

## Children's Services on the Isles of Scilly

The Children's Services Department of the Council of the Isles of Scilly is committed to providing excellent services for children, young people and families.

Our vision and priorities are set out within our Children & Young People's Plan. We have determined these priorities following analysis of national and local data, as well as extensive consultation with children, young people, parents and professionals.



We work with a wide range of statutory and voluntary partners and we're always keen to hear feedback on services we deliver. We are proud of our achievements but recognise there is still a lot to be achieved.

## 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.

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*If you require this document in an alternative language, in larger print, Braille, easy read or in an audio format, please contact the Community Relations Officer on [diversity@scilly.gov.uk](mailto:diversity@scilly.gov.uk) or 01720 424046*

# A Guide to Safe Babysitting



**COUNCIL of the  
ISLES of SCILLY**  
Children's Services



## 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.

