



Quality First

NCMA Quality First is a quality assurance scheme for individual childminders in England and Wales. It has been designed by the NCMA to provide childminders with a valuable tool for developing and demonstrating the quality of their service.

Your ability to demonstrate that you have achieved a nationally recognised high standard of practice could be crucial to your success in maintaining and filling places.

NCMA Quality First is suitable for registered childminders who have approximately a year's experience of childminding. If you are a new childminder you may want to wait until you are settled in to your new job and have a range of experience before you start.

Once you have enrolled on NCMA Quality First, you are sent a pack containing the materials for you to read and work on. You write in your answers and add in your own documents to build up a portfolio.

During this time you will have access to support and advice from an NCMA Mentor, by phone or if you prefer by email. The mentoring service is available Monday to Friday from 10am to 4pm. To speak to a mentor you simply call free phone 0800 652 2120. The mentors are there to answer any query you have regarding the completion of your portfolio and you have unlimited access to the mentors during the stated hours.

You will also be supported by Julia Senior-Smith, Childminding Development Officer who will assist you by providing you with supporting documents that you will need for your research, and by organising discussion groups that you can attend to discuss sections of the portfolio and to meet other childminders working on the quality first portfolio.

You can work on the portfolio at your own pace, and when you're ready you send it off for assessment. It will usually take about a year to complete. Once you have finished an NCMA Assessor will visit you at home to observe your relationship, contact and communication with the children.

When you have successfully completed you will be awarded a certificate which lasts for three years. You will also receive leaflets to explain to parents and others what your achievement means.

Please phone Julia Senior-Smith if you're interested in undertaking the Quality First assurance scheme on 020 8566 2524. There will be no cost as we will be funding this quality assurance scheme on behalf of childminders.