



JULIE MUNRO,
NurseryCam

The online nursery – open 24/7

These days there aren't many successful businesses without websites. And that goes for nurseries too. According to Janet Gibb at the Glassford Day Nursery in South Lanarkshire, there was never any doubt in her mind about getting a website – and a good one. "We knew we weren't going to get much passing trade. Occupancy in our village is around 600, so it was always going to be hard for parents outside the village to find us."



But with a website, you can show people where you are with pinpoint accuracy. "Prospective parents can Google us and see that really, we're very convenient for lots of other local towns and villages." Getting onto Google is part and parcel of the way parents look for nurseries; they'll hold off on nursery visits until they've checked out the likeliest candidates online. So what the website looks and feels like is going to be their best way of sizing things up quickly.

So how do you make sure, what they see is what their children get? "Our website is a perfect starting point for parents," says Janet. "Of course it gives them all the basics, but NurseryCam made sure the design had the right look and feel. In fact, we worked very closely in making it friendly and easy to use.

Getting the look!

With most web users only prepared to spend a few seconds getting a feel for each site before deciding to stay put or go



elsewhere, the look is all important. And getting a sensitive designer is a must. Janet says she was very lucky to work with hers. "Lucia, our designated designer really understood what we were trying to convey – she took our ideas for the logo and made sure the rest of the site had that same warm, welcoming feel."

Unlike your nursery, your website is always open to visitors. That's pretty important when parents do most of their nursery research late into the evening. And it's surprising what they can pick up on. Janet believes her website does much more than fill in the blanks on places, fees and FAQs. It gives a real sense of their ethos too.

The best websites are as alive as the nurseries they represent. Check out a nursery in person and you'd expect to find a vibrant atmosphere and lots of activity. Most of all, you'd want to see the smiling faces and hear the happy laughter that tells you, better than any prospectus could, that this is a good place for children. And thanks to the marvels of flash media and streaming video, your website can do all of that too.

Suddenly the case for having a nursery website is very one-sided! So how did Janet choose who to build the Glassford Day Nursery site? "We found NurseryCam online and were immediately impressed. The monthly subscription is very good value for money and the site is easy to update. And we know that most of our customers have found us through the website."

One final thought

There are lots of compelling reasons for having a website – it's a great way to keep parents in touch with what's going

on, and it can be a great tool for the kids. And from a commercial point of view, your website is the biggest, cheapest marketing tool you've got – much more effective (and longer lasting) than the papers. And as Janet says "With Google adwords, we know we're going to get a top of the page listing every time someone searches for "day nursery, Glassford." That's quite a recommendation. ■

- For more information contact Glassford Nursery on 01357 523772 or visit their website at www.glassforddaynursery.co.uk.

 **Parental Webcam**
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Tel: 01344 751688
www.nurserycam.co.uk
info@nurserycam.co.uk