

Statement Regarding Childminder Patricia Yepes - 2ND February 2011

My son Joseph McGibbon (DOB 20.10.08) has been looked after by Patricia Yepes since he was one, firstly attending for 3 mornings a week and now 5 mornings, 9.30-1.00. From the moment my husband and I, who are both self-employed, met Patricia we trusted she would look after and nourish Joseph on every level and our hopes have been more than realised, she completely enriches his life and indeed all our lives by her care of him.

Every morning when we take Joseph to Patricia's home we are always greeted warmly by her, and she is always immaculately presented, as is her home. Her flat is very clean and tidy, and the children are all made to feel as if it is their home too. The children are very happy in her apartment with her and her loving family.

Patricia works with a very organised routine. We are all given the timetable and informed of any changes in advance. The children thrive on her schedule and it is regularly adjusted to their growing needs, there is a perfect balance of learning, playing and fun.

The consistent and carefully thought out program she shares with the children is truly wonderful. Joseph was born prematurely and with a cleft soft palate and we have annual assessments at Great Ormond Street with a speech therapist. During his last meeting it was noted that he has an advanced level of understanding language and that his speech was progressing very well.

All the children of the same age under Patricia's care have the same level of understanding etc. I believe, as do the other mothers, that this is due to the attention Patricia gives to teaching the children; not only finger phonics, but simple grammar and word association. This is presented to them in a fun and unpressured way so that they are all eager to learn, not only with her, but outside her care. We are eternally grateful for the confidence this gives Joseph and the start this will give him and the other children when they attend their various nurseries and schools.

The children also spend time painting and making lovely pictures often incorporating the letters and numbers they are working on at the time. We are presented every month with a scrapbook of all their artworks. It is beautifully put together with photographs of the children. We treasure these and they completely reflect Patricia's level of dedication, attention to detail and generosity.

The musical aspect of her childminding is fantastic. I regularly come to pick Joseph up and the children are all dancing and singing happily. There is always a variety of music playing and the children love listening to it as well as making music in the time she sets aside for them to do this.

They are also taught a high level of respect for themselves and for others. Patricia insists in sharing and kindness at all times. Manners both at play and at the table are taught and encouraged with affection and a light spirit, which the children respond so well to.

She feeds the children extremely well and with her typical thought and concern. We are given regular menus of the food they have. There is a good variety of fresh food with a nutritious balance. She always tells us of how the children are eating on a daily basis.

What is exceptional about Patricia and her family is that aside from the excellent way she looks after our children, she always includes all the parents in occasional events, eg, a Christmas party or a summer picnic. It has meant that the parents have all got to know one another and it helps the children have a greater sense of belonging and allowed us to make friends.

We are never let down by her, she is easy to communicate with and her care for the children is genuine. She respects us as parents and the work we do and she makes it possible for us to continue our work with ease. She is understanding of the pressures of work/life and is flexible where possible, if we need extra hours childminding, for example. I can honestly say that we consider ourselves lucky to have found such a special childminder and I would not want anyone else to look after Joseph, Patricia is truly exceptional.

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