

# Self-Assessment Scotland – SAF prompt



Every childminder in Scotland must complete a Self-Assessment Form (SAF) which gives their Care Inspector information about their service and ways of working. The revised SAF (March 2014) is available from the Care Inspectorate website.

**Before you start writing your SAF** you need to read through the questions and guidance notes very carefully and consider what evidence you need to include for each question. E-books 68 (SAF – Scotland) and 69 (SHANARRI – Scotland) from [Knutsford Childminding](#) will give you lots of hints and tips – but only you know the level of service you currently offer children and their families.

It is very important that you include comments from children and their families in your SAF – so before you start writing, speak to them and ask them questions about your service. Welcome their comments – even the negatives ones – because without their input you will find it harder to improve.

This little prompt list has been written to help you think about what type of things you need to write about to answer each question. We hope you find it useful.

## **Remember to –**

- Give evidence of your strengths
- Talk about your service and ways of working
- Put the children at the centre of everything you do
- Include information and input from parents where possible
- Ask your colleagues for feedback about your service
- Think about the future and how you intend to improve

- Give yourself a grade based on the evidence you have provided
- Update your SAF regularly and as things change in your service.

### **Using SHANARRI in your SAF**

Refer to the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators and how you use them to raise outcomes for the children throughout your SAF. The SHANARRI wellbeing indicators are –

- S = safe
- H = healthy
- A = achieving
- N = nurtured
- A = active
- R = respected
- R = responsible
- I = included

You need to focus on how you ensure all the children who attend your service are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. Every question in your SAF can be linked directly to the SHANARRI indicators.

Use your SAF to talk about what makes your service unique and special – your SAF is your boasting book. It doesn't have to be a specific length – it is up to you how much information you want to include. If you work with staff include them in the comments you make

Let's look at each of the SAF questions in turn and think about answers you might give...

## **SAF question 1 - Service user participation**

The SAF guidance says –

You are asked to consider how you have used information, suggestions or comments from parents and carers, and children, to improve the service. Think about: how you gain/encourage the views of parents, carers and children how you make sure that parents/carers and children feel respected and included how you gain the children's views for activities/outings during the day/week

Evidence might come from –

- How you encourage feedback from parents via, for example, regular questionnaires you give them to ask how they feel about your service
- How you encourage feedback about your service from children
- Visits from other childminders
- Nurseries and pre-schools you visit
- Local support network participation in your service
- Parents comments about how well you work in partnership with them
- Your participation strategy / parent partnership policy

Talk about changes you have made to your service as a result of input from others.

Refer to SHANARRI – especially what children / parents say about –

- How well you keep them safe and healthy
- How well your educational programmes ensure each child is achieving to their full potential
- The type of things you do to ensure they feel nurtured
- How well you encourage children to be active – inside the house, in the garden and on outings
- Whether they feel respected
- The type of opportunities you offer children to encourage them to be responsible / independent
- Whether they feel fully included in the service eg how you ask for their views about the activities and outings you plan during the week.

## SAF question 2 - Quality of care and support

The SAF guidance tells you to focus on –

- How you identify and promote children's **individual needs** (SHANARRI – achieving)
- How well you **know** children and their parents (SHANARRI – respected)
- How you maintain **personal plans** for children (SHANARRI – included)
- How you link with **child's routines** in the family home (SHANARRI – respected)
- How well you build and maintain a **trusting and supportive relationship** with the child and parents (SHANARRI – respected)
- How you support families through **transitions** eg going to nursery or school etc (SHANARRI – nurtured)
- How you meet the **nutrition** needs of the children – do you use the new 'Setting the Table' guidance - <http://www.healthscotland.com/documents/21130.aspx?> (SHANARRI – healthy)
- How well you encourage **healthy lifestyles** (SHANARRI – healthy)
- The **choices** you give to children and their families (SHANARRI – respected)
- How you make sure children are protected and kept **safe from abuse** (SHANARRI – safe)
- How you make sure that children are well equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to **keep themselves safe** (SHANARRI – safe / responsible)
- How well you promote **positive behaviour** (SHANARRI – safe)
- How you ensure that you **administer medication** safely (SHANARRI – healthy / safe)
- How you ensure each child experiences and chooses from a **balanced range of activities** (SHANARRI – active)

You should aim to write a paragraph for each of the suggested areas of focus linking to the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators where possible so that you show they are a valuable part of your overall provision and ways of working.

