

Leaving your child on their own

There is no law which states the minimum age that a child can be left alone. However it is an offence to leave a child alone/unsupervised if it puts them at risk and parents can face prosecution if they do so.

The NSPCC gives advice about deciding if/when it is safe to leave children at home alone or in the care of siblings on their website [Leaving Your Child Home Alone - Advice | NSPCC](#). They detail different considerations for children of different ages and for where children would be left in the care of their siblings. You can ask for more information by ringing the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000.

Finding a childminder or babysitter

Babysitters are not "registered" with Ofsted and there are no regulations to govern this service.

Solihull Family Information Service does not hold lists of individual people offering a babysitting service but we can provide details of some babysitting agencies covering the Solihull area. Should you use a babysitting agency, it is important that you are clear as to how they vet their sitters, for example, do they interview and take up references and **do they complete a Disclosure and barring check (previously known as a Criminal Records Bureau checks)?**

Solihull Family Information Service also hold details of all Ofsted registered childminders in the borough and some of these childminders may be willing to do some evening or weekend babysitting on request.

Parents may also wish to find a sitter by asking a friend or a relative with children for a recommendation or by searching the internet for babysitting agencies.

Choosing a babysitter

When deciding to use a babysitter remember to:

- Follow your instincts - if in doubt don't use them.
- Ask for at least two references and contact the referees yourself.
- Choose a babysitter over 16 years old.
- Listen to your child about any issue of babysitting that they are unhappy about.
- If your child is unhappy about your babysitter, find someone else.
- Ask childminders for details of their Ofsted registration. They should be able to provide details of this, of their experience and of their qualifications.

Further tips on good practice when using a babysitter are available from the NSPCC website [Leaving Your Child Home Alone - Advice | NSPCC](#)

Remember, you know what is best for your child. Ask questions and find out as much as you can before making a decision.

Contact the Family Information Service if you want to find out more about childcare funding which is available for some 2 year olds and free early education funding for 3 & 4 year olds.

Solihull Family Information Service offers impartial information relating to childcare, activities and support services.

Family Information Service is here to help, if you need any assistance finding childcare please contact us on 0800 389 8667

Would you like to know what's happening in Solihull for children and families? Then join our Parent's Network for regular information at www.solihull.gov.uk/children-and-family-support/solihullparentsnetwork

Solihull Family Information Service

Call: 0800 389 8667

Email: familyinfo@solihull.gov.uk

Web: www.solihull.gov.uk/familyinfo



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