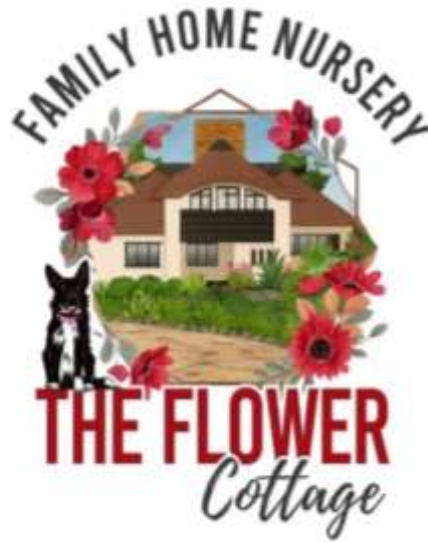


# Welcome Booklet



Hi! My name is Caitlin Smith, and I warmly welcome you and your family to my childminding services. I live in a cosy family cottage with my mum, Joanne, who assists me, my stepdad, Pete, and my partner, Joe, who often visits. Sadly, our beloved dog Sophie, who you may recognise from my logo, passed away in April 2024. She was dearly loved by all the children and families at The Flower Cottage.

My aim is to provide flexible, tailored childcare that meets the needs of your child. I am committed to maintaining the highest standards of care, ensuring that terms and conditions are clear, fair, and consistently followed. I also strive to be as accommodating as possible to support your family's individual requirements.

I look forward to welcoming you into our family home, where each day is full of exciting opportunities and experiences. Please make yourself a lovely drink and take a moment to read through this welcome pack. Thank you!



<https://www.facebook.com/Caitlinschildminding110>



<https://www.instagram.com/theflowercottage110/>



[www.theflowercottage.uk](http://www.theflowercottage.uk)



[Theflowercottage110@outlook.com](mailto:Theflowercottage110@outlook.com)



**07704921373**

## Information about our home and childminding services

Our home is a historic 4-bedroom thatched cottage, situated on Oakham Road in Dudley, West Midlands. This unique property features a large driveway where parents and carers can safely drop off and collect their children, with a front garden beautifully enclosed by flowers and plants. Upon arrival, you will notice the sign for 'The Flower Cottage.'

On entering the premises, you will head into the additional annex located on the left-hand side of the cottage. The Flower Cottage Childminding operates within a spacious open-plan room and kitchen area, which leads into a conservatory playroom and extends into our extensive garden spaces. Our facility offers a variety of climbing and physical equipment, leading to a sand shed and a muddy kitchen with an investigative water station for exploration. Children also have access to a planting and potting greenhouse and our own forestry play space. Additionally, they can enjoy our role-play and sensory cabin.

We provide both indoor and outdoor bathrooms, along with nappy changing facilities throughout the setting. Our play spaces for children are separate from our family home to ensure that our childminding services run smoothly and effectively from 8 AM to 6 PM without disturbing neighbours or intruding on our family's privacy regarding their own work schedules.

Our free-flow environment, which is risk assessed daily, operates safely. All necessary health and safety measures have been implemented to ensure that our indoor and outdoor areas are suitable for children. All activities, setups, opportunities, and experiences are tailored to the individual interests of each child. As Early Years Educators, we build on these interests to create awe and wonder for our children, extend their learning, and encourage them to reach their full potential.



## A little bit about me and the services I provide...

My name is Caitlin, and I have been dedicated to the Early Years and Child Care sector since I was 16 years old. Throughout my school years, I studied childhood development and went on to complete my Level 3 CACHE Early Years Educator certificate full-time at college. Balancing work and studies, I successfully graduated with Level 4 Advanced Practitioner Status. I then had the opportunity to participate in the Erasmus project, which allowed me to live, teach, and study in Barcelona for five weeks.

With around six years of experience in nurseries, I worked my way up to the role of deputy manager before venturing out to open my own successful business. I am OFSTED registered and based in Dudley, West Midlands. My mum, Joanne, assists me and supports the setting on our busy days.

