortable)

For non-prescription medication such as e.g. paracetamol or ibuprofen you may be asked to complete written consent to give this medication if the childminder feels your child needs it, for example your baby may be teething and hasn't needed medication in the morning, but the childminder feels they need it later in the day if they develop a high temperature.

For each dose of medication given (prescription or non-prescription) the childminder must record the time it was given, the dose given and inform parents as soon as reasonably practicable, preferably the same day.

Safeguarding records

If a childminder has concerns that someone is abusing a child in their care, there is a responsibility to record their concerns. These records may or may not be shared with parents. Records may be requested by Children's Services or the Police if the childminder has to make a referral to report suspected abuse and may be used in any Child Protection Conference or court case. Childminders will usually inform parents that they need to make a referral unless it is deemed more harmful for the child, for example if it is felt the parent is the one harming the child.

Privacy Information

The GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) came into force in May 2018 and there are new requirements for childminders to share with parents **Privacy Notices** which explain how they abide by the GDPR regarding safety and security of the records they keep about your child and family. If your child also attends another early years setting, there will be **Data Sharing Agreements** in place which give both parties permission to share information about the child's learning and development.

Attendance Register

The childminder will record the hours your child attends each day. Some registers ask for parent's signature to say this is a true record of attendance.

Development Files

If your child is under school age, the childminder will need to build a written record of your child's learning and development. Some of the information you give the childminder in the Child Record form and Starting Points will be used to start this off. You will have access to this record on request but it may also be sent home for you on a regular basis. Expect to be asked to write comments or sign to say you have seen it.

Parent Feedback

Many childminders will ask you to complete a feedback questionnaire each year or they may have a comments box available for you add your comments at any time. This is in addition to the daily conversations you will have about your child and the purpose is for the childminder to demonstrate when parents are happy with the provision and to consider parents' wishes for any improvements they may be able to make to their childminding service.