

Childminding Best Practice Newsletter

Issue 24: Autumn 2019



Welcome to the Autumn 2019 Childminding Best Practice Newsletter. I 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). I also use it to highlight any changes to legislation or policy that may affect your childminding business.

In this issue:



Simple Halloween ghost project



Counting chart of 'found' items



Clever 'tongs' invitation to play idea

- [Forest Childcare Association news](#) and stories – members describe their outdoor experiences, plus links and activity ideas
- [Crafts](#) loads of great crafts in this issue for Autumn, Halloween and Bonfire Night.
- [Articles, Blogs and Information Pages](#)
 - Do you give childminded children homework to help support learning at home?
- [Inspirational best practice](#)
 - What would you do if this happened to you: children calling you 'mummy'
 - How to get outstanding under the new Inspection Framework

- FGM training
 - Planning for an emergency
 - Fact or myth: as long as I'm doing the learning and development areas, I don't need to do the COEL
-
- [EYFS Paperwork, Policy and Legislation News](#)
 - [Free product updates](#)

The next issue (Winter) will be coming out in **December 2019 and will include my annual free printable Diversity Calendar.**

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

Happy reading!

Kay



Forest Childcare Association news

Members of the Forest Childcare Association commit to taking the children on an outdoor outing to a 'wild' place once a week. Children who play outdoors a lot grow up with a greater awareness of environmental issues. Children are the future of our planet. If we want them to care about saving it, Forest Childcare trips are a great way to make environmental issues a part of their lives.

Forest Childcare members make a commitment to weekly outdoor outings.

Going on a Bear Hunt – contributed by Claire Jones



"It's a beautiful day. We're not scared."

Here we are going on a Bear hunt in Moss Nature Reserve, Whitchurch Shropshire. A fun day trip had by all.

Make a counting wall chart of found items – contributed by Donna Cannon



We have been enjoying collecting and spotting and the children and I have made a very large number wall chart of found items. We enjoy our weekly visits to the woodlands and we always create a new theme from which we get from your craft activities folder which is so helpful full of ideas.

Also, I would like to thank you as **I feel you had a part to play in my husband and I maintaining our outstanding Ofsted reputation** as I was able to adapt and use information which I had gained from your paperwork and practice.



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.

Tractor Ride – *contributed by Kathy Goldsmith from Juniper Day Care*



We are fortunate enough to have private woods where the children love to play ~ this week we took the children down the lane and into the woods by tractor and trailer - they loved it! We got very muddy and dirty but had a fabulous time!

Family Fun Day in the Forest – *contributed by Lou*



“By getting the parents actively involved they were able to see first hand just how much learning was taking place & how their children thrived in an outdoor environment.”

Just thought I would share one of our great days out this summer. Every year I hold a fun family event for the children in my care, their parents & siblings. This year we had a 'Family Fun Day in the Forest' held at our local country park. Everyone got involved in a den building challenge, explored the forest trails using nature spotter sheets & enjoyed a picnic in the park. The day was a great success with lots of positive feedback & several parents have since reported taking their children on more trips to the woods for their own 'forest fun!' By getting the parents actively involved they were able to see first hand just how much learning was taking place & how their children thrived in an outdoor environment.



[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 – September is ‘Goldilocks and the Three Bears Themed’. October is Halloween and Diwali.

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 Halloween and Diwali themed activities like these:



Autumn Tree - contributed by Dawn Barnett

I LOVE Dawn's enormous cardboard box tree. The tree was made from boxes and was painted over a couple of days on a big mat on the floor. Dawn writes, "the tree can be any season really, just add blossom, snow flakes or green leaves etc for different seasons. The same with the apples, they could be birds, flowers etc. All ages enjoyed this. They all enjoyed the tree painting and leaf sticking, the older ones made the owls and the younger ones did the apple printing. It all covers all areas of learning!"



Salt Dough Pumpkin Craft – *contributed by Stacey Dugan*

Love Stacey's keepsake pumpkin craft just made of salt dough and painted to send home with children on Halloween.



Two simple ghost crafts – *contributed by Shani Anderson*

I love these two crafts that Shani has sent in because they are really eye catching and things the children can make themselves very easily.



**Using Tongs Invitation to Play – contributed by Cathy Smith
from Aunt Cathy's Childminding Service**

Superb invitation to play idea here. The children were given tongs to retrieve the items through the masking tape.



