

## **Exceptional Practitioner Nominations**

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[Ashleigh Jackson – The Ark Pre School](#)

[Genna Rowley – The Playroom West Bridgford](#)

[Kirsty Spooner – The Playroom West Bridgford](#)

[Millie Luddington, Annie Bestwick and Genna Rowley - – The Playroom West Bridgford](#)

[Tasha Spencer – The Playroom West Bridgford](#)

[Jack Hammond – The Playroom West Bridgford](#)

[Edward Luddington The Playroom West Bridgford](#)

[Amy Bevan – The Village Nursery](#)

[Amy Linford – The Village Nursery](#)

[Amy Hill, Jess Foster, Aimee Bevan, Kayti Hall and Amy Linford – The Village Nursery](#)

[Jordan – The Wolds Stragglethorpe](#)

[Tracey Owen – Tollerton Playgroup](#)

[Naomi – Upton Crickets](#)

[Sarah Boot – Wollaton Village Day Nursery Eastwood](#)

## Christine McGrath – Fernwood Day Nursery

Christine has worked tirelessly to meet the ever-changing needs of the children returning from the pandemic, she put the children first planning a range of amazing activities to engage and motivate them to learn. Christine works closely with parents and supports children into their transition within the nursery. She also helps children who have returned with additional need especially helping vulnerable families and two-year funded children. Christine supports children emotionally offering the support and nurturing they need. I would highly recommend Christine for her long service dedicated to improving lives of young children.

Christine is an excellent practitioner, she is enthusiastic, a good role model and goes above and beyond. Christine has good relationship with parent/carers by supporting them, sign posting them to appropriate agencies and working together to ensure their child receives the best learning experience.

My son F had a difficult time transitioning from his old nursery to Fernwood Day Nursery due to his shy nature but the staff at the nursery especially Christine have made him feel very welcome and have let him settle at his own pace. Whenever I question F about his day, he just says how much fun he has had with Christine and that she's his best friend which melts my heart a little, it's very reassuring to me that F had now settled well and has formed some close bonds.

Christine always goes above and beyond for all of the children in the setting. Her imaginative and exciting play encourages children of all abilities to learn and grow in different ways. No matter what she always ensures the children leave with a smile on their face and happy memories to take home with them.

Christine is such a hard worker and contributes massively within the room. She has offered not only myself but others a lot of guidance and support. There has never been a day where she hasn't gone above and beyond to make the children and staff laugh. It is clear to see that working with children is a passion she has. Kind, enthusiastic and caring are a few words to best describe her. If life is a little rainy, she always manages to brighten up the day.

Christine has worked at the setting for over 10 years, she always puts the children first and is so engaged with them and their learning. She's constantly giving her time and her own money to buy extra resources for the children, she's completely selfless. She does the best role play ever and the children love her so much.

Christine has a natural ability to build caring, professional relationships with children and their families. She gives 100% every day to make sure that children receive the best opportunities and that the children's time in nursery is fun and stimulating.

Christine doesn't always believe in herself, but she should, as toddler rooms senior staff member, she is so fun and engaging with the children and try's her hardest every single day.

Christine is an exceptional member of staff who isn't afraid to get on all fours giving the children donkey rides to her brilliant disco dough sessions and rhyming children's names "Morgan plays the organ" to help them learn rhyming words.

Always wanting to be helpful to both staff and children and is a great role model to both.

## Ellie Pitchford – Enchanted Garden

I am putting Ellie forward for many reasons, as a parent it has been very important that my child's needs, personally, socially, emotionally and educationally are met. Ellie looks at each child as an individual and she sees them as a whole, she nurtures them as individuals. She's a key worker for my son who has allergies and very hyper energy and she always finds a suitable way to include and support him. She's got an incredible bond with all the children, as a parent I see it at pick up when she's talking passionately to other parents and interacting with the children. My son has had Ellie as a key worker since he was 9 months old. She's supported and followed him throughout his nursery and preschool journey and their bond is so precious. She has already started to help him with his school transition and has ensured he is ready. My son also has speech and language support, and Ellie has been amazing in ensuring nursery also help him with this. She's so approachable and supportive. The best.

Ellie shows such compassion, care and love towards all the children in her setting. She always goes above and beyond to ensure that all children's individual needs are met, supports new staff and is a friendly face for parents. Ellie is forest school trained and my child's favourite part of nursery is when Ellie is leading a forest school activity. She offers helpful advice to parents and is very reassuring. Last year, I know she helped a parent and child at the nursery after closing hours when their car had rolled in to a ditch and even took them to the hospital, staying with them to check they were safe. This is just one of many things that she does that are beyond what she is paid or expected to do.

Ellie is outstanding she works enthusiastically with all her key children as well as other groups. Completed Forest School and high levels to give children more opportunities within our outdoor setting. Seeing her encourage and support all children no matter what their abilities, brings a smile to the children's faces and staff. Ellie has worked with children identifying their own abilities and encouraging them to do things outside their comfort zones ready to go to school. Ellie has key children with physical difficulties, but her interaction is fun and encouraging with big smiles, their faces shine. Having completed forest school training, she has brought different ideas and fun to the nursery. She is an exceptional practitioner. Hard to put into words what she does.

Ellie is a credit to the nursery. She's taken my little boy under her wing and helps him in every way possible. My little boy has additional needs following being seriously poorly as a baby. She makes sure he is involved in all activities and kept with his peers. Also, he has 1 on 1 care to help his ability to do things his peers do normally. Ellie goes above and beyond to make sure my little boy is meeting what he can and pushes him where he can do more.

Wow!!!! Ellie has come on so much since starting with us and always takes on board. She is a very warm and welcoming lady and always meets each individual child needs

Ellie always had a smile for all the children and will greet them with excitement. Her activities are always inclusive and allows all children to join in.

Fabulous warm loving caring lady towards all the children in her setting. She will go the extra mile for all staff and children.

Amazing practitioner, great with children and parents.

## **Emma Myatt – Nestlings at Rampton Primary School**

Emma always goes above and beyond with our son A. He has excelled and progressed so much since starting at nestlings preschool when he was 2. She understands each child under her care and is always tailoring the activities based on their interests. She keeps us so well informed about A's progress and is always there to support us with any concerns we may have. She is currently supporting us with A's potty training and he is doing an amazing job. She literally thinks of everything, even down to an apple to eat on the way home so that he doesn't fall asleep after a busy day of learning and playing. She is a parent herself and as such she really understands the challenges that you may face and can draw on her own experience. I am so happy with Nestlings and especially Emma, I couldn't imagine A going anywhere else. She is truly deserving of the recognition.

When we looked to put our son into early education at 2 years old, as parents there is always a level of concern. Rampton Primary, Nestlings, has gone above and beyond to ensure that A was made welcome, involved and in a home from home environment. I believe this credit deserves to be echoed for Mrs Myatt (Emma). She is continuously encouraging all the children to come out of there shell and build their own unique little characters. Genuinely overwhelmed by the way she teaches and looks after not only my son, but all involved with the blue hut.

Emma goes above and beyond to help each child feel safe, secure and understands each child's individual needs. She makes sure each parent feels welcomed and valued and listened to, but most of all she has time for each parent. She provides the most wonderful activities to cater for every child, Emma has fun and you can see the passion each day she has.

Mrs Myatt is kind, caring and nurturing. My son's confidence, speech, communication and overall personality has come on leaps and bounds since she has been working with him. The work, time and effort Mrs Myatt puts into nestlings is above and beyond. Thank you for all you do.

She makes the learning, inclusive, fun, and interesting. At the same time as being professional, friendly and super organised.

She goes up above and beyond for children and parents.

The most caring, patient person ever.

## **Pauline Nyblem – Home from Home**

Pauline is a very well-respected childminder in our village Calverton. She has been minding for years and loved by all her families. She is still familiar with the children she minded now they are adults. Pauline has a welcoming home and looks after the children as they were her own. She provides them with a wide range of activities and most of all, lots of memorable experiences! She supports all the parents and children she cares for and has lots of memories exploring up in the local woods. Pauline goes above and beyond for her families and is a real inspiration to myself as a childminder of 6 years. I am lucky enough to work closely with Pauline on a daily basis and share her wonderful ideas and experiences. I have learnt a lot from Pauline and admire her hard work she dedicates to her role as a childminder.

