

## When you are choosing a Childminder

### Parents should consider the following:

- Take your time
- Ask Questions
- Check it out
- Communicate your needs

### How do I find a Childminder?

- Through the Childminding Advisory Worker based at the Leitrim County Childcare Committee office Laird House Church Street, Drumshanbo Co Leitrim
- By contacting the HSE Pre-School Office
- Through your local Playgroup/Pre-school and/or Parent and Toddler
- Your Local Public Health Nurse
- By word of mouth
- Through your local newspapers

### Steps to choosing a childminder

- Arrange to meet with a few known childminders in your area in their own homes
- Prepare a list of questions and issues you want to bring up beforehand and make notes
- Talk to friends neighbours other parents and the Childminder Advisory Worker with County Childminder Committee
- Ensure you check out two references from the childminder

### Questions to be asked

- How many children do you care for?
- What are the ages of the children in your care?
- What hours of childcare do you provide?
- What is your daily routine?
- What type of activities do you provide?
- Is outdoor play part of your daily routine?
- Will other people be in the home while my child is here?
- What emergency arrangements do you have in place e.g. sickness of child / yourself, fire prevention, accident?
- How is good behaviour encouraged?
- What type of food do you offer to the children in your care?
- Do you have public liability insurance cover?
- Do you have adequate car insurance?

- Do you travel in the car with minded children, and have you care safety seats / belts?
- Are you liaising with the County Childcare Committee?
- Are you notified to the HSE or Voluntary Notification to the Leitrim County Childcare Committee?
- Do you have first Aid Training?
- Do you have Child Protection Training?
- Do you have a plan in place in the event of an emergency?
- How long have you been a childminder?

### Issues for further discussion

- Fees
- Outings
- Rest sleeping facilities
- Toilet training

### What to look for

- The skills of a childminder and suitable person
- A childminder who likes and relates well to children who will be gentle and kind and keep your child safe
- Ability to listen
- Sympathetic tolerant and kind
- Fair with the children and with own children
- Clear thinking
- Understanding of their own child's feelings if they are also being cared for
- Business like approach to parents professional in the service they provide
- Self confident
- Ability to think of others
- Good relationships with children in their care
- Plenty of energy
- Good health
- Appropriate language
- Sense of Humour

### Childminder's home

- First impression and gut feeling
- Visit the home and meet the childminder there
- Is the home caring and friendly, yet stimulating?
- Are the premises safe?
- Make sure there are childproof locks on the windows and doors, guards on fires and stairs and smoke alarms

- There should be no trailing flexes and low - level glass should be protected
- Is it a home from home
- Is it cosy and warm
- Is there enough space for your child to be cared for and to play freely and safely?
- Are there a variety of age and stage appropriate toys to play with? Look for crayons, colouring books, books, play kitchens, jigsaws etc.
- Are the kitchen, toilet and other rooms clean
- Outdoors is it safe check for hazards is there a secure gate fence to prevent your child from gaining access to the road
- Pets: are there any pets in the Childminders home?

Your childminder will require the following information from you

- The child's name and address
- The child's date of birth
- Details of parents' place of work
- Telephone numbers- home and work numbers
- The name and telephone number of the person to be contacted in an emergency
- Name of two adults who are authorised to collect your child
- The name address and telephone number of the child's doctor
- Necessary medical or dietary information
- A signed agreement for medical treatment
- Consent for medication to be given
- Consent for outings also to be given
- The child's likes dislikes fears and comforts
- The childminder will ask you to complete a working agreement/contract which will cover all these matters

For further information please do not hesitate to contact Leitrim County Childcare Committee and ask to speak to your Childminding Advisory Worker.