

Meet the Team at Helen Gibson Nursery School

Mrs Parker – Executive Head Teacher



Hello, my name is Jenny Parker and I am Executive Head Teacher over both Helen Gibson and Clervaux Nursery Schools.

I began my career in education way back in the early 90's working for Sure Start in the Meadowell and based within Children's Social Care. I then successfully gained a job as a nursery nurse at a lovely Nursery School in North Tyneside. That was where my heart lay. Nursery schools nurture children's souls and excite their minds. They are the true essence of what early years' education should be. Whilst working there the Head Teacher asked me if I would like to do a degree to support my knowledge. At first I was a little worried as it seemed like something that I might not be capable of but the Head believed in me so I did it. 4 years later I gained a Bachelor in Philosophy in Early Childhood Education at the highest grade. The next step in my career was to train as a teacher, which I did. I was very scary leaving the comfort of the amazing Nursery School but I knew I would end up back one day. It was then that I decided that I wanted to be the Head Teacher of a Nursery School.

For the next few years I worked in a Primary School in the West End of Newcastle. I worked my way up from being a lead teacher, early years lead etc in a mix of schools until in 2012 I applied for my 1st headship at Helen Gibson Nursery School. I wanted this so much as it had been my goal since working at Sir James Knott Nursery School. I could not believe it when I actually got it. I, Jenny Parker who grew up on a council estate in Wallsend, had actually become a Head Teacher in my dream location.

The nursery at the time was graded Satisfactory and had been through a particularly difficult time. The staff were amazing and we soon whipped the nursery from Satisfactory to Good in the matter of 7 months! The parents were fantastic, the Governors were so supportive and the children were second to none! 3 years later we were graded Outstanding by Ofsted. We were all so happy as we had worked so hard.

A short time after this an opportunity arose to enter into a soft federation with Clervaux Nursery School, obviously I jumped at the chance. The partnership

grew and grew and now we are in a hard federation with the schools known as The Early Years Nursery School Alliance with me as Executive Head over both.

I also do work for Ofsted, inspecting in Early Years.

At Helen Gibson and Clervaux Nursery Schools we are one big family. We treat each child as if they are our own and go that one step further for our families because they are our family too! Believe me when I say that whilst your child attends our Nursery School they will grow in ways that you would not believe, talk about the most amazing adventures and learn knowledge that will equip them for the rest of their lives.

Mrs Westhall- Early Years Teacher



Hello, my name is Jacqui Westhall. I am the teacher at Helen Gibson Nursery School and have worked for South Tyneside Council for fifteen years. I am the Key worker in the Penguin Group and Forest School leader. I am passionate about learning in the outdoor environment and love working in our Forest School. The best part of my job is being part of the children's learning journey and being able to see them flourish ready for their next steps towards life-long learning.

Miss Reed – Non teaching Deputy Lead



Hello my name is Nicola Reed. I have worked between our two nursery schools Clervaux and Helen Gibson Nursery for four years, and have worked within South Tyneside Council for 18 years, working with young children and their families with additional needs. I am a non-teaching deputy lead and a massive part of my role is supporting the well-being and mental health of children and their families, and our staff team, which is a very passionate part of my role. I am trained as a mental health first aider youth and adult and lead the better health at work award across our schools. I absolutely love what I do. I love to

join in the fun in nursery and look forward mostly to greeting you all each morning at the door/gate. I am always around for a chat if you would like to pop in. More recently a lot of the work I have done is supporting families with food parcels, Christmas gifts, getting back into work. We are here to support you and appreciate how hard the last couple of years have been so please if there's ever anything we are here to help if we can. One day a week (Tuesdays) I deliver a parent programme with a colleague for the local authority called EarlyBird/EarlyBird Plus for families who have children with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. I have delivered this programme since 2012 and have a strong passion for it. At home I love to spend time with family including my god children, I love to run and keep active too.

Miss Jessica Riley – HLTA



My name is Jessica Riley and I am the Higher Level Teaching Assistant and First Aid lead for Helen Gibson Nursery. I have been working here for over 8 years now and my love for the job grows each year. I have over 12 years' experience working with children, particularly from birth to 5 years old. I believe that every child has the potential to achieve and that this can be encouraged through positive reinforcement. I strongly believe in all children having a voice and that the best way to extend their development is by following their interests. I like to adapt a nurturing approach when educating the children because they need to feel loved and safe to get the most from their environment.

Mrs MacDonald – Nursery Nurse



I am Wendy Macdonald and I am a nursery nurse. I have been qualified for 30 years. Goodness that makes me sound old!! I have worked at Helen Gibson Nursery for the 25 years and have helped, supported and cared for many children and families. My aim is to make every child in my care feel safe, secure and loved and to learn about the world around. I feel honoured to be in the job I am in, after all you are handing over your most precious gift in the world, your child! I have enjoyed every minute of my time at Helen Gibson Nursery and I am really looking forward to seeing you all and making more special memories.

