

Childminding Business of the Year

Pebbles Childcare Worthing



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 I am particularly impressed by the way Pebbles have incorporated and integrated their community involvement into their childminding business
 – judge

Bridgit Brown launched Pebbles Childcare in 2015 to provide an educational, holistic and nurturing environment for children. Her approach was to listen to the child's voice and put them first in every decision, planning stimulating activities and experiences every week.

Demand was so high that Bridgit took on an assistant, who is now a registered childminder, in February 2016. This has enabled the business to grow, but Pebbles still has a bursting waiting list, with enquiries flooding in almost daily.

Pebbles Childcare draws from a range of pedagogies to provide an exceptional enabling environment. 'Loose parts' resources are freely accessible to challenge children's thinking and inspire their play. A Froebelian approach is taken to using outdoors and the natural world, and a visit to a Froebel-inspired nursery resulted in a project based on the artist Kandinsky's

Circles for the children to learn about, explore and interpret in their own ways. The setting is also a huge advocate of risky play and incorporates the elements of earth, wind, fire and water into everyday activities.

Pebbles is recognised within its local community for initiatives such as the beach school sessions it developed after acquiring the use of a beach hut near its setting in Worthing. And it also takes part in events that benefit the wider community, such as a 'beach clean' with its local childminding network. Intergenerational relationships are fostered with weekly visits to elderly relatives with dementia, and Pebbles also organised a 'Reverse Advent Calendar' project for its local Salvation Army branch last Christmas.

Pebbles aims to inspire other like-minded settings to step outside their comfort zone and help to change the face of the wider childminding community, writing a blog offering ideas and advice to both

professionals and parents, which is read in 12 countries worldwide.

Ofsted rewarded Pebbles with Outstanding in all areas in its first inspection in September 2017. Our judges commented on the setting's excellent partnership with parents, its success in sharing its experiences and learning with the wider community, championing childminding as a profession, and the way it makes the most of the local environment.

Parents too were glowing in their assessment. 'The thought and planning they put into the children's experiences and learning is outstanding. I love how they take into account the children's personal interests when planning trips or activities,' said one parent. Another commented, 'We love that Florence is always out and about visiting new places. Equally, it is just lovely to see her curled up on the sofa under a blanket with her friends in Bridgit's home. We feel incredibly lucky to have found and be a part of the Pebbles family.'



HIGHLY COMMENDED

Brightest Beginnings, Yeovil

Brightest Beginnings' lead practitioner Rebecca Lihou was a *Nursery World* Childminder of the Year and now runs this setting with co-minder Louise Guilbert and two assistants. As well as supporting children and families to learn, develop and grow to be resilient and confident, Brightest

Beginnings has grown a model of collaboration in Somerset, involving providers, teachers, early help and childminders in CPD and targeted local community quality improvement. This partnership model is being rolled out by the council to influence the whole of the sector in Somerset. Brightest Beginnings wants to show the world that childminding is a fantastic career.

FINALIST

Cheeky Cherubs, Melton Mowbray

CRITERION

Open to settings where childminders are working with other childminders and/or assistants, including those registered as 'childcare on domestic premises'.