

## **References Tracy Gourley**

We have employed Tracy as our son Freddy's childminder for two and a half years. He is due to start nursery soon so will be leaving her care. Freddy will miss her greatly. He has really enjoyed the time he has spent with Tracey and the other children she cares for.

Tracey has a fair but firm approach, which Freddy responds to well. She encourages the children to participate in a wide variety of activities. They attend different toddler groups; to go to the park and the beach. Freddy enjoys playing in Tracey's garden, where there is a wide range of outdoor toys and lots of space. In summer, the children play in the paddling pool; in the winter they build snowmen. Freddy's first ever snowman was built with Tracy!

Tracy encourages Freddy with his milestones. She helps establish his vocabulary, counting and visual awareness. She encourages him in crafts and messy play. Freddy often brings home special crafts and cards he has made.

Tracy follows our guidelines for Freddy's eating, sleeping and toilet routines.

We would thoroughly recommend Tracy as a childminder. She is extremely hard working and strives to create a stimulating environment for the children.

Gill and Neil Armstrong

July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2010

Tracey has been our childminder for the past 7 years and someone we now consider as an integral part of our family life. My youngest son Joshua, now 7 years old spent his very early years, from the age of 6 months with Tracey for three full days per week, along with my eldest son Jamie, now 13 years old, who was also looked after by Tracey for two days per week after school.

Tracey has been one of the most consistent features of my children's lives and one I would recommend to anyone considering utilizing her services for their own children.

On a practical note, is reliable, consistent and trustworthy. In all of the years we have been with her she has never let us down with regards to arrangements made. She sets out her rules and regulations clearly with regard to acceptable behavior, sickness etc. for both children and parents.

I find Tracey to be fair and honest and very approachable. If I have any problems with my children I can quite happily discuss these with Tracey, she will observe without intrusion and give constructive and honest feedback.

She has dedicated rooms in her home which seem to be solely geared towards her childminding work with substantial variety of equipment and educational toys for the children to play with, and I can honestly say that neither of my children have ever complained about being bored! When weather permits Tracey ensures that the boys get plenty of fresh air and also have the opportunity to play in her garden – again with various games and toys for their entrainment but with a nice balance of one to one attention and also giving the boys the opportunity to explore within boundaries.

On a more personal note, never a birthday, Mothers or Fathers Day, Christmas or indeed any event ever passes her by. The children always come home with homemade gifts and cards which they have created with Tracey. I can honestly say that Tracey dedicates quality time to my children for which I am extremely grateful. I go to work knowing my children are first and foremost happy, safe and secure with the added benefit of knowing whatever they are doing at Tracey's house will either be educational, creative or when they need it – relaxing.

Tracey's children are a credit to her and have accepted my boys from the outset all of whom have become good friends. My children still go to Tracey one day a week after school and consider it a treat which makes our work/life balance a lot easier to accommodate, I can not recommend her more highly.

Mrs B Bairstow

21<sup>st</sup> September 2009

“Outstanding”

We have had Mrs Tracey Gourley as a childminder for over seven years and she is exceptional. We first used Tracey for whole days when our first child was just under one year old and my wife returned to work. Tracey also looked after my second child. When my children started going to school she picked the children up from school and had them for a couple of hours. My children adore Tracey, they love the fun activities they complete with her inside and outside, they are highly stimulated by her and always feel safe with her. They also loved the fantastic food! This children always came home after completing exciting craft activities. We couldn't recommend Tracey highly enough. She is loved by my children and a superb child minder. Tracey is outstanding.

Nick

05/06/2014

My son Fraser started his time with Tracey as his childminder when he was six months old and has been in her care since then until he starts school in September 2015, so far approximately four years on a full-time basis, on average 40 hours per week for 50 weeks of the year.

Fraser's needs have obviously changed throughout his time with Tracey and these needs have always been met by her enthusiasm and commitment, from his physical development- learning to crawl, walk and stand as a baby to learning how to drink from a cup and being able to dress and undress himself to his personal, social and emotional development –being aware of his own and others feelings and developing his confidence with both his peers and adults and everything in between! In addition, Tracey has developed Fraser's literacy and mathematics so he is able to recognize letters, write his name and count to 50 in order prior to starting school. He has also attended Spanish classes with Tracey which he has embraced and knows over 100 Spanish words and has enjoyed completing his Spanish "homework" with Tracey.

