

Sport and Recreation Health and Fitness Playwork The Outdoors Caravans

The Playwork Induction Standard and Qualifications for Holiday Playschemes

The introduction of the Early Years Register and Childcare Register changed requirements for staff qualifications. Training that included the Playwork Induction Standard, originally developed by SkillsActive as an adequate briefing for staff working temporarily on holiday playschemes, is no longer accepted by Ofsted.

Holiday playschemes registered on the Early Years Register and/or Childcare Register, which cover children up to eight, are now required to employ staff with qualifications. Settings that cater solely for children over the age of eight do not need to register or meet these requirements, although they may choose to register on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register.

Many employers are likely to have difficulty meeting this condition for temporary holiday playscheme staff. SkillsActive is in discussion with both the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and Ofsted to find a way forward that enables schemes to meet registration requirements, but to date SkillsActive has not been able to agree an acceptable outcome.

While Playwork Induction Standard endorsed courses are no longer accepted by Ofsted, it should be noted that these still make a valuable contribution to induction training for staff and volunteers who are new to the playwork sector. Training providers who have gained endorsement for their Playwork Induction Standard linked courses should understand that, while Ofsted may no longer accept the course, SkillsActive will continue to promote these courses as appropriate induction for staff new to playwork.

PRACTICAL STEPS FOR HOLIDAY PLAYSCHEMES

SkillsActive only considers a playwork qualification to be full and relevant for those working in the play sector. It is committed to a more qualified workforce, and hopes holiday playschemes will be able to recruit sufficiently qualified staff to meet requirements. Employers may however want to start planning and recruiting earlier than usual, and examine their rates of pay and other terms and conditions to make their positions as attractive as possible. JNC terms and conditions, developed for youth and community workers, are particularly suitable¹. Local authorities have a duty of childcare sufficiency and they may be an important first point of contact.

If suitably qualified staff cannot be recruited, there are a number of different routes that providers may want to explore. Not all of them involve registering on either the Early Years Register or Childcare Register, and not all will be suitable for each community. This briefing is not a legal document, and employers are responsible for making the decisions that are right for their circumstances. If employers do choose an option that does not involve registering, they will need to ensure they meet legal requirements and have sufficient insurance coverage. Good practice also suggests that adhering to the Register's welfare, safeguarding, and suitability of those in contact with children requirements would be sensible.

SETTINGS MAY DECIDE TO:

1. Restrict numbers of children attending to match available staff. This may mean running a smaller scheme and some children may not be able to attend as much as they or their parents would like. Settings would be able to take children of appropriate ages by registering on the Early Years Register and/or the Childcare Register.
2. Not open. There may be other providers locally who have space for children.

¹ www.cywu.org.uk

3. Limit sessions for individual children to fewer than two hours per day. Settings can open for longer, but where individual children attend for less than two hours per day, providers are exempt from registration.
4. Open for 14 days or less per year, which means providers do not have to register as long as they notify Ofsted at least 14 days in advance. They would be able to take children of all ages. Coordinating this with other local communities could provide potentially seamless provision for children and parents across different employers. Settings may be eligible to register on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register.
5. Provide activity-based provision. If no more than two types of activities from the list below are offered and childcare is not the main purpose, then settings do not have to register on either the Early Years Register or Childcare Register, but may be eligible to register on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register. This exemption only applies for children who are aged three and over; and where children aged under five do not attend for more than four hours in any one day. This may be suitable if settings run environmental or forest schools type activities, or operate from leisure centres. The challenge is how to work to the playwork principles within this type of structure. It is worth noting that the list is very broad and subject to differing interpretations, and could easily encompass activities such as den building and different types of play such as 'socio-dramatic' play. Play has also been described as 'children's culture', and interestingly, even Sport England has no definitive list of 'sports' activities.
 - School study support or homework support
 - Sport
 - Performing arts
 - Arts and crafts
 - Religious, cultural or language study.
6. Run an open access scheme for children, which are exempt from either register, but may be eligible to register on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register. An open access scheme, according to Ofsted, may not provide care for children in the early years age group (the early years age group is from birth to 31 August following a child's fifth birthday). It is worth noting that if younger children are accompanied by a parent or carer who is responsible for them, then the setting would not be providing care for them. Childminders who care for children in the later years age group are not allowed to provide an open access provision, although they could accompany these children to an open access setting.
7. Settings may decide only to take children over eight, in which case they do not have to register at all, although they can decide to register on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register.
8. Play ranger schemes are not childcare and are not able to be registered.
9. Smaller schemes may decide to run informally from domestic premises, in which case they may need to register as childminders, depending on how many children they take.

Requirements for registration: Further details are available from Ofsted at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

EARLY YEARS REGISTER

Settings who take children up to the August 31 following their fifth birthday are required to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage to these children and the following requirements are assuming that there is not a qualified teacher or early years professional present:

- At least one member of staff (the manager or supervisor) must hold a 'full and relevant' level 3 qualification (as defined by CWDC);
- At least half of all other staff must hold a 'full and relevant' level 2 qualification (as defined by CWDC);
- At least one person must have a first aid certificate appropriate to the age of the children and activities on offer;
- There must be at least one member of staff for every eight children aged three and over (this increases to 1:4 for children under three and 1:3 for babies).

Workers must have successfully completed these qualifications; working towards them is not sufficient.

Employers wishing to check if staff qualifications are accepted for early years registered settings (for children up to the August 31 following their fifth birthday) should visit: <https://secure.cwdcouncil.org.uk/eypqd/qualification-search>. It should also be noted that the CACHE level 2 certificate in playwork (2004 to the present date) is accepted for playwork settings only (not early years settings such as nurseries) although this is not stated on this website as yet.

COMPULSORY PART OF THE CHILDCARE REGISTER

Settings that take children from the September 1 following their fifth birthday up to the age of eight need to ensure:

- At least half of all persons caring for children have successfully completed a qualification at a minimum of level 2 in a relevant area of work;
- The manager has a qualification at a minimum of level 3 in a relevant area of work;
- At least one person must have a first aid certificate appropriate to the age of children and activities on offer;
- In any setting there must be at least two people who have achieved the age of 18;
- For every eight children there must be at least one person over 18 who 'cares' for them, and this is effectively a ratio of eight children to one staff. In addition, any workers under 18 must be supervised at all times by someone over 18.

VOLUNTARY PART OF THE CHILDCARE REGISTER

Play provision for children aged eight to 17 years old, who are exempted from registration on the compulsory part of the register, can choose to join the voluntary part.

The official requirements:

- One person has a qualification at a minimum of level 2 in an area of work relevant to the childcare; OR
- Training in the core skills as set out in the document 'common core of skills and knowledge for the children's workforce';
- That any person aged under 18 caring for children is supervised at all times by a person who has attained the age of 18.

Qualification requirements for this section are minimal, and SkillsActive would suggest it good practice to have more than one qualified member of staff.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

SkillsActive is currently in the process of developing playwork units of common content at level 2 and level 3 which will combine to form an award, certificate and diploma at each of those levels. These qualifications will be available through the new Qualifications and Credit Framework and achievement of them will meet the needs of the playwork sector in the following way:

- The award will provide an induction to the sector
- The certificate will allow entry to work in the sector
- The diploma will confer competence.

SkillsActive is keen to have the award accepted as a recognised qualification for temporary holiday staff and are designing it to be short enough to be accessible to that group of playworkers. Following many meetings and discussions with DCSF and Ofsted, we are still awaiting final confirmation that the award will be accepted for practice in holiday schemes that are registered on the compulsory childcare register, but will make this information available as soon as we have it ourselves.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
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