

## Work Experience Statement

Between 9 June and 20 June 2003 I went on a work experience placement to Little Sutton Nursery and Club. The placement lasted for two weeks. I worked Monday to Friday from 8.45 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. My main supervisor, who was the Manager of the Nursery, was Mrs. Debbie Blythe. On the first day I arrived at 8.40 a.m. and I was introduced to the other members of staff.

During the work experience placement I carried out a variety of jobs. The main job, which was extremely important and had to be carried out from the moment the children arrived to the moment they left, was supervising them. The days at the nursery were very structured. The children arrived at 9.00 a.m. Between 9.00 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. was the time when the children sat on the carpet. The register was taken and a story was read to them. At 9.30 a.m. the children did different activities – these varied from craft to learning to count.

At 10.45 a.m. the children helped the staff to tidy up the activity they were doing. After tidying up the younger children went to the toilet before having a drink and some fruit. After having a break it was playtime again until 11.50 a.m. when it was lunchtime. At lunchtime the children went into the dining hall with the Infant Scholl. They all had cooked school dinners. Lunchtime usually lasted about 25 minutes. After dinner the children watched a video lunch about 1.30 p.m. At 1.30 p.m. it was playtime until 2.45 p.m. At this time all activities and toys were completely cleared away. The children were given a drink and a story was read until it was time for them to go home at 3.15 p.m.

While the children playing or carrying out activities, such as craft, I would do a variety of jobs. Almost everyday of my placement, I was asked to supervise the craft activity in the morning. This itself involved a number of tasks. I had to make sure each child was wearing an apron. I also had to write the child's name on their work. Once the child had finished the activity, I had to make sure the work was put on a rack to dry. I also had to make sure the children did not run out of glue or paint etc.

Sometimes a child would ask me to read them a story. This usually gained the attention of other children and I would end up reading to a small group. A lot of the time the children wanted me to play with them. One day during my placement, I organised a game of dominoes with a group of six children. At break time I would sometimes make drinks for the children and prepare the fruit. Another job which I really enjoyed doing and I felt was rewarding was helping the children to complete counting books which the Nursery had produced. I think that the children enjoyed doing this with me and I found this interesting. I also learn a new skill which I how to teach children to count. I found this my most rewarding achievement.

As well as teaching children to count, I also learnt many other different skills on my placement. An important thing which I had to do when reading to children was to speak clearly. I am usually a quite unclear and very fast speaker, however, during the placement I improved this skill. Another thing which I found to be very important when handling children was to have patience. Very often the children did not do as

they were told the first time and therefore this meant I must have patience with them. I found this became easier as time went on.

During my placement I found that I didn't really encounter many problems. However, in the first week I found myself asking questions constantly about where things were kept. After the first week I almost knew where everything was kept and routines became more familiar to me. Another minor problem I encountered was with some of the children. They were very stubborn and would not do as I asked. This was worrying sometimes as I felt they were endangering themselves. I resolved this problem by informing another member of staff.

At my placement there were between 10 and 12 other members of staff. I found most of the staff very pleasant and willing to help me. However, a few of the staff were quite intimidating and I felt a little uncomfortable or lost for words when I was around them. Also, I found one of the members of staff to be very condescending. I felt as though she was talking down to me and spoke to me in the same way in which she spoke to the children. This really got on my nerves at first, but after a while I chose to ignore it and not to let it bother me.

This placement has helped me to understand the disadvantages and advantages of this type of work. It has also helped me to decide on what I would like to do in the future. I found out that being a Nursery Assistant is a very badly paid job, although it is very hard work. This is the only real disadvantage of this type of job. I think the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. This job can be very difficult at times, but can also be very rewarding. I think that young children are lovely to work with. This placement has made me realise that I would definitely like to work with children as a future career.