



Job Title: Family Play Practitioner

Responsible To: Family Play Lead / HQLWD

Location: Community venues, family hubs, schools, early learning and childcare settings and other locations across the designated area.

Purpose of the Role

The Family Play Practitioner will work as part of CALA's Family Services team to provide high-quality, inclusive and responsive play and family support opportunities for children and their parents/carers.

The role will use play as a key means of engaging families, strengthening relationships, supporting children's development and wellbeing, building parental confidence and reducing isolation.

Working alongside the Family Play Leads and wider CALA team, the practitioner will deliver a range of community and targeted family play opportunities including Play and Learn sessions, Rise and Shine Groups, Pop-Up Play, family groups, holiday activities and other responsive programmes developed around identified local need.

The Family Play Practitioner will build positive, trusted relationships with children and families and provide a welcoming and non-judgemental first point of contact. Through conversations, observations and ongoing engagement, practitioners will help families identify strengths, needs and potential sources of additional support.

The role will contribute to CALA's wider preventative and early-intervention approach, working collaboratively with colleagues, communities and partner organisations to help families access the right support at the right time.

Key Responsibilities

1. Family Play and Children's Experiences

The Family Play Practitioner will:

- Plan, prepare and deliver welcoming, inclusive and high-quality family play sessions within community and other settings.
- Provide a varied range of developmentally appropriate, stimulating and enjoyable play opportunities for babies, children and families.
- Promote child-led, freely chosen and open-ended play which responds to children's interests, needs and stages of development.
- Provide opportunities for sensory, messy, creative, imaginative, physical, outdoor and exploratory play.
- Create environments which encourage curiosity, confidence, independence, creativity and positive relationships.

- Support parents and carers to recognise the value of play in supporting their child's learning, development and wellbeing.
- Positively model play and interactions with children, supporting parents to develop ideas they can easily continue at home.
- Encourage parents/carers and children to play, explore and learn together.
- Ensure activities and resources are accessible and adaptable to meet differing needs and abilities.
- Balance planned opportunities with flexibility to respond to the interests and needs of the children and families attending.

2. Family Engagement and Relationship Building

The practitioner will:

- Develop warm, trusting and professional relationships with children, parents and carers.
- Create environments where families feel welcomed, respected, included and able to participate without judgement.
- Take time to listen to families and understand what matters to them.
- Recognise that families may initially engage through play or informal community activities before feeling comfortable seeking or accepting additional support.
- Use sensitive, strengths-based conversations to identify what is working well and where families may benefit from further information or support.
- Build parental confidence and recognise parents and carers as the people who know their children best.
- Encourage families who may be experiencing isolation or lack confidence to develop connections with other families and their wider community.
- Support families to identify their own strengths, resources and solutions.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries while developing positive and trusting relationships.

3. Early Intervention, Information and Signposting

The practitioner will:

- Recognise opportunities where early information, practical guidance or additional support may benefit a child or family.
- Provide families with accessible and appropriate information about CALA services and other local support.
- Signpost and, where appropriate, support families to connect with relevant statutory, third-sector and community services.
- Work with the Family Play Lead where a family requires more targeted or coordinated support.
- Support families to overcome barriers to accessing services where possible.
- Recognise when concerns or needs are beyond the scope of the practitioner role and seek appropriate guidance.
- Follow agreed pathways for escalating concerns relating to children's or families' wellbeing.
- Promote early intervention and preventative approaches which aim to provide support before difficulties escalate.

4. Children's Wellbeing and Development

The practitioner will:

- Promote children's wellbeing through nurturing, responsive and developmentally appropriate practice.
- Have an understanding of children's development and recognise that children develop at different rates.
- Observe children's play and interactions and respond sensitively to their individual needs.
- Promote positive attachments and interactions between children and their parents/carers.
- Support children's confidence, communication, emotional wellbeing, physical development and social skills through play.
- Recognise potential barriers affecting a child's participation, development or wellbeing and discuss these appropriately with the Family Play Lead.
- Work in accordance with GIRFEC and SHANARRI wellbeing principles and CALA's policies and procedures.
- Ensure children's views and experiences are recognised and valued.

5. Participation and Family Voice

The practitioner will:

- Actively seek the views of children and families about the support, activities and services they receive.
- Use informal conversations, feedback activities, surveys and creative/play-based approaches to gather children's and families' views.
- Ensure children are supported to express their views in ways appropriate to their age, stage, communication needs and abilities.
- Encourage families to identify what they would like to see happening within their local community.
- Feed emerging themes, gaps and family priorities to the Family Play Lead and wider CALA team.
- Demonstrate to families how their feedback has influenced practice and service development.
- Promote meaningful participation rather than consultation as a one-off activity.

6. Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

The practitioner will:

- Contribute to the planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of family play services.
- Maintain accurate records of attendance, participation and engagement as required.
- Gather appropriate feedback from children and families.
- Contribute to the recording of referrals, signposting and partnership activity.
- Support the collection of evidence demonstrating outcomes and the difference services are making for families.
- Contribute to case studies and examples of family journeys where appropriate and with the necessary consent.
- Use observations, feedback and evaluation to reflect on and continually improve practice.
- Identify emerging needs, barriers or gaps in local provision and share these with the Family Play Lead.
- Complete records and monitoring information accurately, appropriately and within agreed timescales.