I have always been passionate about working with children in their early years, believing that these formative years are crucial. From birth, children have an incredible capacity to absorb information, and it is essential to guide, support, and teach them the necessary skills to become independent and aware of the world around them. Providing children with the foundation for future learning, health, and life success has always been my priority.

Transforming my living space into a suitable environment for child care took approximately five months, from December to May. During this time, I completed numerous courses and CPD, gathered all necessary legal documents, and awaited the call from OFSTED. Since then, our home and large outdoor environment, including the outdoor lodge, have undergone continuous improvements to benefit the children's development.

Providing a home-from-home experience and tailoring my working day to the children's needs and development is my top priority. It is a magical experience, and I wouldn't change it for the world. I am delighted to announce that in September 2024, we had our first OFSTED inspection and were graded outstanding!



# Everything you need to know...



## Opening hours:

The Flower Cottage is open from 8AM – 6PM Monday to Friday, full time. Hours outside of this may also be accommodated due to emergencies or parents/carers work schedules.

We are CLOSED on bank holidays and our calendar can be accessed VIA our website –

<https://www.theflowercottage.uk/closures>

## Prices:

**From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026, we are a cashless setting. All payments are to be made VIA bank transfer**

**Hourly rate:** £6.00 \*Minimum of 4 hours\*

**Daily rate (Includes all meals, trips, and wipes/cream):** £58.00 (8AM-6PM)

Early starts are available for shift work or emergency purposes only. The earliest drop-off time is 7:00am and the latest collection time is 7:00pm. These hours are charged at the hourly rate of £6.

**Overnight stay:** £84 calculated from the hourly rate (6PM-8AM) Mon-Thurs

**\*Must be booked in advance\* 2 weeks' notice is required.**

**Meal/snacks- (These costs apply if your child attends using the hourly rate or choose to pay for optional extras)**

Breakfast - £1.50

AM snack – 50p

Dinner - £2.50

Pudding - £1.00

PM snack – 50p

Tea - £2.00

Evening snack – 50p

Total for all £8.50

**All Inclusive Care Package option available**

Please see page 6. A letter regarding this will also be sent individually to parents/carers.

## Help with childcare costs:

You may be able to get financial help and practical help with childcare through a range of options including tax free childcare, universal credit and funding entitlements. You must inform me of your eligibility along with your code. I will always check in with you regarding eligibility, to ensure you claim your entitlement in alignment with my availability. However, it is your responsibility to ensure you apply and renew your funding codes on time. **Childcare vouchers are not accepted.**

## Age ranges:

At The Flower Cottage we cater for children within the Early Years aged from 9 months to 5 years. Me and my mum (Assistant) will look after an absolute maximum of six per day.

## Staff:

At The Flower Cottage there is myself (Childminder), My mum (Joanne) who is also my assistant and my partner (Joe) is also registered as an assistant too. My stepdad also helps with maintenance and the smooth running of our environment. All have up-to-date DBS checks.

This booklet is reviewed and updated as and when necessary

# A Commitment to Every Family

## Early Education Funding – Options for Parents / Carers

At The Flower Cottage, we prioritise addressing every family's unique needs by offering a variety of options to cater to everyone. Transparency is key for us; therefore, we ensure you know exactly what you are paying for. We do not charge top-up fees, and our invoices are clearly itemised. During the sign-up process, if your child qualifies for any Early Education Funding entitlements, you will be asked to read a separate letter in full and choose from the available options before providing a written signature.

