

Job description – Forest school practitioner / Playworker for pre-school and out of school club

Harlequin is committed to ensuring that, at the centre of all staffing matters, is children's safety, welfare, care and development.

The forest school practitioner / playworker is accountable to the Setting Manager or the Pre-School manager as appropriate.

Job Purpose

To carry out the duties of a Forest School practitioner / Playworker for a variety of client groups, conforming to Harlequin policies and under the direction of senior management, pre-school or setting manager.

Forest participant groups will include, but not exclusively, children aged between 2-16 years including pre-schoolers, birthday parties, social events, corporate events customers, and groups of school children.

The role of all staff in the forest, pre-school and out of school club is to boost and develop children's self-esteem, self-belief and confidence by encouraging manageable tasks and ensure that they have time and freedom to learn and discover at their own pace without pressure.

Job specification

The Forest School Practitioner / Playworker role is full time, 38 hours per week, all year.

The key responsibility of the role is in the delivery of forest-based sessions for any of the harlequin businesses, such as pre-school, after school clubs, holiday clubs, home-education groups, provision for schools and any other forest-based group that may be introduced in future. This will include session and activity planning, delivery and evaluation (see also job activities below).

All regular Harlequin Forest sessions will be planned such that delivery is fully compliant with the Forest School Principals. Forest-based sessions (ie during holiday clubs and after school sessions) will adhere as closely as practical to these principals.

The Forest School Practitioner / Playworker will also work in the breakfast, after school and holiday club sessions as required and during which will perform the role of Playworker, including any and all job activities for that role.

This role will require travel to and from and between sites as necessary.

Job activities

The Forest School Practitioner / Playworker will assist in the day-to-day running and organisation of forest sessions and out of school club sessions. This includes:

1. To plan, prepare and deliver a range of forest school sessions, with guidance/instruction from managers and their deputies, and with support from assistants as appropriate. These will be purposeful and productive activities for all children.
2. To liaise with managers, colleagues or clients prior to sessions to ensure plans are appropriate, well prepared and well resourced, and all needs and expectations are met.
3. Providing safe, creative, high quality education and care for children, following the guidelines and frameworks set out in the EYFS (<https://www.gov.uk/early-years-foundation-stage>) and being able to confidently use it to plan activities, monitor and review children's progress.
4. Daily interaction with children to provide a range of stimulating activities to support all areas of learning and development.
5. Meeting the physical, social and emotional needs of children at the session through appropriate direction, observation and awareness.
6. Daily care provision for the children, through setting routine, changing nappies, supporting toilet use and preparation and clearing of food.
7. To create and maintain an engaging, fun and supportive environment, demonstrating flexibility in adapting sessions and plans in response to varying/changing needs of children.
8. Being prepared to innovate and devise imaginatively varied ways of teaching the forest school experience to all clients and children.
9. Encouraging children and show enthusiasm for their subject indoors and outside and in the forest.
10. Selecting and using a range of different resources and teaching styles, appropriate to the forest school experience.
11. Be available 7.10am-6.30pm week days and at least 4 weekend days per calendar year.
12. Week day hours are negotiable/flexible. You will be required to work at least 38 hours per week, or as indicated in your contract if different.
13. Travel to any of the Harlequin settings in Kent. A full UK driving licence and unrestricted use of a vehicle with business insurance is essential. This may include carrying children and equipment.
14. Administering first aid and medicines as appropriate.

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15. Ensuring children are not exposed to any allergen or fed any food that parents have prohibited on their registration forms.
16. Acting as a key worker to a small group of children, including liaising with parents/carers and being responsible for individual children's records associated with their learning and development.
17. Observe and record children's progress and produce accurate, well written learning journeys, within agreed timescales.
18. Demonstrating an awareness of Assessment for Characteristics of Effective Learning and identify the learning of all children, as appropriate.
19. Ensure that you are familiar with Harlequin's health and safety guidance and be mindful of their own health and safety and that of the children, other adults and visitors.
20. Have a responsibility for ensuring safeguarding, safety and welfare of children for whom they are responsible or with whom they come into contact and to adhere to and ensure compliance with Harlequin's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy at all times.
21. To act on inappropriate or unsafe occurrences as they happen to effectively close them down.
22. Promoting positive values and attitudes with all children, and acting as a positive role model at all times. Promote positive Management of Behaviour at all times. Establish routines and boundaries to ensure the safety and to support good behaviour of the children.
23. Proactively look for opportunities to support and promote Harlequin in day to day activities. Support and foster the aims of Harlequin.
24. Developing and maintain successful and professional relationships with parents.
25. Ensuring records are completed to a high standard, remembering confidentiality and appropriate sharing of information.
26. Attending meetings as appropriate.
27. Ensure equipment is maintained to a high standard and is stored appropriately. Also, counting equipment in and out during sessions.
28. In the event of an emergency, be aware of the correct procedures and respond appropriately to ensure the safety of children, staff and other adults in the setting.

Minimum training

The Forest school practitioner / Playworker must have or undertake the following training as a minimum (paid for by the company) during staff induction and as and when required:

- Forest School Leader level 3
- Safeguarding children level 1
- Food safety in catering level 2
- Outdoor First Aid plus Paediatric first aid (12 hour) (within three months of commencement of employment)

Continuous professional development training is available and encouraged by senior management.

Person specification

Essential

- Forest School Leader Level 3 certification from a recognised examination board.
- The ability to plan and deliver environmental, education-based activities to a wide age range of children.
- Current paediatric first aid (or to be refreshed by the start of the fixed term contract).
- Strong communication, presentation and interpersonal skills with a proven ability to disseminate information to a variety of audiences, including children and colleagues.
- Excellent inter-personal skills and a strong team working ethos and ability to work collaboratively with managers, peers, assistants and volunteers.
- Enthusiasm to work with children.
- Ability to provide safe, creative play.
- Ability to meet children's individual needs.
- Ability to work conscientiously and on own initiative.
- Possess good organisational skills, sound judgment and common sense.
- No restrictions or convictions that will result in an enhanced DBS check not being clear. Be a suitable person to work with children.

Desirable

- Relevant childcare training and qualification.
- Recent and significant experience in leading Forest School/outdoor education sessions with children of a range of ages.
- An understanding of outstanding childcare.
- Experience working with 2-16year olds within an educational or club establishment.
- A current outdoor and paediatric first aid certificate.
- Current driving licence and own transport.
- Desire to develop a career in childcare through professional study and best practice.

Safer recruitment

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All staff have a responsibility for the safeguarding of all children attend Harlequin and other adults within the business, as well as themselves. Safer Recruitment practices are in place to ensure only suitable candidates are appointed. This includes identity verification, checking of police databases for criminal history (DBS), personal declarations, taking up of references and verification of a candidates' suitability to work with children and in the United Kingdom.