### SAF question 3 - Quality of environment

The SAF guidance tells you to consider these questions:

- How well you ensure that children are safe and are cared for in a **hygienic, smoke free, clean and tidy** environment (SHANARRI – healthy / safe)
- How well you **meet each child's needs** (SHANARRI – achieving / included / respected)
- How you make best use of the **space** in the house and the outside environment (SHANARRI – safe)
- How you give children a **homely environment** (SHANARRI – nurtured)
- How you minimise the **spread of infection** – you will find lots of advice about infection control here - <http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/haic/ic/index.aspx> (SHANARRI – healthy / safe)
- How you share information about **accidents and incidents** with parents (SHANARRI – healthy / safe)

You also need to think about –

- How well you involve parents and children in ensuring your environment meets their needs and the type of changes you might have made as a result of their input (SHANARRI – included / respected)
- The type of activities you offer children to move around and be active, especially if you have a small house or limited access to a garden (SHANARRI – active)
- How well you have set up your environment and resources to support children to make good progress in their learning and development (SHANARRI – achieving)
- The opportunities to offer children to take responsibility and be independent (SHANARRI – responsible)

Where possible, talk to children and their parents and include their views in your SAF – talk about what they have said and any changes you have made to your service as a result of their input... think about how you can improve in the future and the way you can involve parents and children in your CPD (continuous professional development) plan.

You will find lots of ideas to help you with CPD in Chapter 2 of e-book 68 'SAF – Scotland' from [Knutsford Childminding](#).

## SAF question 4 - Quality of staffing

You only need to answer this question if you work with an assistant / assistants or a co-childminder. It relates directly to staff who work with you.

The SAF guidance asks you if you employ an assistant in your childminding service and to consider these questions:

- How do you safely **recruit staff**? (SHANARRI – safe)
- How do you ensure your assistants **meet children’s needs**? (SHANARRI – all wellbeing indicators)
- How do you encourage **staff development**; and carry out support and supervision? (SHANARRI – achieving)
- How do you **monitor staff practice**? (SHANARRI – safe)
- How do you **involve assistants** in your service? (SHANARRI – included)

Relate question 4 to the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators –

- Are staff trained to keep children **safe** and **healthy**?
- How do you ensure staff ensure children are **achieving** in their learning and development?
- How well do staff **nurture** children to ensure their individual needs are met?
- Do staff encourage children to be **active** through the day?
- How well do staff **respect** individual children’s needs?
- How well do staff encourage each child to be **responsible**?
- Does your staff in-house training support staff to make children feel **included** and **respected**?

Think about - what training do you offer staff to support children using all the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators as your guide?

Talk to your staff and include their views in your SAF - what do staff think about how well you manage their recruitment and ongoing practice? Do they feel respected and included? Do you help them to stay healthy and safe?

How well do you use the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators to involve staff in the service you provide?

## SAF question 5 - Quality of management and leadership

The SAF guidance asks you to consider these questions to help you answer section 5:

- What **improvements** have you made to your service since the last inspection? It is important that you keep your SAF up-to-date, adding information regularly so that you can show you are making improvements to your service and ways of working. Complacency is not an option!
- How do you **keep up to date** with best practice and legislation? Keeping up-to-date with legislation involves talking to other childminders and your local support networks so you can respond quickly when new documents are released or there is new legislation or guidance that impacts on your service.
- How do you identify your **training needs** and how do you use that to develop your service? Training might be online, in-house or via training courses – and should always make a difference to your service and ways of working. Evaluate your training after you have attended and think about how it will impact on the service you offer parents and children.
- How do you **evaluate your service**? Are parents and children involved in the evaluation – how well do you do this?
- How do you seek **feedback, concerns or complaints** about your service? You must react very quickly to negative feedback, concerns or complaints about your service – parents need to know that you are constantly aiming to improve and that you respect their views.

Again, remember the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators as you answer the question 5. Your training must ensure that you are keeping children -

- S = safe and...
- H = healthy

That you are supporting children to -

- A = achieve in an environment that -
- N = nurtures them and keeps them -
- A = active

And that children are -

- R = respected...
- R = responsible and...
- I = included.

## **Important information about this document**

**References** - I try to reference every source I use either at the end of my documents or in the text. If I do not, it is because the information is old and the source no longer exists or because I have genuinely forgotten where I originally found the information. Some of my sources are free to all and, where this is the case, I have tried to recognise it within the text. Items from these sources are offered for reference because they are the best I can find and I want my readers to share them with me. If I have used something of yours that you recognise and I have not referenced it, please email me and let me know and I will correct future versions.

- National Care Standards - <http://www.nationalcarestandards.org/213.html>
- E-book 68 – SAF – Scotland from [www.knutsfordchildminding.co.uk](http://www.knutsfordchildminding.co.uk)
- E-book 69 SHANARRI wellbeing indicators from [www.knutsfordchildminding.co.uk](http://www.knutsfordchildminding.co.uk)
- Wellbeing information from Scottish Govt - <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/background/wellbeing>.

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