**Please refer to the table below:**

<b>Avoiding extra costs</b>	<b>Individual costs</b>	<b>All Inclusive Care Package</b>
<p>You MUST bring all essential extras or provide food at home. Trips/events/outings at separate cost.</p> <p><b>No payment</b></p>	<p><b><u>Food price list per day:</u></b>                      Breakfast £1.50                      AM Snack 50p                      Dinner £2.50                      Pudding £1.00                      PM Snack 50p                      Tea £2.00                      Evening Snack 50p                      Total = £8.50                      You <u>must</u> supply your child with nappies, wipes and cream.                      Trips/events/outings at a separate cost.</p> <p><b><i>Weekly payment</i></b></p>	<p>Our all-inclusive care package is £13 per day, payable weekly or monthly, this includes: All meals, wipes, Sudocrem, pampers nappies or pull-ups, trips, outings, external classes, plus a spare clothes set, puddle suits, wellies, indoor shoes, hats, mittens, scarves along with swimsuits and hats in the summer—everything your child needs for a fun, safe day all year round.</p> <p><b><i>Weekly or monthly payment</i></b></p>

### All children have access to the following:

- High quality learning environment indoors and out
- Full funded entitlement where possible
- Child’s own basket containing dummy box
- Labelled water bottles
- Unlimited water
- Home learning book bags with communication book
- Lunch box
- Sleep mat with all bedding included
- MAM baby bottles
- Bibs / aprons
- Reins and pushchairs
- ERF Axxid Movekid car seats
- Towels

### All children MUST bring:

- Plenty of spare clothes
- Appropriate indoor and outdoor footwear
- Weather appropriate clothing
- Suncream
- Warm waterproof coat
- Nappies / wipes / cream / food unless you have chosen the ‘All Inclusive Care Package’ option or paid for extras / daily rate.

**Please do not bring small toys or Ipad/electronics into the setting.**

# Overnight care

## Overnight Care at The Flower Cottage

At The Flower Cottage, we offer overnight care from 6:00pm to 8:00am, Monday to Thursday, providing a safe, cozy, and nurturing environment for children attending our setting. This service is designed to support working families, giving parents peace of mind that their children are cared for overnight in a familiar and comfortable space.

Children sleep in the same room as myself, so I can see and hear them at all times. Safety is a top priority: safety gates are in place, windows remain shut, and fire alarms are regularly checked and fully functional. The room is equipped with a baby monitor, night light, and a speaker for soft music to create a calm and reassuring atmosphere.

Sleeping arrangements are age-appropriate: children aged 9 months to 3 years sleep in a Cuggl travel cot, while children aged 3 to 5 years sleep on a Travel Cot Bed Inflatable Mattress Air Bed. An upstairs bathroom is available with a nappy changing mat, nappy bin, and tooth brushing facilities.

The overnight stay costs £84 and includes safe sleeping arrangements with bedding, pyjamas (provided and washed at the setting), an evening snack, bath, nappies/pull-up pants, wipes, cream, one set of emergency spare clothes, and breakfast in the morning.

Please note: Overnight care is available only for children who already attend the setting, with a maximum of one child or siblings booked at a time to ensure safety and proper supervision. Overnight care must be booked at least two weeks in advance to allow for appropriate arrangements.

We are fully insured with Morton Michel, and a copy of our insurance certificate and further information can be provided on request.



