

Document Control

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Introduction

The Emerging Playwork Practitioners Programme (EPP) is a structured, practice-based learning programme developed by Raising Youth CIO to support individuals who are new to the playwork, childcare, health, education and youth sectors to develop the knowledge, skills and professional behaviours required to work safely and effectively with children and young people.

The programme combines supervised practical experience within the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme with protected learning time, reflective practice and portfolio-based assessment. Trainees are supported by experienced practitioners to develop competence in areas including safeguarding, communication, inclusion, child-led play, professionalism, and safe working practices.

The EPP is designed to provide a structured introduction to practice within community and play-based settings whilst maintaining a strong emphasis on safeguarding, professional boundaries and reflective learning. The programme recognises the importance of experiential learning and aims to support trainees to apply theory to real-world practice through supervised participation in sessions and activities.

The curriculum has been designed to align with Raising Youth CIO's values and approach to child-led, inclusive and relationship-based practice. Successful completion of the programme may support progression into paid opportunities within Raising Youth CIO, subject to organisational need, safer recruitment processes and satisfactory demonstration of competence in practice.

The programme does not replace formal professional qualifications or regulated training pathways, but instead provides an introductory developmental experience intended to enhance employability, confidence and readiness for practice within children and young people's services.

Entry Requirements

The EPP is open to applicants who are aged 16 and over when they start the programme. Applicants must be undertaking a qualification in a relevant field, including, but not limited to:

- Childcare
- Teaching
- Health and Social Care
- Youth Work

Recruitment and Selection

Trainees are recruited via an open and competitive process. Applications must be submitted via the charity's website and must include:

1. Basic personal information and contact details
2. CV
3. A supporting statement outlining the interest in the programme and how it will support their academic and professional development

Applications which do not meet the above or are significantly lacking information will be refused. A panel will shortlist applications and invite applicants to a values-based interview.

All applicant selected for the programme will undergo Enhanced Background Checks as outlined in the Recruitment Policy.

General Professional Capabilities (GPCs)

The curriculum is structured around a series of General Professional Capabilities (GPCs), which describe the professional, values, behaviours, knowledge and skills expected of a Playworker from day 1 of their practice.

The GPCs provide the overarching framework for assessment and progression throughout the programme and are evidenced through practice-based assessment, reflective learning and professional discussion.

GPC 1: Safe Practice and Safeguarding	AO1: Participate safely in a supervised playwork environment AO2: Demonstrate safeguarding awareness in practice
GPC2: Child Centred and Inclusive Practice	AO3: Supports play activities with children AO4: Demonstrate understanding of play and its importance

GPC 3: Communication and Team Working	AO5: Communicate appropriately in a team setting
GPC 4: Professional Values and Behaviours	AO6: Demonstrate professional behaviours
GPC 5: Reflective Learning and Development	AO7: Reflect on practice and identify areas for development

Programme Structure

The Emerging Practitioners Programme (EPP) is a practice-based learning programme which combines supervised practice with protected learning time, reflective practice and portfolio-based assessment.

The majority of learning will take place in the charity's Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) provisions. Trainees will undertake supervised engagement with children, families and programme staff. Trainees are expected to actively participate in sessions and progressively develop confidence, competence and professional behaviours through supported experience and feedback.

Protected learning time is incorporated throughout the programme to support the development of underpinning knowledge and reflective practice. This may include:

- Professional discussions
- Reflective activities
- Scenario-based learning
- Workbook and portfolio tasks
- Group teaching sessions
- Practice debriefs and feedback sessions

Professional feedback may include verbal or written feedback provided by supervising practitioners regarding professionalism, communication, engagement, safety and performance in practice.

The programme is designed to support trainees to apply theory to practice and develop an understanding of child-centred, inclusive and relationship-based approaches to playwork.

Trainees will undertake a 3 week placement at the charity's HAF programmes over the Summer Programme. Trainees will attend a minimum of 3 shifts a week. Trainees are expected to attend all allocated placement days and engage fully with practice learning, supervision and portfolio activities throughout the programme.

Attendance concerns may impact progression and successful completion of the programme.

