



Modern-day Mary Poppins: the UK's increasing demand for nannies

With both parents in many families juggling careers and childcare, a live-in or part-time nanny is increasingly becoming part of modern life. Today's nannies are a far cry from the matronly or Mary Poppins stereotypes. Many are experienced primary or nursery school teachers, or have a similar qualified background in childcare and are much more likely to be found scoring goals in the garden than singing about spoonfuls of sugar. Here we debunk some of the myths and examine the trends surrounding modern nannies and childcare in the UK.

There is no such thing as a typical nanny in the UK today. They are born and bred here as well as recruited from all over the world, and in addition to qualifications, each brings his or her own special areas of expertise and her own personality. When hiring a nanny, it is advisable to think not only about the type of skills that you are looking for from a nanny, but also the type of person you want to work with. Many good client-nanny relationships develop into lifelong friendships, which far outlast the placement.

One myth surrounding childcare is that it's easier to find a good nursery than a nanny. According to the Family and Childcare Trusts 2017 Childcare Survey, only 50% of areas in the UK offer enough nursery places for children. For parents who do not work typical office hours, only one in eight areas offered sufficient nursery placements. For families who run their own businesses or work internationally, employing a nanny, whether live-in, full-time, part-time or just in emergencies, gives them unique flexibility. This may be a key reason why the demand for nannies continues to increase in the UK.

Another benefit of employing a nanny is the one-to-one attention a child receives compared with other forms of childcare. Parents often ask their nannies to record things such as the children's daily fun and learning activities, what they've eaten and any achievements, however big or small. In addition, the familiarity of being cared for in their own home, surrounded by their own toys and belongings, can be of huge benefit to children and

can increase their capacity to learn.

Yet another myth is that employing a nanny is comparatively expensive. Five years ago a nanny became a more affordable way to achieve private childcare than a place at a top nursery. Furthermore, demand for part-time and temporary nannies is on the rise and this can also be a more affordable option. The data from a recent salary survey (see table) gives an insight into the range of salaries for nannies in different regions of the UK. In addition, when comparing these costs to other forms of childcare it is important to remember that nurseries charge per child, whereas a nanny will look after all children in a family and for one fee.

For the nannies themselves it usually isn't about money. Nannies frequently say that developing a professional bond with the children they look after and seeing them develop in all areas – as well as having a fun, varied working life – is the most rewarding element of what they do.

Table showing average salaries for different types of nanny positions

| Position/Hours | Salary range |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Live-in full-time nanny | £18.5-33.5k per annum |
| Live-out full-time nanny | £22-45.5k per annum |
| Live-out part-time nanny | £10-15 per hour |
| Temporary or short-term nanny | £100-£150 per day |

Source: Greycoat Lumleys Salary Survey www.greycoatlumleys.co.uk

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