

Childminding Best Practice Newsletter

Issue 33: Winter 2021



Welcome to the Winter 2021 Childminding Best Practice Newsletter. We produce this newsletter four times a year to promote childminding best practice topics with a focus on safety, health, diversity awareness and childminding in the great outdoors (Forest Childcare). We also use it to highlight any changes to legislation or policy that may affect your childminding business.

The next issue will be coming out in Spring 2022.

Thank you to everyone who sent in contributions to this newsletter. We welcome contributions from readers on all aspects of childminding best practice.

Happy reading!

Kay, Jennifer and Amanda

[Inspirational best practice](#) ideas, stories and links

Use my annual free 2022 Diversity Planning Calendar to 'actively' promote British values



2022 Diversity Planning Calendar					
January 1 st - World Bulb Day 20 th - World Health Day	February 2 nd - Chinese New Year (Year of the Tiger) 17 th - Random Acts of Kindness Day 28 th - Black History Month (UK)	March 1 st - St David's Day 8 th - Kinoshita Day 11 th - International Women's Day 17 th - St Patrick's Day 21 st - World Water Day 23 rd - World Book Day 24 th - World Day of the Girl	April 1 st - Easter 22 nd - Earth Day 29 th - St George's Day	May 1 st - May 4 th - World Mental Health Day 12 th - World Day for Cultural Diversity 24 th - World Day of the Girl	June 19 th - Father's Day
July 1 st - UK Independence Day 10 th - International Day of Friendship	August 23 rd - World of the Girl Day 24 th - World of the Girl Day	September 22 nd - World Day of the Girl	October 2 nd - World Day of the Girl 10 th - World Food Day 14 th - World Day of the Girl 20 th - World Day of the Girl	November 11 th - World Day of the Girl 19 th - World Day of the Girl 20 th - World Day of the Girl	December 18 th - World Day of the Girl

British values continues to be a hot topic for Ofsted. One way to show that you are actively promoting British values at your setting is to plan to celebrate some multicultural holidays and festivals in 2022. There are so many awareness days and festivals to choose from! [My free one page diversity planning calendar](#) can give you some focus and help you to get started.

Kidstogo is changing hands – Kay Woods has gone back to school

I have some exciting news. At the end of the year **Jennifer Fishpool and Amanda Goode** are taking over Kidstogo. Jennifer has been an outstanding childminder and Early Years Educator for many years and you will know her from the wonderful colouring pages she designs for the packs. She comes from an arts and teaching background and has worked in a wide variety of different settings. She believes there is no better setting for young children than at a childminder so is passionate about helping childminders and promoting the profession. Her sister Amanda is passionate about nature and the outdoors and loves coming up with creative ways to help children learn. She will help with the admin side of the business as well as the creation of some of the packs. Together they will bring so much creativity to the monthly packs, and I'm sure that you will love their fresh ideas and energy going forward.

As for me, I live in the USA now and I've gone back to school to retrain as a physician associate. I'm 45, I must be mad! But after all those first aid courses, I am loving learning medicine and this is an exciting new career for me as my own girls (featured in so many of my packs as toddlers) are now grown into teenagers.

Idea to do instead of an advent calendar with childminded children – *contributed by Louise Scott*

It's the first year (at 33) I don't have a advent calendar! Instead....every day, I will place something in this box food, toiletries etc., then on Christmas Eve I will take it to a shelter or find a homeless person to give it to! Let's share this idea and make someone else's Christmas special.





My new [Characteristics of Effective Learning Pack](#) is tools, activities to put the CEOL into practice

The importance of devising your own curriculum suitable for your own children – by Jennifer Fishpool

A few people lately have been asking if we are going to be producing a ready made curriculum that they can follow with their children. This is not something we intend doing and would advise against you investing in any scheme that says you just have to follow what is in their material without putting anything else into it. This is because all childminding settings are unique as are the children attending them. So, for example, a curriculum that would suit a setting in a fairly middle class, semi-rural location would not necessarily suit a setting in an urban, working class or deprived area. You do not need to write down your curriculum in any formal way but the important thing to consider is the needs of your children. Do they need more support with a particular area? Use the basic subject information provided in the first section of the EYFS and build upon it thinking about what your children need and work from there. For example, under physical development; what activities will you provide the children to help them build and develop their fine motor and gross motor skills?