We first met Pauline 13 or 14 years ago, when we needed a childminder for our son C, who was about 1½ at the time, and when our daughter was 9 months, M went there as well. She is an amazing childminder, and she still sends birthday and Christmas cards and presents every year to C and M. When C was little he said, "Can we move next door to Pauline?" The bond has always been

strong, and she still asks after them to this day.

Pauline is also very active in the community, and runs the Calverton toy library, and is a trustee and organises the toy library Christmas party every year. She also offers other childminders support and help and helps with the village get together. Pauline has a very strong community spirit. She will always take the children in her care out for a great community experience to all the toddler groups, and to a variety of different groups and settings. This has led to C and M having very confident personalities.

Pauline was an outstanding childminder to my eldest daughter who is now 8, and still continues to be so. I would highly recommend her services to any parent. She is very welcoming, caring and so good with the children. Always there to help if needed, very welcoming. Our family is still close to her as we are now neighbours, my girls love her!

Pauline has been a childminder in our village for many years, caring for children and then their children. She is kind, caring and just amazing with the children and their families.

Amazing childminder, professional caring, nothing ever too much for children and supportive with parents.

Professional and very supportive and amazing with the children.

### **Lizzie Townsend – Brooklyn Day Nursery**

Lizzie is such a kind, amazing, innovative and thoughtful practitioner. Her knowledge of early years working is second to none. Our eldest child has additional needs and the school she is now at were not at first very supportive during transition. Others were quite negative about her needs whereas Lizzie has always seen the positive side of her differences and the importance of viewing her as an individual rather than the need for her to fit others' ideas of how she should be. She is the best example of a child led practitioner and inclusive of all needs and differences. She also has the most amazing ways of engaging children in play and learning and helps to ensure that Brooklyn is the most amazing early years setting possible!

Lizzie has been exceptional from Day 1 with both my girls. She ensures that all children are prepared for their next stage of their education by liaising and going above and beyond with all the future educational settings. Although my child hasn't required additional support, I know from fellow parents Lizzie has been motivational in ensuring that support plans are in place and doing as much as possible to aid transition with regular communication to the other settings. Lizzie goes above and beyond every single day and in turn is truly loved by all the children and parents. She on a daily basis strives to ensure the needs are met of all the children and ensure each child is fully included in all activities no matter their ability.

When my daughter found out she was going to go preschool, there was only one person she wanted as her key worker and that was Lizzie! She knows all of the children's strengths and helps them to develop their emotional literacy. She knows how to nurture and facilitate learning in a fun and engaging way to suit the needs of all of the children. The children (and parents) simply love Lizzie and the bright, sunny disposition she brings every day!

Lizzie always goes above and beyond in what she does. She has taken the time to make sure my child's needs are supported for the school transition in nursery. She communicates well and lets me know how things are going.



Lizzie is a very inspiring leader of pre-school. My daughter adores her. She always takes an interest in our family and can remember every minute detail. She's always so happy to see the children.

### **Mrs Samantha Roberts – Mansfield Primary Academy**

I would love this award to go to one of the receptionists at our school. She isn't the average receptionist and goes way above her role to ensure parents feel validated, cares about our feelings and will absolutely anything to make things better for the parent and children. Mrs Roberts is a constant support for all parents within our school and if there are any problems, she will always do her utmost to resolve the situation.

Mrs Roberts made arrangements for a support group to come into school and help parents that had been struggling. She arranged for food deliveries to be brought into school, she would personally package up food parcels for the most desperate families. She sets up a vast amount of events to help anyone within school, from asking if anyone has spare clothes that no longer fit their child to see if they could donate it, so she can wash it and then distribute them to families that struggle to afford new uniform. She is one of a kind and never gets noticed for it!

Sam has a big heart of gold always helping families whenever she can always helping others at school and will always put others first and will do anything to make sure all students are happy and have everything they need Sam is so supportive to everyone around her xx.

Sam as a big heart of gold she is so supportive with all parents and students and will always help where every she can and will support anyone with anything and is so supportive with events at school and will always put families first.

Sam always goes out of her way for everyone and will help anyone wherever she can always check in on people and is a role model too all the children around her.

Sam is so supportive if we need any help Sam will always help us wherever we can xx.

### **Beth Morley – Fernwood Day Nursery**

Beth started at the setting as an apprentice now she is a preschool room leader, she is dedicated to her role. Its Beth's first year as a room leader during this time she has built up lovely partnership with parents, is currently supporting children with SEN working with outer agencies, ensuring the room is welcoming and inclusive to cater for each child's individual needs. At present Beth is leading her team to support a group of children who are transitioning to school, providing specific activities and experiences to help prepare the children for their next journey. Beth goes above and beyond within her role and nothing is too much trouble.

Beth has been the 'key person' to both of my children and has been a joy to know over the last 6 years. Her manner is always professional, yet friendly and chatty and she regularly goes above and beyond to ensure that they are settled happily. Beth is a real credit to the team, someone who can get along with anyone and make everyday fun for the children.

Beth is the most creative positive leader of the preschool room. She does her absolute best to make the children's opportunities memorable and has a brilliant relationship with all the children. Her staff team is the best because she is supportive of them.

Worked from a trainee up to a room leader. Amazing leadership skills caring and understanding to others, parents and children in her care

### **Kelly Higham – Carnarvon Pre-School Bingham**

Kelly joined the pre-school in September 2021 as a new manager / team leader and has been exceptional. It feels like she has always been a part of the team and it has felt like a seamless transition. She is so approachable and always has time for the children and their families. She really gets to know everyone well and always brings so much energy and new ideas. Kelly is fantastic at introducing new concepts such as using Tapestry as a communication tool and having themed weeks such as sports week and mental health week. There are always fun and engaging events too such as religious festivals, the Queens jubilee etc and they are always very inclusive. Kelly's communication with parents is spot on- we feel well informed and know the forward plan for the term which is great, and feedback on our child's progress is given regularly. The whole team are amazing and I think Kelly is a wonderful leader for the setting and this deserves to be recognised!

When covid happened 2 years ago and all childcare settings closed, I found myself having to find a new care setting for my then 2 and 3 year old when everything reopened and I was back to work as my previous care setting had moved on. All the restrictions in place made it hard to be able fully engage with the new setting we had chosen - not being able to look around the pre-school and meet the leaders that would be looking after my two children was horrible. As an anxiety sufferer this was tough - but - when pre-school opened and my two started at Carnarvon Pre School - I can honestly say I could not have asked for a better bunch of ladies and Kelly Higham (nursery manager who amazes me) Always keeping in touch, always there when needed and just all have such a great presence. I know my children are so happy there and can't thank them all enough for what they do.

I would like to nominate Kelly Higham, she has recently taken on the role as pre-school manager and goes above and beyond her role. She ensures that all staff are inclusive and really goes the extra mile to make sure that she understands each staff member. She is always working extra hours outside of pre-school, whether it be helping staff complete their reports, writing reports herself, organising open days, sports days, special theme days for the children, buying little treats from her own money for the staff and even during lockdown producing story time videos on Facebook for her children so that they don't miss out. She really is an exceptional leader and Carnarvon are really lucky to have her.

### **Jodie Bicker – Hucknall Day Nursery**

Jodie joined our nursery as an apprentice in 2018 and has since gone on to achieve her Level 3 with distinction! From day one, Jodie has demonstrated outstanding practice, which is recognised not only by our team, but is often commented upon by parents. Most recently Jodie has been promoted to our Walker Room Lead and now leads a team of 5 staff, responsible for the day to day care of up to 15 children. Her partnerships with parents are exceptional and she uses her professional curiosity to approach tricky conversations.

Jodie has restored our faith in that there are young people out there who are able to meet the challenges of this demanding (and often, unacknowledged challenging profession). I now use Jodie to mentor our new apprentices and help with our recruitment process.

Jodie is so lovely. As a parent, it's hard sending your child away all day. I know that my girl is in very safe hands. Jodie is always smiling and very helpful. Very approachable and you can tell she loves her job. We as a family cannot thank Jodie enough.

Jodie has helped my little boy settle into his room always making sure we feel comfortable as parents and guiding us along the way.

