

Your guide to nursery work

“ Over the years my experience of working with children and families has been enormously rewarding and enjoyable. I learn something new every day and I cannot think of another job that I would rather do! ”

Jackie, stay and play coordinator

What is involved?

Nursery workers provide care and education for babies and young children to help them learn and develop. Most nursery work is for children under five, but some nurseries offer after-school and holiday care for older children. Duties vary according to the job role and include encouraging children to develop social skills and learn through play, planning activities that are educational and fun, taking care of children's personal and emotional development, organising outings, supervising rest times, observing and assessing children and writing reports on each child's development, ensuring that they are safe at all times. Nursery workers keep parents and carers informed about their child's daily progress.

There are many roles in nurseries and children's centres including:

- nursery assistants - work under supervision;
- early years practitioners and nursery nurses - responsible for a group of children with support from nursery assistants;
- team leaders/deputy managers - assist the nursery manager and are often responsible for a team of staff or specialise in baby or pre-school care;
- managers - responsible for the daily running of the nursery;
- early years professionals - leading on quality and practice within the Early Years Foundation stage;
- children's centre assistant head - strategic development and implementation of a range of services for parents and children;
- children's centre deputy head - development of the curriculum for children from birth to five and
- children's centre head -strategically coordinates all outreach services as well as high quality care and education for children from birth to five.



Is working in a nursery or children's centre right for me?

You need to have:

- a patient, caring nature and a genuine interest in working with babies and young children;
- the ability to motivate children to learn new skills;
- good communication and organisational skills;
- energy and enthusiasm and
- the ability to work well and in a team.

What experience/qualifications do I need?

Different job roles within nurseries require different levels of qualifications. There may be opportunities to work in a nursery or children's centre as an assistant without formal qualifications. Those who are unqualified sometimes start out as a volunteer and then progress towards paid work and training. However, it is better to have previous experience of working with children and you will usually be expected to work towards a qualification.

Demand for qualified nursery nurses is high in local authorities, community and private nurseries. Nursery assistants, who work under supervision, need a level 2 qualification. Early years practitioners and nursery nurses, who work unsupervised, must have a level 3 qualification or higher. Nursery workers with management or supervisory responsibilities need a level 4 qualification or higher. Managers and supervisors need to have relevant work related experience and senior managers need to be educated to at least graduate level.

You must have a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check.

How much could I earn?

The current salary range is approximately £14,000 to £25,000, depending on the specific role and which sector you chose to work in although for management positions salaries can be significantly higher. See the Islington FIS jobs list for local rates of pay at www.islington.gov.uk/fis and follow the link for Work and Training with Children and Young People.

What are the working hours?

Nursery workers usually work around 40 hours a week, Monday to Friday, although hours may vary and part-time positions may be available. Many nurseries open from 8 am to 6 pm to fit in with the working hours of parents. Some nurseries and playgroups are only open during term time.

Further training and opportunities

As an experienced nursery nurse you can increase your opportunities for promotion through further training. As mentioned above, you can work towards a level 3 qualification to become an early years practitioner or nursery nurse or a level 4 qualification to gain management or supervisory responsibilities. You could also go on to set up your own nursery or train in related careers such as teaching, nursing, or social work.

Useful contacts:

