

Early years policy briefing

Co-childminders and assistants

Introduction

1. Registered childminders can work from any domestic premises not just their own home. Domestic premises refers to any premises which are used wholly or mainly as a private dwelling; this includes another registered childminder's home.
2. Where two or three registered childminders work together from the same domestic premises we call this co-childminding. Childminders may also employ assistants. Assistants do not have to be registered but must complete suitability checks with Ofsted.

Principles

3. Childminders may work from any home on their own or with other childminders or assistants providing the total number of people looking after children at any time does not exceed three. Working with other people will potentially allow them to care for increased numbers of children.
4. Childminders operating at different premises other than their own home are not required to complete further application forms or EY2 forms. They must notify us of each address they intend to operate from and confirm that these are domestic premises.
5. They can notify us by email of the name and URN of the childminder and address of whom they will be co-minding with. Co-childminders are required to be associated and listed on the registration of the childminder where they are working. When a childminder works at multiple addresses their certificate must state all addresses.
6. If the address is not known to us i.e. they are not the premises of an already registered childminder then Ofsted will need to check any other individuals living or working on those premises. A childminder must not allow unchecked people to have unsupervised contact with children being cared for.
7. We must add the address to the childminder's registration and also add the childminder as a co-childminder to the associations list on Cygnum. We must check for any open cases and alert the region if there are any concerns.

Requirements

8. If a childminder employs an assistant or works with another childminder, each person may care for a maximum of six children under the age of eight and must ensure that they meet the ratio requirements in the EYFS.
9. Childminders do not have to wait for a new certificate to begin operating (unless the address is unknown to us and we are conducting checks) but must be able to demonstrate to parents and inspectors that they are registered with Ofsted and are awaiting issue of a new certificate.
10. Everyone who lives or works on premises where childcare is provided will have to complete an EY2 form if they are haven't already done so and are not known to Ofsted. We will also require an enhanced DBS check for a home-based role.
11. If there are more than three childminders or assistants they are collectively providing [childcare on domestic premises](#) and must make a new application to register. They must meet the requirements for this type of care at all times, not the requirements for childminding. This includes meeting the qualification requirements for group care and appointing a manager before registration is granted.
12. If any person providing childcare on domestic premises decides instead to hold a registration as a childminder for any days they operate with fewer than four people on the same premises, they may do so. They must hold a separate childminder registration. These people must pay two fees and have separate inspections and inspection reports. The law does not permit them to act as a childminder and childcarer on domestic premises on the same premises at the same time.

Key person

13. Each child must be assigned a key person. In childminding settings the key person is a childminder. A key person will still need to be identified if childminders work together on a part-time basis and/or care for large numbers of children attending part-time.
14. If two or three childminders or assistants work together at all times with a settled group of children then it is reasonable that they effectively share the care and arrangements for all children bearing in mind each child must be assigned a key person. They must show how they operate an effective system to meet children's needs continuously.
15. Assistants can only be a key person if they are working at a setting that is registered as childcare on domestic premises.

Inspection

16. We normally inspect co-childminders together, but may do so separately especially if they work at different times of the week from different premises.
17. We expect all registered childminders to be able to demonstrate how they meet the requirements of the EYFS even if they may be an employee of another childminder. If we inspect childminders together we will take account of their particular way of operating but will also expect each childminder to know, understand and implement the EYFS and may question each childminder independently to assess their own knowledge.
18. Co-childminders working together are likely to share policies, procedures and resources so the inspection judgements and reports may be very similar. However, it is also possible that judgements may differ where childminders have different knowledge of the EYFS, a different understanding of the policies and how they each implement them. We would expect each childminder to be able to demonstrate how they separately and collectively reflect on their practice and improve what they do.
19. Providers must carry the appropriate insurance (e.g. public liability insurance) to cover all premises from which they provide childcare or childminding and must be able to demonstrate that all addresses are covered in their policy. If they are employing co-childminders and/or assistants then they should also carry employer's liability insurance.
20. It is not appropriate for a childminder to employ co-childminders/assistants to care for children and then take time off and remain on the premises. If there are three or more childminders or assistants on the premises when childminding takes place this is effectively group care ([childcare on domestic premises](#)) and the childminder must make a new application to register.