



Friday 10 July 2020

NOTICE FOR CHILDMINDERS ON GUIDANCE CHANGES FROM PHASE 3

To: All registered childminders

Today we are issuing Phase 3 guidance for childminders, which will come into effect from 15 July. This notice outlines the changes. Until 15 July, the current guidance applies. You can access the new guidance [here](#) and the archived Phase 1 guidance [here](#).

How many children can a childminder setting care for at any one time?

- Childminders can return to their normal operating model in line with the [Care Inspectorate guidance on adult to child ratios](#) for childminding services. There is no restriction on the number of households the children belong to.
- Large childminding services registered for more than eight children can care for more than eight children at any one time. However, when they are caring for more than eight children at any one time, these settings should establish cohorts of children consistent with the [ELC reopening guidance](#). These cohorts should be as much as possible with the same childminder or assistant in the time they are at the childminding setting, in line with childminder staffing ratios.

What is the advice on blended placements?

- The Scottish Government hopes to be in a position to lift the restrictions on blended placements (where children attend two or more settings) alongside the return of schools, subject to expert advice and continued suppression of the virus. We will confirm by 31 July whether this restriction can be lifted at the same time as schools return.
- For now, blended placements should still be avoided. This is because of the current expert advice about the additional risk of transmission where children move between groups. In limited circumstances, blended placements may be permitted where this is the only option to support critical childcare arrangements for keyworker families. In these cases, childminders can use their discretion in entering into blended placements, following a risk assessment and consultation with the families and other setting concerned.

How should spaces be allocated?

- Childminders can use their discretion to allocate places to families, based on their usual operating model.
- Childminders who have contracts in place with a local authority to deliver childcare, for example to deliver funded early learning and childcare (ELC), will need to agree these placements with the local authority before they are agreed with parents and carers.



ANNEX A: KEY CHANGES

	Phase 1 and 2 guidance (3 June to 15 July)	Phase 3 guidance (from 15 July)
Number of children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Childminders must limit the number of households for whom they provide childcare to a maximum of four, in addition to children of their own household, at any one time. Large childminding services registered for more than eight children must limit the overall numbers of children in their service at any one time to eight, including their own children or relatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Childminders can return to their normal operating model in line with the Care Inspectorate guidance on adult to child ratios for childminding services. There is no restriction on the number of households the children belong to. Large services can care for more than 8 children but should establish cohorts of children.
Allocation of spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued critical childcare for keyworkers and vulnerable children should be the first priority for childminders. Beyond that, childminders can use their discretion to allocate places to families. Where possible, critical provision should be delivered as part of a coordinated local authority-led emergency response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Childminders can use their discretion to allocate places to families, based on their usual operating model.
Shared resources (sand, water, playdough)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of shared resources that cannot be cleaned such as sand, water and playdough in the childminding setting is discouraged unless it is allocated to a single child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources such as sand, water and playdough can be used as usual with additional cleaning of equipment used, and for larger settings caring for over 8 children, should be used only by one cohort of children.