



FOUNDATION YEARS

Great early years & childcare

HOW

ACTION FOR CHILDREN

WORKS

Key Questions for a Childminder Agency trial



Information on your agency

- How will you find out about different childminders in your area?
- How will you introduce the concept of an agency to childminders?
- How will you arrange for prospective parents to meet childminders?
- How will you let parents know when new providers/spaces/events happen?
- How will you sign up parents/register childminders and store their information?
- Have you thought how you will map parental needs with Childminder services?
- How will your agency cover illness including longer term sickness?

Training of new Childminders and CPD of Childminders

- How will you attract new childminders to the agency?
- How will you organise training to meet the needs of differing needs of childminders?
- How will you organise all the support that needs to be put in place for new childminders e.g. policies and procedures, insurance, first aid, quality assurance etc
- How will you work with childminders to increase the quality of their provision?
- How will you meet the needs of individual childminders? E.g. CPD, peer to peer mentoring
- How will you monitor the quality of the childminders?
- How will you provide Quality Assurance for all the childminders in the agency?



Creating a sustainable business model

- Have you begun to develop a business model that covers all the things you will have to do? Does this include your charging regime?
- Have you researched different cost scenarios e.g. Buy-back from FIS or staffing?
- How many parents/childminders will you need to register to cover your costs?
- Have you got a timeline of when you want your agency to have recruited childminders and parents?
- Have you begun to think of pricing to childminders and to parents?
- Sustainability of recruitment – have you begun to plan how you will be continually recruiting childminders?
- How are you planning for growth and sustainability?
- Have you thought about what type of business models could work in childcare provision?
- Have you thought about childminders/parents paying fees in instalments over the year?

Systems and Processes to register with Ofsted

- How will you organise systems for CRB and LA checks for all your registered childminders, plus key staff who have contact with children?
- How will you build this cost into your budget? E.g. As part of admin when register with agency or an extra cost in addition to the agency fee
- How will you put in place checks for Childminders regarding the outcomes of their medical checks and first aid certificates?
- Have you begun to think about the cost for at least two QA visits to the childminders home per year by a suitably qualified/skilled member of staff, with new starters being visited before they are registered to check suitability and venue?
- Have you thought through how the hours of contact time will be made up of, for example training, workshops, networks, keeping in touch etc and how you will organise these?
- How will you incorporate the Ofsted fee to register into your costs?
- How are you going to communicate to parents about your QA regime and the quality of each of your CMs?



Parental Access

- How will you make information about the childminders accessible to parents?
- How will parents be able to contact the agency?
- How will parents access information if they are unable to have a face to face meeting?
- Will parents be able to speak to a person to find out more information or answer queries?
- How will parents contact you out of office hours if they need to e.g. If a parent needs to contact you if their CM is ill?



Journey of a parent

- Attends the agency/looks on webpage to find out information about childcare
- Wants to know different options that will fit in with differing working days and which childminders will pick up from which settings
- Discuss price/funding available – fill in forms/direct to website
- Look at the availability of different childminders
- Give contact details of childminder
- Parent phones up to arrange visit to childminder



Journey of a childminder

- Register interest with the agency/fill out questionnaire
- Attend information meeting to find out how the agency will work for them
- Sign up with the agency providing information about ages/hours/prices/training needs etc
- Complete an environmental audit and create a quality improvement plan
- Attend regular meetings/training to keep updated and for training purposes
- Time planned in for Quality Improvement, home visits and reviews with the agency
- Inform the agency when their availability changes