



# Nursery News

## Winter 2007/08 Newsletter

### Little Einstein's acquires Wonderland

**Little Einstein's Leaps into Scotland's Top Five Children's Nursery Chains With Purchase of Four Wonderland Nurseries in North-East.**



MD Deepak Poddar

Little Einstein's has acquired the Wonderland group which operates four nurseries in Perth, Dundee and Arbroath. The purchase, which also includes a company, Thistle Training, which trains nursery nurses, makes Little Einstein's Scotland's second biggest independently-owned children's nursery group and puts it in the top five overall.

Little Einstein's, which started trading in October 2006, will now provide day care for around 425 children from 0 to 5 years of age at six sites, where a total of 120 staff are employed.

Managing director, Deepak Poddar, said that the Wonderland acquisition represented a key part in Little Einstein's expansion strategy. He said: "Wonderland is a successful business and all of the staff are being retained. We hope to expand further this year at our premises in Thistle Street, Dundee where we have planning permission to build accommodation to provide day care for another fifty children as well as at 15 Hillside Road on the Southside of Glasgow where we expect to almost double the number of children we can look after.

"There is a huge demand for high quality nursery day care in Scotland and we aim to fulfil that demand by expanding the choice of high quality children's nurseries available to parents throughout Scotland", he said.

### A witchy Wonderland way of celebrating Hallowe'en!

Hallowe'en was the cue for colourful and fun all-day parties in the Wonderland nurseries at Ninewells and Arbroath – where games, prizes and fantastic costumes turned the annual celebration of everything spooky into one of the busiest days of the year.

Both are part of our family of Little Einstein's nurseries, and as you'll know we like to make special occasions go with a swing!



At Ninewells Cameron Barrie won the contest for the best outfit while Nathan Shaw was the best dancer – but everyone had a wizard time, with loads of party games in a nursery full of witches hats, ghosts and pumpkins.

Colourful costumes and Hallowe'en games were also on offer in Arbroath, where the children took part in games ranging from "ghost waiter" – balancing an inflated balloon on a plate while negotiating an obstacle course – to old favourites like musical chairs.

The children were also invited to create a spooktacular picture at the arts and crafts table to take home for their parents and carers. And of course at both nurseries there was plenty of Hallowe'en food to enjoy – even the "apples infested with worms" (apples cored with jelly worms) were a hit; not to mention the spider cakes (sweet laces for the legs and sponge cake for the head), and "witches fingers" – hotdogs wrapped in bread and dipped in tomato sauce.

But for anyone who found these ghoulish treats just a little too exotic there were plenty of traditional treats too – cheese fingers and sausage rolls.

The day's activities at both Wonderlands was voted a terrific success – and not a bad warm-up for the Santa Claus party season that's now just around the corner!

taking the first steps in childcare

# The daily life of a nursery manager



Carol-Anne Hebgin has worked at the Glasgow south side nursery for eight years, but reckons things have really taken off since the business became Little Einstein's just over a year ago.

She thoroughly approves of the positive ethos which underpins daily life at Hillside Road, and says the investment in the nursery which followed acquisition – not least in new play equipment – has taken things a further step forward.

The highlight of her career so far has been her appointment to nursery manager, and she says the skills needed for the job are "patience, enthusiasm and a sense of humour and creativity."

In fact Carol-Anne says the strongest element of daily work life at Little Einstein's is the sociable and cooperative "can-do" spirit of her colleagues.

That approach to the job is vital, she says, because the atmosphere in the place is so important for the children.

She considers the biggest challenge the nursery faces in its working year is inevitably the new nursery intake, because it means getting to know everybody from scratch – parents as well as children – and making sure everything goes smoothly for the year ahead.

And of course that follows on from the annual "goodbye" to children leaving to prepare for their first year at school – something which Carol-Anne and colleagues, having known the 3-5's so closely over the past few years, also find a challenge no matter how often it happens.

