

Nursery Nurse

Nursery nurses are concerned with the care, education and well-being of babies and young children up to the age of eight.

They are qualified to work unsupervised and to take responsibility for the children in their care. They normally work with healthy babies and children, but may care for them when they are temporarily ill.

Nurses' duties depend on the age of the children they care for. With babies, a lot of the work involves physical care. With toddlers, pre-school and older children they also focus on developing language skills and encouraging exploration of the world through play.

Hours vary: to provide a service to parents, day nurseries stay open past normal working hours. It is possible to work part time. Some nannies may work long hours, with early starts and late finishes.

The work is mostly indoors, although there may be some outdoor tasks supervising play or taking children on outings and visits.

Nursery nurses start from about £8,000 a year. Salaries can reach £23,400 for senior posts.

Nursery nurses need:

- to love children
- patience and adaptability
- firmness and consistency
- good physical fitness and stamina.

The main areas of employment are:

- day nurseries or creches
- in schools, supporting teachers
- as nannies in private homes.

There are several recognised qualifications, which can be studied full or part-time or at work.

There is no upper age limit for this work.

