



Family Engagement Intern

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in joining our friendly and dynamic team. The pack contents are:

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We hope this pack provides the information you need to decide if you wish to apply for the role. However, if you have any questions, please do contact Susan McIntyre at susan@playmidlothian.org.uk or on 07792 402 316.

About Play Midlothian

Play Midlothian is a registered charity (no. SC025474) working to enable every child in Midlothian to thrive through play by creating opportunities, removing barriers and addressing inequalities. We focus on play because we know how much this benefits children's health, wellbeing and development. It is important for their lives in the here and now as well as for their future life chances.

We provide services for children and young people (aged 0-14) and families and build the capacity of communities to support play (including training and development opportunities for other settings, including schools). We are a partner in the cross-sector Midlothian Play Strategy, which takes a strategic approach in planning for and promoting play locally.

Our current main services for children (and where applicable their parents) are:

- Play in Mind, which provides adventurous play and relaxation in woodlands for children aged 7-14 with emerging mental health challenges, to reduce stress and build resilience, with occasional blocks of sessions for the whole family.
- Play for All, which supports disabled children aged 0-14 and their families to access play, through group play sessions and 1-to-1 support in homes or parks, helping families meet their child's different needs and be included.
- Out2Play, which encourages children aged 5-12 to play out close to home in greenspaces within five locations, by reducing safety concerns about playing out (such as local ASB or bullying) and tempting children away from screens with interesting play resources.

We have an office base at the One Dalkeith Business Hub in central Dalkeith, but deliver services throughout Midlothian, and if commissioned, beyond.

The Family Engagement Intern Role at Play Midlothian

This role is particularly suited to someone considering a future career in playwork, community engagement, family support, social research, youth work, community learning and development, social work or the wider third sector. The internship is a fixed-term opportunity to develop skills, knowledge and experience relevant to those areas – whilst supporting Play Midlothian's work.

The role splits into approximately:

- 29% play session delivery (relating to play and family support) – likely two sessions per week
- 71% family consultation work (relating to research, evaluation and community engagement)

The play sessions the postholder will work on are family Play in Mind sessions. The service model is already developed and the intern will be trained on how to run these sessions.

These sessions support families where any one or more family member (parent/carer or child or any age) is experiencing emerging mental health issues (such as anxiety, stress or very low self-esteem), through play in nature. At our woodland sessions, families can, for example,

build dens, make campfires, relax in hammocks, create nature crafts and explore the woods. We also guide families through 'mindful' activities such as listening to the sounds of nature and a sharing circle. The idea is to use the power of play in nature to help families destress and build resilience. Travel and transportation of play resources to woodlands is required for successful delivery of the play sessions.

We've had great feedback on these sessions e.g. "I was only looking for a way to help my daughter, but in fact, joining these sessions was a turning point for us both. I'm so grateful for this step change in our lives that is down to this service. The difference it has made is far reaching."

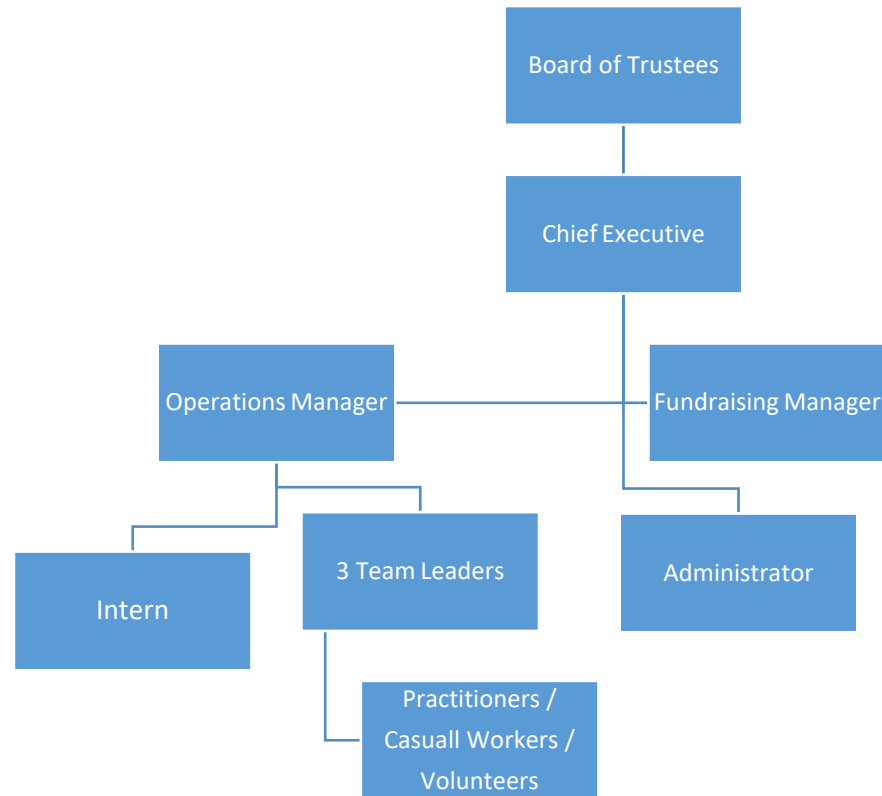
One of these sessions is likely to take place on a Saturday, and the other a weekday after school hours.