### **Kiera Holmes – Little Lambs Kirkby**

Kiera is an exceptional practitioner, one of the most caring, funny and down to earth humans I have ever met. Through everything she has experienced over these few years she still fights to be on top of her game! Never letting down her team or then children. Kiera takes great pride in what she does and will continue to do so for many more years to come. Kiera has a natural talent for working with children and has great knowledge that she passed on to her teammates. Kiera runs an amazing room dealing with hyper toddlers and very energetic pre-schoolers. How she keeps her cool is beyond me. Wish I had the patience.

Puts 100% effort into her role where many of the children are from less privileged background and social circumstances. Kiera has given her all in the field and adds immensely to the establishment. She truly has a gift for working with children outside the mainstream gained through her experiences with her step mums fostering of children with additional needs. Kiera ought to follow this track as she will achieve great things.

Kiera Holmes is an exceptional practitioner and always there to support her children and staff, even through tough hardships. She is always the one to take lead, knows where she stands, finds the right times to use her innovative, she is always outgoing and is second to none when it comes to care for the children, parents and co-workers. Therefore, that is the reason I am nominating the strong, kind, caring and inspirational young women.

### **Jemma Cotton – Mansfield Primary Academy**

Jemma is absolutely incredible she works so hard not only as F2 teacher, as foundation stage leader and our SENCO. She also supported our principal for a year as deputy as well as all this when we were without permanent leadership. She is always there to support all parents and staff as well as excelling in her role with multiple expectations. An absolute credit!

Miss Cotton has supported my son amazing in school. Has always told me if there were any issues and supported my son into settling into school after his move. Has offered him emotional support and helped support him in class so he could reach all his levels.

This woman has made great connection with all the children and has made each one of them feel confident about them self's.

### **Sue Marsh – Carnarvon Pre-School Bingham**

Sue gives the setting positive energy, she works so hard and goes above and beyond her duties as Deputy manager. She takes care of all the staff ensuring everyone's well-being is ok, she offers help and support in both work duty's and in personal life's. Sue loves her job and the children she has had the joy to nature along the way. Sue needs to know what a fantastic person she is! So here you go Sue, this one's for you.

Sue has worked hard her time at Carnarvon pre-school. She worked through the pandemic which was hard. But sue never complained and carried on with her hard work and made sure the children were happy and cared for. She's amazing at her job and should be so proud.

### **Thomas Elce – Cherubs Wynndale**

They are an apprentice who works tirelessly every day and makes sure every child has a smile on their face. He brings something different to the table being a man as there are not many men in childcare and is a joy to be around.

Only been here 3 months but been fantastic. Been sent to 4 other nurseries since working with cherubs and has always done amazing.

### **Becky Whyte – Cherubs Wynndale**

Becky is absolutely amazing at her job as nursery manager. No job is ever too big for her. She puts everyone else above her and will support anyone who needs it. She brings a smile to everyone's face whenever she walks in a room! The passion Becky has for the job is so lovely to see. The children absolutely adore her and she will always put them first. The activities and opportunities she provides for the children are outstanding. She is amazing with the parents in the settings and has great bonds with them too. Her knowledge is outstanding and will put this into her practice always. Becky definitely deserves this award!

Rebecca is the most hardworking and kind person, she gives her all to the children and families she supports.

### **Jessica Fudger – Cherubs Wynndale**

Jessica has recently qualified as a Level 3 Educator and works in the Preschool room at Wynndale but has worked previously in the baby room. Jess has the most amazing bonds with the children in her room and otherwise. She works hard to get to know the children, their likes and interests and what they each individually need. Jess has worked with children with challenging behaviours and works with the parents/carers to best support them and find methods that work for that individual child, she never gives up and ensures that the child feels cared for and supported. She is well loved by the children and their families alike because of this! She is brilliant at what she does and she deserves recognition for this.

Jessica has been a great support throughout our child's journey. She is very professional and informative when it comes to hand overs.

### **Emma Varley – Church House Nursery**

Emma is an exceptional person. She excels in her role as manager at Church House. I have two children at nursery and from the moment I met Emma on my first visit to the nursery to have a look round she was everything I was looking for in a nursery manager. She is so warm, friendly and professional, we look forward to seeing her in the playground in the morning where she takes the time to greet all the children and parents. She has really made us feel like we are one big family. O and A have blossomed at nursery and it down to the leadership and hard work Emma put in every day to ensure my children have the best setting to grown, learn and develop in. During the pandemic it was very difficult for all involved, but Emma always made time for everyone, checking in with us all

and ensuring everyone was doing ok with updates and activities for the children, I am very thankful for her support during this time. Thank you for all your hard work Emma, we will never forget it!

My son J started at Church House around 6 months ago Emma has gone out of her way to make me and J both feel comfortable, filling paper work out for J's appointments and being there for us as a family! If it wasn't for Emma I don't think J would be the way he is now and for that I want to thank her he had no language skills before going to nursery he now says a few words I can leave him with people now without a complete melt down the whole team have been fantastic but Emma really stands out to me!!

### **Mrs Bridgemount – Coteswood House**

The best teacher that any of my kids has ever had. Worked so hard teaching them phonics at pre-school level that my child is now flying at school. More importantly, it was the extra activities where she went above and beyond. During lockdown she hosted a live singalong session via Facebook where the children could request their favourite nursery rhymes and she would give shout outs. My son lived this as he was missing pre-school so much. My favourite single moment though was when ITV news filmed a clip of her and the kids for Euro 2020. They were being interviewed for match predictions, taking part in a penalty shoot out and singing 3 lions. I still have the clip now.

Amazing with the kids.

### **Tracy Spencer – Coteswood House**

Tracy is absolutely fantastic I feel as though my little boy is so well looked after, she makes me feel as though she's part of our family. She is constantly preparing activities in her own time at home which the children absolutely love i.e. coloured ice, ice with dinosaurs in, plants, the list is endless. Things most people wouldn't think to do off their own back. Tracy has such a fantastic relationship with all the children and is amazing with the parents. Nothing is ever too much trouble and the work she's done with my son preparing him for school this September is fantastic. He's learnt so much and has really come out of his shell. My little boy keeps on asking if Mrs Spencer will be at his infant school in September. Honestly cannot speak highly enough of her. She is one of a kind and a true asset to Coteswood.

My daughter M was incredible shy when she started in Mrs Spencer's class, so much so that she wouldn't speak to her at all. Mrs Spencer worked so hard to get her to engage with her and now M is so confident with her and keeps asking me if she is going to be her teacher when she goes to "big school" Tracy goes above and beyond for the children, making activities at home in her own time and constantly coming up with new learning styles and topics to keep the children engaged. She deals with any issues sensitively and the progression and confidence M has shown since being in her class is really down to Tracy.

### **Kathryn Whittingham – Fernwood Day Nursery**

Kat, our nursery SENDCo, is committed to ensuring that children with SEND in our setting are in receipt of the highest possible care and levels of intervention from our team as well as enabling other agencies to build strong relationships through her tireless efforts to develop strong partnership working. Kat works individually with children with SEND and their parents to develop the right provision for their child on an individual basis. She is very knowledgeable and trains the team regularly in updates at staff meetings to ensure their understanding of children's needs in our care

are relevant to enable strategies and plans to be delivered appropriately and to a high standard to maximise the impact of intervention. Kat has amazing bonds with parents of children with SEND and the trust that she is able to build in short spaces of time show her level of experience and understanding of such a vital role within the setting.

Kat is an amazing room leader. She supports the staff within the room and ensures everyone feels comfortable within their role. Kat is always there to talk to and is easy to approach with any concerns or for support. Kat shows dedication to her role and is amazing with the children. Her leadership is outstanding. Kat supports the children who have SEN and will work alongside the parents closely to make sure that both the setting and the parents are working as a collective to support the children. Kat's commitment to the staff and children is clear to see.

### **Leanne – Fernwood Day Nursery**

Leanne is the room leader in the Caterpillar, or baby room. She is always positive and had built such a fantastic relationship with our son. He is always so happy to go to nursery because of the wonderful work Leanne and all of the Caterpillars staff do.

