



Play Champions Special Schools Programme

The Play Champions Special Schools Programme is an intensive training programme designed to embed positive play firmly in the ethos and delivery of special schools and other settings working with children with special educational needs and disabilities. The programme enables learners to advocate for play and promote positive play in their schools and wider communities. The training takes a detailed look at the theories and neuroscience behind play and introduces a huge range of experiences that demonstrate these theories and can be used directly with children with SEND. Crucially the course also details how to get the message across to parents and carers and the wider community and how to encourage play in the home with an entire session dedicated to delivering a vibrant parent workshop to engage and educate parents/carers. The course inspires learners to become proactive and passionate advocates for play with a firm grounding in current research.

Play Champion status is awarded to learners who successfully complete the course and deliver a follow up session for staff teams or parents of children at their school. This session can be supported by the tutor if required.

The sessions

1. Introduction - Theories and neuroscience of play, learning whilst playing and the catastrophic effects of Play Deprivation. Addressing the Play needs of children with SEND.
2. Play and the Imagination – Play for Communication and Social Development, EAL and building the creative brain. Experiences rather than “activities”. The value of Symbolic Play for children with SEND.
3. Play as a Process - The Process Focused approach, multi-level self-directed play, differentiation, adaptation and continuous provision. Sensory play and play for Physical Development. Therapeutic play and emotional resetting. Finding the balance between adult led and child initiated.
4. Play advocacy – Supporting children to play outside the school, working with parents/carers and the wider community. The Ludocentric approach in practice.
5. The Play Champions – Techniques for delivering sessions. The Play Audit and assessing play potential within a school. Micro presentations to group.

Typically sessions run for 3 hrs a week over 5 weeks but this is entirely flexible to suit the needs of the school and can be split into shorter sessions over a longer period of time. Gap tasks between each session give learners an opportunity to put into practice elements of the course. The course can be delivered to up to 25 teachers and support staff at a time.

The course costs £3000 for up to 25 learners. This includes all course materials, certification and endorsement and a play champions medal. This also includes after support for settings and continuing advice and help on play related matters.

Comments from Play Champions

"The children responded really well to it and it was one of the best lessons I've ever done."

Sian Wooldridge Teacher Forest Way School

"I can't believe what a difference this course has made to me and the setting I work at. Thank you!"

Lisa Bennett, Holy Trinity Playgroup – Play Champion



Play Champions from Forest Way Special School and Birkett House Special School

Play champion status is endorsed by Inspired Children and Forest Way Teaching School Alliance. Learners will be expected to complete gap tasks and a mini presentation as well as delivering a session for local parents, other settings or colleagues from their school.

For more information email info@inspiredchildren.org.uk or go to www.inspiredchildren.org.uk