Supervision Framework

Trainees have supernumerary status and are not included in staff to child ratios. All trainees undertake practice under supervision of Raising Youth staff with varying levels of supervision, determined by staff, informed by the trainee's competence, confidence, professionalism and ability to maintain safe practice. There are three levels of supervision:

1	Practices safely under direct supervision
2	Practices safely under indirect supervision (supervisor on site but not immediately nearby) within clearly defined boundaries
3	Demonstrates increasing independence whilst appropriately seeking support when required

Trainees should progress stepwise as they move through the weeks. To successfully complete the programme, trainees must demonstrate the ability to undertake safe practice with appropriately reduced supervision whilst recognising the limits of their competence and seeking support when required. Trainees are expected to recognise the limits of their competence and seek support whenever required. Supervisors may increase supervision levels at any time where concerns are identified regarding safety, professionalism or competence in practice.

Protected Learning and Portfolio Development

Throughout the programme, trainees are required to complete a range of portfolio activities designed to support learning and evidence progression against the curriculum outcomes and General Professional Capabilities (GPCs). Portfolio activities are intended to support trainees to apply theory to practice, demonstrate understanding of core concepts and evidence progression throughout the programme.

Portfolio activities may include:

- Reflective learning logs
- Posters and information resources
- Observation activities
- Scenario-based tasks
- Professional discussions

- Activity planning tasks
- Workbook activities
- Direct observations of practice

The Practice Assessment Document (PAD) is used to record progression, achievement and feedback throughout the programme. Trainees are expected to maintain their portfolio throughout the placement and engage fully with supervision, reflection and assessment processes.

Teaching & Learning

The main bulk of teaching is carried out by staff working on programmes during the placement element of the programme. Learners will observe and participate in key elements of playwork practice under the supervision of staff.

Additionally, bitesize sessions will be delivered by staff, either live via MS Teams or via recorded sessions. Learners will be expected to engage in at least 3 of these sessions and write a reflection about their learning in the Practice Assessment Document (PAD). The sessions available include:

1. Core Principles and Theories of Play
2. Trauma Informed Practice
3. Children's Learning and Development
4. Health and Safety in Playwork
5. Sensory Processing in Playwork Environments

Additional sessions may be run as determined by staff or upon request from trainees. These bitesize modules aim to complement trainee's learning on placement and support their wider professional development.

Assessment

Assessment within the Emerging Playwork Practitioners Programme (EPP) is practice-based and designed to evaluate trainees' developing knowledge, skills, behaviours and professional values within real-world playwork environments.

Assessment is continuous throughout the programme and is informed by direct observation of practice, reflective learning, professional discussions and portfolio activities completed within the Practice Assessment Document (PAD).

Trainees are assessed against the programme's General Professional Capabilities (GPCs), Assessment Objectives (AOs) and associated assessment criteria. Assessment activities are intended to support trainees to demonstrate progression in areas including safeguarding, communication, child-centred practice, professionalism and reflective learning.

Assessment methods may include:

- Direct observation of practice
- Reflective learning logs
- Professional discussions
- Workbook and portfolio activities
- Scenario-based tasks
- Posters and information resources
- Supervisor and assessor feedback
- Initial, mid-point and final review meetings

Trainees are expected to engage fully with all assessment processes and maintain their portfolio throughout the placement.

Assessment decisions are made holistically by the Practice Assessor and Educational Supervisor, informed by the trainee's demonstrated competence, professionalism, engagement and ability to maintain safe practice within the placement environment.

Where concerns are identified regarding safety, professionalism or conduct, trainees may be subject to increased supervision, additional support measures or removal from the programme in line with organisational policies and procedures.

Awarding

To successfully complete the Emerging Playwork Practitioners Programme (EPP), trainees must:

- Complete the required placement hours
- Attend all mandatory induction and training requirements
- Demonstrate achievement of the programme's General Professional Capabilities (GPCs) and Assessment Objectives (AOs)
- Complete all required portfolio activities within the Practice Assessment Document (PAD)
- Demonstrate safe and professional practice throughout the programme

Assessment outcomes are determined through review of the trainee's portfolio, direct observations, reflective work and professional discussions alongside feedback from supervising staff and assessors.

