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■ **HI-TECH NURSERY:** Teacher and children enjoy the facilities at the Computer Associates' Child Development Centre. 1089x/a

Developing childcare in the workplace

ACCORDING to the Daycare Trust, the Government has pledged to create one million new places for 1.6 million children by 2004.

Dave Prentis, General Secretary of Unison, says: "Organising childcare is a major headache for working parents – not just pre-school care, but wrap-around and holiday care for school children. We need to increase the supply of high quality childcare, provided by well trained, decently paid childcare workers."

Locally stands a model of excellence, the Child Development Centre at Computer Associates' European Headquarters at Ditton Park between Langley and Datchet.

The Computer Associates' Child Development Centre is a comprehensive early childhood programme dedicated to providing the finest professionally directed programme for the young children of CA employees at Ditton Park.

Claudine Campanelli manages the centre. "We take children from six weeks to six-years-old," she says. "We believe that the best solution is to provide for parents

Next week is National Childcare Week. This year the focus is on listening to the most important people in the equation: children and parents. Richard Hill looks at some of the issues facing working parents and visits an innovative childcare centre near Langley.

who are working here. They know that their children are safe and are close by. They therefore feel more comfortable and become more productive. We currently have 26 children, but the centre here can take up to 90 children."

The centre is very impressive, a palace of light and early education. The Montessori method of education is followed throughout the centre., developing each child's social and academic skills, emotional growth, and physical co-ordination.

By focusing on the process rather than the finished product, each child is allowed to explore, create, and develop a good sense of 'self', as well as developing prob-

lem-solving skills and techniques.

By allowing children to begin making 'real' choices, CA aim to prepare them for making decisions throughout their lives.

The Daycare Trust is the national childcare charity.

National Childcare Week is now in its fourth year and aims to highlight the needs, concerns and benefits of childcare to parents and employers. Since the announcement of the 2001 election, the Daycare Trust is urging parents and childcare providers to ask all general election candidates in their area where they stand on childcare.

For further information on childcare issues:

Daycare Trust, 21 St George's Road, London SE1 6ES

Tel: 020 7840 3350 Fax: 020 7840 3355

E-mail: info@daycaretrust.org.uk

Website: www.daycaretrust.org.uk

Childcare hotline. Free information and advice for parents – 020 7840 3350 Mon-Fri 10am to 5pm.