

Voluntary Approval Scheme FAQs

Voluntary Approval Scheme Frequently asked Questions for Nannies (home childcare providers)

Q1. If I care for a child or children in one of their homes do I have to be approved?

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.

Q2. What are the criteria for the voluntary approval scheme?

The criteria for a home childcarer (nanny) to be approved under this scheme are that the applicant:-

- is over 18 years of age;
- holds a current paediatric first aid certificate;
- has undergone an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check; and
- has a qualification on the Social Care Wales [list of Required Qualifications](#) to work within the Early Years and Childcare Sector:

Q3. What if I don't have one of the qualifications listed above?

Further information about training opportunities, and any local funding support which may be available, to undertake qualifications can be accessed from:

- [Social Care Wales](#)
- [Local Authority Family Information Services](#)
- [PACEY Cymru](#)

The Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY Cymru) are able to offer support to nannies and other home-based childcare providers in Wales, or from CIW.

Q4. How much will it cost to become approved?

The Approval cost for the Voluntary Approval Scheme is £55 per annum. If applicants also need a DBS certificate, this can be requested through CIW, – for more information see attached [link Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\) checks | Care Inspectorate Wales](#) . a fee for .. Please note that the DBS check is valid for 3 years, you should submit your re-application 6 to 8 weeks before your approval is due to end.

Q5. What is a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check?

As part of the approval process applicants are required to apply for an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS check). A DBS check is a document containing information held by the police and government departments and can be used by employers and voluntary organisations to make safer recruitment decisions. Disclosures are provided by the DBS an executive agency of the Home Office.

The DBS check is necessary for those regularly caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children or vulnerable adults and contains details of all convictions on record including spent convictions, plus details of any cautions, reprimands, or warnings. It also involves an extra level of checking with local police force records in addition to checks with the Police National Computer (PNC) and the government department lists of those who are legally barred from work with children.

Q6. Have you considered subscribing to the DBS Update Service?

For an annual subscription you can join the [DBS Update Service](#); this will allow you to keep your DBS Certificate up-to-date and take it with you from job to job provided it is within the same [workforce](#) area and where the same type and level of check is required (Standard or Enhanced).

Q7. What if I'm already registered with the DBS Update Service?

If you have an enhanced DBS certificate for the correct [workforce area](#) that you are applying for and you already subscribe to the Update Service, then the approval fee for the first-year application will be £55 as you won't have to pay for the cost of a DBS check. You must show us your original DBS certificate and give us your consent to carry out an online '[status check](#)' to see if there are any changes on your certificate.

Important: If you don't keep up your payments of the annual subscription fee to [DBS Update Service](#), you'll need to apply for a new DBS check

Q8. How do I apply for approval with the Childcare Approval Scheme?

Complete an application form and send it to:

Childcare Approval Scheme
Care Inspectorate Wales
Government Offices
Rhydycar Business Park
Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 1UZ
(Tel. 0300 790 0126)
Email: ciw@gov.wales

Application forms can be accessed via this link from [our website](#):

If you submit your application via email please ensure you attach scanned images of your qualifications. We will then contact you to take your payment over the phone and if you require a DBS we can start the process with our online provider.

If you submit your application by post please include your qualification certificates so we can assess your eligibility.

Q9. I am working as a childcarer in England/Scotland, can I apply to be approved?

Childcare at Home Approval Scheme 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 child carer.

Q10. What can someone do if they are refused approval?

In the first instance childcarers can ask the Approval Body to reconsider their decision. If after this internal appeals process the childcarer is still not happy with the decision they can appeal to the First-Tier Tribunal.

If you wish to appeal you must do so by application in writing to the Secretary of the First-Tier Tribunal at Mowden Hall, Staindrop Road, Darlington DL3 9BG

Q11. How will I be able to find out if a childcarer is approved?

Each approved childcarer will be given an Approval letter with their name, period of validity and a unique identity number. When you employ a carer you should ask for them to present this letter to you as evidence of their approval.

Q12. How can I find approved carers in my area?

You can contact your local [Family Information Service](#) to find approved carers in your area.

Q13. 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?

The identification of any risks will be a matter for the childcarer and parents. Approved child carers should make themselves aware of the [All Wales Safeguarding Procedures](#) as they relate to children at risk, safeguarding principles and the duty to report a child at risk of abuse, neglect and/or harm.

Q14. What will the approval body do if notified of an approved childcarer having harmed a child?

Advise the caller to notify the appropriate Authority. Take details of the childcarer and their address and pass on the information to the local Social Services. When informed that an appropriate authority is investigating the allegations, CIW may withdraw approval at any point during the investigation. Should the investigation clear them of wrongdoing the childcarer can re-apply to become approved.

Q15. Will childcare provided by a carer approved by the Voluntary Approval Scheme be eligible for help within the childcare element of Working Tax Credits/Universal Credit?

Childcare provided by a carer approved under the terms of this scheme, who is delivering care in the home of one of the children for whom they are caring, is qualifying care for the purposes of calculating eligibility for the childcare element of Working Tax Credit/Universal Credit and for the tax and National Insurance contributions benefits of using employer childcare vouchers.

Nannies who are on the approval scheme can also sign up online to receive parents' payments through Tax-Free Childcare. Once CIW has approved an applicant for the scheme, we send the home childcare provider an approval letter and this information is then shared with HMRC. CIW have no further involvement in the process from this point. HMRC pass this information on to the Tax-Free Childcare team. The home childcare provider will need to be registered with the Tax-Free Childcare team before the employer can start claiming for this.

To do this the home childcare provider will have to contact Tax Free Childcare on '0300 123 4097', state that they are an approved home childcare provider and request that they search for them using the Customer Number on the approval letter from CIW and their post code. Tax Free Childcare will then email the home childcare provider with a welcome pack.

Q16. 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/Universal Credit?

You can't usually claim help with childcare provided by relatives, even if they are approved.

Q17. When can you claim for childcare provided by relatives?

You can claim for the childcare element of Working Tax Credit/Universal Credit for childcare provided by a relative if the relative is:

- a childcare provider, approved under Childcare Approval Scheme, who cares for your child outside your child's own home - but they must also care for at least one other child who is not related to them. For more information please visit the [HMRC website](#).

Q18. Do I need to be approved if I am paid in childcare vouchers?

No, but your employer will only benefit from tax and National Insurance Contributions savings if you are approved. For information about tax and National Insurance visit the [HMRC website](#).

Q19. Will childcare provided by a carer approved by the Voluntary Approval Scheme be eligible for Childcare Offer funding?

No, a childcarer on the Voluntary Approval scheme cannot provide [Childcare Offer for Wales](#) funded places.

Q20. How long does the renewal process take?

We advise carers to reapply for approval 6 to 8 weeks in advance. For parents to retain continuous entitlement to tax credits/Universal Benefit / employer childcare vouchers, it is necessary for their nanny or carer to remain approved or registered. Those who follow this advice will be more likely to achieve a seamless renewal starting from the date their old approval expires. You will need to apply for approval each year and will need to provide evidence that your first aid training is up to date. However, if you have an enhanced DBS certificate for the correct [workforce area](#) and you already subscribe to the Update Service, then you will not need to also undertake a new DBS every 3 years.