

## Job of The Week

### Health Play Specialist

#### Key Skills

- counselling skills including active listening and a non-judgemental approach
- sensitivity and understanding
- the ability to understand people's reactions
- excellent verbal communication skills
- patience and the ability to remain calm in stressful situations
- a desire to help people
- to be flexible and open to change
- the ability to work well with others
- to be able to use a computer and the main software packages competently

#### Salary

£27,000 - £38,000

#### Working hours

37 – 40 per week

You could work  
Weekends

Aspire | Challenge | Achieve

# Health Play Specialist

## University

You can do a healthcare play specialism foundation degree, which you'll need to register with the Society of Health Play Specialists.

### To get onto the course, you usually need:

- a childcare qualification at level 3 or above
- GCSEs or equivalent in English and maths
- at least 2 years' experience of working with children – paid or voluntary
- This is a 2-year, day-release course. It combines academic study with work placements.

## Entry requirements

GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A\* to C), or equivalent, including English and maths at least 1 A level, or equivalent, for a foundation degree

## Volunteering

You can [get work experience](#) by volunteering in a healthcare setting, which is useful when applying for courses and jobs.

You can also find volunteering opportunities through [The National Council for Voluntary Organisations \(NCVO\)](#) and [Do IT](#).

## Apprenticeship

You may be able to apply for the Health Play Specialist Level 5 Higher Apprenticeship, if you have at least 2 years' experience of working with children. You should also be employed in a healthcare setting, for example a hospital or clinic.

You can find vacancies through [NHS Jobs](#).

## Entry requirements

4 or 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A\* to C) and A levels, or equivalent, for a higher or degree apprenticeship

## Career path and progression

You could use your experience to work outside of a hospital setting, for example in a hospice or within a community paediatric team.

### **You could also become a:**

Senior play specialist, Team leader or Play department manager

You might apply to train as a healthcare professional, like a children's nurse, child psychotherapist or counsellor.

## Day to Day tasks

- work closely with children, families, carers and health professionals
- carry out therapeutic assessments
- design play activities to meet children's individual needs
- plan and run play, art and craft activities at the bedside, on the ward or in a hospital play area
- create a safe environment that encourages play
- advise parents and carers about activities they can do with their children
- maintain patient records and data

## Working conditions

You could work in an NHS or private hospital, at a health centre or at a hospice.

Your working environment may be emotionally demanding.

You may need to wear a uniform.

# Labour Market Information

In the Careers section of the school website you can find the useful comparison tool the ‘Labour Market Information widget’.

Use the widget to compare different job roles in any employment sector or relating specifically to the ‘Job of the Week’.

Playworkers	Registered mental health nurses	Psychotherapists and cognitive behaviour therapists
<div>Weekly Pay</div> <div>£360</div> <div>Hours/Week</div> <div>43h</div> <div>Annual Pay</div> <div>£18,720</div> <div>Hourly Pay</div> <div>£8</div>	<div>Weekly Pay</div> <div>£880</div> <div>Hours/Week</div> <div>40h</div> <div>Annual Pay</div> <div>£45,760</div> <div>Hourly Pay</div> <div>£22</div>	<div>Weekly Pay</div> <div>£700</div> <div>Hours/Week</div> <div>35h</div> <div>Annual Pay</div> <div>£36,400</div> <div>Hourly Pay</div> <div>£20</div>
<div>Workforce Change (projected)</div> <div>Growth</div> <div>9.6%</div> <div>The workforce is projected to grow by 9.6% over the period to 2035, creating 2,600 jobs.</div>	<div>Workforce Change (projected)</div> <div>Growth</div> <div>9.6%</div> <div>The workforce is projected to grow by 9.6% over the period to 2035, creating 5,500 jobs.</div>	<div>Workforce Change (projected)</div> <div>Growth</div> <div>9.6%</div> <div>The workforce is projected to grow by 9.6% over the period to 2035, creating 4,100 jobs.</div>
<div>You might find this job in</div> <div>Social work</div> <div>Education</div> <div>Sport &amp; recreation</div> <div>Services to buildings</div>	<div>You might find this job in</div> <div>Health</div> <div>Residential care</div> <div>Public admin. &amp; defence</div> <div>Other personal service</div>	<div>You might find this job in</div> <div>Social work</div> <div>Health</div> <div>Education</div>
<div>More info</div> <div>Clear card</div>	<div>More info</div> <div>Clear card</div>	<div>More info</div> <div>Clear card</div>

# Labour Market Information

<p><b>Playworkers</b></p> <p>Playworkers deliver and facilitate play opportunities for children in a range of formal and informal settings including play schemes, free play locations, and in pre- and after-school activities.</p> <p>Common tasks in this job:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supervises children's games and encourages the development of physical, social and language skills</li> <li>provides play areas and prepares materials for a wide range of children's activities</li> <li>encourages children's independence, self-confidence and social interaction</li> <li>organises and supervises children on excursions</li> </ul> <p>Back Clear card</p>	<p><b>Registered mental health nurses</b></p> <p>Registered mental health nurses support and care for people with a range of mental health conditions, in hospital and community settings, and help them towards recovery and management of their conditions.</p> <p>Common tasks in this job:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provides day to day support for and, in some cases, physical care for patients with a variety of mental health conditions</li> <li>participates in the preparation for physical and psychological treatment of patients with mental health conditions</li> <li>monitors patient's progress, encourages patients to participate in different therapies</li> <li>administers drugs and gives other forms of treatment</li> </ul> <p>Back Clear card</p>	<p><b>Psychotherapists and cognitive behaviour therapists</b></p> <p>Psychotherapists and cognitive behaviour therapists use a variety of therapies in one-on-one or group settings to help people with mental health issues, stress, emotional and relationship problems.</p> <p>Common tasks in this job:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assesses and provides treatment for people suffering with mental illness, stress, and emotional and relationship problems</li> <li>talks with patients about their emotions, relationships and personal history</li> <li>analyses events, behaviour, and habits to understand their mode of thinking and feelings</li> <li>helps people come up with new ways to cope with their problems and to change their ways of thinking</li> </ul> <p>Back Clear card</p>
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# Keep looking...

Use these links to learn more about our Job of The Week, consider the various pathways leading to the career, what you can be doing now to help yourself and other roles in the industry...



## Take a look at these short videos for inspiration...

Healthcare Play



[Meet, Holly a healthcare play specialist in the NHS.](#)

Hidden Heroes



[Health Play Specialist | Hidden Hero Final - YouTube](#)

## More Information

### Registration

you'll need to [register with the Society of Health Play Specialists](#)

### Career tips

When applying for jobs, you'll be expected to have an understanding of how [NHS values](#) would apply in your work.

### Further information

You can find out more about becoming a health play specialist from the [Society of Health Play Specialists](#) and [Health Careers](#).