

Case Study |



Franchise Case Studies are an essential ally to your franchise research. Reading about people who have been where you are now, considering starting their own business and taking one of the biggest decisions of their lives, can be extremely helpful and give you the confidence you need to take the step into self-employment for yourself

Meet Gemma, our Franchise Partner in Leighton Buzzard. Gemma has been trading as Kiddy Cook Leighton Buzzard since September 2021 when she left her job as a TA at Leedon Lower School where she'd been employed for 8 years. Gemma has been a Learning Support Assistant for all her working life (21+ years) in various educational settings and with children of all ages.



“ Since I can remember, I have always wanted to be a teacher. At 16 I did 2 weeks work experience placement at a special school in Beckton which I absolutely loved. All of the students had very complex needs and many were wheelchair bound but this ignited my desire to become a teacher of special needs.

Once I'd finished my A-Levels, I didn't want to go straight to university and I started an art foundation degree course (which I didn't complete) because I got a full time job working in a specialist unit for children with severe behavioural problems that had been permanently excluded from main stream school. This job was very challenging at times but I loved it and met some amazing children. I worked in a few different primary schools in some pretty rough areas of East London before moving to Leighton Buzzard when my 2 sons were very small.

A few years ago I completed a Foundation Degree in Educational Practice at Bedford Uni whilst working at Leedon Primary School.. It was a very hard course but I got there in the end. My plan was to do the extra year in Special Educational Needs to gain my full degree but I decided to defer and as of yet I haven't returned to my studies.

This leads me on to why I left my job. I love working with children and wanted to remain working with children but I do not like what education has become in England in recent years. Children having to hit all sorts of targets by a certain time and if they don't then there must be something wrong. I would get so frustrated when I would work with a group of children who found learning very difficult, and the teacher would go so fast and these particular children would get left behind and not learn a thing. If I had my way, all schools would allow children to grow at their own pace. They would do art, music, cooking and anything else they wanted to do in a relaxed and supported way. No child should be made to feel sad, stupid or a failure because they can't do a test to show off a school's figures.

When the opportunity to buy a Kiddy Cook franchise came up I was very excited - Kiddy Cook had delivered their classroom cooking sessions where I worked and I purchased an existing business from someone who'd been delivering sessions for over 10 years.

I left my job at Leedon pretty quickly after buying my franchise. It has been wonderful because I am still working with children - I am teaching how I want to teach and teaching something that I love doing. I love being busy, but most of all I love giving the children a happy and safe environment where they can do something fun and hopefully give them wonderful memories that they will remember forever. It's the perfect job for me really and all with the fabulous support of the franchise network.



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