Autumn Leaf Suncatchers - contributed by Jill Parker

The children enjoyed going on a leaf hunt. We had read "We're Going on a Leaf Hunt" before our adventure to find different coloured leaves. The children picked Autumn coloured paint to paint the outside of the suncatcher which is made from a paper plate.



**Bonfire Night idea – 5th November – edible fireworks -
contributed by Stacey Dugan**

Very simple to make – just cool them in the fridge.





[Articles, Blogs and Information Pages](#)

Information pages on www.childmindingbestpractice.com

I have added lots of new information pages to my [Childminding Best Practice website](#) where I also publish my blog articles. On this site you can search for information, articles, links, and support by topic including:

- [Inspection](#)
- [New to childminding](#)
- [Continual Professional Development \(CPD\)](#)
- [Official document links](#)
- [Business tips for childminders](#)
- [Themes for childminding settings](#)

Remember to “[follow](#)” [my blog](#) to receive articles by email. You just need to enter your email address. Please note that the blog is not the same as my newsletter.

Do you give childminded children ‘homework’ to support learning at home?

What sorts of things do you send home in your settings? [\[more\]](#)

Loose Parts Play – guest blog by Samantha Boyd

Lots of great ideas for how to safely do loose parts play with small children. [\[more\]](#)

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 free way to support my small business and I really appreciate you taking the time.



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

Planning for an emergency

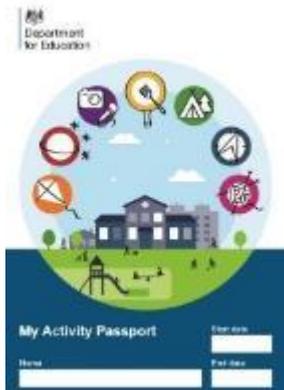
We always hope that it won't happen, but when you childmind you need to plan for an emergency. Important points to consider are:

- Do you have a back up childminder you could leave the children with in an emergency and does she have the parents' contact details?
- Do you have access to a phone at all times especially if you store important phone numbers on your phone?
- Do you have and practice a fire drill plan?
- Do you and the children know what to do if one of you suddenly finds themselves lost?

The more you practice what you would do in an emergency, the more likely everyone is to keep their head if the situation arises. Remember that for data protection reasons you need to have parental permission to give their contact details to another childminder.

My Activity Passport

[My Activity Passport](#) is a popular Dept for Education free printable booklet. You can download it here. The activities begin at Reception age (so are fine for many EYFS children) and there are lots of ideas for school aged children too.



Help put an end to FGM in the UK

FGM is illegal in England, Wales and Northern Ireland as outlined in the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 but a case recently in the UK showed that it can be done to children as young as 3. If you know of any cases where FGM has been performed on someone under the age of 18, you must report this to the Police. If you think a child may have had FGM or you suspect they are at risk, you should follow your own safeguarding procedures, or contact your local safeguarding area education officer.

Signs to look out for:

- Absence: if children are going on 'holiday' towards the end of term, visiting a country of origin. Children may share that all female members of family including aunts and cousins are going on 'holiday'
- An older female family member visiting the UK from a country of origin
- A girl disclosing she is to have a 'special procedure' or that they are attending a special occasion to 'become a woman'
- Difficulty walking, sitting, standing
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom
- Concerns related to a girl's genitalia during nappy changing

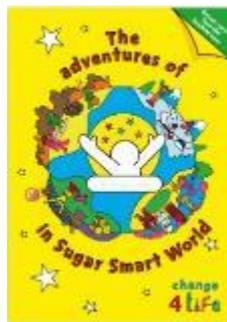
- Difficulties urinating
- Lengthy absences
- Frequent urinary infections
- Behavioural changes e.g. withdrawal, depression upon return to provision
- Asking for help but not explicit about the problem.



[Free training is available](#) through many sources including your council and the Home Office

Sugar Smart World take-home pack

[Information to send home](#) about unhealthy foods – great way to show you are supporting learning at home



What would you do if this happened to you: Childminded children keep calling you ‘mummy’?

The childminded children keep calling you ‘mama’. You have tried to correct them and say things like “give it to Jess” or “Jess will do it” but it doesn’t seem to make any difference. You don’t want to upset the real mums by them thinking you encourage this. What should you do?

Here’s what other childminders say:

Keep going with what you are doing. Make sure parents are reinforce it. They will grow out of it.

