

About the Childcare Approval Scheme

The Home Childcare Approval Scheme in Wales took effect in February 2007 and is being run by Nestor Primecare Services Ltd, the Approval Body, under contract to the National Assembly for Wales. The approval fee, payable on application, is currently £99 and includes the cost of an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure (CRB check), maintenance of the website, a telephone helpline, an appeals process and all administrative costs and VAT.

The scheme is voluntary and only applies to childcare provided in Wales.

In order to be approved under this scheme the carer has to meet the following criteria at the point of application or renewal.

- Must be aged 18 years or over.
- Must have an existing qualification on the National Framework of Accredited Qualifications for Early Years, Childcare and Playwork at level 2 or higher.
- Hold a first aid certificate which is less than three years old, suitable for the care of babies and young children and which covers dealing with emergencies, resuscitation, shock, choking and anaphylactic shock.
- Be able to demonstrate that there is nothing in their past which would suggest that they are unsuitable to care for children (usually via a CRB check). Approval is valid for twelve months.

<http://www.childcareapprovalschemewales.co.uk/about.asp>

Tel: 0844 736 0260

What does the Scheme do for me?

What the scheme does

1. It verifies that the applicant has a suitable childcare qualification.
2. It verifies that the applicant has undergone appropriate first aid training within within three years of the date of application.
3. It carries out an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure (CRB check) including a POCA (Protection of Children Act) list check. The Childcare Approval Body will then assess whether the CRB check or entries on the POCA list contain information which would make the applicant unsuitable to work with children.
4. By using an approved carer, an employer may be able to access financial support through the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit or through employer supported childcare.

What the scheme does not do.

1. It does not verify whether the childcarer is eligible to work in the UK.
2. It does not clarify the age group they are suitable to work with.
3. It does not guarantee that parents using an approved child carer are entitled to financial support either via working tax credit or employer supported childcare.
4. It does not remove the parent's responsibility to make sure that child carers are individually suitable to look after their children.

Why should my nanny be approved?

Benefits to Parents

- By using an approved carer you know that they have been checked and met basic criteria as a childcarer.
- This means that they are not unsuitable to care for children and have some understanding of their needs and what to do in an emergency.
- By using an approved carer you may be able to access financial support through the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit or through employer supported childcare.

Benefits to Child Carers

- Increased employability through a nationally recognised approval scheme commissioned by the National Assembly for Wales.
- Recognised confirmation of childcare training and status.
- Increased opportunity for employment with parents who may benefit from claiming tax benefits when using approved child carers.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. If I care for a child or children in one of their homes do I have to be approved?

A. No, this is a voluntary scheme but it will enable you to prove to your employer that you have met the criteria and will enable them to access financial support should they be eligible, which should make you more employable.

Q. How much will it cost to become approved?

A. The approval fee will be £99.00 for applications submitted from 1st Feb 2007 (this includes VAT and is non-refundable). This covers the cost of administration and an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure (CRB check). The fee is applicable annually as approval is renewed. Approval lasts for 12 months so you will need to reapply every year.

Q. I am working as a childcarer in England/Scotland, can I apply to be approved?

A. The Childcare Approval Scheme for Wales (CASW) only applies to Wales although if you live in England or Scotland and look after children in Wales you can apply to become an Approved Childcarer.

Q. Why are we not accepting portability of CRB checks?

A. Nestor in line with company policy under advice and guidance from the CRB does not accept portability because certain information is only supplied to the CRB Registered Body. The applicant does not have access to it and therefore when a CRB check Certificate is taken onto another organisation this additional information does not follow.

Q. What can someone do if they are refused approval?

A. In the first instance child carers can ask the Approval Body to reconsider their decision. If after this internal appeals process the child carer is still not happy with the decision they can appeal to the Care Standards Tribunal.

The Care Standards Tribunal is an independent body established under the Protection of Children Act 1999. More information about the tribunal is available on the web site -

www.carestandardtribunal.gov.uk

Employing an approved childcarer

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Q. How will I be able to find out if a childcarer is approved?

A. Each approved childcarer will be given an Approval letter with their name, period of validity and a unique identity number. With this information, plus the childcarer's CRB unique identifier which will not be on the letter, the employer will be able to find out if the childcarer is approved or not via the interactive website.

Health, Safety and Protection

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Q. What protection will there be for an approved childcarer working in the parent's home if that home is dangerous to either the children or the childcarer?

A. The identification of any risks will be a matter for the childcarer and parents.

Q. How can parents be sure their childcarer is in good enough health to care for children?

A. If parents are concerned about the health of their childcarer they should ask for a medical reference as part of their pre employment checks.

Q. What will the approval body do if notified of an approved childcarer having harmed a child?

A. Advise the caller to notify the appropriate Authority. Take details of the child carer and their address and pass on the information to the local Social Services. If informed that an appropriate authority is investigating the allegations, approval would be withdrawn. Should the investigation clear them of wrong doing the childcarer can re-apply to become approved.

Financial support

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Q. What about people caring for children they are related to? Will the parents of the children be able to claim the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit?

A. Childcare will not be qualifying care for the Working Tax Credit childcare element or through tax and NICs savings on employer supported childcare or childcare vouchers if that care is provided by a relative of a child caring for that child in the child's home even if the relative is registered or approved.

For more advice on the Working Tax Credit please contact Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs Helpline on 0845 300 3900. www.hmrc.gov.uk

Q. Do I need to be approved if I am paid in childcare vouchers? A. No but your employer will only benefit from tax and National Insurance Contributions savings if you are either registered or approved. For information about tax and National Insurance visit www.hmrc.gov.uk/childcare.