

Playworker

Playworkers support children and young people to create their own spaces and opportunities for play.

Salary: £12,000 to £30,000 average per year

Hours: 35 to 40 per week

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1. Entry requirements

You'll need to have a positive attitude towards children and enjoy working with them.

You'll find it useful if you have some related experience, either paid or as a volunteer.

You don't need any formal qualifications. You can train and get playwork qualifications while you work.

You could prepare for this job by taking a college course in playwork.

Before you start paid or voluntary work, you'll need a background check by the [Disclosure and Barring Service](#) (DBS).

You could get into this career through an [apprenticeship](#).

[Skills Active](#) have information on the role of a playworker.

2. Skills required

You'll need:

- excellent listening skills and a responsible and caring attitude
- patience and tolerance
- creativity
- organisational skills
- the ability to work well as part of a team

3. What you'll do

You'll support children to follow their own ideas and interests for play. You'll make sure there are safe, interesting and fun play opportunities to meet children's individual and group needs.

You'll also follow health and safety procedures and help children to be aware of their own safety and that of others.

Your day-to-day work may include:

- providing and setting up play areas, materials and equipment
- giving out refreshments
- talking to children about their concerns or worries
- dealing with injuries and emergencies
- building relationships with parents, carers, and professionals
- keeping records and looking after petty cash

You may be invited to join in activities like sports, drama, music, den building, cooking and creative games.

4. Salary

Starter: £12,000 to £14,000

Experienced: up to £20,000 (senior playworker)

Highly Experienced: £25,000 to £30,000 (manager)

If you work part-time, you may be paid pro-rata (a percentage of the full-time salary) or on an hourly basis.

These figures are a guide.

5. Working hours, patterns and environment

Most playwork is in the evenings, at weekends and during school holidays.

You'll be working indoors and outdoors, depending on location and the type of activity.

You could be based in a breakfast club, after school club, mobile play bus, holiday play scheme, adventure playground or children's centre.

Your work will usually be very active, and you'll join in with games and sports when you're invited to.

6. Career path and progression

With experience and training, you could work for a local authority as a playwork development officer or become a manager.

You could also become self-employed and set up your own after-school club or childcare project.

Related careers

You may be interested in:

- [Childminder](#)

- [Children's nurse](#)
- [Nursery manager](#)
- [Nursery worker](#)