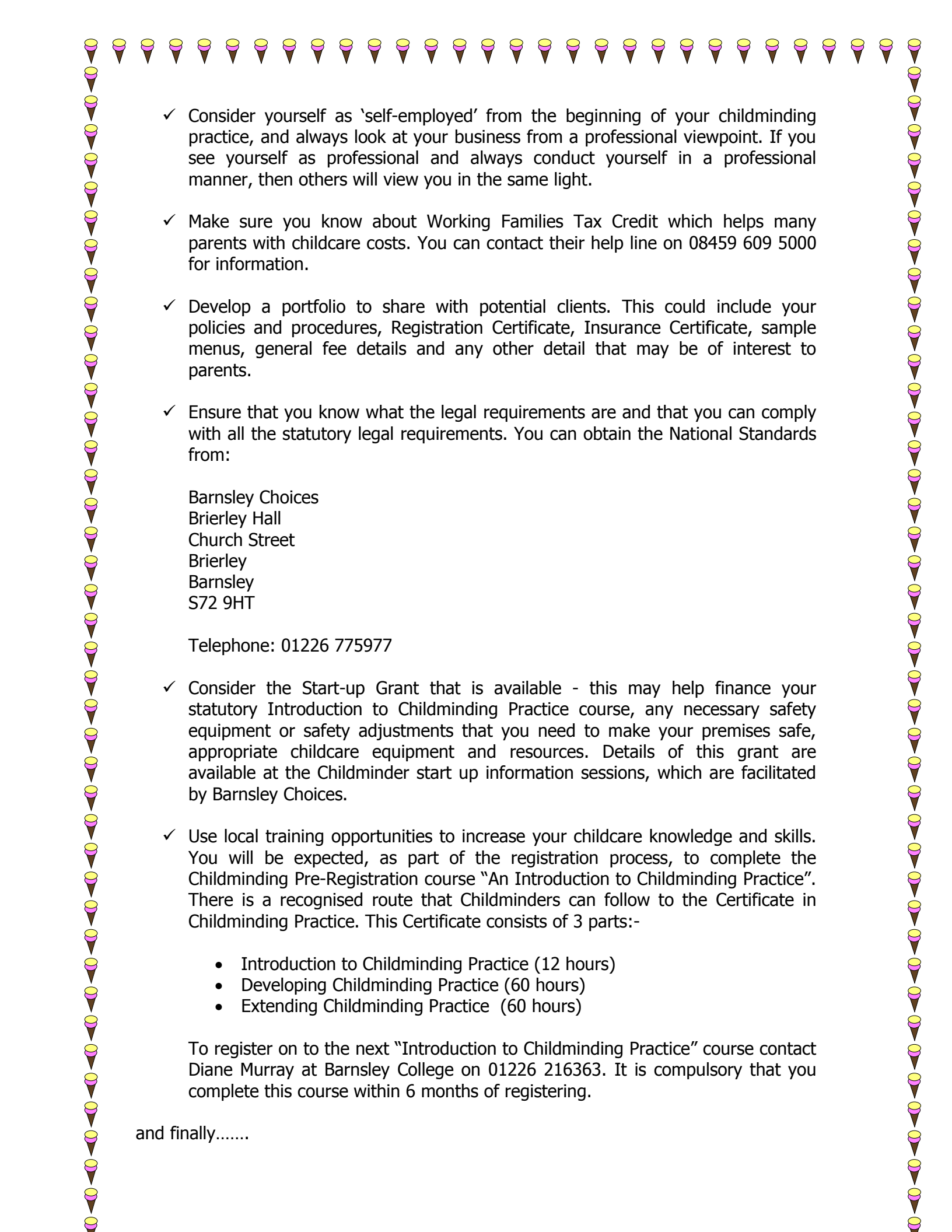


BARNSLEY CHOICES

CHILDMINDERS MARKET RESEARCH PACK

Thinking of Becoming a Childminder? Some tips to help you market your service and become successful.

