

9 February 2021

To all registered childminding services

The Scottish Government considers childminders to be a vital and valued part of our childcare sector, providing high quality care and learning in a safe and nurturing environment.

The unique and nurturing environment that childminders offer in their service also benefits from being a low-risk setting for childcare during this pandemic. To reflect the lower risk in small settings with fewer opportunities for adult to adult transmission, childminders caring for fewer than 12 children have been able to continue to operate under existing [guidance](#) for children of any age.

Nevertheless, it is recognised that operating during the pandemic has been a challenge for childminders, and that there have been increased pressures on their businesses as a result. This notice provides information about the further support we are announcing today, and the other existing support available for larger settings.

Childminding Business Sustainability Fund

On the 21 January the Scottish Government confirmed that £1m would be made available to provide grant support to childminders in the light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their businesses. It is recognised that this initial funding would only be able to support a proportion of childminding businesses in Scotland and therefore a needs-based assessment would be required.

Further discussions were held with the Scottish Childminding Association and with Unite childminding branch about how best to target this funding, and make it available as quickly as possible.

In the light of those discussions the Scottish Government has today confirmed that additional funding will be made available in order to increase the fund to more than £3.2 million.

This £3.2 million fund will provide for a £750 business sustainability grant to be made available to all childminding services which are registered with the Care Inspectorate as of 1 February 2021.

The application process to receive this grant will be simple and will not require evidence of need to be presented. The grant is intended to support childminding services to sustain their business in the light of the pressure of the pandemic.

Further information on how to apply will be made available as soon as possible.

Childminders caring for 12 or more children

Childminders who are caring for 12 or more children and are therefore currently subject to restrictions on which children can attend their setting, are also eligible to apply for the Temporary Restrictions Fund.

The Temporary Restrictions Fund will help mitigate the reduction in income and increased costs resulting from the restrictions which require settings to operate below capacity. This will help these settings remain open to support children of key workers and vulnerable children.

You can apply for a Temporary Restrictions Fund grant covering the four week period of restrictions from 4 January - 29 January 2021 through the [Temporary Restrictions Fund application site](#).

Applications for the first round will close on **1 March 2021**.

The Fund is administered by Local Authorities.

Grants are available to settings registered with the Care Inspectorate as being either:

- a 'day care of children' and a 'Private' or 'Voluntary or Not For Profit' service; or
- a 'childminding service' and currently caring for 12 or more children.

Providers also need to confirm each of the weeks within the restrictions period that they were open to deliver childcare to key worker and vulnerable children.

Further information

Further details on available financial support is provided on the Scottish Government's [information pages on financial support](#).

These pages will continue to be updated as more information becomes available.

Regards

**Directorate for Early Learning & Childcare
Scottish Government**

ⁱ Where more than one childminder works in a service only one grant will be issued per registered service.