## Our daily routine

We also go on outings across the week, displayed on our weekly events table

<b>8:00AM</b>	Open. Coats and bags on pegs, nappies/wipes in basket
<b>8:00AM-8:30AM</b>	Quiet activities, music, yoga video
<b>8:30AM-9:00AM</b>	Breakfast time. Any late arrivals can have breakfast before 9:30AM
<b>9:00AM-9:15AM</b>	Group time and self-registration
<b>9:15AM-10:00AM</b>	Access to all play spaces. Follow child's lead and input when needed
<b>10:00AM-10:15AM</b>	Nappies/toileting and hand washing ready for snack time
<b>10:15AM-10:30AM</b>	Snack time. Children use own chopping boards and knives
<b>10:30AM-11:15AM</b>	Access to all play spaces. Follow child's lead and input when needed
<b>11:15AM-11:30AM</b>	Tidy up time
<b>11:30AM-11:45AM</b>	Music and movement
<b>11:45AM-12:00PM</b>	Nappies/toileting and hand washing ready for dinner time
<b>12:00PM-12:30PM</b>	Dinner time. Self-serve when tray bakes/pasta on menu
<b>12:30PM-12:45PM</b>	Hand washing
<b>12:45PM-1:15PM</b>	Educational TV time and quiet activities during washing up/dishwasher
<b>1:15-1:30PM</b>	Group time – Stories, singing, phonics, listening and attention games
<b>1:30PM-1:45PM</b>	Brush time
<b>1:45PM-2:00PM</b>	Nappies/toileting and hand washing ready for snack time
<b>2:00PM-2:15PM</b>	Snack time. Children use own chopping boards and knives
<b>2:15PM-3:30PM</b>	Access to all play spaces. Follow child's lead and input when needed
<b>3:30PM-3:45PM</b>	Tidy up time
<b>3:45PM-4:00PM</b>	Nappies/toileting and hand washing ready for tea time
<b>4:00PM-4:30PM</b>	Tea time. Self-serve when tray bakes/pasta on menu
<b>4:30PM-4:45PM</b>	Hand washing
<b>4:45PM-5:00PM</b>	Educational TV time and quiet activities during washing up/dishwasher
<b>5:00PM-5:15PM</b>	Evening nappies
<b>5:15PM-5:45PM</b>	Access to physical garden and play room
<b>5:45PM-6:00PM</b>	Tidy up time and quiet activities, calm music, yoga video, story box
<b>6:00PM</b>	Last nappy checks around 5:50PM. Close at 6:00PM

## Current uniform and available products to purchase - OPTIONAL

**In partnership with Lynne's Lumières – Logo and name personalisation**

Items	Colours available	Sizes	Price
Home learning book bag	Grey	One size	£10.00
Water bottle with cover and clip	White	One size	£8.00
Sunhat	Grey	One size	£6.00
Lunchbag	Red AND white	One size	£9.00
Bagpack	Grey	One size	£12.00
T-shirt	White / black / navy blue / royal blue / sky blue / purple / burgundy / red / orange / green / yellow / pink / heather grey	2/3yrs 3/4yrs 5/6yrs	£6.00
Polo top	White / black / royal blue / red / soft pink / heather grey		£8.00
Zip up jacket with hood	Grey		£11.00
Pyjamas	Red AND white		£6.00
Hivis jacket	Yellow		£7.00
Pop under vest	White	6-9m	£5.00
Babygrow	White	9-12m	£8.00

**In partnership with Faye Ella Be – Logo personalisation only**

Items	Colours available	Sizes	Price
Outdoor fleece lined waterproof coat	Red	2/3yrs 3/4yrs	£27.00
Outdoor ultra padded waterproof body warmer	Red	5/6yrs	£23.00
Outdoor fleece	Grey	3/4yrs 5/6yrs	£23.00

## Terms and Conditions...

<b>Meals</b>	Breakfast, tea, snacks, drinks, and additional items are included in the cost when your child attends on the daily rate or all-inclusive care package. Please refer to the menu in the welcome booklet for details of any extra charges when choosing the hourly rate. If you prefer not to have hot meals provided, you may supply a packed lunch for your child, ensuring it meets the recommended nutritional guidelines.
<b>Deposits</b>	No deposit required.
<b>Child sickness / Holidays</b>	If your child is ill, you will be charged for the session you have booked regardless of attendance. There will be a 50% deduction off your bill if your child is off due to going on holiday, however this must be discussed in advance directly with myself. Two weeks' notice is required to be eligible for the deduction, if absence is taken without discussion, you will be charged your full fees.
<b>Staff absence / Holidays</b>	If I am ill or have a holiday, then there is no charge, and you will be refunded on your next bill if paid in advance. Holidays will be discussed in advance so you can arrange childcare.
<b>Contract</b>	Contracts are to be filled out before your child starts the setting. Contracts can be amended.
<b>Late payment fee</b>	Please be aware that a late payment fee of £10 per day will be applied if childcare fees are not paid by the agreed date. This fee will be added to your invoice. You have a grace period of up to three days to settle the late payment and additional fees. Failure to do so will result in your child not being accepted into the setting until payment is received. If the payment is not made within one full working week, your child's place will be forfeited, and the collection process will commence. The available place will then be advertised.
<b>Late collection fee</b>	You must contact me if you are running late. If there is no contact, a late collection fee of £15.00 will be charged for every 15 minutes - this needs to be paid before your child comes back to the setting.