If you get stuck for ideas why not join the [Childminding Best Practice Club](#)? You will receive a toolkit with everything you need, including but not limited to: news, continual professional development activities, planning and activity ideas and for children including children under two and craft ideas with templates for the older children.

We are also working on a sequenced curriculum ideas document which will give you lots of activity ideas for different topics and subject areas, all arranged in development order. Keep an eye out on future newsletters for more information.



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Please [Like me](#) on Facebook

Please like and follow my Facebook page. I share inspection tips, craft and activity ideas, news stories affecting childminders, articles supporting best practice, legislation updates and some funnies. Liking my Facebook page is also a totally



Another outstanding for childminder Linda Poxon

Thank you so much for forwarding your updated 2 yr progress check. Everything I have purchased in the past from you have been incredibly helpful and invaluable. I'm soo proud to say that my last two Ofsted inspections have seen me graded as "OUTSTANDING" Linda xx



Fact or Myth: You don't need to do written risk assessments

Myth: The EYFS Statutory Framework states that you must take all reasonable steps to manage risks and determine where it is helpful to do some written risk assessments. It used to be a requirement for childminders to write written risk assessments for EVERYTHING but this has been removed from the current version of the legislation to help childminders to cut back on paperwork. This certainly doesn't mean that you never need to do risk assessments in writing.

In most normal day to day childminding, a written risk assessment is simply not necessary and just adds to unnecessary paperwork load.

However, from time to time, and **especially when you are just starting out at childminding or doing something new**, I think that it is very useful to go through the whole risk assessment process properly in writing at least once so that you know how to do it. Writing it out forces you to formalise the process in your mind so that any corners you choose to cut in the future, at least you know what you SHOULD be doing.

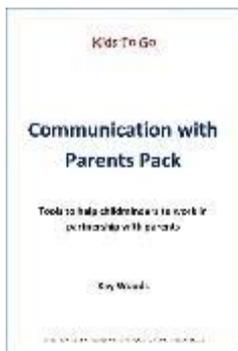
Risk Assessment Form - EXAMPLE

Date of Risk Assessment: _____ Risk Assessment carried out by: _____

DESCRIPTION/ACTIVITY or outing to be assessed	POTENTIAL RISK	CONTROL MEASURES TO MINIMISE RISK	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ASSESSING RISK/TO BE DONE
Swimming - Supervised at all times	Children are not swimmers	Children are closely supervised in the water	CF
Access - External	Children could fall as they walk	A path is cleared and kept well maintained	CF
Wine - 18/09	Wine on the table or on the floor	Wine is kept in a secure container and the table is cleared of wine as soon as possible and reported as any other spillage	CF

www.kidstogo.co.uk

For a [free risk assessment blank template](#), examples of what to write on it and list of things childminders might want to risk assess around the home, garden and outings.



“Sam’s mum couldn’t care less” – why partnerships with parents don’t have to be like this

In an ideal world all parents and childminders would communicate perfectly and we’d all have great partnership working with all parents, but in reality this is not always the case. Building partnerships takes time and ongoing effort and everyone needs to keep working at it.

Some parents are easier to work with than others. “Sam’s mum couldn’t care less,” is unfortunately how many childminders feel about the parents they work with. I am hoping this pack will encourage you to ask instead: what can I do to encourage Sam’s mum to work with me more?

The key points about communication with parents are that:

- Parents are experts on their child – so we need to tap into their knowledge.
- Practitioners are experts on learning and development – but we won't succeed with any child if the parents don't continue what we do at home.
- Effective parenting can take many different forms – the more we respect that, the stronger our relationship will be.
- Effective communication can take many forms – it is up to us to be flexible in our approach because we are the professionals.

Children benefit when the people most involved in their everyday care and learning have good, meaningful communication. If you set up a good working relationship with parents, so that you are both on the same side right from the beginning, then this will make it easier to work through any more challenging conversations that may arise later on. My [Partnership with Parents](#) pack can help you to improve how you work with parents so you have everything in place to improve your childminding business and impress Ofsted!



