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## Case study: Childcare Works Project - Trainee Nursery Assistant Experience

Khadija participated in NDNA Cymru's 16-week Childcare Works programme that was delivered in Conwy from October 2025 to February 2026.

The programme was funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and supported 11 participants from Conwy.

The trainees completed 4 weeks of training, followed by 12 weeks on placement in a childcare setting.

Khadija completed her placement at Apple Tree Tots in Colwyn Bay and this case study shares her journey and experience of participating in the programme.



I first gained experience in a childcare environment when I completed my Level 3 in Health and Social Care at college several years ago. Since then, I have worked in various sectors, but I always found myself drawn back to working with children, especially as I have nephews and nieces and have always enjoyed supporting their development.

After moving to Wales, I took a break from employment and welcomed my daughter in August 2023. I became a stay-at-home mum and spent valuable time caring for her. During this period, I realised just how much I enjoyed working with children and knew that childcare was the career path I wanted to return to. Once my daughter turned two and started attending a playgroup, I felt ready to take the next step back into employment.

It was at this point that I discovered the Childcare Works Project through Indeed. I submitted my CV and was delighted when the Project Coordinator Lesley responded almost immediately. I was over the moon to be accepted onto the course and excited at the opportunity to return to the childcare sector. Although I felt nervous about starting, those worries quickly disappeared as everyone in the



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group was welcoming, and our tutor made us feel comfortable and supported from the very beginning.

Throughout my time with NDNA, Lesley was incredibly helpful and supportive. She showed great understanding when I had childcare difficulties for my daughter during some of the training and allowed me to have her in the same room as me during sessions. This flexibility made it possible for me to continue with the course without added stress and showed a genuine commitment to supporting parents back into work. The four weeks of online learning were extremely beneficial and gave me valuable insight into working in a nursery, as well as children's development. Once the online learning was completed, I identified a nursery where I wanted to complete my placement. Lesley went above and beyond by reaching out directly to the nursery manager and securing the placement for me, which I was incredibly grateful for.

As a result of the training, placement, and additional courses such as first aid and safeguarding, I was able to secure a job within a nursery. These qualifications played a key role in building my confidence and employability. I am now happily working in a nursery, and this opportunity has only been possible because of the Childcare Works Project and the support I received from Lesley throughout the journey.

I am extremely grateful for the experience and support provided and would highly recommend the Childcare Works Project to anyone looking to return to or start a career in childcare.

### **Feedback from Apple Tree Tots:**

The National Day Nurseries Association childcare placement scheme has been and is a great initiative to support the sector and encourage more people to consider careers in childcare.

By providing a hands-on experience, the program offered me as an employer and the employee valuable insight into the day-to-day operations of our setting and has helped us and helping the industry in encouraging more people into the sector by helping build confidence and interest in the profession. It has created a direct talent pipeline, promoting industry awareness, and really does foster networking and mentorship opportunities and working with Lesley has been superb!

Supporting settings through funding and incentives, integrating placements with formal qualifications, and promoting the program widely really does enhance its effectiveness. Overall, this initiative has significant opportunities to address workforce shortages and strengthen the childcare sector by attracting and retaining motivated, well-prepared staff. Thank you for placing candidates with us and we would love to welcome new candidates in the future.