

Over 11 happy years in the pool with Puddle Ducks

Sarah Austin has owned the Bristol and Bath franchise of Puddle Ducks baby and child swimming school for long enough that she has passed a number of milestones. The business was teaching 1,000 children a week by 2015, received an award for excellence at the company's national conference in 2017 and celebrated 10 years in business in 2018. Now, she is happier in her role than ever.



“I worked in marketing for years before I became a franchisee. I enjoyed that industry, in many ways, but I spent too much time in the office and on the motorway, with not enough time with my young son. I did, however, take him to swimming lessons and we both absolutely loved them. I hadn't heard of Puddle Ducks back then but I enjoyed being in the pool enough to give up my job and become a baby swimming teacher.

“It was only three years later, when I discovered Puddle Ducks, that I realised I could combine the best of both worlds and use my business experience to build a career doing the thing that I loved and really believed in.”

As well as teaching important life skills to tiny tots, Puddle Ducks provides a fantastic opportunity to parents to meet and form friendships. In fact, it was through a like-minded friend that Sarah originally heard about Puddle Ducks. Close friend Jane Bozic became a Puddle Ducks franchisee in Dorset and, after doing her own due diligence, Sarah decided to follow in her footsteps and buy the franchise for her own area. Both still support each other in the running of their successful franchises.



“The flexibility of being my own boss was what originally drew me to franchising,” said Sarah, “And it has been invaluable over the years. I've worked hard but I have been supported every step of the way by my brilliant team and national office Duck HQ and can easily fit my role around my family commitments.

“If I was going to offer one tip to someone thinking of buying a franchise it would be to consider the life you want and look for other franchisees already living that life. If they can do it – if I can do it – so can you.”