

# A Childminder's tale of lockdown

**As a childminder who has been registered for twenty-five years and counting I have seen many changes over the years but Covid-19 brought with it a whole new set of challenges.**

I would like to share with you some of the things I have done to help parents feel confident to return to work and leave their children with me. I still have initial meeting with new parents, but these have taken place in my garden and I have set up WhatsApp chats before the child attends to help the parents and myself to get to know each other a little better and this helped me to answer a lot of their questions before their child started.

I have limited the amount of paperwork passed between myself and the family. They complete the statutory forms that I need but daily information about their child's time with me is sent each day by WhatsApp (along with a photographic diary of the child's activities each day).

I have put a new risk assessment into place and policy and procedure concerning the Coronavirus for my existing families, this includes:

- A new doorstep policy, this ensures that no parents enter the setting, children are dropped off and collected by one person at the door at an allocated time to make sure that only one family is present at any one time.
- An updated illness and infection policy, stating symptoms to be aware of and laying out the guidelines for isolating should any family member have symptoms.
- An updated hygiene policy including handwashing procedures for all children and my procedure for cleaning and disinfecting my toys, resources and the rooms that the children would use. I had also made the decision to open an hour later and close an hour earlier to allow time to sanitise my setting and had reduced my resources packing away a lot and carefully selecting those that could be easily cleaned. I had organised seven small baskets of books, one for each day reducing the risk of cross infection between the children.
- My plan to utilise my outdoor area as much as possible.

I am thankful that I have such good relationships with my parents and the support and loyalty they have shown to myself and my setting during this time has reminded me why I chose childminding as a career all those years ago.