Leanne is a room leader she has endless enthusiasm for her role in working with children, leading and supporting her colleagues. Leanne provides a range of exciting experiences for all children as is always coming up with new ideas and resources to help extending children's learning and always makes sure that all experiences can be access by all and if she comes across a barrier will always find a way to overcome these. Leanne is our language lead and is always there to support children with language barriers and will always do her very best to help the children and support parents with this by sending home now and next boards, routine cards with Makaton signs and is always available and approachable if you have any concerns, she has excellent skill in listening and trying to come up with solutions, support and advice. Leanne also holds regular Makaton signing nights with colleagues who want to learn more signs she does this in her own time. Leanne is highly thought of by her colleagues.

### **Nicola Duers – Fernwood Day Nursery**

Nicole started as lunch cover and has worked her way up to being deputy manager. She has faced many challenges in life and is a single mother but always comes to work with a smile and has fantastic bonds with the children. She also isn't afraid to chip in and do the bins or get on her hands and knees and scrub the floor if required.

Nicole is an exceptional leader of out of school club and is always supportive to the staff. Nothing is too much trouble to help you.

### **Lucy – Fernwood Day Nursery**

Lucy supported my child throughout all of her nursery years, from the age of 9 months through to leaving the setting. Lucy was always there to support my child with her development and has always been a firm favourite with my daughter. Lucy has then gone on to support with the transition from nursery to school setting, through the breakfast club and after school club. Starting school was a turbulent time for my daughter, struggling with the transition and meeting new people and a new routine after covid times, but the setting supported my daughter and me, as well as worked with the teacher at school as well. Lucy genuinely worked hard to give my daughter the support needed, liaising between me, the school and the out of school club setting.

### **Kelly Dowling – Fernwood Day Nursery**

Kelly has been so supportive of all staff and parents within the setting. Kelly will go above and beyond to support staff with both their life both inside and outside of the workplace. Kelly shows passion in her role and it is clear to see that she cares about those around her.

Kelly does an exceptional job at leading Fernwood Day Nursery she goes above and beyond and is always professional with advice to parents and staff, she always makes changes to our nursery and puts all her time into making experiences for children amazing.

### **Amy Sissons – Good Foundations Day Nursery**

I'm nominating Amy as she has been excellent with our son I. This is I's second nursery and it was upsetting having him moved from one to another. However, with the help of Amy I settled in well and progressed amazingly. Amy is always helpful and understanding. You can tell she loves what she does and is passionate about her role. Struggling with work life balance. I's nursery life is one thing I can rest easy about. It doesn't surprise me at all she is SENCO for the nursery. As she is someone who goes out of her way to care for children. This wonderful care has carried on to his new room thanks to brilliant staff at the nursery. That's why I'm nominating Amy. Thank you very much.

My son was only 3 months old when we decided to enrol him into a nursery so leaving him there was absolutely terrifying. Amy formed a connection with him almost instantly and 4 months on if you even mention her name to my son, he's extremely excited! She has helped his development so much meaning that he is now much more advanced than most his age and she never fails to put my mind at rest especially when he returned after a hospital stay and I had terrible anxiety leaving him again but I was told I could ring numerous times a day if needed to check on him. I cannot thank you enough for the love and compassion you show our son. He truly loves spending his days with you.

### **Sherrina Kelly – Good Foundations Day Nursery**

Sherrina Kelly is my son's SENCO worker and has been for the last year and a half since my son (who has global development delay and suspected autism) started at nursery she has gone above and beyond to ensure that my son settled into the nursery and has supported us as his parents with appointments and advice as and when needed, Sherrina always makes sure that my son has everything he needs and encourages all of his achievements. She supports my son to be the unique individual that he is and arranges meetings as and when they are needed to monitor his progress within the setting. I couldn't ask for a better SENCO worker for my son.

Sherrina goes above and beyond for our SEN children at the setting. Nothing is too big for her and she honestly has a heart of gold. There isn't a moment when she isn't smiling and she always has the children's best interest at heart.

### **Kym Shepherd – Hucknall Day Nursery**

Kym is amazing in every way. She is a wonderful practitioner and has made our one nursery-shy child absolutely love attending, he even asks to go on weekends! She is also a manager and we've seen first hand how brilliant she is with her team. Very supportive, not afraid to muck in in any way, and very approachable. Thirdly, she is a fantastic point of contact for parents. Nothing is too much

trouble, she goes above and beyond daily and treats the children like her own. She is so understanding and compassionate. We feel so lucky to be able to have our child in her care!

Kym has always gone above and beyond for my little boy but this last 6 month more than ever. He has never really shown bad behaviour on this level and Kym has known him since he was born! Yet slowly but surely, she has helped settle his behaviour thinking of everything and anything to help and he has now started to come out of the other side, grateful for her and her hard work. Thank you Kym.

### **Rebecca McCready – Hucknall Day Nursery**

Rebecca joined us an apprentice in 2018 and has since gone on to achieve a distinction in her Level 3. Rebecca is now our senior practitioner in preschool room and is our behaviour lead. We have a particularly challenging COHORT of children with our preschool room and Rebecca has identified this and been proactive in reaching out for support, training and intervention from outside agencies and professionals. She has worked closely with the leadership team to make strategies on who to deal with distressed behaviours. Alongside this role, Rebecca has received specialist CECIL training to address the inequality in our children's early language and communication. With Rebecca newly established toolkit of skills, we have children who joined out preschool non-verbal and are now able to use complex sentences!

Rebecca is my daughter's Key worker. My daughter has cerebral palsy and requires a lot of support in nursery. Rebecca is a wonderful practitioner who has really worked hard to build a fantastic bond with my daughter. She performs her physiotherapy on top of her other duties. She is always looking for new ways to help my daughter grow and develop. She really goes above and beyond in the way she cares for her.

### **Anne Harrison – Leahurst Road Pre-School**

Anne is a dedicated practitioner. She has always time for the children, listening attentively to their stories and making them feel happy and secure at pre-school. She is always on the lookout for ideas to support the children's communication and language development and has promoted the Makaton sign language very well at pre-school. She is loved by all the children so much so that 'Mrs Harrison' is always the first adult name that the children learn at pre-school.

Anne is very supportive and welcoming to everyone at preschool- children, parents and carers. She has supported me with concerns about my son, listening and offering advice. She has also implemented a visual timetable to support my son in understanding transitions to help him outside of the preschool setting.

### **Jolanta Dayal – Netherfield Kindergarten**

I would like to nominate Jolanta for being an Exceptional Practitioner in childcare setting. She has looked after my son for well over 3 years and I can't praise her enough for the environment she provided to my little boy. Ever since he joined the setting, his needs were met with utmost attention to detail. When he first started he only spoke one language (non English) and we were concerned that he would be very anxious about spending his time with an English speaking family. For us it was very important that Jolanta allowed him to have conversations with her in his native language to help ease the transition. 3 years on my son is speaking fluently in both languages, a big credit to Jolanta's efforts. Also, it was very important that Jolanta's family was actively involved in



communications with my son. They made him feel as a part of a family - a critical factor in helping him settle in. Jolanta pays special attention to cultural development celebrating various religious events.

I am so glad we found Jolanta when looking for childcare for our son (8.5months old at that time). Jola is caring, friendly and creative person. Jola provides a large variety of activities and walks/outings, she has a lovely outside space too for children to use. She makes cakes for kids on their birthdays, teaches them about different cultures by celebrating days such as Chinese New Year, Diwali which helps them to become open-minded individuals. Jolanta has completed many courses such as first aid, food safety and many more which, I believe, help her to understand even more about her role. I trust Jolanta, I know that my son is in good hands. Jolanta agreed to open the setting 0.5h earlier every day for our son as normal opening time would not suit us due to our working hours. We are so grateful for that. Jolanta is dedicated, professional childminder that i can recommend to anyone. My son loves being with her.

### **Amy – Secret Garden Day Nursery West Bridgford**

Amy has done brilliantly at running the honeybee room at the setting and she is always trying her best at making sure the children have what they need development wise and emotionally, she is always supportive to staff as well and has a bubbly personality and amazing skills as a practitioner and a room leader.

Amy is such a positive person and gives a lot of encouragement and input with the kids, you can tell that she loves what she does, our daughter absolutely loves her.

