



Working in the Childcare Sector: how to progress your career October 2009

Getting Started

The *Getting Started in a Pre-school Setting* course is a CACHE Level 1 qualification. This practical course offers a perfect introduction to working in a pre-school. Aimed at new and/or unqualified staff and parents/carers helping in group setting, it is provided over 30 hours. If you're not already working at a pre-school, it's helpful to visit one while you are studying. Your local pre-school could advise about this and also whether funding is available through the local authority to pay tuition fees.

Aged between 16–24?

An Apprenticeship, which will qualify you respectively to NVQ level 2 or 3 in Children's Care, Learning and Development, may be ideal for you.

During the apprenticeship you will work in a pre-school at a specific apprenticeship wage. You will need to undertake workplace assessment and one technical certificate to achieve your NVQ. You will also be required to attend Key Skills training and achieve the Key Skills Awards in literacy and numeracy.

All pre-schools registered with Ofsted require half of the staff to be qualified to NVQ level 2; more and more settings are supporting apprenticeships in children's care, learning and development and it's an excellent way to learn and train while working. More information can be found at www.cwdcouncil.org.uk.

Certificate in Pre-school Practice (CPP)

This CACHE Level 2 course is ideal for anyone who is keen to work as an assistant in an early years setting.

The course duration is 180 taught hours. You would also need to ensure that you are able to work in an early years setting for at least 150 hours while studying.

Diploma in Pre-school Practice (DPP)

The DPP is a CACHE Level 3 qualification. On completion, the qualification would enable you to work at a supervisory level in an early years setting as leader, manager or deputy. It's possible that, in some settings, you will need some post qualification experience too.

The DPP runs over 240 taught hours and covers both theoretical knowledge and practical skills required to organise and administer a pre-school. Many parents who have volunteered at their children's pre-schools decide to take the DPP, as well as those wishing to make a career change.

The CPP and DPP courses are run at centres and colleges countrywide and are sometimes funded by bursaries from the local Early Years Service or Children's Trust. Many employers also fund these courses and allow day release to attend college. The National Extension College also offer the qualifications by distance learning.

Progression

There's no need to stop at the CACHE Level 3 DPP. On successful completion of a level three award, the next step on the progression route is to degree level. Early Years Foundation Degrees are widely available and can often be funded with local authority bursaries.

Once a Foundation Degree is achieved the next move would be to take further study at higher level to convert the foundation degree into a full undergraduate degree.

The last stage in the progression route is to achieve Early Years Professional Status. There are a number of routes to achieve this and this is fully explained on CWDC's website. <http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/eyps>

Returning to Work?

If you are considering returning to work after a break and you have qualifications but you are not sure if they are still relevant, it's definitely worth looking to see if they are still accepted in early year's settings. You can consult the database of recognised qualifications on the CWDC website. <http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/qualifications-list>

Whatever your background or current qualifications, there are many routes into the early years sector, as well as opportunities for building a rewarding and fulfilling career.

Contact Details

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CACHE

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Children's Workforce Development Council

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National Extension College

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The Pre-school Learning Alliance is the largest voluntary sector provider of quality affordable childcare and education in England. The Alliance supports children's centres and nurseries, pre-schools and parent and toddler groups. We develop and deliver family learning courses, offer specialist information and advice including publications, run acclaimed training and accreditation programmes and campaign to influence early year's policy and practice. We recognise, support and actively promote parental involvement and inclusive practice in all aspects of our work.

If you would like to find out more about our work or you wish to make any comments about our products or services, please do get in touch.

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