

Why consider a career in early years and childcare?

High quality childcare and early years education are in high demand in this country. That is why people like you – with commitment, energy and a caring nature – are needed to play a key role. There is a wide range of career opportunities in the early years and childcare sector. Jobs can vary widely in terms of venue, hours and the age of the children you are caring for.

Not only do you get to enjoy playing and having fun with children but you are also helping them to develop and learn. Some of the skills they may learn with you, such as how to get on with other children, can set them up for the rest of their lives. If you are interested in a more managerial job you could even end up running your own nursery.

What about experience and qualifications?

If you have some experience of looking after children, so much the better, but it is not an essential requirement and you certainly do not need to be a parent. Employers are looking for unqualified as well as qualified staff, and there is a range of on-the-job training available at all levels. You do need to be enthusiastic, energetic, resourceful, responsible and patient.

For some occupations you will need specific qualifications, for others no formal qualifications are required. However, if you hold formal qualifications (or are prepared to work for them) there will be more opportunities open to you. If you want to progress to more senior and managerial levels in early education, childcare and playwork you will certainly need to obtain recognised qualifications as well as relevant experience.

To ensure the quality of early education, care and play, substantial funding is being made available to support investment in staff training so that employees will be encouraged to acquire and build on relevant qualifications. So there has never been a better time to enter a career in childcare and early education.

What can I do?

Whether you have just left school or are thinking of returning to study as a mature student this helpsheet will help you consider your options if you think you would like to work with children.

Childminding

You will be self-employed and can choose to work when you want to. You will need to register with Ofsted and complete a CRB check and a basic induction course. If you are interested in becoming a registered childminder please contact Medway Family Information Service for details of the next information session being held locally.

Nurseries

Provide care, play and some education for the under 5s. There are different types of nurseries: private, community or council run. All offer various working hours and levels of responsibility depending on your qualifications.

Pre-school playgroups

Provide part time play and education for children from 2½ - 5 years. Most groups offer morning and afternoon sessions during term time only.

Teaching Assistant

Work with teachers, helping with classroom organisation, supervising small groups of children while they work on a task, helping individual children with their work, listening to them read and helping develop their social skills. TAs work in primary, secondary and special schools.

Playwork

Holiday Playschemes and Extended School Clubs organise activities for children and young people before and after school and during school holidays. Playworkers organise a variety of developmental activities and events.

Crèches

Generally form part of another organisation such as sport centres or shopping centres and are places where parents can leave their children while they do other things. You will need to be qualified if you want to become a crèche leader.

What qualifications do I need?

The type of work you think you would like to do will influence which type of qualification you aim for. These range from induction courses for childminders to advanced BTEC Diplomas and Certificates to degrees in childhood studies.

Foundation Level

For people with little or no experience of working with children. At college you will need a work placement to gain practical experience or as an apprentice you will train while you work.

Level Two

For those who are working under supervision such as a nursery assistant or playgroup assistant working with children under five, a teaching assistant or assistant playworker.

Level Three

For those who work on their own initiative, planning and organising their own work and supervising others, for example, a nursery nurse, playgroup leader or senior playworker.

Level Four

For experienced practitioners who carry out complex and non-routine tasks such as a manager of an early years nursery or out of school setting.

Level Five (Foundation Degree)

For those working as senior managers and development officers.

Level Six and Above

For those working as senior managers and development officers at strategic level.

The following tables list some of the most common qualifications for job roles within early years, childcare and playwork, and is current at time of print. The full up-to-date list of accredited qualifications can be obtained from the awarding bodies.

