



# Lostsocks Newsletter



February 2009 lostsocks Newsletter

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## The Credit Crunch – How it is Affecting Childcare

Whilst the country is in the grips of financial downturn, Chiltern Training decided to find out how the current situation might be affecting employers and trainees in the childcare sector.

A recent report in the Reading Evening Post shows that 51% of those questioned had heard that there would be redundancies at their place of work. As the media reports on daily job cuts and high numbers of house repossessions, we are preparing for the fact that the need for childcare spaces may be reduced as parents find themselves out of work. As a result of a drop in numbers of children, the number of apprentices may also follow suit.

After talking to some of our employers, we have found that this may actually not be the case. A number of nurseries have found that in fact, the credit crunch is having the opposite effect on childcare to other professional sectors. It seems that the number of new children coming to nurseries has increased by a bigger percentage than usual. Sarah Gowland, manager at Woodlands Day Nursery in Newbury says, 'The number of show rounds we have done since Christmas has gone up by more than 5 times the usual amount. At this time of year we might have one or two

parents per week having a look round but this week we have had eight appointments. And nearly all of them have taken a place for their children.' Sadia Siddiqui, acting manager at Little Ducklings nursery in Woodley says the

situation is no different there. 'Not only are we showing more parents around the nursery but nearly every parent is taking a place to start as soon as possible. I have also found that parents who already send their children here are extending the number of sessions and days that they are doing. We're really very busy at the moment.' Sarah King, manager at Just Learning in Newbury says things are the same at her nursery. 'I think a lot of mums are cutting their maternity leave short and rushing back to work whilst they can. The number of younger babies in the nursery is starting to increase.'

CTL have found that currently the number of placements available for learners is still high and nurseries are also looking for more qualified staff to work in their nurseries, notably the baby rooms are in demand for new staff.

So how is your nursery faring in this economic downturn? Give us your thoughts by email at [sarah.darsley@chilterntraining.org](mailto:sarah.darsley@chilterntraining.org). or call Sarah on 0118 956 6995 and we will keep you all updated.

## Open Day 2009



CTL will be holding its Open Day on Wednesday 11th February from 9:30am to 6pm. If you know anyone who is looking to start their career in childcare or start their next level of training, they can book to attend by calling the admin team on 01189 566 995. We will be running information presentations as well as practical activities and informal interviews on the day.



**Inside this issue:** Affects of the Credit Crunch, Open Day, Katy's Word, Achievers update, Shrove Tuesday, Male Learners in Childcare, Call for More Male workers in Childcare, Chiltern Childcare Recruitment

## A note from Katy:



We are now well into 2009

and February is one of our busiest months of the year for recruitment. Our open day for school leavers will be held on Wednesday 11th February and a week later, on the 18th we will have a taster day, which allows school leavers to try some of the practical tasks involved in a career in today's childcare sector.

This is the time of year when we are approached by those leaving school at the end of the summer term and we will start to interview for placements for summer starts from the middle of February onwards. We will be hoping to arrange work experience for new applicants during the Easter holidays - which are not that far away!

I would therefore ask all nursery managers to have a think about how many apprenticeship placements they may be able to offer, bearing in mind that many nurseries are now beginning to fill their baby rooms much more quickly and many of you have reported having fairly hefty waiting lists again.

Sarah will no doubt be contacting you over the next few months to help you work out your requirements. We would be particularly keen to hear from those of you in West Berkshire as we will be running another Level 2 NVQ Team Leading course at our training room in Woodlands Nursery at Greenham Common starting at the end of February. We already run a Level 3 course at Woodlands on a Wednesday evening and those interested in joining should contact Sarah Darsley on 0118 956 6995.

**Katy Edwards**

## Achievers for December

### Apprentices

Jessica Staniforth– Forbury  
Beatrice Warner– Bramley Wood  
Katy Roberts– Little Bears  
Rebecca Mills– Kiddi Caru  
Mark Maynard– Brightstarts

### Advanced Apprentices

Rebecca Rowland– Dickory Docks  
Amy Randall– Woodlands  
Graziella Biasin– Little Ducklings  
Angela Taylor– Casterbridge  
Caroline Orman– Forbury

