NIAMH’S CHILDMINDING

Your parent handbook

A practical guide to starting care, everyday routines and working together.

Hindhead, Surrey · Ofsted EY405949

Understanding your child’s learning

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards for children’s learning, development and care from birth to five. It gives us a framework for providing thoughtful, playful experiences and understanding how best to support each child.

Children develop in different ways and at different rates. They may be confident in one area while still building skills in another. I use the framework to notice progress, celebrate each child’s strengths and plan their next steps, rather than expect every child to reach the same stage at the same time.

The Early Learning Goals describe the expected level of development at the end of Reception. They are used by teachers for the EYFS Profile assessment, rather than as targets that every toddler or preschool child must already meet. If a child needs additional support, we work together to respond to their individual needs.

What to expect in the EYFS - a guide for parents (PDF)

Before your first day

We’ll meet, discuss routines and complete the contract, emergency contacts, health information and permissions. Bring any care plans and tell me who has parental responsibility. Before your child starts, please complete the All About Me form so I can get to know your family, their special people, interests, likes, dislikes and routines.

Download the blank All About Me form (fillable PDF)

Settling in

We agree a gradual approach around your child. Familiar routines and a comfort item can help. The first four weeks are a settling period under the draft contract.

What to bring

Nappies, wipes and creams; spare clothes; waterproofs and suitable footwear; sun cream and a sun hat; any agreed comfort item and labelled medication.

Meals & allergies

Home-cooked food, snacks and drinks are included in the private fee. I have completed Healthy Eating for Toddlers training and was awarded the Eat Well Start Well Award. Tell me about allergies, textures and dietary needs before care begins and whenever they change.

Sleep & toileting

I have completed Babyem Gentle Sleep Training. We discuss your child’s naps and routines together, with safe sleep always guiding care. We also work together on toilet learning, following children’s readiness and treating them with dignity.

Healthy teeth

I have completed Children’s Oral Health Advice for All through e-Learning for Healthcare. I work with families to support healthy habits and children’s oral health.

If your child is unwell

Protecting all children in my care, my family and one another is a priority. I ask every family to respect these illness arrangements and tell me about symptoms and any medicine given before arrival.

Temperatures: I do not accept children with a high temperature. If a temperature develops during the day, parents will be asked to collect promptly. Calpol is only used as an emergency measure for a distressed or uncomfortable child while waiting for collection, with written permission and in line with my medication policy.

Rashes: Please have any new or unexplained rash checked by a doctor before arrival. I will decline care until it has been checked and we have discussed the advice about attendance.

Sickness and diarrhoea: A full 48 hours must pass after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhoea before returning. This rule is strict. Three unusually loose or runny nappies within a few hours will lead to parents being asked to collect due to suspected diarrhoea. Please let me know about your child’s normal bowel pattern or any known medical explanation.

Conjunctivitis: Please keep your child at home with suspected infectious conjunctivitis, particularly green or yellow sticky discharge. Seek pharmacist or clinical advice. Where drops are recommended, return is after at least 24 hours of treatment, when your child is well enough and discharge can be managed safely. If drops are not recommended, or the cause is non-infectious, contact me to agree return; unnecessary treatment is not required.

Hand, foot and mouth: Please keep your child at home until skin spots or blisters have dried or healed (scabbed over where applicable), and they are well, without a high temperature and able to drink and join in comfortably. Discuss return with me first. These conjunctivitis and hand, foot and mouth rules are my setting’s precautions, stricter than national exclusion guidance.

Read the full illness policy

Arrivals & collection

Allow time for handover within agreed hours. Tell me about changes to collectors in advance. Call promptly if delayed or if your child will be absent.

Keeping in touch

We share day-to-day information and discuss progress. Let me know about changes at home, health, contacts or other settings that may affect your child.

Photos & permissions

Private learning photographs and public marketing permissions are separate. We agree the sharing method and you can discuss or withdraw optional consent.

Questions or concerns

Speak with me promptly and privately. Formal EYFS complaints receive an outcome within 28 days. Safeguarding concerns can go directly to the relevant service.

Following your child’s progress

I notice what your child enjoys and can do, then offer the next small challenge. We share observations and ideas from home and care without turning play into a test.

Between ages two and three, the written progress check helps us discuss strengths and any areas where support would be helpful.

Working together

I have experience working with speech and language therapists and other outside agencies to support children’s individual needs. With parental permission, I work alongside families, nurseries and relevant professionals, sharing observations and incorporating agreed strategies into everyday play and routines. Please tell me about any support your child already receives.

Our summer sports day

Every summer, I organise a sports day for local childminders, nannies and the children in their care. It’s a chance for the children to enjoy being active, join in together and celebrate their efforts.

The annual Big Toddle

Once a year, I organise a Big Toddle fancy-dress walk and picnic with local childminders to raise money for Barnardo’s. It’s a lovely way to come together, enjoy a shared adventure and help others.

Fees and hours

The current hourly rate is shown on the website’s fees page and confirmed in your signed contract. Private childcare includes home-cooked food, healthy snacks and drinks, routine playgroups and routine outings.

My usual pattern has been Monday to Wednesday, 9am-5pm. Current opening hours and vacancies are confirmed when you enquire. Additional hours depend on availability and written agreement.

Your childcare days, hours and individual terms are agreed in writing before your child starts.

Payments and notice

The current draft contract specifies monthly BACS payments due on the 30th and four weeks’ written notice after a four-week settling-in period.

Late collection is listed at £5 for each 15 minutes or part thereof. Charges and payment dates are confirmed in your signed agreement.

Private childcare absence and closure charges

When	Charge
Child illness or family absence	Normal contracted fee
Parent holiday	Normal contracted fee
Niamh’s illness or holiday	No childcare fee
Bank holidays - closed	No childcare fee
Christmas Eve and the period between Christmas and New Year - closed	No childcare fee

Funded childcare

Please ask about current funded places and the available delivery pattern. Eligibility, entitlement and the agreed hours are checked before care begins.

Any permitted additional meals, consumables or activities must be clearly explained, voluntary and separately itemised, with appropriate alternatives.

Extra private childcare hours are agreed separately. Your funding arrangements follow Surrey’s current provider rules.

Check working-parent eligibility

Contacts and accompanying policies

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This handbook brings together the practical information on the website. Please read it alongside your signed childcare agreement and the full policies. Individual arrangements are confirmed in your signed agreement.

Read the full policies · Contact Niamh