



Centre for Professional Practice

## Practice Briefing Note 31

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Childcare Plus Scheme</b>
<b>Effective From:</b>	11/04/2018
<b>Practice Note:</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Childcare Plus Scheme</u></b></p> <p>Childcare Plus is a project supported and delivered by the Childcare Team in Family Solutions.</p> <p>The Childcare Team have in depth knowledge of all registered childcare providers and childminders within the Dudley Borough, and will make extra support visits to childcare providers and childminders offering specialist places. The team will find appropriate childcare and childminders with vacancies to suit the family's needs if they have children on a Child Protection Plan or are a Child in Need.</p> <p>This scheme is generally a planned service and should not be used for emergency placements although we are aware in some circumstances you may approach the service in an emergency. Children can be cared for from birth to 14 years old, however in some circumstances placements for older children may be considered.</p> <p><u>Process</u></p> <p>Following initial assessments, you may use the information below to decide if the scheme would be an appropriate intervention for the family, and decide to make a referral to the scheme.</p> <p>Please call Jane Noke (Senior Practice Supervisor) on 01384 812862 to discuss referrals.</p> <p>To make a referral you will need to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Provide us with all relevant information; all information received will be treated as confidential and with respect, however we will need to know of any specific needs to ensure the best match between carers/children and their families.</li></ol>

2. Be clear about the hours, and type of service you are looking for. We aim to be flexible, but to find an appropriate childcare or a childminder; the team will need a starting point.
3. Confirm you have the budget available for the care you will be requesting.
4. Have negotiated with parents the type of care they want, and have ensured they understand the boundaries some childcare providers and childminders have.

The team will then make enquiries with childcare providers and childminders to identify a suitable placement. It may take a few days to find a placement, and the team may need to renegotiate days and times to ensure the most appropriate provision.

Once a placement has been identified, a planning meeting will be organised between the family, social worker/family support worker and childcare provider or childminder. The team will aim to be present in a supporting role for this meeting. At this meeting a contract should be signed, if all are happy with the placement.

Once you have made a referral you need to be aware of the following:

- Childcare providers and Childminders working within the scheme will be given contracts specifically designed for Childcare Plus placements.
- Social Workers/Family Support Workers must ensure they have signed the contract on behalf of the local authority before the placement commences. Copies of the contract will need to be retained by the family, the childcare provider or the childminder and the social worker/family support worker.
- An understanding of the hours and days agreed between the childcare provider or childminder, social worker/family support worker and the parent/carer should be clear to all parties. Childcare providers and childminders will make additional charges for any care outside the agreed contracted hours.
- Childcare providers and childminders will need to receive payment in advance for their contracted agreed services, this is normal practice. Therefore they will require prompt payment. Please inform the childcare provider or childminder when they can expect to receive payment, and keep them informed if delays look likely to occur. Childcare providers and childminders will charge an additional late payment fee.
- Places that are booked with childcare providers and childminders will be required to be paid in full if the child does not arrive. This is a normal contractual arrangement for childcare providers and childminders.

- Some childcare providers and childminders may charge for food and outings. If the childcare provider or childminder makes additional charges they will make this explicit in the planning meeting and you will need to confirm these arrangements prior to signing the contract. There is a set £5.50 hourly rate for the childcare or childminding provision accessed via the Childcare Plus Scheme.
- Should a childminder be required to collect and drop off the child; their travel time will be included within the contract for e.g. – if the childminder leaves home at 10.00am to collect the child by 10.30am; their fee will be paid from 10.00am. Childcare providers do not generally do pick up's or drop off's.
- Once the placement has finished, if the parent/carer wishes to continue using the childminder or childcare provision, they can negotiate this directly with the childminder or childcare provider, in these cases a new contract will be completed by the two parties and a standard childminding or childcare agreement will be made.
- Childcare providers and childminders are very keen to attend training to help them deliver an effective service. If you wish to place a child in need of additional support or with more complex issues, please offer the provider any training opportunities you can.

We will always endeavor to find a placement to meet your needs; however there will be occasions when we are not able to find appropriate care.

**Final note: Please remember that childcare providers and childminders are self-employed; therefore they do not receive sick pay or holiday pay, and out of their earnings must pay tax, and comply with Inland Revenue requirements. Please respect our childcare providers and childminders.**

**Contact:** Jane Noke - Senior Practice Supervisor (SPS) – Childcare Team

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**Available:** Monday to Friday office hours only

<b>Reason:</b>	Requested by Jane Noke
<b>Adopted at:</b>	As per request by Jane Noke
<b>Authorised by:</b>	Darren Shaw (PSW)
<b>Date:</b>	11/04/2018
<b>Review Date:</b>	11/04/2019
<b>Reference No:</b>	0031/2018/CPP