Trainees who successfully complete the programme will receive:

- A Raising Youth CIO Certificate of Completion
- Recognition of achievement within the Practice Assessment Document (PAD)
- Any associated accreditation or unit awards linked to the programme

Completion of the programme may support progression into paid opportunities within Raising Youth CIO, subject to organisational need, safer recruitment requirements and satisfactory demonstration of competence in practice.

Completion of the programme does not guarantee paid work with Raising Youth CIO.

Assessment Outcomes

Assessment outcomes will be recorded using one of the following classifications:

Outcome	Descriptor
Achieved	Demonstrates safe and appropriate practice across programme requirements
Achieved with Development Needs Identified	Meets core requirements but requires ongoing support in identified areas
Not Yet Achieved	Has not yet demonstrated the required level of safe and professional practice

Assessment Moderation

Once a trainee has completed the curriculum and gathered the relevant assessment evidence outlined by this document, they will send their PAD to the Education Supervisor who will mark it and confirm completion of the programme. The marked documents will be sent to a suitably qualified colleague, such as the CEO, for moderation and quality assurance before a final outcome is sent to the trainee.

Reasonable Adjustments

Raising Youth CIO recognises that trainees have a broad range of individual circumstances and needs and is committed to ensuring that every trainee has the right support to complete the programme. Any trainee who may need adjustments to the assessment process will discuss these with the Education Supervisor who will ensure the appropriate reasonable adjustments are made, these may include:

- Providing learning and assessment materials in different formats,
- Additional time to complete assessments,
- Professional Discussions to be used instead of written tasks

This is not an exhaustive list and any adjustments will be tailored to the trainees individual needs.

Learning & Assessment Plan			
General Professional Capability	Assessment Objectives	Assessment Criteria	Required Evidence
GPC 1: Safe Practice and Safeguarding	AO1: Participate safely in a supervised playwork environment	1. Follows instructions from supervising staff 2. Maintains awareness of safety expectations in the setting 3. Contributes to a safe play environment 4. Recognises situations requiring support from supervising staff	• Practice Assessor/Educational Supervisor Observation • Professional Feedback
	AO2: Demonstrate basic safeguarding awareness in practice	1. Recognise indicators of concern 2. Reports concerns to staff appropriately 3. Maintains appropriate professional boundaries with children and families 4. Demonstrate an understanding of confidentiality	• Poster task • Professional Discussion • Observation
GPC 2: Child Centred and Inclusive Practice	AO3: Support play activities with children	1. Engages positively with children 2. Supports child-led play appropriately	• Observation • Reflection

		3. Adapts communication and interaction styles where appropriate 4. Contributes to an inclusive play environment	
	AO4: Demonstrates understanding of play and its importance	1. Identify at least two benefits of play for children 2. Identify different types of play observed in sessions 3. Describe how adults can support child-led play 4. Recognise the importance of inclusive play opportunities 5. Reflect on how play supports wellbeing and development	• Poster task • Reflection • Workbook Task

GPC 3: Communication and Team Working	AO5: Communicate appropriately in a team setting	1. Communicates effectively with staff 2. Interacts appropriately with children and families 3. Responds constructively to feedback 4. Shares relevant information with supervisors 5. Contributes positively within the staff team	• Professional Feedback • Reflection
GPC 4: Professional Values and Behaviours	AO6: Demonstrate professional behaviours	1. Attends sessions reliably and on time 2. Works within the limits of their own competence 3. Demonstrates professional conduct and attitudes 4. Reflects on their own practice and learning 5. Maintains appropriate appearance and behaviour	• Attendance Record • Educational Supervisor's Report • Professional Feedback

GPC 5: Reflective Learning and Development	AO7: Reflect on practice and identify areas for development	1. Participates in reflective discussions 2. Identifies strengths in their practice 3. Identifies areas requiring development 4. Responds constructively to feedback 5. Uses reflection to improve future practice	• Reflections • Professional Discussion • Initial, Mid Point and Final Review
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