

Outstanding Contribution

Noreen Hennessey, Lark Lane Pre-school
Liverpool



Noreen's work on behalf of the community centre generally, and the nursery in particular, deserves wide recognition. Her contribution has been, and continues to be, enormous and we all owe her a great debt – local community association

Noreen Hennessey became a volunteer worker at Lark Lane Pre-school 21 years ago, when her grandchild was first attending the nursery and the lunch assistant was off work. Noreen volunteered to cover for her, and has stayed at Lark Lane ever since. In that time, she has become a much-loved and valued member of staff who will always go above and beyond her duties.

No matter the weather, Noreen will arrive into work before any of the paid staff, and will have the daily morning books filled in, the tables laid for the children and the kettle on for when the rest of the team arrives. If any shopping is needed for the nursery, Noreen will pick it up at the weekend and bring it in on Monday morning. Nothing is too much trouble.

Noreen is passionate about her role and is an inspirational and motivated worker. She makes everyone feel welcome and is always encouraging children to try new things and make new friends.

She projects a warm, cheerful attitude to

all families and is able to resolve conflicts and handle difficult situations with remarkable patience and admirable tact.

Noreen values parents' knowledge and understanding of their child, and will talk to parents regularly and build trusting warm relationships with them to enable her and other members of staff to work more effectively with their children.

When she turned 60 she announced that she was going to complete a Level 2 and Level 3 CACHE diploma for the children and young people's workforce. She also attends any courses that are available to nursery staff – although as a volunteer she doesn't have to – including first-aid, health and safety, portage, speech and language, Shine therapy and safeguarding.

Noreen has her own key worker group. She looks after six children and is meticulous in ensuring their development files are correctly written up. She builds on the children's interests to plan their learning journeys, follows weekly planning, and has studied the EYFS in depth to better understand her role in the children's education and development.

In order to better support the children in her care, Noreen has also gone out of her way to become proficient in understanding and using technology. She is now a confident and prolific user of iPads, smart TVs and touchscreen whiteboards. She also uses Tapestry to update parents on their child's day.

Recently, Noreen has also helped pilot a programme of targeted support for developing communication and language skills through high-quality interactions. It was aimed at two-year-olds, and engaged parents and carers in developing children's communication skills in a home learning environment.

She constantly goes out of her way to help people in need and can always be relied on to lift the spirits of all those around her.

CRITERION

For an individual whose long service and dedication in day-to-day work with young children is truly inspiring