Sarah Haynes– Toad Hall  
Christine Henderson– Dickory Docks

### Level 2 NVQ

Eloise Mills– Western Elms

### Level 3 NVQ

Karen Brooks– Stepping Stones  
Jessie Mullinger– Positive Steps

### Level 3 NVQ Management

Rachel Fletcher– Casterbridge

### Level 4 NVQ

Nina Edmonds– Little Dragons  
Catherine Treglown– Toad Hall

## Shrove Tuesday 2009 (Pancake Day)

This year, Pancake Day (Shrove Tuesday) falls on February 24<sup>th</sup>. It is the last day before the period that Christians call Lent. This day is one of the moveable feasts in the church calendar and is directly related to the date on which Easter falls. Shrove Tuesday always falls 47 days before Easter Sunday, so the date varies from year to year and falls between 3<sup>rd</sup> February and 9<sup>th</sup> March.

**Why is it called Shrove Tuesday?** The name comes from the old word "shrive" which means to confess. On Shrove Tuesday, in the Middle Ages, people used to confess their sins so that they were forgiven before the season of Lent began. Shrove Tuesday is a day of celebration as well as penitence, because it is the last day before Lent.

**What is Lent?** Lent is a time of abstinence, of giving things up. So Shrove Tuesday is the last chance to indulge yourself, and use up the rich foods that are not allowed in Lent. Pancakes are eaten on this day because they contain fat, butter and eggs which are considered luxuries and should be abstained from during Lent.

**What is an English pancake?** A pancake is a thin, flat cake, made of batter and fried in a pan. A variety of toppings can be used to make it really tasty, but traditionally people use sugar sprinkled over the top and a dash of fresh lemon.



**Pancake Recipe:** 220g/8oz of plain flour, pinch of salt, 2 eggs, 1 pint of milk, 50g/2oz butter

- 1 sift the flour and salt into a large mixing bowl with a sieve held high above the bowl so the flour gets an airing.
- 2 make a well in the centre of the flour and break the eggs into it.
- 3 whisk the eggs making sure any bits of flour from around the edge of the bowl are mixed in with the egg.
- 4 gradually add small quantities of the milk while still whisking.
- 5 continue whisking until the batter is smooth, with the consistency of thin cream.
- 6 melt the butter in a non-stick frying pan.
- 7 spoon 2 tbsp of the melted butter into the batter and mix it in. The remaining butter is used to grease the frying pan for each pancake you make.
- 8 ensure the frying pan is hot before you add 2 tbsp of batter mix. Tilt the pan from side to side to spread the mixture evenly to create a thin pancake.
- 9 leave until golden brown before flipping the pancake over using a palette knife or fish slice. Sprinkle each pancake with caster sugar and freshly squeezed lemon juice. Roll them



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## Male Learners in Childcare

**Name:** Mark Maynard **Course:** NVO Level 3, Train to Gain **Age:** 20  
**Nursery:** Brightstarts Day Nursery, Theale

**In the Beginning:** Mark came to the Open Day at CTL last February and had been working in the painting and decorating trade. Mark had grown up with 3 younger sisters and a younger brother and had helped a lot in looking after them as they were growing up. He always knew he wanted to work with children but was not sure which aspect of childcare he wanted to go into. A friend who trained at CTL recommended he started his career and training with us and Mark has not looked back since.

**What age group do you work with?** I was working in the babies room but I now work with the 3-5's. They are really chatty and can tell you what they want. They are very active. **What do you like about working in Childcare?** I love being with the children and watching them learn. There is always a lot to do and every day is different. **What do you like about your nursery?** I tried a few different nurseries before I started at Brightstarts. I really liked Brightstarts because it was smaller and more personal so you had more time to enjoy your role. Im busy without being rushed off my feet all day and I can take time with each child. **What do you think of college?** The college work is good but I do prefer the practical side of my qualification. I've got a new baby son, Jack who has given me some great experience for my line of work. My course has taught me a lot and helped me to prepare for looking after him. The courses at CTL are really good because they allow you to work full time and get qualified at the same time. That's why I am doing the Train to Gain course. I have found my course really interesting, especially the child development module. **What would you say to other men considering a career in childcare? What are your plans for the future?** This is a job that anyone can do so if you want to do it, go for it. The benefits of having men in childcare is the male role model. **What are your plans for the future?** I've just started my level 3. Im not really sure what I want to do yet, maybe one day I'll be a paediatrician.



Mark Maynard has recently completed his Apprenticeship and is now doing his NVO Level 3. Mark works at Brightstarts Day Nursery in Theale.