- ✓ Before you begin, make positive links with other childcare providers such as local day nurseries, play groups, childminders. This vital link will help you market your service and raise your profile within the community. Ask other childcare providers about their business, such as what the demand for their service is (what hours are they asked to work, and what hours they are actually able to provide a service).
- ✓ Use every opportunity you can to promote yourself - tell anyone that you have contact with that you are *planning* to become a childminder. Then tell them when you have *become a registered childminder*. This could lead either directly to new business for you, or it may lead to a new business contact (a friend of a friend may be looking for a childminder, and this casual promotion of your service may lead to a new business arrangement for you).
- ✓ Advertise your services through local notice boards - libraries, local shops, health centres, schools, swimming baths, community centres, in fact anywhere that you think parents of young children may go.
- ✓ Establish what you will charge for the service you will provide - take care not to undercut your fees, or to price yourself out of the market. Find out what other local childminders currently charge, and decide what service the fees you charge will cover. For example, will the fees cover food, outings, nappies etc?
- ✓ Ensure that you have a written contract with the parents/guardians of the children you care for. This contract must be discussed in the early stages of your professional relationship with the family, and will set the boundaries for all the concerned parties. Setting up this type of contract will help to avoid any misunderstandings, either concerning the childcare or the financial arrangements.

- 
- ✓ Consider yourself as 'self-employed' from the beginning of your childminding practice, and always look at your business from a professional viewpoint. If you see yourself as professional and always conduct yourself in a professional manner, then others will view you in the same light.
 - ✓ Make sure you know about Working Families Tax Credit which helps many parents with childcare costs. You can contact their help line on 08459 609 5000 for information.
 - ✓ Develop a portfolio to share with potential clients. This could include your policies and procedures, Registration Certificate, Insurance Certificate, sample menus, general fee details and any other detail that may be of interest to parents.
 - ✓ Ensure that you know what the legal requirements are and that you can comply with all the statutory legal requirements. You can obtain the National Standards from:

