Childcare sector welcomes new Worked Based Award

Monday 23 April, 2018

Six steps form one giant leap towards an accredited qualification.

Over 5,500 childminders across Scotland, and those entering the childcare sector, now have access to an accredited Work Based Award that recognises and values the unique form of childcare they provide, thanks to the launch of the Complete Childminding Learning Pathway. The Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) working with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) have developed the Work Based Award that is credit rated at Level 7 on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework.

Dr Janet Brown, SQA Chief Executive, said: “This new Work Based Award will give childminders the opportunity to be recognised for the skills and knowledge they developed throughout their careers. The new qualification will also help to raise the profile of childminders and the vital role they play within Scotland’s early learning and childcare landscape.”

SQA officially launched the Work Based Award on Saturday 21 April at their offices in Glasgow and learners are likely to be those interested in becoming a professional childminder or wishing to widen and develop their knowledge and skills for continuous professional learning. Speaking about these learning opportunities, James Dornan MSP, and Convener on the Scottish Parliament’s Education and Skills Committee said: “It is well known that education is the *defining mission* of our government. Lifelong learning is a huge part of this and the launch of the Complete Childminding Learning Pathway is now ensuring that childminders have a recognised route that very much supports the unique form of childcare which they provide. It is excellent news that childminders taking part in the Award will gain accreditation of their prior learning and, of course, it will be the children in their care who will be the main beneficiaries. The whole focus is on the needs of children and I welcome this Work Based Award within the Early Learning and Childcare sector.”

Six Work Based Units make up the steps that form one giant leap towards an accredited qualification and commenting on its launch, Maggie Simpson, Chief Executive of SCMA said: “SCMA has worked closely with SQA to launch this Work Based Award that has now established a learning and development pathway for childminders. It supports the commitment of the Scottish Government in the Blueprint Action Plan, to help secure a role for childminders, and will allow them to gain accreditation for their prior learning whilst working towards a recognised qualification.

“This is good news and ultimately will help to professionalise our sector in line with proposals in the Blueprint for 2020 Expansion of ELC in Scotland - ELC Service Model for 2020 which is currently out for consultation.”

The Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Service Model for 2020: Consultation Paper, aims to set out the ‘Funding Follows the Child’ approach for funded ELC and the Scottish Government is now consulting widely on the proposed National Standard, which will set out quality criteria for all services that provide funded ELC.

Minister for Childcare and Early Years Maree Todd, said: “I’m very pleased to welcome the launch of this Work Based Award for childminders. We are committed to making Scotland the best place to grow up, with every child given the best chance to succeed and fulfil their potential, and childminders have a key role in that.

“They support many children and families across Scotland and will also play an important part in the delivery of the expanded funded Early Learning and Childcare provision in the years to come.

“This Work Based Award will help ensure that more childminders are recognised professionally for the high-quality service they provide.”

Barbara Dennistoun, who is a childminder and Convener of SCMA is set to start her journey on the pathway. She added: “During my career I have always actively engaged in learning, so I am really pleased that this qualification is accredited and will recognise my prior learning. As a childminder, my work is always focused on the needs of the children in my care to ensure the best possible start in life for them. My work is still all about children, but the Childminding Learning Pathway will help professionalise my career and reflect the excellent service provided by childminders throughout Scotland.”

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Scottish Childminding Association

T. 01786 434953
E. helen.forrest@childminding.org
W. https://www.childminding.org

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