

# Debbies's delight!

IT IS easy to see why the Little Masters and Misses nanny and childcare employment agency has become such a great success, when you meet the driving force behind

the business, Director Deborah Ellif. A former nanny herself, Debbie, as she is known to parents and staff alike, has set the highest standards for the agency and is

scrupulously fair in all her dealing with employees and employers.

She has the ability to identify gaps in the childcare market and expand her service accordingly, and has started a successful after school service in addition to her superior nanny and babysitting facility.

She pays top rates to her handpicked staff and nannies who earn between £85-£170 a week after tax, are placed abroad as well as locally.

Debbie has positions for residential and daily nannies, to look after both babies and older children. She aims to place a nanny within three days of interview.

She insists that all her staff are qualified and experienced in childcare, and aged over 19 years, fully checks their references and insists on personal interviews with both potential employees and the families she places her staff with.



Little Masters and Misses

She has built up a loyal staff who she knows she can rely on. She insists on a clear contract between employee and families and that the tax situation is made clear so each knows the duties and conditions which are expected.

Debbie employs nurses, nursery staff and active retired teachers, social workers etc. In an After School Childcare service which involves meeting

children from school, entertaining them, seeing that homework is done and that they are fed and ready for bed if necessary, before a working parent arrives home.

She also runs a babysitting service, a crèche service for businesses (Tottenham Hotspur Football Club are among her clients) and a school holiday crèche at the Whitgift Centre.

## Little Masters and Misses



**NANNY SERVICE — 01-771 4006**  
N.N.E.B., childcare qualified or experienced nannies (not mothers helps) available and **ALWAYS** required for resident and daily nanny posts local to Croydon, Bromley and Dulwich. Phone Debbie **NOW** for prompt family interview and placement.

**BABYSITTING SERVICE — 01-771 2641**  
Childcare experienced, qualified and reference vetted staff available **NOW** for bookings local to Bromley and Croydon.

**AFTER-SCHOOL CHILD CARE SERVICE — 01-771 4006/2641**  
'Active retired' teachers, nurses, nursery staff **URGENTLY** required **NOW** for local part-time posts (min. booking 2 hours) at £2.50 p.h.

**Note:** All applicants placed subject to agency and family appointment interview and confirmed childcare references.

Employment Agency Licence No. SE8873 Director Deborah Ellif (N.N.E.B.)

1987

# Childcare Guide '99

Croydon Advertiser 22/1/99

**Little Masters and Misses**

**N**ANNY and Baby-sitting agency, Little Masters and Misses, is launching a recruitment campaign in response to an increase in the number of baby-sitting requests.

Deborah Ellif, who owns the agency, said: "The early indications are that it's going to be a very festive season indeed this year! I would like to increase the number of baby-sitters on my books from 75 to 100 and am keen to hear from car drivers across Kent and Surrey, who are child care qualified, who work in schools, day nurseries or as nannies, and who can commit to two evenings baby-sitting each week.

Bookings will be within a 20 minute drive of their home and work is available to suit all year.

To arrange an interview, call Deborah on 0181 771 5122.

a range of topics. Last year a Doctor from Croydon Public Health Authority spoke about meningitis and a children's librarian told us about the range of books (and services) available from local libraries.

Deborah added: "My aim is to provide Little Masters and Misses nannies with access to current and relevant child care information on an ongoing basis so that they are as well equipped as possible to look after the children in their care."

**Little Masters and Misses**

**L**ITTLE Masters and Misses Nanny Agency has been established for 14 years and Deborah Ellif, who owns the agency, prides herself on the additional services she provides to nannies and families. She said: "We have worked closely with the British Red Cross and now offer a First Aid course, specially tailored for nannies. We also run monthly Nanny meetings with guest speakers covering

**Little Masters and Misses**  
NANNY & BABYSITTING

13 Years experience of placing the right Nanny in the right job

Please contact Debbie (NNEB)  
Monday-Friday 9 am-5.7 pm  
0181-771 5122 ansaphone

# Nanny's secrets for success

By David Callam

david.callam@croymadvertiser.co.uk

A FORMER nanny who started her own agency with money she saved from her wages is about to celebrate 20 years in business.

Debbie Elliff, 46, of Woodville Road, Thornton Heath, has prospered with her Little Masters and Misses agency, despite the passing of the Mary Poppins era.

Debbie, who began her working life as a nanny in central London, made up her mind to open her own agency at an early stage.

She said: "I spotted a gap in the market. I was living in Broadstairs at the time and I couldn't find an agency anywhere in Kent or the London suburbs, so I decided to open my own. But I had no experience of business and I hadn't taken account of the essential expenses involved.

"My initial set-back didn't put me off. I just took extra jobs - more nannying or even cleaning - working seven days a week to raise my initial investment.

"I finally opened my agency in 1983 here in Thornton Heath, and in the early days I did most of my advertising for nannies and clients in the Croydon Advertiser.

"But as the childcare market changed it became necessary to seek clients in more specialist publications - baby magazines and the like.

