

Cathy Armstrong: Childminder

About Cathy

Cathy is an Ofsted Registered Childminder of 20 years, working from her home in Reading. After completing the Early Years Professional Development Programme in 2022, we interviewed Cathy to find out how she found the training programme and what the long-term impact has been.

What first attracted you to the Early Years Professional Development Programme and how did you find it?

I was first attracted to do the Early Years Professional Development Programme (EYPDP) training as I'm always looking for new opportunities to fuel my brain and improve how I do things in my setting. The EYPDP was an excellent training programme and I found it beneficial. I really enjoyed the content that we covered and found my Programme Trainer who led the weekly webinars to be really enthusiastic, informative and helpful. The webinars were a handy way of discussing and exchanging ideas with other EYPs from across the country and of taking the time to reflect on your own practice.

How did you find the Programme content?

The programme covered three modules in Speech, Language and Communication with content from Elklan; Early Mathematics and Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED). Over the course of the 8 months, we covered lots of different scenarios. This helped us in our day-to-day planning, making sure we were being inclusive and meeting all the requirements, both from an EYFS curriculum level and extra tips for children with more specific needs. Even after 20 years, I found myself considering things which I hadn't really thought about before and that was great!



Six months after completing the Programme, are you still applying what you learnt?

Personally, I found the whole course extremely valuable and I learnt things that I am still putting to use now. We were shown a planning tool for example called 'Mind Maps'* which provide a way of meeting the requirements of the curriculum in a fun way, by placing the themed activity in the centre of the map and then webbing out how each area fits into the EYFS, adding extra pieces where the child requires more support. Simple ideas like this really help you to feel more prepared for your day/week ahead and confident that you are meeting the child's developmental needs. I also feel that I have more time in the evenings as I'm planning ahead more.

I also found that the programme went into detail about strategy planning for gaps in the child's knowledge or learning and helped me to identify where children may need an alternative approach. This has helped me to adapt my style when necessary to ensure I'm providing the right level of support and guidance for each unique child and I am very proud of that.

How has doing this Programme affected your role as a Childminder?

I've always loved what I do, but thanks to this course I would say that I have a greater level of job satisfaction and feel more confident and happy because of that. I would recommend this programme to any EYP who is looking for a training programme to support their professional development and it's great that it's free but I would have happily paid towards such beneficial, inclusive training!"



Funded by



Delivered by