This month Glasgow's Evening Times wanted to find out what working life is like at Little Einstein's and Carol-Anne was featured in their 'Worklife' column in 19 November issue.

In it she says that if she were ever to consider moving it might be to Turkey, a country she loves, where she would still be looking for a job working with people – but she has no plans to leave Hillside Road any time soon.

Everest Care Homes,  
Nithsdale Lodge Care Home,  
620 Shields Road, Glasgow, G41 2RD  
Email: info@littleeinstein.co.uk  
Website: www.littleeinstein.co.uk  
Telephone: 0141 423 1144

Wonderland Nursery Ninewells,  
71 Simpson Court, Dundee,  
DD2 1UT  
Manager: Angela Murphy  
Telephone: 01382 646 700

Little Einstein's,  
Hillside Creche, 15 Hillside Road,  
Mansewood, Glasgow, G43 1DB  
Manager: Leanne Bain  
Telephone: 0141 649 1557

Wonderland Nursery,  
Abbot Street, Arbroath,  
DD11 1HH  
Manager: Emma Paterson  
Telephone: 01241 871 700

# Birthday joy for a nursery with a difference

How do you make an already excellent nursery even better? It's just over a year since Little Einstein's took over our two thriving nurseries in south Glasgow's Mansewood.

Owner Deepak Poddar said: "I knew that the largely young professional parents living in the south side had very high expectations of modern nursery provision, but for me the challenge was to make Hillside Road the model for nurseries which we would more than meet the expectations of discerning parents. One year on, I'm satisfied we've succeeded."

The staff appear to agree that new investment in the business is already paying dividends, while obviously helping to make life still more enjoyable for the children.

But managers also consider the best thing about the first year has been to confirm the strength of the existing team – staff morale is high and that helps make Little Einstein's a happy, friendly and confident place in which to look after children. Low staff turnover also means children get continuity of care from people they know and trust year after year.

One put it simply as "Parents know they're getting the best", which gives everybody a demanding goal to live up to, but also a great deal to be proud of."

## Countdown to Christmas

The festive season will be more than usually busy at Little Einstein's, Arbroath, where some of the younger children will be learning all about Santa Claus and the Christmas story for the very first time.

Inevitably it's one of the busiest times of the year for staff, but also a season which gives the children the chance to give full rein to their imaginations with plenty of opportunities to enjoy everything from costume-making to designing Christmas decorations.

On December 19 there's a special session devoted to seasonal carol-singing, followed next day by a fun-packed festive party for the children – to be followed on Christmas Eve by a Christmas lunch. At Little Einstein's in Perth there will be a Nativity Concert in aid of Ninewells' paediatric ward on both December 12 and 13 – a terrific opportunity to enjoy making all sorts of exotic costumes - while the Christmas party will be staged on December 21.

And at our nursery in Thistle Street, Dundee, there's also a packed programme of festive activities, carol singing for the 3 to 5-year-olds on December 12, followed by a Christmas concert for the 2 to 3-year-olds' parents and grandparents.

Then there's a Nativity Play given by the 3 to 5-year-olds on December 19, followed by a grand Christmas party for all the children next day and, rounding off a hectic schedule, a Christmas lunch on December 21.

Little Einstein's,  
Hillside Clubhouse, 3 Hillside Road,  
Mansewood, Glasgow, G43 1DD  
Manager: Carol-Anne Hebgin  
Telephone: 0141 649 6888

Wonderland Nurseries,  
1a Thistle Street,  
Dundee, DD3 7RF  
Manager: Carrie-Anne Findlay  
Telephone: 01382 827 000

Wonderland Nursery Perth,  
MacDonald House, 4a Whitefriars  
Crescent, Perth, PH2 0PA  
Manager: Karen Forbes  
Telephone: 01738 626 700

Thistle Training,  
MacDonald House, 4b Whitefriars  
Crescent, Perth, PH2 0PA  
Manager: Tanya Small  
Telephone: 01738 628 528