## Call for More Males in Childcare

Parents in England are calling for more males to work in early years settings. According to research conducted by the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC), 55 per cent of parents say they want a male childcare worker for their nursery-aged children, with two thirds of lone parent mothers saying they would like a man involved in the care and development of their young children.

Early years settings can provide children with access to a male role model. Currently 17 per cent of children from lone parent female families have fewer than two hours a week contact time with a man. Male early years workers can perform a vital role in ensuring many of these young children have quality contact time with men. Offering someone for the boys to look up to was seen as important for 37 per cent of parents, who say that it sets boys a good example, while a quarter say they believe boys will behave better with a man. But it's not just boys who stand to benefit. Fifty-seven per cent of parents recognised the fact that men and women have different skills to offer young children, while 52 per cent simply said that a nursery setting should better reflect the real gender mix of the world.

Yet despite the high demand for male workers, there are very few men currently working in this field. To try and tackle this dramatic gender imbalance, CWDC is calling on more men to consider working in early years. Thom Crabbe, National Development Manager for Early Years at the Children's Workforce Development Council, said: "Parents are right to want to see more men working in early years. It is important that during the crucial first five years of a child's life they have quality contact with both male and female role models.

"And working with under 5s is definitely a job for the boys. It's one that requires someone who is patient, creative and bright and one which gives back major rewards. Male workers will get to work in a challenging, stimulating environment with like-minded professionals dedicated to the development of children with positive benefits to babies, toddlers and young children as well as to families and communities."



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## Childcare Vacancies

**Nursery Practitioner** **Shurlock Row** **circa £13,000**  
 An excellent opportunity has become available for a qualified Nursery Practitioner to join this exciting teaching nursery who have recently been awarded an outstanding Ofsted report. Term Time only, 8.30am—4pm. VAC- 10105

**Nursery Practitioner** **Sonning** **£Negotiable**  
 Our client is looking for an experienced Nursery Practitioner to join the team. Must be NVQ level 3 qualified, have excellent experience and be a committed staff member. Salary dependent on experience. VAC-10111

**Nursery Practitioner** **Theale** **£12,500+**  
 Two positions have become available for nursery practitioners at this nursery to work with the under 3's. A good level of experience is required. VAC- 10102/ 10103

**Nursery Practitioner** **Sunningdale** **circa £14,000**  
 This local family day nursery is looking for a nursery practitioner to work in the baby room. Level 2 or 3 in CCLD is required as is previous experience VAC- 10093

**Nursery Practitioner** **Crowthorne** **£Negotiable**  
 A competent and hard working nursery practitioner is required to work in the 3-5's room alongside the teacher. The candidate will need to have a good use of initiative and take a leading role where necessary. VAC- 10095

**Nursery Practitioner** **Newbury** **£10,000+**  
 A Nursery Assistant or Practitioner is required for the baby room in this nursery. They will be required to start ASAP. Level 2 or 3 is required and salary is dependent on level of qualification and experience. VAC-10096

**Nursery Manager** **Binfield** **£Negotiable**  
 Looking to further your career or just feel like a change of setting, this fantastic opportunity could be just what you are looking for. Vac-10110

**Room Leader** **Binfield** **£Negotiable**  
 A Room Leader vacancy has become available within this fantastic nursery based in Binfield, Berkshire. You will need to be NVQ Level 3 qualified or equivalent. VAC-10108

**Nursery Practitioner** **Binfield** **£Negotiable**  
 A Nursery Practitioner is required by this busy nursery based in Binfield, Berkshire. You must be NVQ Level 3 CCLD qualified or equivalent. Vac-10108

**3rd in Charge** **Reading** **£Negotiable**  
 This nursery is seeking an NVQ Level 3 CCLD or equivalent qualified Nursery Practitioner to work as 3rd in charge based in the 2yrs+ room. VAC-10114

**Are you looking for a Nanny?**

**Are you a Nanny looking for work?**

If you are looking for the right person to look after your children, or are looking for the right family to join, please contact our recruitment team today for more information.

If you are looking for staff, interested in any of these vacancies or would like to see what other vacancies are available, please contact **Karen Wick** on **0118 9566 995** or for more information please see our website.

[www.chilternchildcarerecruitment.co.uk](http://www.chilternchildcarerecruitment.co.uk)

