

# Inspections—A County Lottery?

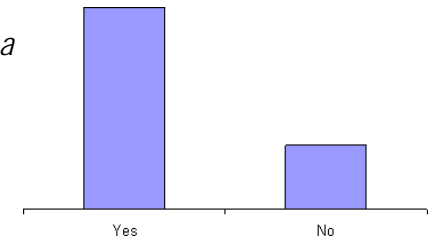
*Childminding Ireland* contacted over 30 notified Childminders throughout the country to ascertain their experience of the inspection process prior to the Quality and Standards Conference. Childminders' experiences vary widely from area to area, as there are no clear national guidelines and Pre-School Inspection Officers and Environmental Health Officers work mainly at their own discretion. However, in the main, Childminders felt very positive about the process.

Most notified Childminders see childminding as a long term career, with well over 50% childminding for at least the past 5 years.

Childminders who are inspected by an Environmental Health Officer as well as a Pre-Schools Officer will be surprised to learn that not all Health Boards insist on this. Almost one quarter of Childminders had not been visited by an Environmental Health Officer. Most Childminders (74%) received no notification of the inspection and those that were aware of the intended inspection had a more positive experience. The Childminders who had unexpected inspections expressed a desire that they be informed of the next visit.

The majority of Childminders see the Inspection as a positive process. When asked:

*"Do you see the inspection process a support to you and a means to improve your service?"*



All respondents bar one were happy with the inspection feedback process. Although quite a few said they found it hard to listen carefully to feedback and respond whilst they were minding children. Most found the recommendations reasonable. When asked:

*"Were the recommendations in your inspection report reasonable in the context of a family home setting?"*

