

Nursery School Teacher

Nursery school teachers work with children between the ages of three and five. They aim to help children to develop in six areas:

- personal, social and emotional development
- communication, language and literacy
- mathematical development
- knowledge and understanding of the world
- physical development
- creative development.



To achieve this, they plan and organise a range of individual and group activities that can include role play, movement, dance and singing, games, art and crafts, cooking and nature activities.

It is important for teachers to develop children's understanding of language and their skills with numbers. To do this, teachers read to children, encourage them to talk, and play counting games with them. In England and Wales, they teach the foundation stage of the National Curriculum, with associated early learning goals. Other important parts of the work include:

- talking to parents or carers about their child's development
- monitoring development and identifying children who may have a learning difficulty
- keeping records, writing reports and completing profiles for each child
- working with teaching assistants (classroom assistants in Scotland), parent volunteers and nursery nursing students
- consulting other professionals, eg social workers, health workers, or speech therapists.

Teachers in state schools work 39 weeks a year. Part-time work is possible, as is supply work (filling in when other teachers are away). Teachers spend most of their time in the classroom. They also supervise children's outdoor activities.

Salaries range from at least £18,558 a year (£18,522 in Scotland) for a newly qualified teacher, to at least £36,432 a year (£36,531 in Scotland) for a nursery headteacher.

Nursery school teachers should:

- like and respect children
- be interested in how children develop
- be able to provide a happy, caring and stimulating environment
- be able to encourage and motivate children.

Nursery school teachers can work in state-funded nursery schools, independent nursery schools, nursery classes in primary schools, preparatory schools and nurseries run by social services departments (Scotland only).

People must be qualified teachers to work as a teacher in a state nursery school or a nursery class of a state primary school. Many independent schools also prefer this.

Newly Qualified Teachers have to successfully complete a one-year probation period. Promotion is possible to headteacher of a nursery school or to head of the nursery section of a primary school. Teachers can move into related work, eg teacher training, or run a playgroup, small private school or nursery.