"Now I rely on word-of-mouth for my nannies. I have about 500 on my books and each of them comes back to me looking for another job about every two or three years."

Debbie charges a one-off payment of up to £700 for finding and placing a nanny successfully and

the nanny can expect to earn up to £70 a day for an average ten hours work.

Today the nature of the job has changed and the places where nannies work are also very different.

Debbie said: "Nanny will still take the children out but it tends to be to play-groups rather than for walks in the park. And she will spend the rest of her time working directly with her charges rather than doing domestic chores."

The home situations have changed in the past 20 years too. According to Debbie there are far fewer grand houses employing nannies. These days the idle rich are likely to engage an au pair, while a nanny will work in more modest surroundings.

She said: "I place up to half my nannies in what I would call ordinary homes - semi-detached or terraced houses - where one parent works full-time and one works part-time.

"The couple need a nanny for the two or three days when they are both out, or one of them is working at home, but doesn't want to be disturbed."

Debbie is increasingly placing nannies who are mothers themselves, with their own child on hand as part of the deal.

She said: "The attraction for an employer is that this is a more economic way of buying a nanny's services. She will work for less pay but, in my experience, the standard of care is unaffected."

Despite a lifetime spent looking after other people's children, Debbie has none of her own.

She said: "It was something I always intended to do, but I have devoted myself single-mindedly to my business and I think the time has now passed."



Nanny provider: Debbie Elliff, celebrating 20 years in the agency business

Photo by: 2002/02 by Gerry Fitzpatrick

The Advertiser Friday, December 10, 2004

## Business



Croydon Advertiser  
1/9/2000



LIVE Aid and the first episode of EastEnders were among the events of 1985, as was the launch in Croydon by Deborah Elliff of Little Masters and Misses, a nanny agency which celebrates its 15th anniversary this month.

Miss Elliff, a former nanny herself, initially ran the agency from rented premises before buying the shop it now occupies in Woodville Road, Thornton Heath in 1987.

Now she has around 800 families and 600 nannies and baby-sitters on her books and places, on average, some 250 per month.

Hers was the first agency to introduce regular morning sessions in which the likes of the British Red Cross Society and Croydon Council's health department offer nannies a series of updates on first aid and other matters relevant to child care.

Running a nanny agency is great fun but very hard work according to

Miss Elliff, who has been reflecting on the past 15 years.

She said: "I was determined from day one not to lose sight of the fact that this business is primarily about providing care for children.

"I believe it is vital that nannies are able to keep themselves up to date with current thinking on this complex subject.

"Things move quickly, so the more information I can make available to

the nannies, the better the standard of care the children will receive.

"I am now looking forward to the agency's next 15 years."

Our picture shows the agency's generation span, with Marie Hussy, one of its first nannies, now retired, Lisa Conway, a present nanny, and Chris Maih, 9, Catherine Maih, 11, and Georgia Lockstone, 3, three of the children looked after by the agency.

Photo: 002994/7A

Little Masters  
and  
Misses

**PRESS RELEASE**

**PREMIER NANNY & BABYSITTING SERVICE**  
"Specialists in the care of children since 1985"

7<sup>th</sup> November 2001

**A Christmas present for parents**

The festive season will soon be upon us, bringing with it invitations to all manner of pre Christmas events. For the parents among us, however, the number of invitations we can accept is often only equal to the number of local and amenable relatives and friends that we can persuade to babysit.

Well worth considering then is Little Masters and Misses (LM&M) Babysitting service. Deborah Elliff started LM&M in 1985 after a long career as a Nanny herself. Sixteen years on there are over 250 families registered with the service and around 70 childcare qualified babysitters, all of who have been agency vetted (including police check) and are car drivers with current first aid certificates.

Deborah said: We get extremely positive feedback from our clients many of whom renew their subscriptions year after year. In fact, we have now introduced a gift voucher pack as many families are seeing a six monthly or annual subscription to the service as an ideal present for fellow parents."

The babysitting service is just one string to the Little Masters and Misses bow. The company also offers a very successful nanny service and, over the years, Deborah has introduced numerous initiatives designed to safeguard the well being of the children for whom she arranges care:

- LM&M was the first agency to introduce its own First Aid course for nannies & babysitters. Also daytime talks by Doctors on Meningitis symptoms & by the British Red Cross on First Aid.
- The agency produces regular newsletters and fact sheets to keep nannies, babysitters and clients informed of industry and agency developments.

Deborah added: "Any parent that has ever complained that their children have a better social life than them could benefit from a subscription to our babysitting service."

**Ends**

**Note:** Registration from £45. Hourly rates 4.50/5.50.

**Enquiries:** Emma Pyott, Semaphore Public Relations. T 020 8289 6119 E [talk@semaphore-pr.co.uk](mailto:talk@semaphore-pr.co.uk)

**Proprietor: Deborah Elliff (NNEB and experienced Nanny)**  
**Croydon Shop: 156 Woodville Road Thornton Heath Surrey CR7 8LL**  
**Telephone and Fax: 0181 771 5122**