

## TRAINING

NICMA provide a range of training courses for childminders, home childcarers, parents and individuals within the Early Years sector. The training provided covers the care and education of children aged from 0 – 12 years.

Training includes:

- "Introduction to Home-based Childcare" CACHE ENDORSED – 12 hour introductory training for prospective or newly registered childminders – available in English, Polish and Lithuanian
- Quality Business Start Programme supports newly registered childminders in developing good childcare and business practice
- NVQ in Children's Care, Learning and Development - Levels II & III
- Looking After Me - Aimed at enabling Childminders to promote their health and wellbeing
- Safeguarding Our Children
- Developmental Programme for 2 year olds
- Caring for Children with Special Needs
- High/Scope in the Family Daycare
- Workshops on wide range of topics
- Top Tots / Top Start
- Training for External Agencies

## STAFFING OF NICMA

The Director oversees the day to day management and development of NICMA, assisted by staff either based in the main office in Newtownards, or working in specific areas to provide local services.

## LOCATION

NICMA is based in Newtownards, although services are available through all of Northern Ireland. The office is centrally located within the town, has disability access, is child friendly, and close to car parking facilities.



## QUALITY ASSURANCE

NICMA's Quality Assurance scheme is designed to enhance the quality of service offered by registered Childminders:

### NCMA Quality First

NCMA Quality First is a national quality assurance scheme which is accessible to individual childminders, relevant to their work context and practices and which will enable them to demonstrate the quality of the service they offer to families.



**NICMA**  
*the Childminding Association*



**NICMA**

the Childminding Association  
16-18 Mill Street  
Newtownards BT23 4LU  
Tel: 0871 200 2063  
Fax: 028 9182 0921  
e-mail: [info@nicma.org](mailto:info@nicma.org)  
[www.nicma.org](http://www.nicma.org)

Registered Charity No. XO 549

Company Limited by Guarantee No. NI 25861

NICMA 2008

# Introduction to NICMA

## INTRODUCTION

NICMA - the Childminding Association works to support and develop registered home-based childcare. A voluntary organisation with charitable status, NICMA provides a range of services to support Childminders, parents and children.

Founded in 1984, NICMA's main purpose is:

**"to promote quality home based childcare and learning for the benefit of children, families and communities"**

Childminding is the largest form of registered day care and education provision for children aged 0 -12 years, accounting for more than 36% of total childcare provision and over 60% of full day care.

## CHILDMINDING HAS SO MUCH TO OFFER!

More than 17,000 children across Northern Ireland are cared for by registered Childminders - the most popular form of daycare for working parents.

A Registered Childminder is:

"a person who looks after 1 or more children under the age of 12, for more than 2 hours per day, on domestic premises, for reward"

They **MUST** by law register with the local Health & Social Care Trust. Registration protects children, provides reassurance to parents using childcare and ensures that Childminding services meet acceptable standards.

Registered childminders may be registered to care for up to 6 children between the ages of 0 - 12 years of age [including their own children].

To achieve registration a Childminder is required to comply with standards of safety, equipment, numbers of children etc. References and health checks are required, as are police checks on all individuals in the household over the age of 10.

Registered Childminding is one of the forms of daycare eligible for Tax Credits for working parents.

**Childminding** is unique, affordable and flexible to meet families' individual needs offering:-

**One-to-one attention** - low adult/child ratios allow for a level of individual attention that is rarely matched in centre based care

**Real life learning** - Children looked after by a Childminder enjoy real life experiences like cooking, shopping, gardening, mealtimes etc.

**Family friendly** - brothers and sisters of different ages can be cared for together regardless of age, stage and ability.

## WHAT NICMA CAN DO FOR CHILDMINDERS

NICMA provides childminding members with:

**Information & Advice helpline** - to answer childminding queries

**Business Pack** - to help set up in business as a self employed Childminder

**Childminding Vacancy Service** - database of up-to-date details of childminding vacancies by telephone and on-line

**The support of a local Development Officer** - to provide advice and training

**'Childminding Matters'** - members magazine with news, views and ideas

**Public and Legal Liability Insurance cover** - to protect the Childminder in the event of an accident or legal action

**Training** - a wide range of childcare and business training for prospective childminders, current childminders or parents

**Childminding Support Groups** - gives childminders the opportunity for peer support and social interaction

**Childminding Networks** - attached to Surestart projects

Membership of NICMA is open to all childminders who have been **REGISTERED** with their local Health & Social Care Trust and to all Home Childcarers who have been **APPROVED** by their local Health & Social Services Trust.

## WHAT NICMA CAN DO FOR HOME CHILDCARERS

A 'Home Childcarer' is a new form of approved childcare introduced by the Government to allow parents to have approved childcare in their own home and claim tax credits against the cost. NICMA provides home childcarers with a membership package, insurance, training, information & advice helpline plus other services.

## WHAT NICMA CAN DO FOR PARENTS

NICMA can assist parents who are looking for childcare with a range of services in order to make an informed choice about the best care for their child:

**"Choosing a Childminder - a Guide for Parents"** booklet covers all aspects of choosing a childminder to suit the family's needs

**Information & Advice helpline** - provides information on all aspects of childminding including registration, fees, contracts etc.

**Childminding Vacancy Service** - offers details of childminding vacancies to suit families needs either by telephone or on-line