



Scheme of Excellence Scottish Childminding Association

SCMA promotes registered childminding as a quality childcare service, through its vision and key priorities for childminding developed by the Association's elected members.

"Quality childminding... building confident children within a family childcare experience"

Profile

- 1 Raising the profile of childminding and the work of the Association.
- 2 Improving the quality of childminding.
- 3 Recruiting and Retaining quality childminders.

SCMA was first set up in 1985 and became an independent organisation in 1990 at the AGM of the National Childminding Association.

The structure of the Scottish Childminding Association is based on a network of volunteer members from 32 local authority areas and around 60 staff who work to promote the organisation's aims daily. The strength of the Association lies in its belief that every member has the right to contribute and play an active part in the future of the Association through its many networks.

The Association has around 6,000 members. More than half of these members are part of local childminding support groups. There are also a number of corporate and other members who support the Association in its promotion of high quality childminding.

The Association is a Company Limited by Guarantee, whose directors are selected from 32 elected members representing the Unitary Authorities in Scotland. The Association seeks to promote childminding as a quality childcare service. Through its members, elected representatives, volunteers and paid staff, the Association strives to give advice on how the highest standards of childminding can be achieved.



SCMA has a team of development officers covering Scotland who are available for local support and information. These staff members develop childminding on the local authority areas and cover 5 regional teams: North, South East, South West, Central West and Central East.

Through this structure SCMA aims to provide registered childminders with a strong support network that provides training, advice, support, information and a representative for childminding in that area.

The Qualification(s)/Learning Programme(s)

The Scheme of Excellence was developed as an open learning resource to encourage registered childminders to become actively involved in the development of their childminding service.



ORGANISATION
Scottish Childminding Association
QUALIFICATION / LEARNING PROGRAMME
Scottish Childminding Association
Scheme of Excellence

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The material was designed to allow registered childminders to work through the material at their own pace, allowing them to become familiar with self-assessment and the concept of reflective practice. This process can equip them with the understanding, broadened knowledge base and skills to progress to an appropriate qualification, eg Scottish Vocational Qualification.

The Scheme of Excellence incorporates a mix of different types of learning; such as self-directed study resource with learning outcomes, supported study programme and unit assignments for completion and marking.

The 4 units within the Scheme of Excellence are –

- Unit 1 Professional Approach
- Unit 2 Meeting the Needs of Children
- Unit 3 Environment
- Unit 4 Partnerships with Parents

Reasons for submitting qualification/ learning programme for Credit Rating and Levelling

- ◆ Childminding is not readily recognised within the 3 categories of worker identified by SSSC for registration purposes: as a result, there is no clear indicator of the qualification or training requirement for childminders. Across Scotland childminders were experiencing difficulty in accessing training at an appropriate level. Many local authorities were recommending/offering training more appropriate for those working under supervision, eg National Certificates or SVQ level 2 awards.
- ◆ The Association believed that childminders undertaking practice development training should have a means of linking their achievements with a national framework. After seeking guidance from the Scottish Social Services Council, the Association decided to pursue credit rating and levelling for the Scheme of Excellence. This would enable the Association to offer childminders the opportunity to evidence their level of occupational competency.
- ◆ Completing the Scheme of Excellence would allow childminders to develop their practice in line with legislative requirements, and generate evidence that could, if required, contribute to underpinning knowledge for a full SVQ level 3.

Benefits

- ◆ The credit rating process allowed the Association to match competencies required for quality childminding with the wider early years qualification framework. By having the Scheme of Excellence credit rated within the SCQF, the profile of childminding has been raised. Many local authority Childcare Partnerships look more favourably on this award, now that they can see the relatedness to nationally-recognised qualifications. It also enables childminders wishing to move across the sector into other occupations the chance to more readily evidence their ability to work at this level of workplace competency.
- ◆ Until such time as the Executive's Workforce Development Review identifies the requirement for a specific qualification for the 6,000 plus childminders in Scotland, the Scheme of Excellence will assist childminders gain recognition for their commitment to the quality of the service they provide.

OUTCOME QUALIFICATION/ LEARNING PROGRAMME	SCQF LEVEL	SCQF CREDIT POINTS
Scottish Childminding Association Scheme of Excellence	6	10



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