



CHILDMINDING

CLASSROOM ASSISTANT

WORKING WITH CHILDREN

EARLY YEARS

PLAYWORK

EARLY YEARS, CARE,
EDUCATION AND PLAY
EMPLOYERS' FORUM
NORTHERN IRELAND

WANT A CAREER WORKING WITH CHILDREN?

Qualifications and pathway for careers working with children

Early Years	Playwork	Childminding	Classroom Assistant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 & Level 3 CCLD; Level 5 CCLD; Foundation Degree in Early Childhood Studies; BA Hons Degree in Early Childhood Studies. <p>Other entry routes Social Work; Midwifery; Nursing; Health Visiting; Teacher training. (along with at least 2 years relevant experience)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 and Level 3 Playwork; Level 3 Transitional Award in Playwork from Early Years; Level 5 Playwork (Recommended); Level 5 CCLD; Playwork Degree. <p>Other entry routes Social Work; Midwifery; Nursing; Health Visiting; Teacher training (along with at least 2 years relevant experience)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No qualification required <p>Under minimum standards there are some mandatory courses to be undertaken which include: Paediatric First Aid; Health and Safety; Safeguarding</p> <p>You are encouraged to undertake Level 2 or 3 CCLD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 and Level 3 Specialist Support in Teaching and Learning in Schools.
To work in....			
Tends to be working with children up to school age in: Day Care; playgroup; pre-school, creches; sure starts; developmental programmes for 2-3 year olds; afterschool's setting.	Tends to be working with children of primary school age in: Day Care; afterschool clubs; and; playcentres.	Tends to be working with children of all ages in: a home environment. (a registration process is required)	Tends to be working with children of all ages in a Pre-school, Primary School and Secondary School setting
(including special educational needs, and Irish medium settings)			

APPRENTICESHIPNI AND TRAINING FOR SUCCESS

ApprenticeshipNI is a work-based programme which offers:

- recognised training and qualifications to new and existing employees aged 16 and over;
- across a wide range of occupational areas;
- includes the early years and playwork sectors;
- Level 2 and Level 3 both offered.

An apprenticeship can provide the training and qualifications needed to progress your career.

Funding for Apprenticeships training costs are provided by the Department for the Economy (DfE).

Higher Level Apprenticeships are also being developed for the Sector providing funded access to a Level 5 Qualification

The Training for Success programme is all about:

- giving participants the tools and the confidence to find work or get into higher education
- designed for school leavers aged for 16 and 17
- extended eligibility for persons under 22 years with a disability, or under 24 years for persons from a care background

provides participants with the opportunity to gain a nationally recognised qualification, as well as practical.

CASE STUDIES

Mia (18 from Bangor) – working as a Classroom Assistant in Special Educational Needs school

I kind of liked school and did ok there. Got my Maths and English – that was the main thing! My kid sister didn't fancy it as much. She was always getting into trouble and being cheeky to the teachers. I think it was because she couldn't do the work. Anyway, it turned out she had dyslexia. Alison came into her class on Monday, Wednesday and Friday to help her ... WOW. What a difference! She did ok in her English in the end – not as good as me!

Anyway, when my careers teacher asked me what I wanted to do – I thought of Alison and said – I'd like to do that. I went to college at night and did my Specialist Support in Teaching and Learning Course (Classroom Assistants' course) and now I work term time in a primary school around the corner from me. It's spot on.

Mary (46 from Strabane) - working as a Childminder

I was actually working in retail when I finished school. I did my A-Levels and got a job in retail. I was doing alright there as a trainee manager – I actually enjoyed going to work! Then when I had my kids I decided to come out of work to raise them – at least for the first few years!

After Sara, our second child, my friend said to me about becoming a registered childminder. She had two kids as well – around the same age – and she really wanted to get back to work. I talked to a woman down my street who was a childminder and she put me in touch with the Northern Ireland Childminding Association.

NICMA explained how to go about getting registered and the benefits of staying at home with my own kids and earning some money as well - they were really helpful. Even though there were times when I thought 'maybe not!' they were a great help – and got me all the training that I needed to be a childminder.

Anyway – that was six years ago. I now have six kids most of the time – and I love it. No two days are the same! I'm self-employed – so I get to be my own boss and be around for my kids. I get on really well with the parents too, and – well I think it keeps me young!

Jordan (22 Belfast) – working in school age sector

I left school when I was 16. I did all right in my GCSEs but wasn't sure what I wanted to do, I just knew I didn't want to stay on at school. I was in the Scouts and became a helper on club nights and when we went camping. I called in to an open day at my local training organisation and someone mentioned playwork which sounded a bit like what I did in the Scouts. I signed up and I haven't looked back.

I did my Level 2 and was in a placement in an afterschool club. I really enjoyed it, it's good fun playing and helping them play. I see now how important it is. I'm now a room supervisor but we all work really well together ... we are like a big team!

Peter (42 from Newry) - working in a Day Nursery

It wasn't until I was 15 and having recently been diagnosed with epilepsy that I realised what I wanted to do. My neurologist asked me what line of work I wanted to do? I replied, "to work with children", his response was that due to my epilepsy that I never would! So, to prove him wrong that summer I volunteered in a Special Needs Summer Scheme and in the first half an hour of working with the children, I knew I was hooked. This was what I wanted to do every day!

So, I left school after my GCSEs (I did enough to get back for A-Levels but wanted to begin learning more about childcare). I completed my NVQ Level 2 in Childcare, then my NVQ Level 3, gaining experience working with children aged 8 weeks to 18 throughout. My aunt was a Playgroup Leader and I did a lot of my placement there and went on to be the Leader of this group, and I still hope to be as knowledgeable and amazing as my aunt.

For the last 26 years I have worked with children, it is an amazing sector to be involved in. I have loved each day, even the challenging days because when you see a child progressing you know the positive impact you have had on the child and that this will help them in the future. I have gone onto SRC and completed my QCF Level 5 Leadership and Management Course and a BTEC Level 7 Unit in Strategic Leadership and Management.

Currently I am a Daycare Manager supporting my staff in delivering high quality early years care and education to our children and families. It is a privileged position to be in and one which is hard work, fun, spontaneous and rewarding.

What are the next steps?

Depending on the area/s you would like to specialise in, contact the organisation below who will be able to help you get started on your journey.

Organisation	Areas of speciality	Contact
NICMA – the childminding association	Childminding	www.nicma.org
Early Years – the organisation for children and young people	Early Years	www.early-years.org
PlayBoard NI	Playwork/School Age Childcare	www.playboard.org
Altram	Irish Medium	www.altram.org
Education Authority	Classroom Assistant	www.eani.org.uk
Childcare partnerships	Information and support to childcare providers, parents and employers.	http://childcarepartnerships.hscni.net/
Department for Economy (DfE)	Government training programmes	www.economy-ni.gov.uk