### **Mrs Cartwright – Abbey Hill Nursery and Primary School**

Mrs Cartwright is an absolute credit to Abbey Hill as well as all the nursery teachers. Mrs Bower, Mrs Marsden, Mrs Rowland and Mrs Bonser. They are always willing to help my son with anything as well as myself as a parent. My little boy A is thriving at nursery and absolutely adores his teachers. Both myself and A have had a rough year and his teachers have been there for us both every step of the way.

### **Miss Rosie Christy – Abbey Hill Nursery and Primary School**

Rosie goes above and beyond to help parents and children in every aspect to make you feel happy and content with your child's learning and development. she's always very helpful and understanding and you can go to her with any issues or concerns and she will always try her best to resolve them she's an amazing teacher and I wouldn't take my child anywhere else.

### **Mrs Marsden – Abbey Hill Nursery and Primary School**

Been amazing with my daughter, when she was going through a difficult faze worked well with me to help her through it, she's also very kind and friendly.

### **Becca Marfleet – Beccas House Childcare**

Becca is an exceptional childminder. She has worked in childcare since her teens, accumulating more than 35 years caring for children as a nanny and childminder. Families are always reluctant to leave

as their children simply want to be part of her setting. Her strengths are: Guiding parents with practical issues in parenting with sensitivity, always striving to be available and flexible for her families and feeling the responsibility of being the adult who has the corner for the children in her care. During the pandemic, and lockdowns, Becca did not close. She made herself available so families who needed her could work. She is always reluctant to take days off even when sick, such is her dedication. Training for high quality childcare she is never anything less than spectacular in her efforts to provide tailored education, entertainment and care for her minded charges. Her long term dedication and passion for the early years field makes her deserving of highest credit.

### **Carolyn Preston – Bracken Lane Primary Academy**

Carolyn is a long serving, well respected member of staff who has dedicated her working life to enriching opportunities for children & families of Bracken Lane for over 30 years. She has a wealth of knowledge & expertise which she applies universally throughout school to ensure that all children have an outstanding start to their school life. Carolyn demonstrates her abilities to adapt provision to ensure that all children are included in all aspects of learning regardless of their starting points. This involves meeting the needs of children with SEND & those who may be vulnerable in other ways. These traits are also seen when supporting children with transition into/out of EY. Carolyn is a positive mentor & coach for all staff, parents & placement students. She encourages children's individuality, expression & learning by creating engaging environments in which children can flourish & challenge themselves & their thinking. Carolyn is an insightful & reflective practitioner - Fab!

### **Michelle R – Bramcote Nursery (Village)**

Michelle has dedicated her entire 25+ year career to early years and children. The amount of children's lives she has touched over this time is 1000s. She is a passionate individual who cares deeply. A self-confessed workaholic but THE most exceptional practitioner. Always going above and beyond in every aspect of her work the passion that ignites her is making a difference. She is supportive, helpful, kind and caring and will always find a way. Unflappable and strong she always puts the needs of other first. Her commitment to early years and her setting is admirable. She challenges her own thinking and strives to improve. She truly does lead from the front and supports others to be their best. She is modest and will dislike this even being submitted but as her friends we see the hours she puts in, the confidence she instils, the joy she brings and know she has left and continues to create happy memories in so many little hearts and minds. She deserves to be recognised!

### **Samantha Richardson – Bright Sparks**

Sam is an exceptional practitioner. She can comfort three babies at a time whilst reading a story and directing a colleague to 'pop something on the app'. She's a whiz at photography and when our Leavers' budget was clipped last year, she trundled into the wood, took photos and somehow made them into beautiful keepsakes in a 50p frame. Sam worked with physios and OT and adjusted her room to accommodate a child's walking frame, blowing bubbles and using footballs to take minds off the obvious challenge. She negotiates with babies like peers- explaining, knowing who will bend and who can't share turns and must be gratified. Knowing family experiences were limited, she brought the seaside, zoo and farm to setting through creative and sensory tough trays for the babies to investigate. She invites Apprentices to delight in Early Years when she excitedly shares her babies' achievements. She's a resilient mentor, leader and awe inspirer who knows nothing of her own wonder.

### **Zoe – Brightstars Nursery Sutton In Ashfield**

Zoe sees play through my child's eyes she's adapted play to suit his interests. She has gathered general information on a daily basis to ensure my child's needs are met he loves attending nursery. She always as time for a chat with myself as a parent.

### **Karen Williams – Brinsley Primary & Nursery School**

Mrs Williams has worked at Brinsley Primary & Nursery School for 18 years and has been a class teacher from FS1 nursery children to Year 3. For the last 5 years she has works tirelessly in our school FS1 Nursery Class and repeatedly goes above and beyond to support the children and their families. Mrs Williams works closely with the parents/carers of children who are vulnerable and have SEND. It would be lovely if her hard work and dedication could be acknowledged formally. Many thanks.

### **Kim Boot – Brookhill House Day Nursery**

Kim has made sure my children are supported since they started at nursery during the covid pandemic after not being away from me before. Every single day she goes above and beyond for the children she cares for and nothing it too much trouble. She knows every child and every child's needs and my children ran into nursery every day happy to be there because of the ethos she created. She deserves a nomination for all of her hard work over many years.

### **Emma – Brooklyn Day Nursery**

My son has started nursery in March this year and she has gone above and beyond to make sure he settles in and is happy there. She works with me to ensure he is meeting developmental milestones and asks what I would like him to achieve while he is within her care. He is very happy at this nursery because of all the care and attention of the lovely staff here but mainly from Emma's input.

### **Amy Griffiths – Brooklyn Day Nursery**

Amy works in pre-school and leads groups for the forest school. She always has a big smile on her face and goes above and beyond for the children. My little boy talks about the exciting activities she has planned ALL the time. Our nursery experience just wouldn't be the same without her Amy has helped to guide my little boy in the right direction (he struggled with finding activities to keep him engaged and Amy has managed this with their wild nature walks, camp fires and learning through play) my 3 year old is her biggest fan.

### **Natalie Hayden – Buttercross Pre School**

My little boy and I came to the Bingham area after a hard situation. My little boy was showing signs of ASD but I was receiving no support in getting him diagnosed. Buttercross were an amazing help and Natalie worked so close with him. The difference she has made to my little boy in such a short space of time has been amazing. She has worked so hard with him to increase his independence and confidence. When he first started, he was in his shell, and working with Natalie he is always smiling and such a happy little boy. I really could not thank Natalie enough! She has made him such a happy little boy and helped me through so much when it comes to supporting him.

### **Miss Shortland – Carlton Pre-School Playgroup**

She is my children's key worker at the setting, she's very supportive and always telling me how well they are getting on with their progress.

### **Caroline Crew – Caz's Crew Childminding**

Caroline is simply amazing at nurturing and educating young children. She is a Forest School registered childminder and always takes the children out on the most exciting outings - row boats, exploring woods, strawberry or pumpkin picking. Also the fantastic 'camp' days out where the children learn to build a fire and learn to stay safe around it, story-time under the canvas, time to rest in a hammock and always the most creative woodland art activities. My 4 year old has learnt how to identify magpies and cherry trees correctly and has also got a love of learning and independence which a nursery setting cannot replicate. She has also supported me as a parent with getting a diagnosis of ASD for my eldest child before she started school and is still there as someone I can talk to for support. She has been incredible at supporting children and parents with different medical needs - severe peanut and gluten allergies and a child who needed an oxygen tank at all times. Caz is outstanding!

### **Heather Robinson – Cedar House Day Nursery**

I enrolled my son at Cedar House at 2 years old. I had not intended to enrol him in nursery so young, but due to covid restrictions I felt he needed more contact time with children. I was very emotional taking my son to nursery & leaving him in the care of 'stranger'. Heather made the transition easier for both of us. She went above & beyond her role to ensure he was settled & I was happy to leave. If I left my son upset, or indeed I left crying, I would get a phone call to let me know he had settled & was ok. At the end of the day, Heather always gave me a run down of his activities & was genuinely excited to share his progress with me. We went through a bad spell of separation anxiety. Heather noted that my son's favourite activity was to be outdoors. So, for 3 mornings a week, for six weeks Heather ensured that all of toddler room was outside by 9am to make the transition of being left easier for him. She treated my son and his needs as an individual.

