

## Mikki Parkes' tips on how to keep morale high in your nursery

Mikki Parkes is the manager of Auden Place Community Nursery, and has won both herself and the setting numerous awards in recent years.

Despite the nursery being located around other childcare settings offering higher salaries, Auden Place still manages to keep hold of staff year on year.

*“Although we work on a tight budget, therefore our salaries are not the best, our staff still stay. When lots of children centres opened around us offered much higher salaries I didn't lose a single member of staff.”*

### Why do the staff enjoy working at Auden Place Nursery?

- I never expect anyone to work harder than I do. I will always be in the thick of it, when things need to get done
- Nothing is for nothing. Every minute my team works extra, they get back in time off in lieu (TOIL). They can then use this to leave early on a quiet Friday afternoon etc. or save it up to get a full day off
- I offer a choice of working their hours over 4 long or 5 shorter days.
- Staff receive ongoing training and development
- Regular supervisions and annual appraisals
- Employee of the month – with a £10 gift voucher of their choice
- Staff who use less than 50% of their annual sickness allowance receive a £50 gift voucher of their choice
- Company paid for nights out – usually 2 or 3 a year. On these nights, something I do which the staff enjoy is 'Guess the Bill'. The person who guesses the closest to the total of the bill gets a free day annual leave!
- Regular social nights out for birthdays etc.
- All staff get their birthdays off - paid
- Trust your staff and give them responsibilities. This also helps with your work load. I have members of staff allocated to various roles in the nursery – Equal Opportunities Officer, SENCO, Student Supervisor, Health & Safety Officer, Behaviour Co-ordinator and Staff Rep. One of my management team joined me to speak at the recent Nursery World Business Summit
- Allow them to visit other nurseries. They come back motivated and full of new ideas which benefit the nursery. They usually also come back saying how well we are doing as a nursery and how they missed their colleagues
- Let your staff have a voice! We have a staff rep, a section in the monthly staff meeting as well as the monthly MC meetings
- Also give your staff ownership in the nursery. We review our policies as a team in the monthly staff meetings, and everything that is said is valued, and policies are often amended in light of staff's comments
- Recognise and value each individual member of staff for their individuality. I use different management styles with different members of staff to bring out the best of them