

London childcare providers survey 2011

A sample of your success stories

Despite many of the challenges faced by providers, several respondents shared success stories from the last year. These centred around the following themes:

- Helping children from difficult circumstances or with SEN reach their potential
- Seeing staff improve through training and experience and having this reflected in Ofsted reports
- Sharing experience within our own settings and beyond
- Engaging and enabling carers
- Providing the opportunity for outdoor play and additional activities

Helping families in difficult circumstances

“A child of four years old who started my setting was having really bad temper tantrums and threw herself on the floor for nothing at all. If she had to share or take turns instead of talking about it she would just scream and scream, sometimes she just screamed for nothing. So I sat down and had a talk to her, and there was a break up in the family unit and she was very upset about it. To get her frustration out she screamed, I said I would put a chair in a corner where the other children would not disturb her and she could scream, and when she needed a cuddle I would be there for her. Within a few weeks of the child getting her frustrations out in a different way she calmed down and does not scream any more just comes for a cuddle when she feels low.”



“A family living in Cornwall; Dad was a driving instructor and mum was working in London Monday to Friday and staying with the maternal grandmother who helped with Adam's care. He attended our sessional care and he and his mother would return home to join dad at weekends. We were able to be flexible around childcare provision and provide stability for Adam when his grandmother had to have an operation and his mother was made redundant. Adam was able to make friends and moved on to the local school. His mother gained new employment here and the family has put their house on the market and intends moving permanently to London where their son has his friends and extended family.” (name changed)

"[O]ne child whom I looked after both at holiday club and after school care had behavioural issues, he swore at staff, threw chairs was generally difficult to engage with, his mum used to dread coming every evening to hear what he had done that day. (She was constantly getting phone calls from school and or the teacher wanting to see her regarding her child's behaviour.) One evening he had behaved really badly (we told her about it). She said you're not going to exclude him are you. At that moment I saw the look of despair in her face. (We had looked after her daughter who had been and was still lovely). I simply said we will continue to work with you if you want to work with us. A sense of relief came over her face and I knew I had made the right decision. Needless to say the child continued with us until age 11 and as time went on his behaviour changed - he would try and put right what he had done wrong e.g. if he knocked toys off the table - he would pick them up and say sorry! When he left his mum thanked us all very much for working with him it had meant a lot to her. I felt a sense of achievement for my club and the staff - we had done our very best for this family."

Helping children with SEN (Special Educational Needs)

"Our greatest success stories are probably around the support that we have been able to give the SEN children who have attended our setting - being able to send them out from the pre-school to primary education as generally confident children who feel included in every sense. It would be difficult to single out a particular case, since each has its own uniqueness and merits. The one thing which unites all these is happy and fully supportive parents who cannot be more complimentary about our setting."



"We have many children here with SEN and behavioural issues. A family in our setting was really struggling with their 2 year old son who had very challenging behaviour including biting his parents and trying to hurt his baby sister. He did show aggressive behaviour at the setting initially but after setting boundaries, making social stories and rewarding him for his good behaviour he has been able to engage with other children and activities at the setting. We have had case meetings and worked with social services, portage and early intervention teams to help support him at home as well, and this is ongoing."

Achievements by staff...

"Creating, over many years, a team of truly professional, enthusiastic and caring practitioners, who enjoy working with young children and their families. Practitioners who feel passionate about training students to a high standard, who allow them to make mistakes and learn from them; who support them and applaud their achievements. We don't always get it right but we reflect on what went wrong, make some changes and bounce back, hopefully stronger and more knowledgeable. We are not so keen on the paperwork because it takes us away from the children but we have to acknowledge that some (maybe a bit more than some) of the paperwork provides us with the information to encourage the children to develop the skills to enjoy learning through play and to embrace their own interests with confidence and purpose."

“That staff achieved Level 2/3 Childcare qualifications and I have observed their confidence develop in the setting. They have become more aware of the children’s individual needs by observing and recording their progress. Ongoing training also gives staff insight and awareness to provide good practice.”

“Our success story is regarding a member of staff who after working for us for over twenty years embarked on and successfully completed her level two qualification. English is not her first language but with support she also gained her entry into level three course and we are very proud of her.”

“Ofsted 2007 Outstanding Ofsted 2011 Outstanding. This shows the setting and staff are dedicated to the profession, families and children. They work hard to make improvements and move beyond basic requirements. To see this all end due to funding is a disgrace.”

...and by self

“I am a single parent and at times struggled. I used to volunteer in groups/nurseries my child attended. I became a childminder 16 years ago so my working hours fitted in with school hours! I have worked extremely hard to get where I am today at the age of '46' (now a Network childminder) and am proud to know that I have made a huge contribution in 'all' of my childcare children. It is known that once childcare has ended, being that they have moved on in education or moved house, they still to this day respect me and what I had done for them as a family. I attend regular training, I give advice to potential childminders and parents seeking childcare. I feel I am a success story as I'm what I am 'today' from working hard and I love it!”

“Obtaining outstanding through my hard work and dedication.”

Sharing experience

“Being part of a buddy scheme of mentoring newly registered childminders and those with poor Ofsted grades with strong support and regular meetings with the children center teacher and local authority officers. Seeing childminders grow in confidence as they felt less isolated was rewarding. The scheme led to changes in how the local authority inducts new childminders ensuring that they are ready to take on the role due to the demands of the EYFS.” (EYFS = Early Years Foundation Stage)

“The local area meetings are a bonus as we can meet with other providers and share practice as well as gaining knowledge on local authority training etc.”

Engaging...

“Last year we took in the National Strategy for Social and Emotional Aspects of Development giving us skills to support children and these families to build self esteem and self confidence especially in being able to recognize and name a range of emotions and to find the language to express themselves effectively. Behaviour between the children has improved and disputes between children are rare and children talk to each other about how they feel. Parents comment on how this has impacted on life at home too. Parent workshops have supported parents in understanding and supporting their children in this area.”

“We have been doing a lot of parent partnership and grandparent event that have been real successes such as making gingerbread men with our grandparents - also we had a fabulous party for the royal wedding.”

“Having 170 children compose their own opera and perform it on stage to a live audience. Having a parent of an autistic child recognize that it was better for the child to remain in our setting than to go to a special needs school, and for us to integrate the child in our activities on a daily basis. Hearing parents say they've never seen anything like our approach to child care and nursery education.”

...and enabling carers

“As part of a children’s centre we were able to help a single mum get back to work and child care”

“We have helped a number of children and parents through support to leave abusive partners and finding new accommodation.”

“Helped a lady whilst she went on a course to learn about CV writing and help finding a job - I was paid by the job centre.”

Securing funding for outdoor play



“We received money from the Capital Grant Funding, which enabled us to improve our storage and our very small outdoor area. Both projects have had a very positive effect on the pre-school and the children particularly love their 'garden'.”

“Capital grant funding to improve my outside area. This means that I can deliver free flow play according to The EYFS Guidelines with the use of the outside area all year round. The improvement to the quality of play, learning and development in the children has been excellent.”

Going beyond the standard

“Starting a singing and signing group that I ran for 5 years at my local children’s centre. It was amazing watching the children learning and being able to communicate with each other. It encouraged other minders to start signing with their children at home and at other toddler groups. It really raised the profile of signing.”

“Most of our success stories come from the hard work and dedication of staff and parents in providing initiatives beyond the EYFS and local authority directives, e.g. pet area including hens, art projects, garden projects, fairs, trips etc.”

In sum...

“All children I care for are success stories. Just day to day learning and development in a safe environment.”