

Childminding in and around Elmstead Market

It is always difficult to find adequate childcare for children of all ages, but once children start school it can become even more difficult to find childcare that fits around the school day and also provides the quality that every parent looks for. Childminders can not only provide this flexibility and availability to provide before and after school care but can also give children access to a homely, yet educational environment.

As a parent or carer we are all searching for childcare that our children feel happy and secure in, that can support their education but is also regulated by external authorities. Many parents consider using a childminder as risky because they are entrusting their child to just one other adult, which is a totally understandable, however it is often overlooked that there are tight regulations and expectations placed on childminders. All childminders must be fully police checked on a regular basis and have full public liability insurance as well as being registered with OFSTED. They have regular inspections and must have a qualification in paediatric first aid. Some childminders choose to further their career and become Network associated which means that they have 3 inspections a year, have to complete 18 hours of training a year and can become accredited to accept nursery funding for 3-5 year olds.

Childminders can provide a safe and loving environment for children to go to both before and after school and it is essential to find the right place for your child. Some useful points to consider when searching for a childminder are the following:

- What is the childminders availability; can they care for my child when I need them to?
- Is the childminder fully registered and regulated and has the necessary qualifications and insurance in place?
- What sort of environment do they offer? How many other children are there?
- What will the children be doing while they are with the childminder?
- Does the childminder have the necessary training and resources to support my child?
- Does my child feel happy in the company of the childminder?

- Can the childminder support our personal family situation in terms of living arrangements, religious beliefs and needs of the child?

A childminder should never mind being asked for any information that you feel you need to know and should be willing to prove any qualifications and legal documents that are in place. They are also working towards providing extremely high quality childcare that is individually tailored to each child yet provides the warm and homely environment that every child needs to thrive.