### **Kia Fletcher – Cherubs Kimberley**

Kia is one of the most kind, caring and passionate educational key workers that we have ever met. The fantastic early years work that she does with my daughter and the broader group of children at Cherubs creates a sense of community and exceptional care amongst children and parents. The whole Cherubs team are fantastic, but with Kia you really feel part of your child's emotional, educational and physical development journey.

### **Sharon Bennett – Cherubs Kimberley**

Shannon knows all of the kids at Cherubs so well, she is passionate, friendly and my daughter always talks about her at home when we discuss her time at pre-school. She helped my daughter settle into Pre-school after we relocated and has just made the whole transition so easy. She is an absolute beacon in what is a fabulous institute.

### **Jenny Wilbraham – Cherubs Mansfield Woodhouse**

Excellent keyworker. Very informative handovers. Supportive of my boy's additional needs and communication difficulties. Always encouraging his listening and exploring other methods such as sign language.

### **Amy Bennett – Cherubs Mansfield Woodhouse**

Amy goes above and beyond and nothing is too much trouble. My children adore her, she greets everyone with a smile and is warm and welcoming. She teaches the children from an early age and is always thinking of new ways to introduce new concepts to children. She's a credit to Cherubs Mansfield Woodhouse - I wish all practitioners were like her. Amy is just amazing.

### **Rachel – Cherubs Mansfield Woodhouse**

Rachel has supported my child when he found it difficult starting nursery after being born during lockdown. She is a highly skilled Early Years Practitioner who has aided the development of my child and gone above and beyond what is required to ensure children get memorable experiences.

### **Cassie Jarvis – Cherubs Pleasley**

Cassie is absolutely outstanding the effort she has put into my son is unbelievable. She is so approachable and very easy to talk to, I am always thanking her for all that she does, my son has come on massively since Cassie became his key worker.

### **Tracey Murphy - Childminder**

Tracey has been childminding for the best part of 12 years now. She has a disabled son, and yet despite everything, she goes above and beyond to provide exceptional care for my child. She's always there if I need someone to talk to, and will always treat my child, and others within her care, as though they were her own.

### **Mr Kai – Childrens First Toton**

My son started early years before the pandemic and was very well cared for and comfortable in the setting known as the bungalow. During the pandemic when nursery was closed, he turned 3 which meant that when nursery reopened, he would move to the main building. Having so little contact with his nursery friends and other adults during lockdown, this move was quite an anxious time. Nursery went above and beyond to help to resettle him when the time came for nursery to reopen. This was mainly down to his new key worker Mr Kai, who was new to us both. He really took the time to get to know my son, his personality, his favourite things, how to comfort him and also to guide him through a tricky time for all children, potty training. Despite various social distancing guidelines, Mr Kai made the effort to spend time chatting to us and getting to know us as a family.

### **Georgina and Lottie – Children House Nursery**

Georgina and Lottie put so much hard work into looking after not only my daughter, but the whole class. They are always smiling, happy and we are so pleased with all their efforts as our daughter is so settled and has such a great time with them., Thank you for all your hard work and care! It's truly appreciated!

## **Maisie Thrower – Childrens House Nursery**

Maisy started with us at age 15 in July 2021, our youngest ever employee, and she has restored our faith in young workers. Maisy from the start was enthusiastic, dedicated, smiley, and had a great work ethic. She offers flexibility and is mature beyond her years and is a pleasure to have around the nursery. Due to her hard work Maisy has recently completed her Level 2 ahead of schedule, making her our fastest ever member of staff to reach Level 2 qualification. Maisy has completed units on time, ahead of schedule and at a consistently high level, which only goes to further highlight her enthusiasm and dedication. Maisy is a real asset to our team of staff here at Childrens' House and is a joy to have around the Nursery. We are so looking forward to Maisy completing her Level 3 with us. Thank you, Maisy for choosing Children's House, we cannot tell you how much we appreciate you.

## **Shelly – Childrens House Nursery**

Shelley is a super star! I first met Shelley on my daughters first settling day at Church House Nursery. She was so calm, professional and friendly, just what I needed when I felt so anxious about returning to work and O starting nursery. Shelley really helped to put my worries at ease and supported O and I through the first few difficult weeks of O setting into nursery. O soon grew a wonderful bond with Shelley and it was a joy to see her blossom during her time in the baby room. O had a number of coughs, colds and virus during the first few months and had to spend a night in hospital, thankfully nothing too serious, but it was comforting to know the Shelley was genuinely concerned about the wellbeing of O. A, my son has also recently started nursery. Shelley has been superb as always, A settled in really well and they have built a wonderful bond. I will always be grateful to Shelley for all her hard workday in day out, she is amazing!

## **Penny Sharpe – Cranmer Pre School Aslockton**

Penny always goes above and beyond to help children and staff, they are kind and caring and help parents and carers with any needs and problems that arise, they are calm and have a manner about them that calms people and makes them feel at ease. Through some difficult situations they give their best and help everyone as much as they can giving time and advice and being patient in challenging situations. They are overall an amazing person who goes all out to keep the nursery running.

## **Emma Vere - Childminder**

Emma is an amazing childminder. She is so patient and kind with all the children and they absolutely love going to her house. She works hard to make sure each child can thrive individually and works with parents to ensure all the children's needs are met. Our little girl who visits Emma was struggling with her confidence after lockdown. Emma has worked with our little one and helped improve her confidence and skills but has done this at her own pace. Emma is so thoughtful and generous with her time, the activities are brilliant and the children are always talking about what they have done and how much fun they have had with her. She is absolutely one of the best childminders, but she also one of the best people we know.

## **Chantel Thirpe – Enchanted Garden**

Great with all parents

### **Katie – Enchanted Garden**

Katie is my daughter's bestest friend and real comfort at nursery, Katie has taught B so much from nursery learning and general care. She loves you Katie and you will 100% be missed when she moves to primary school, thank you for everything you've done with her. Thank you.

### **Jenny Henshaw-Allcock – Enchanted Garden**

Jenny is incredible with my son who is on the autism spectrum. She goes out her way to make sure he is ok and he loves her because of it

### **Rheam Jenny, Charlie – Enchanted Garden**

Amazing support, effort and activities done with children

### **Chelsea and Beth – Fernwood Day Nursery**

Chelsea and Beth have been the most amazing ladies with my daughter especially as she is in the run up to attending big school. She adores them both and I love hearing how her day has been and how they have both have played big parts in her happiness. They are both such friendly smiley people and seeing my daughter walk in with such confidence and excitement each day is such a relief. She always talks so highly of them and I cannot thank them enough for making it so easy to wave her off in the mornings and not having the dreaded mum guilt when I leave for work. Everyone within the setting is amazing but the bond my daughter has with both Chelsea and Beth is wonderful to see and we will be so sad when she eventually leaves in just a few weeks' time. Thank you for everything you have done for her and the confidence you have given her before big girl school. We will always be so grateful and will be leaving with amazing memories.

### **Emily Todd – Fernwood Day Nursery**

The most bubbly smiley fun practitioner in Fernwood Day Nursery, makes all the children laugh and have fun.

### **Nicola McCarthy – Fernwood Day Nursery**

Nicola started in the toddler room and struggled with confidence and paperwork having no belief in herself. She is now based in the baby room and she has formed lovely relationships with her children and staff team and is growing in confidence by the day. She has come such a long way and I am so proud of her.

### **Vicky Davis – Fernwood Day Nursery**

Vicky is an exceptional practitioner who works hard every single day!

### **Kara Head – Good Foundations Day Nursery**

This lady goes above and beyond for every staff member, parent and child that she comes into contact with! She shows compassion and care in both the room she works in and towards the team

she works with. I feel proud to know Kara and know that she has been a big influence in the nursery and her positive attitude reflects on children and staff.

### **Lynsey Dean – Haywood Road Preschool**

For Lynsey, work doesn't stop when the last child goes home at the end of the day. She spends her evenings and weekends looking for new ways to enhance children's experiences and break down barriers to learning. I think Lynsey deserves recognition for her exceptional work with the children at the nursery. My nephew would have struggled if it wasn't for her work improving his language skills.