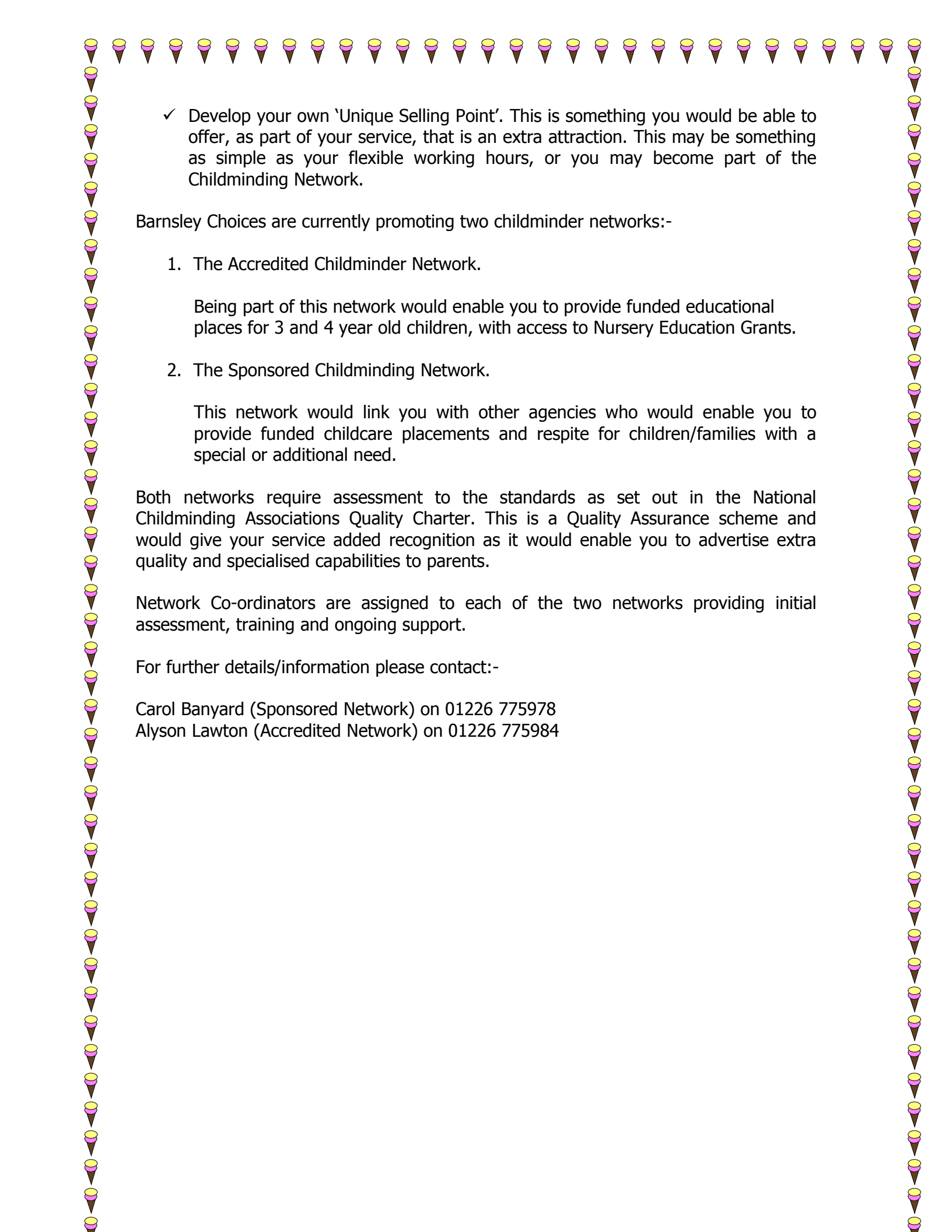
Barnsley Choices
Brierley Hall
Church Street
Brierley
Barnsley
S72 9HT

Telephone: 01226 775977

- ✓ Consider the Start-up Grant that is available - this may help finance your statutory Introduction to Childminding Practice course, any necessary safety equipment or safety adjustments that you need to make your premises safe, appropriate childcare equipment and resources. Details of this grant are available at the Childminder start up information sessions, which are facilitated by Barnsley Choices.
- ✓ Use local training opportunities to increase your childcare knowledge and skills. You will be expected, as part of the registration process, to complete the Childminding Pre-Registration course "An Introduction to Childminding Practice". There is a recognised route that Childminders can follow to the Certificate in Childminding Practice. This Certificate consists of 3 parts:-
 - Introduction to Childminding Practice (12 hours)
 - Developing Childminding Practice (60 hours)
 - Extending Childminding Practice (60 hours)

To register on to the next "Introduction to Childminding Practice" course contact Diane Murray at Barnsley College on 01226 216363. It is compulsory that you complete this course within 6 months of registering.

and finally.....

- 
- ✓ Develop your own 'Unique Selling Point'. This is something you would be able to offer, as part of your service, that is an extra attraction. This may be something as simple as your flexible working hours, or you may become part of the Childminding Network.

Barnsley Choices are currently promoting two childminder networks:-

1. The Accredited Childminder Network.

Being part of this network would enable you to provide funded educational places for 3 and 4 year old children, with access to Nursery Education Grants.

2. The Sponsored Childminding Network.

This network would link you with other agencies who would enable you to provide funded childcare placements and respite for children/families with a special or additional need.

Both networks require assessment to the standards as set out in the National Childminding Associations Quality Charter. This is a Quality Assurance scheme and would give your service added recognition as it would enable you to advertise extra quality and specialised capabilities to parents.

Network Co-ordinators are assigned to each of the two networks providing initial assessment, training and ongoing support.

For further details/information please contact:-

Carol Banyard (Sponsored Network) on 01226 775978

Alyson Lawton (Accredited Network) on 01226 775984