When they call me ‘mummy’ I laugh and say, “come on what’s my name?”

Mine all call my Nanny, as I look after two of my grandchildren. I quite like it.

I had one who called me mum until he was 2.5. I corrected him every time and he eventually learned to say my name. He still says mum when not thinking.

I just say, "Oh mummy's at work she will pick you up later. Do you want Ella to do it?"

All of mine call or have called me mummy at some point. They know I'm not, but it's natural. I just correct or go with it. They grow out of it.

Ah, I think it's cute and shows how comfortable and safe the children feel with you.

Mine is the other way around, my own one year old called me Jess because that's what everyone else called me.



Tips for Outstanding Ofsted Inspections

During your inspection, remember to try and get the children to do as much as they can for themselves because promoting children's independence ready for school is really a hot topic for inspectors. So if you go out, make sure you get the children to attempt their own shoes. And if you prepare a snack, try to get the children to help prepare it and to pour their own drinks etc.

Ofsted outstanding for Childminding Best Practice Club Member Sharon Roussel

I wanted to let you know I had my Ofsted inspection yesterday and it went really well. She was here for four hours, observed, went through all my paperwork and fired many questions at us. I showed her the Childminding Best Practice Club documents and other information I have got from you. She was really impressed. I would like to thank you for all your hard work, information sharing and helping me make my life easier and look so professional. My outcome was Outstanding!!! I was so very pleased and emotional. Been childminding for 25 years now and this was my first Outstanding grade.

How to get outstanding under the new Ofsted Framework

The new September Framework has some new areas of focus that you should be aware of if you are going to be inspected and want to get outstanding [\[more\]](#)

CHILD MINDING FACT OR MYTH?

Fact or Myth: As long as I'm doing the Learning and Development areas then I don't really need to worry about the Characteristics of Effective Learning

Myth: Many childminders spend a lot of time learning about the learning and development areas listed in Development Matters and then just have a quick glance at the Characteristics of Effective Learning. The Progress Check Age 2, for example, focusses on learning in the prime areas, as do many transition reports, because the learning and development areas are easier to 'measure'. The child can either count up to 10 or he can't etc.

But the Characteristics of Effective Learning aren't just add ons. They are, in many ways, more important than many of the Learning and Development goals. Because the COEL are the characteristics that set children up for becoming learners for life. The COEL are the dispositions towards learning that affect how well children perform in school and even how successful they will be as adults.

The COEL are included in the EYFS Statutory Framework and are given even more importance in the updated Inspection Handbook and you need to be planning activities to help the children to develop them. They are not just passive things that are acquired in the background to normal activities, they are skills that you can actively help children to acquire by planning activities that promote them.

The COEL are lifelong skills but they begin in the Early Years which is why you, as their childminder, can have an enormous influence on each child's acquisition of the COEL. Before sending him off to school you can really help a child by ensuring he has the ability to concentrate, to persevere at a task and approaches new things with a can-do attitude. The reverse is also true. If you and the education system fail to instil the COEL into children they grow into adults who avoid challenges because they believe they are not capable, who worry about their limitations and give up on things whenever they become too difficult.

A child who fails to acquire the COEL begins his school life at a disadvantage. So please take the COEL seriously – they are not just boxes to be ticked on your learning journey forms – you can really help to make a difference to a child's life.



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



Australian Kids Health Information Site

I like the straightforward way this site gives out information without sugar coating things. Refreshingly Australian. [The Kids Health section](#) includes helpful facts and information about topics such as making friends and friendships and anti-bullying info.



Helping you to stay on top of the paperwork

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

Bumps and bruises: what Ofsted needs

Useful article on what Ofsted really requires regarding notifications on accidents - [Bumps and bruises: what Ofsted needs](#)

Information from Ofsted on becoming a childminder

Pre-registration briefing from Ofsted for [those wishing to become childminders](#).

What is new for childminders in the new Inspection Framework?

Learning walks, cultural capital, curriculum, 'learn-know-do' and even potty training... lots of new areas of focus and new Ofsted buzz words. This article will take you through the changes so you can see what you need to change ready for your next inspection [[more](#)]



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

Free Product Updates

The Ultimate Childminding Checklist and Guided Self Evaluation Packs have both been updated to reflect the September changes in the new Ofsted inspection framework. If you have previously bought these products from me, please email me to request a free update.

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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