

It is very easy, when in an interview situation, to forget some of the questions that you had wanted to ask. Having a list of questions will more likely help to gain all the information you need.

Here are a few questions asked by parents. Don't feel you are being nosy; childminders should be used to being asked questions about their service.

## Questions to ask your Childminder

- How long have you been childminding?
- What qualifications or training do you have?
- What extra training have you done?
- Can I see your Ofsted report?
- Why do you like this job?
- How long do you intend to do it for?
- How many other children will be with my child, how old are they?
- Can I have the phone numbers of other parents you work for so I can follow up references?
- Do you charge for holidays, training and sick days?
- Are there any additional costs?
- How many children will be the same age as my child?
- How can I make sure my child is settling in well?
- Where will my child sleep? Make sure it is quiet.
- Do you keep a daily diary?
- How do you spend the day and how do the other children's schedules fit in with my child?

Find out simple things, such as when she or he does shopping/banking/chores.

- Do you go out on day trips? Where to?
- Do you use a/your car? Does it have properly-fitted car seats?
- What kind of meals and drinks do you give the children?
- How would you organise my child's day? And help them achieve developmental goals?
- Will my child be able to choose his/her own activities each session?
- Do you keep a file about a child's progress? Will these be shared with me?
- How can I get involved and play an active part in my child's learning and development?
- How do you support children in developing confidence, independence and resourcefulness?
- Do you have policies and procedures? Can I see them?
- What's your policy on potty training, feeding, and teaching right from wrong?
- Are there opportunities for children to play outside on a daily basis?
- Will you agree to a trial run (say a couple of mornings) to see how it's going to work out? (Most childminders will agree to this.)

*Ask the childminder to show you around.*

## Questions for yourself

- Are the rooms clean, light and big enough?
- Are there safety precautions in place?
- Does the childminder look interested in playing with, talking to the children
- Do the children look happy and engaged?

- Are toys/books/furniture well kept?
- Does the plan for the day/session look interesting and varied?
- What kinds of activities are planned? Will they provide broad and balanced experiences?
- Are there suitable sleeping arrangements for my child?

Once you have asked your questions and looked around the premises do not feel pressures into making a decision on the spot. If you need time to think about then say so. You must however let the childminder know your decision whatever it may be. Remember you are entrusting your precious little person to a stranger, make sure they are right for you and your child.