

Childcare Works case study: Hill Tots Nursery Brymbo near Wrexham

Hear how the Childcare Works (phase 1) project supported Jackie Hayes in her placement with Hill Tots Nursery Manager Sarah Griffiths.

Recruitment has always been a problem at Hill Tots.

“Even if we get a lot of applicants, based on qualifications and experience you could be left with just two out of 20. You have to have the right mentality around children.”

Jackie attended NDNA Cymru training and then had a 10 week placement, three days per week at the nursery.

“From the first day she walked in, she got on the floor with the children and we knew straight away.”

“She’s just got into a routine. She’s got common sense and knows that if there is a spillage to wipe it up, if a child is crying then comfort them. The kids gravitated to her, they love her. She’s like their nanna.”

Hill Tots employed Jackie for 16 hours per week when she had finished the project and she’s now studying for her qualifications, CCLD starting with level 2.

“It’s been quite difficult for Jackie because it’s a long time since going into school. She’s doing really well and had brilliant feedback from the tutors.

“We have a nice balance of ages here now. I always go towards the more mature applicant anyway because they know this is what they want to do.

“Jackie thought she would struggle, but she has life skills and this scheme is bringing those things out of her. The academic side follows on.

“There should be more of these types of schemes – Jackie would never have applied for this job because she didn’t have the confidence to. We attended the NDNA event to celebrate this project. She was so proud of herself, it’s boosted her confidence.

“The NDNA Childcare Works scheme is a win-win situation. It effectively gives nurseries a 12-week interview process and those 12 weeks are valuable.”

Hear how the Childcare Works (phase 1) project supported Jackie Hayes.

“I signed up in February. I’m on universal credit and they sent us to North Wales Training which encourages you to apply for jobs and boost your confidence. I was out of work for six years but worked previously in an electrician’s wholesalers and catalogue company.

“I thought nobody wanted to employ me in a different career. I had no confidence in myself, and computers had moved on since I was last at work.

Jackie heard about the Childcare Works project through North Wales Training where they support people with interviews and CV writing as well as boosting confidence.

NDNA came in to see if anybody over 50 wanted to work in childcare.

“I hadn’t considered it because I didn’t think I had any skills. They [NDNA Cymru] convinced me I had life skills having children and grandchildren of my own. I thought – that would be a brilliant opportunity, they would pay me to get trained for a new career!

“After training for four weeks in a classroom for which they pay travel expenses, I got a placement at this nursery which was the closest to my home.

“It’s fabulous, it was like a new lease of life! My confidence has completely grown and it’s nice to get back into employment. I am meeting new friends and passing on my skills and knowledge to the children.

“When I first came to the interview I was so nervous because you have to sell yourself.

“On my first day the children just came running and see me as a grandma figure. I talk a lot and interact with them, learning their names, doing numbers and colours with them, much of it is instinctive.

“It was brilliant when they took me on permanently and they are now paying to give me my level 2 qualification in childcare. I get plenty of help from a mentor – I can ring her or email her.

“It’s a perfect position for me, getting up to go to work, working with children. It’s work I love and I don’t have to look for another job. I can’t thank NDNA enough.

“My advice is if you are unemployed and the opportunity is there, take it because what have you got to lose? You get experience on the way but if it’s not for you, you are still learning and it’s on your CV. You can take these skills into a new job.

“I would also like to thank the nursery for giving me this chance. It has got me back into that learning environment and given me a new family.”

Further support

Email: childcareworks@ndna.org.uk

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