

Childminding Liaison Officer

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Who are we?

SCMA is the only national organisation in Scotland specialising in supporting all aspects of childminding practice. We are a membership organisation with circa 2,600 members (more than 80% of the childminding workforce), we are an advocacy body (through which we provide a professional voice for childminding and work to ensure that national policy and standards as they impact upon childminding are influenced by evidence and the experiences of childminders), and we are also a national Third Sector service provider delivering an increasing range of contracted services to support the development of childminding, children and families.

Organisational Development & Strategy

It's an exciting time for SCMA as we recently published the second stage of our ten year 'Changing the Narrative' strategy. Originally launched in 2021 - in the midst of the pandemic and when few others were looking forward – we are incredibly proud of the huge progress we have made in our strategy so far.

As background, childminding had experienced a number of significant challenges over the years and SCMA developed a strategy in response, which we launched in May 2021 (mid-pandemic and at a time when few were looking forward) to promote recovery, strengthen childminding, support families and increase parental choice. This provided a catalyst for change and we are incredibly proud of all that we have achieved so far, including:

- ✓ significantly increasing the profile and importance of childminding
- ✓ making childminding more relevant to different policy agendas (ELC, school-age childcare, Additional Support Needs, remote and rural, community and economic development, parental employment, child poverty etc)
- ✓ securing vital Scottish Government funding commitments to childminding
- ✓ strengthening SCMA's voice, membership benefits, engagement and impact

Looking forward, '**Childminding: providing solutions for Scotland**' 2024 – 2027 is the start of an exciting new delivery phase of our strategy journey which is strongly focused on solutions, recognising that -

- **childminders** provide flexible, high-quality childcare solutions for families
- **childminding** provides solutions for a range of policy agendas
- **SCMA** provides solutions to help inform the development and implementation of policy and practice

Our strategy will continue to span the five work areas of 'Representation, Policy & Influencing', 'Workforce, Learning & Quality', 'Membership', 'Families & Communities' and the 'Value of Childminding' and contains 15 commitments and objectives including –

- continuing to represent and provide a voice for childminders
- strengthening membership support at all career stages
 - further developing our childminding-specific CPL programme, documentation and policies
 - supporting members to diversify their business models to support sustainability
- continuing to address the issues which have been causing childminders to leave the workforce
- delivering a new three-year national programme on childminder retention and recruitment (launched in June 2024)
- strengthening our family support and contributing to the further development of all-age childcare
- continuing to increase the profile and value of childminding

Our Services

As a membership organisation, we also deliver a range of services across Scotland, ensuring that childminders are able to improve the quality of their delivery through professional learning, providing high-quality, nurturing childcare and family support. At this time this includes the following:

- **Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)**
Working in partnership with 8 local authorities, we have locality-based field staff who support the involvement of childminders in the delivery of funded Early Learning and Childcare hours for 2,3 and 4-year-olds. Service delivery includes recruitment, training, quality assurance, ELC referrals, payments, and overall support.
- **Community Childminding**
We are commissioned to provide Community Childminding services in 5 local authority areas (Aberdeen, Fife, Glasgow, Scottish Borders, and Stirling). Community Childminders receive enhanced training to provide short-term childminding placements for children and families who would benefit from early intervention support. These vital services have helped over 900 families in need in the last 3 years, demand exceeds our capacity to supply, and we believe this has the potential to be developed in other local authority areas and indeed nationally. Click on the link to see more information, including our Community Childminding Briefing Sheet. childminding.org/community-childminding
- **Family Childminding Partnership**
Delivering holistic family support and informing transformational change within national policy delivery for one-year olds and their siblings. We are piloting this model, based on our Community Childminding, in five Local Authority areas (Aberdeenshire, Falkirk, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire and West Lothian). It aims to test the impact and outcomes of a model which supports whole family wellbeing, is targeted at families in need and supports the key commitments of The Promise, through the provision of preventative family support within enhanced, nurturing childminding placements.
- **Professional Learning**
Our Learn with SCMA function offers a range of Continuing Professional Learning (CPL) opportunities to support childminders with ongoing quality improvement. Over 90% of childminders consistently score 'Good' or Above across all quality criteria, through independent inspection by the Care Inspectorate, which is the highest rating of any childcare provider. We provide interactive/virtual learning courses and events as well as our e-learning courses delivered on our own SCMA online platform.
- **School-Aged Childcare**
We are currently working across 4 Early Adopter local authorities to deliver a School-Aged Childcare service (SACC), raising awareness of childminders as providers of SACC, providing funded access to SACC in childminding settings as well as recruiting new childminders into the workforce. It will support low-income families and those where children have additional support needs, seeking to reduce the impact of child poverty. It will also provide key learning and modelling to inform future expansion and sustainability of school-aged childcare with childminders.
- **Workforce Retention and Recruitment**
We are delighted to have received funding from the Scottish Government to support our exciting new Workforce Programme, 'Programme for Scotland's Childminding Future', aimed at retaining and growing the number of childminders across Scotland. This work is currently in the development and early implementation stage, with key targets to support new childminders through the registration process, alongside pilot models involving Funded Time Off The Floor, Mentoring and Quality and Learning support for current childminders.

Visit our website to learn more about SCMA, our wide range of activities and increasing influence on behalf of childminders and families. childminding.org

About the role of Childminding Liaison Officer

The successful applicant will work alongside local authority partners such as education and community services, as well as third sector and family support organisations. You will work closely with the Childminding Development Officer and Area Manager West, with the aim of increasing the understanding of how childminding works and the technical aspects of how childminders can deliver a school age childcare model and other models of funded childcare for priority families.

The postholder is required to have a proven ability to work with partners, negotiate and represent childminding. Enthusiasm, self-motivation, good communication and excellent organisational skills are required.

Working for us – Benefits

Our staff matter to us. Previously achieving a Silver award in Investors In People, we subsequently developed our own internal approach to ensuring the success of our organisation through our people – aptly named “Engaging With Our People”.

In addition, we offer the following benefits:

- Generous Annual Leave entitlement - 27 days annual leave plus 10 days public holidays (with long term service increase after 5 years)
- Flexible working
- Contributory Pension Scheme
- Life Cover– 3 x gross annual salary
- Health Assured - Employee Assistance Programme

Application process

If you believe you have the skills and experience and could make a difference in this role, we would love to hear from you.

All applicants must complete an application form including providing a competency-based statement demonstrating their possession of the experience, skills and knowledge required to fulfil this role.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss the role in more detail, please contact Mary Ramsay, Area Manager West in the first instance. Email mary.ramsay@childminding.org

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