7. Safeguarding and Child Protection

The practitioner will:

- Promote the safety, wellbeing and protection of all children and families engaging with CALA.
- Work in accordance with CALA's Child Protection and Safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Understand individual responsibilities for identifying, recording and reporting concerns.
- Remain professionally curious and recognise where changes in a child's or family's presentation may require further consideration.
- Share concerns promptly and appropriately with the designated person/manager in accordance with CALA procedures.
- Maintain confidentiality while understanding when information must be shared to protect a child.
- Undertake all required safeguarding and child protection training.

8. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The practitioner will:

- Promote equality, diversity, inclusion and children's rights throughout all aspects of practice.
- Ensure services are welcoming and accessible to families from a wide range of backgrounds and circumstances.
- Recognise the barriers that poverty, rurality, disability, transport, language, confidence and other circumstances can create for families.
- Adapt activities, communication and approaches to support individual needs.
- Challenge stigma and discriminatory attitudes appropriately.
- Promote compassionate and non-judgemental approaches to working with families.
- Support children and families to feel respected, valued and included.

9. Partnership and Community Working

The practitioner will:

- Develop positive working relationships with local community groups, schools, early learning and childcare settings and partner organisations.
- Promote CALA family services within local communities.
- Attend relevant community or partnership activities as required.
- Work alongside other professionals and services to provide joined-up support for families.
- Share information appropriately and in accordance with CALA procedures.
- Identify opportunities to collaborate with partners to enhance activities and support available to families.
- Avoid unnecessary duplication by developing an understanding of existing local provision.
- Support families to make connections within their own communities.

10. Health, Safety and Risk Management

The practitioner will:

- Maintain safe, welcoming and appropriate environments for children and families.
- Complete and follow relevant risk assessments.
- Carry out appropriate checks of venues, resources and equipment.
- Support children to experience appropriate challenge and managed risk through play.

- Follow CALA procedures relating to accidents, incidents, first aid, allergies, medication and emergencies.
- Ensure resources and equipment are appropriately maintained, stored and transported.
- Report health and safety concerns promptly.
- Take reasonable responsibility for their own safety and that of children, families, colleagues and others participating in activities.

11. Team Working

The practitioner will:

- Work positively and collaboratively with the Family Play Lead and wider CALA team.
- Contribute ideas, knowledge and experience to service planning and development.
- Participate in team meetings, supervision, reflective practice and development activities.
- Share relevant information appropriately to support continuity for children and families.
- Provide support to colleagues during sessions and activities.
- Be flexible and responsive to changing service and community needs.
- Work across different locations and programmes as reasonably required.
- Contribute positively to CALA's organisational culture, values and objectives.

12. Professional Practice and Development

The practitioner will:

- Work in accordance with CALA's policies, procedures, values and professional standards.
- Complete CALA induction and all required mandatory training.
- Participate fully in Continuous Professional Learning (CPL).
- Attend supervision, team meetings and development opportunities as required.
- Reflect on their own practice and identify areas for continued professional development.
- Be receptive to feedback and use this to strengthen practice.
- Maintain appropriate standards of professional conduct, communication, confidentiality, attendance and reliability.
- Keep knowledge relating to play, child development, family support, safeguarding and community practice current.
- Undertake relevant accredited training appropriate to the development of the role.

This remit provides an overview of the principal responsibilities of the Family Play Practitioner and is not intended to be exhaustive.

The postholder may be required to undertake other reasonable duties appropriate to the nature and level of the role and to respond flexibly to the developing needs of children, families, communities and CALA services.

Person Specification

Specification	Essential	Desirable
Evidence of relevant further education or adult qualifications and/or a proven track record of relevant experience that demonstrates the skills and abilities required for the role.	√	
Experience of working with children and/or families within a childcare, play, family support, education, community or related environment.	√	
A genuine enthusiasm for working with children and families.	√	
An understanding of the importance of play in children's learning, development and wellbeing.	√	
The ability to develop positive, trusting and professional relationships with families.	√	
A warm, approachable and non-judgemental manner.	√	
Good communication and interpersonal skills.	√	
The ability to engage confidently with children and adults.	√	
An understanding of safeguarding and the importance of promoting children's wellbeing.	√	
The ability to work both independently and as part of a team.	√	
Good organisational skills and the ability to contribute to planning, recording and evaluation.	√	
A commitment to equality, inclusion and children's rights.	√	
Flexibility and willingness to work across different community locations and programmes.	√	
Commitment to ongoing learning and professional development	√	
Full UK clean driving license - Driving requirement: This post involves regular driving as an essential part of the role, including driving a CALA vehicle. Applicants must hold a full UK driving licence and meet the eligibility requirements of CALA's motor insurance provider for the vehicle(s) used in this role. Our current insurance arrangements require drivers of this vehicle to be aged 21 or over.	√	
A recognised qualification in childcare, playwork, community learning, family support or another relevant field.		√
Experience of delivering family play, parent and child or community-based activities.		√
Experience of working with families who may experience barriers to accessing services.		√
Knowledge of GIRFEC and the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators.		√
Knowledge of child development and attachment-informed practice.		√
Experience of partnership or multi-agency working.		√
Experience of monitoring and evaluating activities or family services.		√
Relevant training such as First Aid, Child Protection, PEEP, Solihull or other family learning/support approaches.		√