The consultation work is a newer strand of work, for which we have funding until March 2027. The overall purpose of the funding is for us to support families experiencing or at risk of poverty (for example due to mental health challenges or disability). This can include work to ensure the voices and experiences of families with experience of poverty inform service design and delivery. This is a great opportunity for us to better understand the current needs of families in Midlothian as regards play and family fun, and how we could better support this.

This would suit someone with an interest in hearing from families about their experiences and gaining skills in using the tools and techniques that can achieve this. There will need to be some flexibility in the hours of work when running consultation activities, so that families can participate at the times that best suit them, which may be after school (including occasionally evenings) or weekends.

There is a strong culture of teamwork and support within Play Midlothian, so please do not feel daunted by areas of work you have not yet experienced – what matters most is a growth mindset with willingness to learn.

Organisational Structure



Job Description

35 hours per week, £14.27 per hour

Responsible to: Operations Manager

Role purpose: To support the delivery and development of whole family support services that strengthen wellbeing, relationships and resilience through play. The internship is to help the position holder develop skills, knowledge and experience in these areas, whilst supporting Play Midlothian's work.

Place of work: Play Midlothian's office in Dalkeith as the main base, with play sessions delivered throughout Midlothian. Admin hours can usually be worked at home under our hybrid working policy.

Line manages: No line management duties.

Key job outcomes:

1. Play sessions run effectively and safely.

- Supports the planning and delivery of whole-family Play in Mind outdoor play sessions, using our existing service template.
- Helps prepare resources, activities and spaces for sessions.
- Follows organisational policies and contributes to safe, inclusive and welcoming environments.
- Completes records and other administrative tasks as required.

2. Families receive high quality support, tailored to their needs.

- Helps create welcoming and enjoyable environments where children and adults can participate together.
- Builds positive relationships with families and encourages participation in activities.
- Observes and responds appropriately to the needs and interests of participants.

3. Families share their experiences, views and ideas about their needs and the support that would be most helpful

- Liaises with partner organisations and agencies to identify ways to reach families experiencing or at risk of poverty.

- Contributes to the design of, and organises and runs, focus groups, questionnaires, art-based activities and other opportunities for children, parents and carers to have their say
- Helps ensure families feel welcomed, listened to and valued.
- Observes and listens to children, parents and carers about their experiences, needs and ideas.

4. We have meaningful insight into the experiences and needs of families

- Collects and records information from conversations, questionnaires and engagement activities.
- Identifies common themes, ideas and issues raised by families.
- Organises information in a clear way so it can be shared with colleagues.
- Contributes to reports, presentations and other ways of sharing what has been learned.

Other responsibilities:

- Any other duties relevant to the responsibilities of the role and which may be delegated by Play Midlothian management.

Person Specification

Documentation / Experience	
Essential	Desirable
• Membership of the PVG scheme for children (this can be applied for if successful at interview and we will meet the cost)	• Some prior experience of working/volunteering with children or families, or of research/community consultation • Driving license

Key skills, competencies and personal qualities

- Welcoming and approachable
- Ability to build positive relationships with a range of people
- An interest in play, family support, wellbeing or community development
- Good verbal and written communication skills

- Ability to use Microsoft Office applications
- Ability to plan and manage workload
- Ability to work both independently and as part of a team
- Willingness to learn and take on new challenges

What We Offer

As an intern with Play Midlothian, you will receive structured support and development, enabling skills in:

- Playwork practice and the role of play in children's wellbeing and development.
- Family support
- Group facilitation
- Gathering and using feedback
- How services are designed, developed and improved.

You will receive regular supervision and mentoring from experienced staff, and opportunities to go on external training courses (for which we have a budget).

We also offer:

- A rewarding role, with the chance to make a real difference to children and families.
- A supportive and welcoming working environment.
- Hybrid Working Policy. Note – play or consultation sessions would be in person at set locations. Planning, admin or online training associated with the role can be done at home if preferred.