### **Jorge Pre-School Leader – Hollies West Bridgford**

My grandson has been at Hollies for 2 years and as he recently turned 3 he moved to the pre-school where Jorge is both room leader and key worker. The work they do together is everything. My grandson has not always felt comfortable with males due to family history, but the way Jorge has built a relationship is exceptional. Jorge takes his time to check in every morning and say goodbye every night. During the day where my grandson may need extra support Jorge is there and shares this ethos with the rest of the staff. Jorge has been instrumental in supporting what might have been a difficult transition due to delayed speech and some fear and he has worked with the speech therapist and family so professionally always encouraging my grandson to have the best possible time every day. I never see him make my grandson feel less than exceptional and the smiles they share when they meet are amazing. Childcare takes a special kind of person and Hollies have a few but Jorge is truly special.

### **Sophie Widdowson – Hollies Day Nursery**

Sophie was an apprentice when I enrolled my son in hollies day nursery, I have watched her flourish within the past year or so and I now consider her to be one of the best practitioners Hollies have. She is always happy to chat about any concerns, she's quick to ask how your day is and give a full handover. Every single day without fail Sophie gives the best she's got to the children and parents, she's an excellent member of hollies and doesn't even realise it! She truly deserves this award and isn't recognised as often as she should be.

### **Jodie Wilkinson – Hucknall Day Nursery**

Jodie has gone above and beyond over the last 24 months, to support families and children with SEND. At present, our nursery has an unprecedented amount of children with SEND. Jodie has worked closely with our practitioners and children's parents to identify these needs and as she is aware of the importance of early identification, ensuring that these children receive the necessary support so that they are able to reach their full potential. Jodie has put together comprehensive inclusion funding application, working in conjunction with the children's families and other healthcare professional involved in the children's care. Her inclusion funding applications have received commendation and recognition by the Early Years Inclusion Funding Panel. Jodie is also tenacious and will challenge and strive to get the support she believes the children require.

### **Laura – Hucknall Day Nursery**



Laura has looked after my son throughout his 2s to early 3s, supporting with potty training, encouraging him to be confident in himself and his opinions and helping him progress. She is always cheerful, works very hard is a credit to the nursery. All of the staff there are wonderful.

### **Laura Richardson – Hucknall Day Nursery**

Fantastic key worker, always positive and is there when you need them, never had any issues, definitely would recommend her as a key worker to anyone new.

### **Haley Marshall – Hucknall Day Nursery**

Haley is the Baby Room Leader at this setting where my baby has been attending since 6 months old. He's now over 1, and I couldn't be happier with the care he receives from Haley and the Baby Room team. Haley goes above and beyond to ensure that parents requests are met and the quality of care she provides is second to none. We're so thankful for everything Haley does for our baby and feel she deserves so much recognition!

### **Rheia Doody – Hucknall Day Nursery**

They have worked so hard to get to where they are. She shows so much kindness to others and has grown as a person.

### **Natalie Summer – Leahurst Road Pre School**

Natalie is a bubbly, outgoing, positive and caring preschool leader. She is able to draw children into whatever she is doing and they catch her enthusiasm! Her specialist area is language development. She has many gifts and is a blessing to Leahurst Road Preschool.

### **Sophie Hopkins – Little Nippers Pre-School Rainworth**

Sophie is my son's key person at Little Nippers Pre-School. My son C has autism, severe language difficulties and is nonverbal. C also has global developmental delay. Sophie's helped C to learn PECs and some sign language. Nothing is ever too much trouble for her, and cares for every child as though they were her own. She's fantastic and puts 100% into everything she does.

### **Christine Hewitt – Ordsall Primary School**

Christine has worked in early years for over 40 years at Ordsall Primary School. She has taught both the parents and the grandparents of children in our school. She is 70+ years old and still working! She has amazing energy and a vast experience of Early Years children but has decided this year to call it a day and finally retire. It would be amazing to end her 40+ years of working at Ordsall with an award from the county for her long service to Early years education.

### **Heather Pettit – Rampton Primary School**

Amazing, inspirational EYFS teacher at Rampton.

### **Heather Gardener – Rampton Primary School**

Mrs Gardener is an amazing early years practitioner. The experiences she provides the children with are out of this world as is her enthusiasm towards the children. She goes above and beyond for her pupils and is always smiling.

For being an inspirational, admirable teacher who goes above and beyond for the children.

### **Ava Smith – Ryan House Day Nursery**

Ava has just qualified in level 2 child care. She is outstanding and parents/caters/staff and professionals have all commented on her professionalism, abilities, and outstanding practise. Ava is leadership material and will go above and beyond to ensure children are put first and she is reaching her full potential.

### **Anne Prescott – Ryan House Day Nursery**

An amazing boss and friends who put her works first.

### **Jess Pendergast – Secret Garden Attenborough Day Nursery**

Jess is just incredible - she is the heart and soul of the nursery. Always there to meet the children with a smile, ensure their day is fun filled with learning experiences and is just clearly passionate about her work. Since my boys started at Attenborough the communication with her has been faultless and she always goes the extra mile. She is supportive, kind, professional and just a credit to the nursery. My kids adore her and her hard work should be recognised :)

### **Hannah Dulston – Secret Garden Attenborough Day Nursery**

Hannah has been supporting two of our SEN children within our Pre-school. We have a boy that is nonverbal Autistic and Hannah clicked with him instantly. She is so calming and always manages to get him into the setting when he is struggling to leave mum or dad. She has built an incredible relationship where he feels safe and secure and has supported him with using picture boards to communicate. We also have a child that has cerebral palsy and transferred from another setting to ours. The progress has made us incredible and this is down to the support and determination from Hannah. Every day Hannah carries out physio activities and uses specialist equipment to help her. Hannah works so hard to ensure this child is included in everything by adapting activities & supporting her. The progress is amazing and since starting with us she has taken her first steps. Hannah has worked so hard and has so much passion & determination to support those two children.

### **Lisa Deakin – Secret Garden Attenborough Day Nursery**

Lisa runs our Pre-school room and is exceptional at supporting children during their transitions to school. She knows her children incredibly well and works so hard to support them to have all the skills needed to start school. The feedback we've had from our local schools is always very positive and highlights how able they children are when starting school. Lisa is our language lead and creates fun, engaging phonics activities which the children really enjoy. This really enables them to have a wonderful understanding of phonics before starting school. It's been a tough year with staffing and

Lisa has held her room together and worked so hard to ensure the children's individual needs are met and they are having a wonderful pre-school experience.

### **Sarah Whittaker – Secret Garden Attenborough Day Nursery**

My son has attended the nursery for the last two years and Sarah has always been a fountain of knowledge on child development. I have on many occasions had discussions with Sarah about my son's development and she has always provided me with reassured with any of my concerns. Sarah always goes above and beyond to ensure the nursery meets the physical and mental developmental needs of the children, through internal and external activities organised, being French, tennis or Forrest school. I perceive the nursery to be the best in the area and it is through Sarah's dedication that it is.

### **Jade O'Dowd – Secret Garden Day Nursery**

She is the best practitioner!

### **Tammy Newbold – Secret Garden Day Nursery West Bridgford**

Tammy has been amazing this year, she has been to our other nursery to cover for people, she has showed that she has the potential to become a room leader, and she is amazing with the children and understanding of their feeling and development, she always has such amazing ideas for activities in her room and the children love it.

### **Michelle Breedon – Serendipity Day Nursery (Bingham)**

Michelle has been a manager at nursery since my eldest child started there in 2016. Every interaction I have had since this has been professional, supportive and overwhelmingly positive. During lockdown in 2019 my youngest daughter attended as both myself and my partner are key workers. It was during this time that Michelle raised some concerns around C's development and proactively supported us in making referrals for support. We had not picked up on this and assumed that C was just quiet and suffering the effects of lockdown. Michelle was sensitive and fair in everything she said, and we benefitted hugely from her wealth of experience in both caring for C and navigating the referral system. She has supported us all the way to a diagnosis of autism and I honestly don't think we would have got there without her. C is about to start school and thanks to Michelle she will have the transition and support she needs from day one. I will never be able to thank her enough.

