



# Working as a Playworker

Playworkers work in various settings providing activities and care for children aged 4 -14. These can include after school clubs, adventure playgrounds, childcare, community and school based play schemes, holiday play schemes and hospitals.

A playworker's role is to support and enrich children's play experiences. This will include ensuring that the environment is child-centred and offers a range of stimulating activities that are creative, physical and social.

To be a good playworker you should like working with children, and have an interest in their development. You will need lots of energy and enthusiasm, as well as patience and a caring nature. You will be responsible for planning activities that are fun and interesting, so you need a good imagination and strong organisational skills. You also need to be alert and observant, have good communication skills and work well as part of a team.

In Ealing there are over 70 registered providers, running a diverse range of activities such as play centres, adventure playgrounds and holiday playschemes, breakfast and out of school clubs. There are full-time positions available in playwork but many posts are part-time. Hours may vary enormously but often include evenings, weekends and school holiday periods. Many play schemes and out of school clubs require staff to have some experience and take on playworkers as volunteers. As a volunteer your travel and food expenses would normally be paid for. In a paid playworker position the pay varies depending on the employer, your level of experience, and any qualifications you may have.

## What qualifications do I need?

You do not need any formal qualifications to become a playworker and you can start to gain your qualification while working. Ofsted require half of the play setting staff to have a Level 2 qualification. Those in charge of play settings generally have a relevant NVQ Level 3 qualification, which could be an NVQ in Playwork, a Diploma in Playwork or a relevant degree.

## What training courses are available in Ealing?

If you would like to work with children but are not sure in what way - there are some introductory courses to explore your choices. The council in conjunction with training providers runs most playwork training in Ealing and it is free. There are some other organisations that offer training.



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For training programmes in playwork contact the training team on 0208 825 9761 or have a look at the Training Programme brochure accessible from the training section of our website [www.childrenscentres.org.uk](http://www.childrenscentres.org.uk).

For further information on playwork contact the Play Service on 0208 825 8205.

## **Voluntary work**

Volunteering is an excellent way to gain experience in playwork. Volunteers then move into paid employment, often at the same centre. Ealing Community and Voluntary service offer voluntary opportunities. To register you must complete an online registration form and then you will be contacted.

For information on jobs and volunteering contact Family Information Service on 0208 825 5588

For further information about jobs in out of school childcare visit [www.4children.org.uk](http://www.4children.org.uk) or call 4Children on 0207 512 2100

For advice on playwork education and training in out of school settings, call SkillsActive on 0207 632 2000 or visit [www.playwork.org.uk](http://www.playwork.org.uk)

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