Tracey's creative skills and imagination are fantastic! She manages to continually assess Fraser's needs, likes and dislikes and interest and adapts his play to accommodate these, always keeping his interest by introducing new activities and ways to learn. Whenever possible Tracey has encouraged Fraser to contribute to the planning of activities and encompasses his ideas and suggestions.

Tracey has always ensured that Fraser has mixed with lots of other children in a variety of settings and takes him to a different play group or setting every day. This has helped with his speech and language development, communicating with his peers as well as him establishing close friendships.

Fraser has always been encouraged by Tracey to ask questions and help find answers to questions by using a variety of methods, whether that is planting seeds and watching them grow, to using the internet to visiting the local library and looking at reference books to undertaking experiments.

Fraser's relationship with Tracey is very special although, through her professionalism, she has managed to always ensure there is no misunderstanding about her role in his life. One of my many concerns about having a full time childminder was that Fraser would get confused about who was mummy. This has never been the case. He has also developed very close relationships with Tracey's family members.

On a personal basis, Tracey has also been extremely supportive to our family as a whole, being exceptionally flexible about the hours she has Fraser in her care to accommodate my busy working life as well as any emergencies that have arisen at short notice. This has proved to be invaluable and one of the

many reasons I would recommend having a child minder rather than a nursery setting. In addition, I have a very good relationship with Tracey due to to outstanding communication skills. She always ensures I am kept up to date with Fraser's development and needs on a daily basis both verbally and in the way she records his progress.

Lastly, but certainly not least, Fraser has never once said he didn't want to go to Tracey's and sometimes doesn't want to leave! This is down to Tracy, from the way she greets him at the door on a daily basis, the warm and caring environment in which he is looked after, the attention And respect he is shown, the vast variety of activities he is involved in and overall being made to feel special as an individual.

In summary, Tracey is an outstanding childminder and I cannot fault her care of my son or support to my family as a whole. I can only strongly recommend her to anyone considering to employ her as a childminder- the care given by her to the children in her care is exemplary. She provides an outstanding foundation from which a child will continue to grow.

Tina Clark

1<sup>st</sup> Sept 2017

Tracey has cared for my son for 3 years and we have found her exceptional in her care and attention to not only my son but all the children in her care.

My child loves going to Tracey as he loves all the activities she plans from arts and crafts, going to the beach, days out at Beamish and Jesmond Dene to name but a few. In all activities completed, Tracey allows the children to use their imagination and helps them when needed. This has helped my son with his confidence and learning how to be independent.

I find Tracey to be fair and honest when discussing my child's development and appreciate the help and feedback she provides when trying new things such as potty training, learning to count etc.

It is clear Tracey gets a lot of enjoyment from her job as she always celebrates the children's success through reward charts and will always share their achievement with you through pictures and text messages.

As my child was in nursery for the last year, Tracey worked very hard to match my child's learning against the nursery's curriculum. This improved his learning development and performance in nursery which was evident in his nursery portfolio and parents evening.

We cant recommend Tracey highly enough. She is loved by my son and is a great childminder, often going above and beyond.

Apinya Power

21/07/15

When searching for a good childminder to care for my 5 year old daughter, Paige, before and after school, Tracey Gourley was highly recommended to me by parents who had used her before.

After meeting her, I had no doubt that I was making a good choice. My daughter quickly settled and I had no need to worry because she just loved going to Tracey's. In fact, I think she saw it as her second home! Tracy has a lovely manner with the children she looks after. She is kind, calm and patient with them and all the children she looks after are clearly happy and well behaved and know what's expected of them.

Whilst at Tracey's house Paige always eats well, something that put me off using out of school's clubs, where the children tend to just eat healthy snacks for tea.

Tracey seems to go that extra mile as a childminder. Paige would often complete math's activities, write stories and letters and even learnt Spanish with Tracey, help that I feel has certainly helped her at school.

Paige particularly loved the exciting events Tracey would arrange, like Easter egg hunts, Halloween parties and the Christmas crafts she would bring home.

One thing that was a massive help to me as a parent was her flexibility too. Occasionally I would need Paige cared for an extra day here and there and she would always accommodate wherever she could, which was great.

Paige will miss having Tracey as a childminder very much now we are moving. She has been a big part of her life for the last two years.

She is highly recommended.

Zoe Batty