City and Guilds	Tel: 0844 543 0033	www.cityandguilds.co.uk
Council for Awards in Children's Care & Education	Tel: 0845 347 2123	info@cache.org.uk
Edexcel	Tel: 0845 618 0440	www.edexcel.org.uk
EDI Education Development International	Tel: 08707 202 909	www.ediplc.com
National Open College Network	Tel: 0114 2270500	www.nocn.org.uk
NCFE	Tel: 0191 239 8000	www.ncfe.org.uk
Open University	Tel: 0845 300 60 90	general-enquiries@open.ac.uk

EARLY YEARS EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE

Examples of job roles	Vocationally-related qualifications (awarding body)	Occupational Qualifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Crèche Assistant ▪ Nursery Assistant ▪ Parent/Toddler group assistant ▪ Playgroup Assistant ▪ Pre-school Assistant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Foundation Award in Caring for Children (CACHE) ▪ Level 2 Certificate in Child Care and Education (CACHE) ▪ Intermediate Certificate in Developing Skills for Working with Children and Young People (NCFE) 	NVQ level 2 in children's learning and development. (This NVQ awarded by C&G, CACHE, EdExcel, EDI)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Crèche Leader ▪ Nursery Nurse ▪ Nursery Supervisor ▪ Playgroup Leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 3 Diploma in Child Care and Education (CACHE) ▪ Level 3 Diploma in Pre-school Practice (CACHE) 	NVQ level 3 in children's learning and development. (This NVQ is awarded by C&G, CACHE, EdExcel, EDI)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teaching Assistant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants (OCR) ▪ Level 3 Certificate for Teaching Assistants (OCR) ▪ Certificate in Higher Education in support for Learners with Additional Educational Needs 	NVQ level 2 Teaching Assistant NVQ level 3 Teaching Assistant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advanced Practitioner ▪ Nursery Manager ▪ Development Officer Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 4 Certificate in Early Years Practice (OU) 	NVQ level 4 in children's care, learning and development. (This NVQ is awarded by CACHE)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Senior Practitioner ▪ Senior Development Officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 5 Early Years Sector-Endorsed Foundation Degree* 	N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Senior Manager ▪ Children's Centre Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 6 Early Childhood Studies Degree* ▪ Level 6 Teaching Degree with Early Years Specialism* 	N/A

*Go to www.ucas.com for more information on universities offering these qualifications

PLAYWORK		
Examples of job roles	Vocationally-related qualifications (awarding body)	Occupational Qualifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assistant Playworker ▪ Adventure Playworker ▪ Holiday Playscheme Worker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 2 in Playwork (CACHE) ▪ Level 2 Certificate in Supporting Playwork Practice (CACHE) ▪ Level 2 Progression Award (City & Guilds) ▪ Level 2 Award in Playwork (NOCN) 	Level 2 in this NVQ is awarded by EDEXCEL, CACHE, City & Guilds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Playwork Manager ▪ Playwork Development worker ▪ Senior Playworker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 3 Diploma in Supporting Playwork Practice (CACHE) ▪ Level 3 Certificate in Work with Children (APEL) (City & Guilds, CACHE, Edexcel & NOCN) ▪ Level 3 Diploma in Playwork (CACHE) 	Level 3 in this NVQ is awarded by CACHE, City & Guilds, EDEXCEL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Senior Practitioner Manager ▪ Development Officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 4 Playwork 	Level 4 in this NVQ is awarded by City & Guilds, CACHE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Senior Practitioner ▪ Senior Manager ▪ Senior Development Officer/Worker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 5 Playworker Sector-Endorsed Foundation Degree* 	N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manager or Development Officer working at strategic level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 6 BA (Hons) degree in Playwork* 	N/A

*Go to www.ucas.com for more information on universities offering these qualifications

Mid Kent College and Medway Adult Learning Service offer a range of Early Years, Education and Childcare courses in Medway. Please contact them for more information.

Mid Kent College

Telephone 01634 402020 or email course.enquiries@midkent.ac.uk

Medway Adult Learning Service

Telephone 01634 338400

For more info...

If you are interested in a rewarding and flexible career in childcare, contact Medway Family Information Service who can provide you details of current job vacancies and training opportunities in your area.

Telephone 01634 335566, email familyinfo@medway.gov.uk or visit www.medwayfisd.com

Medway Family Information Service does not accept responsibility for the accuracy of this information.

This information is available in different formats and languages. Contact Medway Family Information Service on 01634 335566 for details