Islington Family Information Service
020 7527 5959
www.islington.gov.uk/fis

City & Islington College
020 7700 9200
www.candi.ac.uk

Islington Childcare Trust
020 7527 5953
www.islingtonchildcaretrust.org.uk

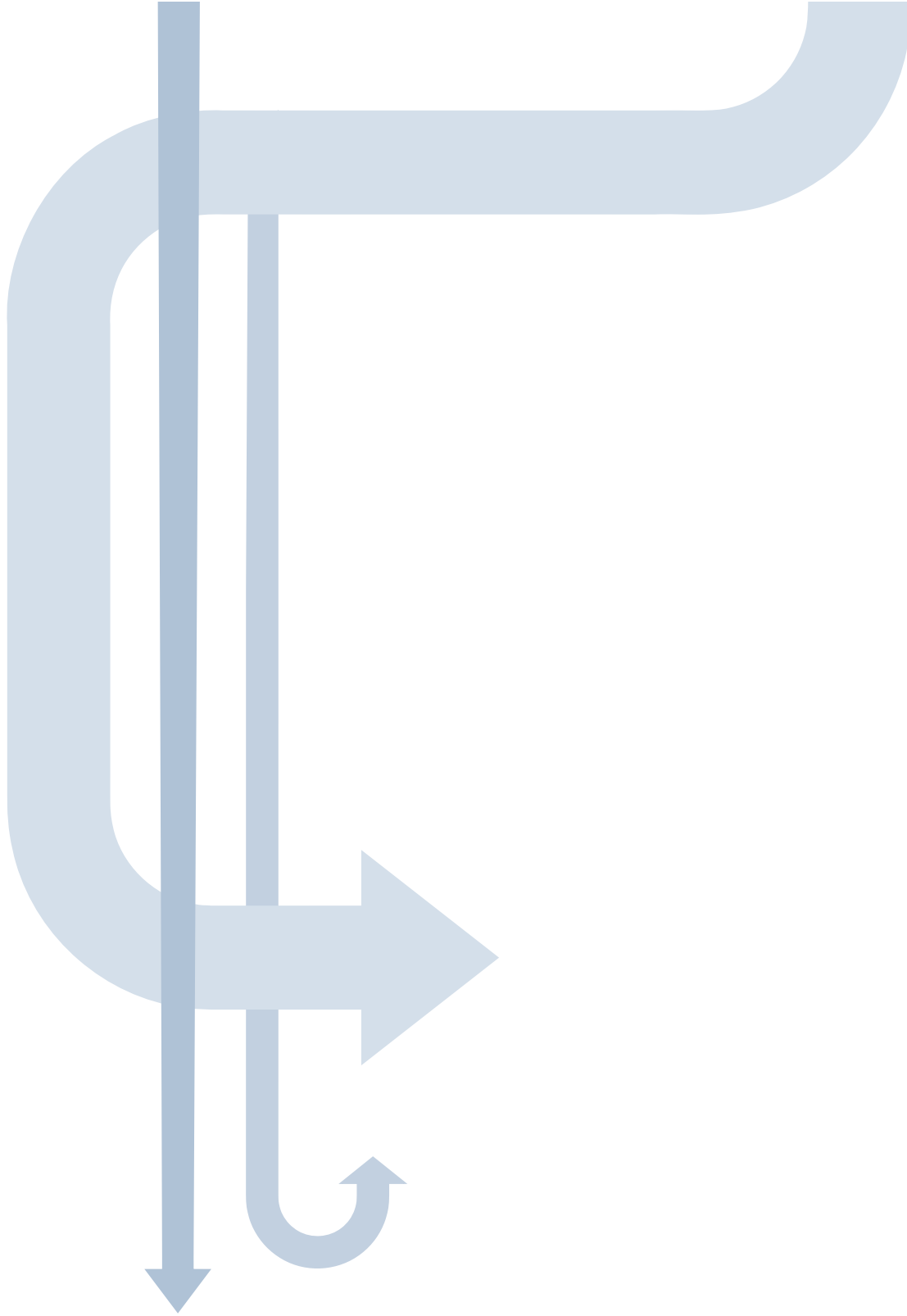
London Metropolitan University
020 7133 4200
www.londonmet.ac.uk

Nursery World (publication for childcare jobs)
www.nurseryworld.co.uk

National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)
0870 774 4244
www.ndna.org.uk

Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education (CACHE)
0845 347 2123
www.cache.org.uk

Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC)
0113 244 6311
www.cwdcouncil.org.uk



Family Information Service

Children's Services
222 Upper Street
London N1 1XR

T 020 7527 5959

E fis@islington.gov.uk

W www.islington.gov.uk/fis