### **Tanya Bee – St Marys CofE Primary School**

Mrs Bee is absolutely outstanding. She is fully committed to the children in her class and in the wider school as well. She is an incredible model of kindness for the children. She goes above and beyond to care for each child as well as supporting and extending them accordingly academically. She knows each child so well and carefully plans around their interests. She is passionate about learning and her passion and enthusiasm is contagious! She is truly wonderful. An incredible asset to the school and the community. We are so lucky to have her and think she deserves recognition for her dedication to the Early Years curriculum and values. She is exceptional and we thank you for acknowledging her endless hard work that is truly based in love and commitment to each child's progress and wellbeing.

### **Dawn Colman – St Marys CofE Primary School**

Mrs Coleman is excellent. She is a truly wonderful and outstanding Early Years practitioner. She is passionate about her job and a wonderful example for the children and wider school community. She is creative, fun and inclusive. She wants the best for every child and knows them so well. We are so incredibly lucky to have her at St Marys. Her and Mrs Bee are the most wonderful team. Collaborating seamlessly to ensure every child has the best experience on their Early Years learning journey. Thank you for recognising Mrs Coleman as an outstanding teacher, she deserves it completely and we thank her so much.

### **Ashleigh Jackson – The Ark Pre School**

Ashleigh took over the role of manager 2 years ago and has proven to be an excellent leader. She has instigated the curiosity approach and with her staff has transformed the setting into an environment that challenges and supports the children's learning. She has sourced materials, built an outside area that is stimulating and challenging. She supports and motivates her staff, encouraging their personal development and goes over and above. Ashleigh has worked very closely with outside agencies to support and gain the best outcome for a number of children with complex needs during what has been a difficult 2 years for everyone. She has worked tirelessly with both parents and agencies to nurture and develop the best possible start for these children. She is an inspiring mentor and leads by example, she has put in many extra hours over and beyond her paid role as she believes in her staff and her children. 100 % recommend her for this award!

### **Genna Rowley – The Playroom West Bridgford**

I would like to nominate Genna as she is absolutely the Queen of the Tuff Box! She regularly comes up with new and exciting tuff box ideas to excite the children. These are often themed around their interests or a special occasion such as the Jubilee but they come in many different guises to stimulate the children's ideas. It could be sensory play with mint, ice and lemon, imaginary play with dinosaur land with a base of sand, water and/or compost or red, white and blue items to form our British flag with a thread of gold depicting the crown - we never know what she will set up next but it's always exciting. Well done Genna, Queen of the Tuff Box! I am really proud of you!

### **Kirsty Spooner – The Playroom West Bridgford**

As her manager, I would like to nominate Kirsty Spooner. Kirsty shows great empathy with a child in our care, aged three years, who at times, experiences emotional outbursts. She has a calming approach and listens when he is unhappy. She solves problems in a sympathetic and understanding way that enables him to sort the issue out himself and understand the impact of his behaviour on others. The impact of this not only on his wellbeing but that of the rest of the group is excellent. Well done Kirsty.

### **Millie Luddington, Annie Bestwick and Genna Rowley - – The Playroom West Bridgford**

I would like to nominate all three individuals for their passion, thoughtfulness and care of one particular child in our nursery. The child has severe autism. All three staff have worked so closely with the child for the past two years that they understand his every action, need and desire. A non-

verbal child who has become able to communicate with both his peers and the team as a result of their huge efforts. All three have worked closely with his parents, other professionals and are now working closely with the school he will attend in September. As a nursery owner, I am absolutely full of praise for their genuine passion to do exactly the right thing for this little boy. He is included in every aspect of the day and has made so many friends that he also now connects with outside of nursery. Well done ladies - I am really proud of you.

### **Tasha Spencer – The Playroom West Bridgford**

I would like to nominate Tasha as a unique individual who inspires our healthy eating programme. Each month, she puts together a new menu, which brings food choices into topics and celebrations that the children are involved in. A rainbow of delightful vegetarian food that children all love. As our former nursery manager, she really engages with children's needs and desires and provides exceptional meals and snacks. Well done Tasha - I am really proud of you.

### **Jack Hammond – The Playroom West Bridgford**

I would like to nominate Jack as he does an amazing job as music co-ordinator in our nursery. He has recently been teaching the children to play the Ukele, having spent a considerable amount of time joining in with their singing whilst playing the guitar. He inspires children to have a love of musical experience. Well done Jack - I am really proud of you.

### **Edward Luddington The Playroom West Bridgford**

Ed is an amazing individual who is successful in many ways. He actually is our kids club manager who strives for outstanding provision, connecting so well with all 300 + sets of parents and children, many of whom have previously been in the Playroom. Twice a week he comes into nursery and takes children out for excellent forest school style trips in our mini-bus, exploring the wider world and getting to do a range of amazing activities from; puddle jumping, pond dipping, rolling down hills, bark rubbings, playing hide and seek in the trees, playing music and drawing outdoors - Ed makes our off-site activities exceptional. We are in the process of building an extension on nursery with a 'green' roof. Ed is also engaged, not only in the building of the extension but in re-designing the garden and green roof to encourage children to have a greater understanding of wilding and the positive impact on our environment. Well done Ed - I am really proud of you.

### **Amy Bevan – The Village Nursery**

She has taken care of our two daughters since induction and has been absolutely delightful. She is an excellent team leader, one person whom you leave your little ones at peace. She excels at teaching them the independence needed to eat/drink and walk independently, to us the truly hardest and most important part of the early years. Big praise for her.

### **Amy Linford – The Village Nursery**

Amy made joining nursery the most wonderful of experiences. As first time parents nursery was "unknown" especially when we joined in the midst of Covid19. Amy was welcoming, reassuring, kind and helpful. Nothing was too much trouble and even a Mummy ringing and checking up 100 times a day was genuinely welcomed. It was lovely to see her get to know our child - finding out all the quirks and parts of their character that we treasure and letting us know - it was these special

moments that make us realise that we picked the right place for our little one. The bond they share remains - even now they have moved up a group. Amy will never know how much she helped us settle, inspiring trust and calmness. She played a massive part in helping us settle into nursery which we will always be thankful for.

### **Amy Hill, Jess Foster, Aimee Bevan, Kayti Hall and Amy Linford – The Village Nursery**

There cannot be only one nomination for exceptional practitioner - it is a title that they all deserve. These team members have been intrinsic in offering support for our SEND children. They have undertaken additional training and courses to support them in their roles and have made such a difference to the lives of SEND children. They work collaboratively and creatively. They inspire cohesion in approach, they have each stepped out of their comfort zones to learn. This dedicated staff team are all exceptional practitioners and deserve recognition for the challenges they have overcome, the solutions they have found, the knowledge they have gathered and most importantly the little ones that they have supported.

### **Jordan – The Wolds Stragglethorpe**

Jordan is (and never will be was) a pivotal person in the development of our daughter. She led a team to ensure she was allowed to thrive! The team at the Wolds was led by her and I would nominate them all if I could, and that includes their inspirational leader in Karen. She has such memories that I will ensure last a lifetime. Every child deserves this kind of experience.

### **Tracey Owen – Tollerton Playgroup**

Tracey's commitment to the children in her care over the past several decades is boundless; she has been a second mum to many in her care, many of whom now send their own children to her! She is the driving force behind Tollerton Playgroup, leading an amazingly devoted group of practitioners who provide a massive community asset to this small village and the transition of children to the adjoining Tollerton Primary School is almost seamless. She is firm, fair and a lot of fun! with my 4 year old often quoting her sayings when he gets home!! Throughout the Covid pandemic she remained in constant communication with parents, sending out weekly updates and easy themed activities to do at home during the enforced closures. I feel so blessed to have had this amazing setting to set my children on a firm footing in all aspects of life! I hope she never retires!!

### **Naomi – Upton Crickets**

Naomi has been amazing with our little boy O who started nursery just after lockdown. He was quite nervous to begin with having not met that many people but Naomi has been so kind and gentle with him he loves her! She always listens to our concerns as parents and is careful to help keep his home and nursery schedule running well together.

### **Sarah Boot – Wollaton Village Day Nursery Eastwood**

Sarah is always helping with the children and always happy to see them arrive. She is very patient and I realised in my own daughters development that she improved vastly when she moved up in classes into Sarah's care. She is exemplary and always gives an update on how my daughter has been on the day no matter how busy it is at pick up time. Sarah always makes the time to talk to us.