

Prepare and facilitate specific play opportunities

Overview

This standard is about preparing and facilitating specific play opportunities within a playwork setting. These specific play opportunities may or may not be planned with children and young people, but will always be optional for children and young people to take part in if they choose to. They should form part of a wider playwork setting with a range of other, non-adult involved opportunities or possibilities. It is possible that this standard would be inappropriate for some playwork settings where adults do not become involved in planning and implementing specific play opportunities.

This standard is for a playworker working directly with children and young people in a playwork setting whose main purpose is to provide children and young people with opportunities for freely chosen, self-directed play. This standard is for staff that do not have full responsibility for the playwork setting but make a significant contribution to supporting play.

The main outcomes of this standard are:

1. prepare specific play opportunities
2. facilitate specific play opportunities

This standard is underpinned by the Playwork Principles and playworkers must be familiar with these and, where possible, demonstrate them through their practice and reflection.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to: **Prepare specific play opportunities**

1. identify ideas for play opportunities to **others**
2. justify to **others** that this is in line with children and young people's play needs and preferences
3. involve the children and young people in planning play opportunities when they choose to be involved
4. develop a **plan** of what needs to be completed for each play opportunity
5. discuss the **plan** with a responsible colleague to gain approval
6. select and obtain resources for each play opportunity

Facilitate specific play opportunities

7. check the children and young people still wish to undertake each play opportunity before proceeding
8. facilitate each play opportunity following accepted playwork intervention styles
9. bring each play opportunity to a close

Prepare and facilitate specific play opportunities

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

Prepare specific play opportunities

1. the Playwork Principles within the professional and ethical framework for playwork and how each of the principles can be applied within your own role
2. the reasons why specific play opportunities may be prepared and when this may be appropriate
3. where to research and find inspiration for ideas for different specific play opportunities
4. the importance of ensuring that each chosen play opportunity is in line with children and young people's play needs and play preferences
5. how to involve the children and young people in planning the play opportunity
6. the considerations required when arranging the **plan**
7. who you need to discuss the **plan** with and why it is important to share the **plan**
8. how to select and where to obtain resources for each play opportunity

Facilitate specific play opportunities

9. the reasons you would check whether the children and young people still wish to undertake each play opportunity before proceeding
10. the importance of involving only those who wish to take part and for as long as they wish to take part
11. playwork intervention styles
12. ways to exercise flexibility and remain adaptable throughout each play opportunity in order to respond to children and young people's current needs and preferences
13. ways to bring each play opportunity to an effective close

Scope/range related to performance criteria **Others**

- 1. staff
- 2. children and young people
- 3. external people

Plan

- 1. health and safety considerations
- 2. inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice
- 3. methods and content
- 4. contingencies
- 5. monitoring and evaluation
- 6. organisational policies and procedures

Scope/range related Plan

to knowledge and understanding

1. health and safety considerations
2. inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice
3. methods and content
4. contingencies
5. monitoring and evaluation
6. organisational policies and procedures

Values

The Playwork practitioners involved in writing this standard, in conjunction with SkillsActive, have agreed to adopt the following as the set of values prescribed for all of those working within the playwork sector:

Playwork Principles

These Principles establish the professional and ethical framework for playwork and as such must be regarded as a whole. They describe what is unique about play and playwork, and provide the playwork perspective for working with children and young people. They are based on the recognition that children and young people's capacity for positive development will be enhanced if given access to the broadest range of environments and play opportunities.

1. All children and young people need to play. The impulse to play is innate. Play is a biological, psychological and social necessity, and is fundamental to the healthy development and wellbeing of individuals and communities.
2. Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children and young people determine and control the content and intent of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way for their own reasons.
3. The prime focus and essence of playwork is to support and facilitate the play process and this should inform the development of play policy, strategy, training and education.
4. For playworkers, the play process takes precedence and playworkers act as advocates for play when engaging with adult led agendas.
5. The role of the playworker is to support all children and young people in the creation of a space in which they can play.
6. The playworker's response to children and young people playing is based on a sound up to date knowledge of the play process, and reflective practice.

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7. Playworkers recognise their own impact on the play space and also the impact of children and young people's play on the playworker.

8. Playworkers choose an intervention style that enables children and young people to extend their play. All playworker intervention must balance risk with the developmental benefit and wellbeing of children.

The Playwork Principles are held in trust for the UK playwork profession by the Scrutiny Group that acted as an honest broker overseeing the consultations through which they were developed.

Glossary

Intervention styles

A range of methods the playworker can use in the playwork setting. These may range from complete non-involvement through to specific intervention and may include: waiting to be invited to play; enabling uninterrupted play; enabling children and young people to explore their own values; leaving children and young people to improve their own performance; leaving the content and or intent of play to the children and young people; letting the children and young people decide why they play; enabling the children and young people to decide what is appropriate behaviour; and only organising when children and young people want you to

Play needs

What individual children and young people have to have in order to be able to play, but are not always able to have for a variety of reasons; for example, lack of access, overprotective adults, lack of outdoor environments, etc.

Play preferences

What individual children and young people are interested in and choose to play; based on their prior experience

Playwork setting

Somewhere children and young people have the opportunity to play that is staffed by playworkers

Play space

A place formed by children and young people playing. It can be physical, affective, permanent, transient or cyber

Staff

This covers those with whom you work, for whom you are responsible, paid and or unpaid, or students and or trainees

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