



How Apprenticeships helped Cannock House Day Nursery develop the... "well-qualified and confident staff we need for our nursery"

**"If we weren't able to offer Apprenticeships as training, we would have to offer our own training scheme. For a business such as ours, Apprenticeships are vital because they are by far the best way of developing the well-qualified and confident staff we need for our nursery." Penny Groves, Nursery Manager, Cannock House Day Nursery**

**Cannock House Day Nursery is based in Orpington and provides childcare for 136 children aged between 3 months to 5 years. It employs around 50 members of staff of which around 30 are fully qualified and the rest are Apprentices at various stages of their training.**

### **Jobs for all**

Practically all of the young people who follow Apprenticeship with Cannock House Day Nursery can be sure of a full-time job when they are qualified.

Most of the nursery's staff follow their training through training provider, Smart Training, although it's Cannock House Day Nursery that decides which young people to recruit.

Penny explains: "Other nurseries get their Apprentices from the training provider, but we advertise and recruit ourselves. We take them on for 2-3 months and see how they are getting on and how strong their commitment to

the job is, before we put them forward for a formal Apprenticeship. This way less time and money is lost by offering training to young people who subsequently decided that they don't enjoy the work."

### **Getting serious**

Cannock House assesses the potential Apprentices themselves, and when they are satisfied that the young person is really serious about their job, they contact a training provider, often Smart Training, and begin filling in the relevant Apprenticeship applications forms.

### **Training provider support**

"We obviously work very closely with our training provider to make sure that our Apprentices are supported well, and Smart Training are excellent at their on-going support for both us and them," explains Penny.

“It was really interesting seeing how Smart Training supports Apprentices from their point of view”

“Our Apprentices work for us between three and four days a week, and as there is a fair amount of study and coursework we would expect them to do that on their days off,” says Penny.

Smart Training also offers once-a-month Saturday training for Apprentices so that it doesn't take them away from work on the same day and they benefit from studying and swapped experiences together.

### Working with every age-group

Cannock House spreads its Apprentices out across its 12 different rooms, so each one has two qualified members of staff supporting the trainee. The trainees get rotated around the nursery so they have an opportunity to work with every age-group and learn to understand their diverse needs and requirements.

The nursery offers regular assessments and those Apprentices who are developing well are encouraged even further.

### Back to school

Having spent some years organising the nursery's Apprentices, Penny found herself back training last year when she completed her Level 4 NVQ.

“It was really interesting seeing how Smart Training supports Apprentices from their point of view,” she explains. “I was quite nervous returning to study, but their support boosted my confidence and I achieved Level 4 more easily than I had anticipated. I also really enjoyed the Saturday sessions which gave me the opportunity to swap experiences with professionals from other nurseries.”

Cannock House also offers good career progression, as Penny explains. “When an Apprentice has qualified, they can work towards becoming a room supervisor, responsible for up to two members of staff, then a head of department.”

### Apprenticeships are ideal

“If we didn't have the framework training support of Apprenticeships, it would be a struggle for us to run the business as we do,” says Penny. “We would have to employ more externally-trained staff. This wouldn't mean they are any less qualified, but as all nurseries work differently, it would mean them taking more time to settle in and learn the way Cannock House Day Nursery Works.

“Apprenticeships are ideal because they allow us to train young people in our way of working and to our standards, but with the support of a well-structured, well-supported Apprenticeship training scheme facilitated by a good training provider.”



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Want more information on how to benefit from the Apprenticeship programme in South London?

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](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