## Terms and Conditions...

<b>Settling in period</b>	<p><u>Paying</u> After signing up, your child will be offered three hours settling in sessions on two days, between Mon-Fri. <u>Free of charge</u>. Any additional settling in arrangements can be made, however you will be charged at the hourly rate.</p> <p><u>Funding</u> If your child qualifies for any of the Early Years Funding Entitlements, we will gradually ease them in with shorter days, extending their session times as they become more comfortable.</p>
<b>Notice periods</b>	<p>A four-week notice period needs to be given if you want to remove your child from the setting, however this can be discussed due to unexpected circumstances.</p> <p>A two weeks' notice period is required to be eligible for a 50% deduction off your bill during your holidays/planned time off.</p>
<b>Permission forms</b>	<p>You are required to complete a range of parental permission forms. These will be discussed with you during show arounds/open day.</p>
<b>Policies and procedures</b>	<p>All of our policies and procedures can be viewed on The Flower Cottage website.</p>
<b>Help with childcare costs</b>	<p>You may be eligible for financial and practical assistance with childcare through various options, including tax-free childcare, universal credit, and funding entitlements. Please inform me of your eligibility status along with your code. I will always check in with you regarding your eligibility to ensure you claim your entitlement in line with my availability.</p> <p>Please remember that it is your responsibility to apply for and renew your funding codes on time. Failure to do so will result in you being required to pay for your childcare. Unfortunately, please note that childcare vouchers are no longer accepted.</p>

# Policies and Procedures – Please see T&Cs

## The Flower Cottage policies and procedures

- Accident, Incident and Emergency
- Administering Medication
- Admissions
- Alcohol, Medicines and Other Drugs
- Allegations Of Abuse
- Allergens
- Anti-Bullying
- Behaviour
- Biting Avoidance
- COVID-19
- Care, Learning and Play
- Childminder Sickness / Annual leave
- Childminder/Childminding assistant
- Complaints
- Confidentiality, Privacy and Data Retention
- Collection and dropping off
- Emergency Evacuation
- Equal Opportunities
- Healthy Eating and Food Hygiene
- Head Lice
- Health and Safety
- House Rules
- Life Vac Anti-Choking Device
- Lost Child
- No Smoking
- Nappies and Toilet Training
- Observations, Cameras and Photographs
- Other Adults in the house
- Parent Partnership
- Pets and Animals
- Ratios
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Safer sleep
- Safety on Outings
- Settling-in
- Sickness, Infection and Disease
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Sun Protection
- Visitors and the use of electronic devices

**All policies** and procedures are developed in accordance with EYFS welfare requirements and Ofsted guidance, clearly outlining the provider's responsibility to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

- Authored by **Miss Caitlin Smith**, an Ofsted-registered childminder at **The Flower Cottage**, Dudley, West Midlands, DY2 7TQ.

This booklet is reviewed and updated as and when necessary


## Meals and snack time...

Each week, children will enjoy a variety of snack choices delivered in creative and fun ways. They will have the opportunity to create or even grow their own snack plates and participate in activities that encourage making choices and using their imagination to try new foods. These activities include making their own fruit skewers, creating patterns, blending fruits, and making smoothies, among others. During snack time, children will be offered milk or water, and on celebration or themed days, special drinks such as tropical juice, hot chocolate, flavoured drinks, and fruit tea will be introduced. All dishes in this menu provide a balanced and nutritious diet. I have included a variation of hot and cold options, and some of the breakfast and tea meals can be handmade by the children to promote independence and choice-making. Vegetarian options are available, and allergies or dietary requirements will be strictly adhered to. If you prefer to bring a packed lunch for your child, that is absolutely fine.

