

The benefits of being an Apprentice



How Elle got her life back on track thanks to Jancett Day Nursery

“I left school at 14, but luckily found support from my training provider and Jancett Day Nursery to get me back on track and building a career in child care.” Elle Penfold, Child Care Apprentice

Elle was just aged 14 when she was asked to leave school. “I wasn’t turning up to lessons and felt resentful at being made to attend school,” she says. “Looking back, I realise that I didn’t behave particularly well, but at the time it seemed impossible to do anything else.”

Outside support

Luckily for Elle, now 18, she was introduced to both a good training provider in Jace Training, and a supportive prospective employer at Jancett Day Nursery.

“Jace Training enrolled me on the Entry to Employment Course and I started doing work experience at Jancett Day Nursery,” she explains.

“I’d known for years that I wanted to work in Child Care so all of a sudden I’d gone from potential failure to a possible new career.”

Realising that she wouldn’t get anywhere without working, Elle knuckled down and achieved a Level 1 on the Entry to Employment Course. She was then offered the opportunity of an Apprenticeship at Jancett Day Nursery and couldn’t wait to take it up.

Hard work

“I began by working school hours at Jancett, from 9am to 3.15pm,” says Elle. “I completed my training coursework after work. Despite leaving school at 14, it wasn’t the hard work I was afraid of – I just didn’t like the way I was treated by some of the staff. At Jancett I’m treated as an adult and find it easier to respond that way.”

Over the last three years, Elle has completed her NVQ 2 in Child Care and is about to starting her NVQ 3.

Made the right choice

“I love my job and really enjoy working with the children,” she says. “Doing activities with them and seeing them develop is great. I know I’ve made the right choice.

“I realise that despite not giving myself the best start to a career, I’ve been lucky to find people who are willing to support and encourage me, so that I wouldn’t end up wandering the streets.”

"I want to complete my Child Care Apprenticeship so that I'm fully trained in a worthwhile career"

Typical teenager grows up

Sharon Bullimore is Elle's manager at Jancett Day Nursery. She says: "When Elle first came to work with us she was obviously without much life experience and quite young in her outlook. Nothing surprising in that, of course, but what was surprising and a real joy was that suddenly she started to grow up and shoulder her responsibilities. Now she's punctual, reliable and a good worker.

"We employ her as a full member of staff two days a week, which adds to her weekly income, and when she's completed her NVQ 3 we hope to be able to take her on full time, if we have the space available."

Outgoing and confident

Elle says that since leaving school, she feels more outgoing and confident. "I sometimes see my old school friends but now I feel so different," she says. "I want to complete my Child Care Apprenticeship so that I'm fully trained in a worthwhile career. But perhaps, when that's completed I might consider seeing what else I could do, before returning to what I enjoy the most.

"The great thing is that my Apprenticeship has given me a new outlook on life and on what I'm really capable of. For me, school wasn't the answer, but learning through working definitely is."



If you would like further information about Apprenticeships in South London call the Apprenticeship Hotline on 0800 169 4824 or visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk

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