

Scottish childminding conference shaping up for success

Wednesday 28 September, 2016

Delegate bags are bursting at the seams with merchandise, and final preparations are well underway, for the *SCMA Annual Conference: Where next? Shaping the future of childminding*, which is taking place on Saturday 1 October 2016 at the Carnegie Conference Centre, Dunfermline.

Childminding is on an ever-evolving journey and this year we are taking a look at the bigger role childminding plays, asking '*What does the future hold for Early Learning and Childcare services?*'

"We look forward to giving a warm welcome to all delegates attending our conference this weekend," said Maggie Simpson, Chief Executive of SCMA. "Childminders are central to the Scottish Government ambition for a massive expansion of Early Learning and Childcare, so we are pleased that Mark McDonald MSP, Minister for Childcare and Early Years will be speaking at our Conference. The focus will be firmly on the bigger role that childminding plays so we are also delighted that Dr Suzanne Zeedyk, a research psychologist whose work focuses on the interaction of parents and infants will be the keynote speaker. We have designed the conference to be both informative and enjoyable and I am sure it will be successful in stimulating a good deal of discussion on shaping the future of childminding in Scotland."

Throughout the day there will be a variety of exhibitors to visit in the Market Place areas – the networking hub of the conference – and workshops for delegates to attend that include:

- *Shaping the future of child and family transitions*
- *How good is your early learning and childcare service?*
- *Outdoor play*
- *Child led participation*
- *How hellos and goodbyes shape children's brains*

One of the major factors that will affect childminding in the future will be the expansion of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC), so the afternoon will finish with a networking session on the subject. Working collectively, childminders will take a look at the bigger role they play in the local community, asking '*What does the future hold for ELC services?*'

"SCMA champions childminders who can offer a blended approach to childcare," adds Maggie Simpson. "Parental choice and flexibility are vitally important to ensuring the best start in life for children and it is our belief that a childminding service is the ideal setting for children to experience their funded hours. Changes in our sector mean childminding has reached a cross-road and the conference is a perfect opportunity to help shape the future of our vital service."

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