Whenever the menu is updated, parents and carers will be contacted regarding their children's food interests and new foods they would like their children to try. All suggestions and ideas will be incorporated into the new menu. We also discuss with the children about the foods they like or dislike and new foods they could try. We often take the children to the local supermarket for our weekly food shop, and if we are very busy, we enjoy doing online food shopping together using website photographs. This involvement allows the children to make their own meal and snack choices and to experiment with new textures and tastes.

**Allergies and dietary requirements will be strictly adhered to and there will ALWAYS be a vegetarian option available!**

**All meals served at The Flower Cottage is all prepared and home cooked by myself or my mum (assistant) Jo, including slow cooker and air fried meals too!**



### Food Menu

Parents/carers will receive an updated menu for the week before on or before Monday morning.

*All meals prepared at the setting provide a healthy and balanced diet for all individual children to enjoy. Children are able to explore new tastes and textures with the flexibility of updating the menu every week tailoring towards any food favourites or interests, events and parental input/feedback from the previous week or eating at home. The Flower Cottage ensures to meet the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements for food and drink.*

**Vegetarian options are always available.**

*If child does not eat the dinner provided, an alternative option can be offered such as a sandwich with salad.*

WC:10.11.25	Breakfast	Dinner	pudding	Tea
Monday	Every morning the children have access to the breakfast cupboard, they are able to make their own choice from the following: Cereals, toast, fruit, bagels, crumpets, yoghurt, porridge, pancakes, pastries or a breakfast bar.	Turkey bolognese with garlic bread	Peach active yoghurt	Beans on toasted sourdough
Tuesday		Fish pie with broccoli florets	Banana mousse	Omelette with pepper sticks
Wednesday		Quorn nuggets, alphabetas and peas	Watermelon	Bagels with dairyfree and cucumber
Thursday		Chicken casserole with Yorkshire pudding	Fruit cake and custard	Ham or cheddar mini wraps with a shaver fruit platter
Friday		Cheese and tomato pizza, wedges and spaghetti hoops	Pineapple chunks	Crumpets

**Snacks:**

*Children are able to choose from a wide variety of snacks during the AM session, PM session and evening. We celebrate a range of festivals, events and celebrations which enables children to join in with food tasting sessions.*

*Example of our snack choices are below. (A different variety of snacks are offered to the children every week.)*

*Fruit, cereal bars, yoghurt, malt loaf, pastries, breadsticks and dips, small portion of sweet selection (Biscuits, chocolate drops, homemade cookies etc). Children also enjoy making their own snacks (and puddings) too!*



## Lastly and most importantly Communication is KEY!



I communicate effortlessly and effectively with families through WhatsApp on my work mobile. This method has been a game-changer for us and my business, and I am thrilled with the switch! We primarily use messaging and often make phone calls as well. If a child is feeling unwell, has had any issues or unusual behaviour the night before, parents/carers can easily share these occurrences with me. This way, I stay informed about the child's life and can provide the necessary support in partnership with the parents/carers.

As a childminder, I offer a more personal and one-to-one experience in my home environment. I find it essential to have 'catch-ups' rather than formal 'meetings' with families. This friendlier approach allows us to discuss the child's development, next steps, interests, and any enquiries parents/carers may have.

Every day, I send photographs and brief observations to parents/carers individually. Each week, families receive multiple photos of their child, along with a short overview of their activities, topics learned, WOW moments, and small targets/home tasks to encourage further learning outside the setting along with home learning book bags.

Additionally, our families receive a handwritten care diary for their child/ren daily. The diary includes details such as meals/snacks, nappies/toilet intervals, sleep times, brush time, bottles, and any important messages. We have two versions of the care diary, one for babies and one for toddlers. Below, I will include an image of our care diary.



This booklet is reviewed and updated as and when necessary

**Thank you for taking the time to read our Welcome Booklet. I sincerely hope you have found all the information you were looking for. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any enquiries.**

**With love and big hugs, Caitlin,  
The Flower Cottage.**