[Childminding Best Practice Club – monthly activity packs and membership](#)

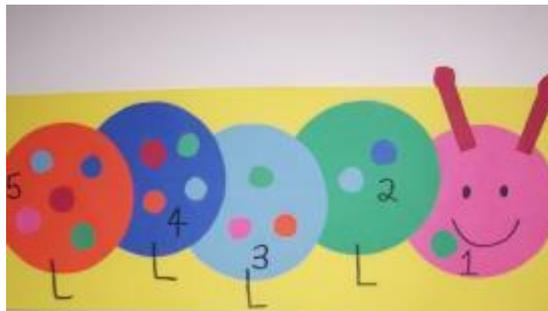
Art and Activity Ideas

NEW: Childminding Best Practice Club – Themed Activity Packs emailed to you - £2.50 per month – December is ‘Christmas Themed’. January is ‘things that fly’

Members of my [Childminding Best Practice Club](#) are emailed a monthly pack of themed activities, plus activities that support continual professional development (CPD). Please join today to get templates and instructions for fun themed activities emailed to you every month.



Counting Caterpillar – free EYFS Counting printable



Promote counting while you make a caterpillar with the children. [Follow the instructions](#) about what to observe on the printout.

Pipe Cleaner Modelling



Pipe cleaner modelling is a fun 'process art' idea. The finished product is not important – it's the process of making the shapes that is important. Buy yourself a pack of pipe cleaners and have a go at pipe cleaner modelling. This is a great activity you can do easily even on a car journey. We made: a spider, a flower, bracelets, a basket, a mouse, some people, a pair of glasses, some shapes, a butterfly, a crown, and a monster. What can you make?

Wipes Box Numbers Activity – *contributed by Sophie Hesketh*

I love DIY crafts ideas for the kids. Thank you Sophie, this is such a great use of wipes lids.



Discovering sounds activity – *contributed by Amanda Armitage*

Love this discovering sounds activity using cornflakes and farm animals in a play tray. “Sounds like walking in the leaves,” says her three year old.





Helping you to stay on top of the paperwork

[EYFS Paperwork, Policy and Legislation News](#)

Covid-19 In Your Setting – by Amanda Goode

Ofsted registered early years and childcare must notify Ofsted of any confirmed cases of coronavirus in their setting and also if you have had to close as a result. For more information, or to report, please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tell-ofsted-if-you-have-a-covid-19-incident-at-your-childcare-business>

The number of covid-19 notifications from early years and childcare settings that have been reported to Ofsted can be viewed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reported-coronavirus-covid-19-cases-by-registered-early-years-and-childcare-settings>

The most recent figures show that in the week beginning 11/10/2021 there were 1643 notifications. This is the highest reported number since the end of July 2021.



The [Ultimate Childminding Checklist](#) is 3 checklists in 1 including a count down to your Ofsted Inspection.

New Minister for Children and Families – by Jennifer Fishpool

Will Quince has been appointed the new Minister for children and families. He replaces Vicky Ford, who some of you may remember I wrote to in September. (If you have not seen my letter you can see it here: [Letter to Vicky Ford MP](#) . Part of his responsibilities include the early years so it will be interesting to see what he gets up to. Watch this space!



Forest Childcare members
make a commitment to weekly
outdoor outings.

Forest Childcare Association news

Children love learning and sharing what they have learned while you are on your Forest Childcare trips. Teach children the names for anything you know and help to build their vocabulary. Sometimes it is fun to look things up on the internet and learn more about the names of things you see on your trips. But always remember, you should go to the woods and take the children there, even if you don't know anything about what you are seeing. You are taking them there so they can EXPERIENCE nature.

How to write a Forest Childcare blog – *contributed by Decima Isles-Broughton*



Children enjoying themselves outdoors make the nicest types of photographs you can take to show parents that children are happy in your care. It is a great way to advertise the service you provide and promote your business! Childminder Decima Isles-Broughton from London writes a blog about her Forest Childcare adventures which she shares with the parents. [Check out her blog](#) to see how she does it.



Why Forest Childcare impresses parents– *contributed by Rachel Tanswell*

I love the outdoors and nature so the Forest Childcare pack was perfect for my setting. It has been well received by the parents and all the children and has inspired us to go on lots of woodland walks, make dens, hunt for mini beasts, pond dipping and climbing trees. I have even bought a mud kitchen for my garden and the children love making mud pies and mud potions



Forest Childcare Facebook Page – join our online community

The Forest Childcare Association has its own [Facebook Page](#). Please like my page and join our discussions, share your photographs and enjoy the links, stories, craft and activity ideas, poetry, photos and inspirational ideas we share.

[Free Product Updates](#)

There are no updates to products at this time.

If you like reading my newsletters, chances are your childminding friends will like them too. Please share this newsletter on social media such as Facebook.

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