Mrs Pirie – Teaching Assistant



I am widely travelled, having worked and lived in various countries with a range of differing cultures and history, from which I believe I learnt to be able to adapt to and respect all ways of life and people.

I am a passionate Early Years practitioner and I have recently completed my BA (Hons) in Early Years and Primary Education. I have worked at HGN since 2015 and I strongly believe that children learn best in a supportive learning environment indoors and out where play is an important part of their learning as it helps them develop fundamental life skills of making choices, using initiative, gaining independence and learning how to take responsibility for their future roles in life.

Mrs Lynch – Teaching Assistant



Hi, I'm Mrs Lynch, I have only been at HGN for a couple of years but I was made to feel so welcome and felt part of the family straight away, which I know you and your family will too. I have worked with children for 23 years

and have enjoyed every one. I always remember my own first days at Nursery and the positive impact the teachers had on me, I hope your children can remember their first days in years to come then I know I've done something right making special memories and helping them to develop

Mrs Wastle – Teaching Assistant



My name is Miss Wastle. I have been working with children for over 8 years now. Working with children has always been my dream job and still is to this day. I left school and knew I wanted to work with children so went straight to college and studied. I believe "If you really want something in life, go ahead and get it. Don't let anything hold you back!" When I was little if I wasn't playing 'shops' I would set up my own school at home.

Working with children is such a rewarding and amazing job which I continue to grow to love. Teaching children new things, watching them develop and thrive is the best part. I love being able to help children and doing all you can for them. I love the bond that is made between the staff and the children which I think is very important. "It takes a big heart to shape little minds."

Miss Weston – Teaching Assistant (QTS)



My name is Miss Weston, and I am really looking forward to getting to know you and your family, learning and playing together and making lots of new friends. It will be really exciting!

We can explore together - the nursery has a lovely garden where we can dig, hide, hunt for worms, run and lots of other things! Inside we can build, draw, paint, share books and stories, play with cars, trains and dinosaurs!

When I am not at nursery I love to visit my family and be busy in my garden, planting fruit and vegetables and watching the birds. I also love long walks on the beach, or in the countryside.

What do you like to do?

I am really looking forward to finding out!

Mrs Howard – Administrator



Hello my name is Andrea Howard. I am the admin officer in the nursery and have worked at Helen Gibson Nursery for 17 years and have over 30 years' experience in admin work. I love my job at Helen Gibson Nursery and it's lovely to see how the children grow and grow and develop from starting with us to leaving us. I work with such an amazing team at Helen Gibson Nursery school. I am looking forward to meeting all our new families again in September.

My office door is always open and I am also just at the end of the telephone for any queries you may have.

Miss Storey- Teaching assistant



Hello my name is Carly Storey. I am a teaching assistant I have been within the nursery family for 8 months. I am passionate about being part of a team in helping children to grow and develop. I love that every day is different and brings something new to explore and play. I love to get messy and explore the outdoor environment.

Miss Edgerton- Teaching assistant



My name is Carmen Edgerton. I have worked for 2 years as a teaching assistant. I am passionate about making a difference in early years, it is a very rewarding field! It gives me the opportunity to experience a child's transformation first hand.

Miss Wright – Supply Teacher



Hello my name is Jill Wright, I am a teacher and have been at Clervaux Nursery School for 1 term. I have been a teacher for many years and I love how nurseries are not just about educating the young but are also at the centre of local communities and families. I love gardening and I use this interest to inspire the young to take an active part in helping the environment and growing and cooking their own food.

Mrs Taylor – Kids Club Leader and Administrator



Hi my name is Claire Taylor, I'm the lead and admin person for our out of school club. My role as a lead is to keep children safe and happy while attending our club. To offer a variety of resources and activities to meet the needs of the children. My role for admin is to process the paperwork side and address the parent's enquiries. The most job satisfaction I get is to see the children happy and participate especially when we have party nights for special occasions. The best feeling is when our children leave happy and experience a sense of achievement for themselves. My philosophy in life is to respect and treat others the way you would like to receive it back.

Mrs Waim – Kids Club



I have worked at Helen Gibson Nursery for over 10 years. My 3 children have all attended have all attended the nursery in the past. I work at the nursery in a few different roles. I love to be involved in all breakfast and after school club especially cooking, various crafts that we make. It's great to see the children create their cakes decorate them. It is lovely to see the children's confidence growth all the crafts and cooking and games we do with them in our club.

Mrs Burns – Kids Club



I work at Helen Gibson Nursery Kids club. I first started over 16 years ago as a midday supervisory assistant. 4 years ago I started to help at the kid's club and time member of the team ago. I have my paediatric first aid certificate which I feel is important working with children. I love to see the children enjoy their time at the kids club where we offer lots of activities, games and cookery.