

Childcare Act 2006

The Childcare Act 2006 gives Local Authorities the duty to provide advice, information and guidance to parents in order to support and promote the care of children. This information will help parents to make informed choices about babysitting. Leaving your children in someone else's care is a serious responsibility, as is the welfare of the sitter. As babysitters are not registered and there are no regulations to govern this type of childcare, the Council of the Isles of Scilly do not hold lists of people.

Extended Services on the Isles of Scilly

Extended Services in and around schools promote a variety of activities beyond the school day. Well organised safe and stimulating activities before and after school provide children and young people with a wide range of experiences and make a real difference to their chances at school. Extended Services activities are broken down into five areas which form what is known as the "core offer". These areas are

Access to good quality childcare; Parenting support; A range of after-school and holiday activities for children and young people; Quick and easy referral for children and young people to access specialist support services; Increased access to community facilities for all members of the community

If you wish to find out more or are involved with a community group and have an idea for improving or expanding what you currently offer please contact the Early Years and Youth Office.



SureStart



A Guide to Safe Babysitting



**Produced by
the Council of the Isles of Scilly
Early Years and Youth Service**

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Regulations relating to babysitting

To date there are no specific legal regulations governing the use of sitters. However the British Red Cross considers it undesirable to leave children in the care of a person under the age of 14 (the age when a person can legally be paid for work). Also, parents must be aware that it is their responsibility for anything that happens to children left in the care of a sitter aged under 16. Parents should not simply take age as a guide to choosing a babysitter.

How do I choose a sitter?

- Are they experienced?
- Has the sitter undertaken any training – First Aid for example?
- Have sitting arrangements been discussed with your children?
- Do your children know the sitter? Are they happy to be looked after by them?

What does a sitter need to know?

- An address and telephone number where you can be contacted and the time you expect to return.
- What to do in an emergency.
- The name, contact details of somebody living nearby who may be able to give help and assistance quickly.
- What to do if a child becomes ill or distressed.
- What to do if a child 'plays up' or is naughty.

What does the sitter need to know about my children?

- The bedtime routine: what time children must go to bed, if lights are left on, if they like a bedtime story etc
- What food and drink the children should, or should not have, where to find nappies etc
- What the children are allowed /not allowed to do

How should the sitter behave in my home?

- Make sure the sitter knows if they are allowed to invite friend/s to keep them company.
- Tell the sitter what they may use (CD Player, TV, Microwave etc)
- Tell the sitter if you have left a snack or a meal for them, and what food and drinks they are allowed to have.

How do I pay the sitter?

- Tell the sitter when you ask them to babysit what they will be paid and when.

How will the sitter get home?

- Negotiate an agreement with the sitter and their parents that suits all parties. If the sitter is staying overnight, agree on sleeping arrangements and tell them if they are allowed to go to bed before you return.

Good Practice for babysitters

- Treat your responsibilities very seriously.
- Try and get to the house early so you can get a feel for the child's home environment.
- Ensure you have contact details for the children's parents before they leave the house. Don't hesitate in calling them if you feel unhappy with a situation.
- Knowledge of home safety will be useful. What are the risks? Do you know how to manage and control these risks?
- Be sensible about the amount of time you spend babysitting. Don't let it get in the way of school work.
- Take advantage of any courses that are available. First aid training could be very useful.
- If you feel unhappy about any aspects talk your concerns over with a responsible adult.