

# CONFERENCE JOURNEY PLANNER 2024

21<sup>st</sup> National  
Playwork  
CONFERENCE  
Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> & Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024  
EASTBOURNE

Dear Colleagues, Friends, and Playwork Family

Hi and welcome to Eastbourne for the 21<sup>st</sup> National Playwork Conference.

When I started this way back in 1999 I didn't realise that it would become an institution in the playwork sector and it is an honour for me to bring this event to you every year.

**DO READ THIS WELCOME FROM ME AS IT INCLUDES USEFUL  
INFORMATION AND HELPFUL STUFF.**

It is, however, quite a daunting process! I want to put on an event that is going to inspire; that is going to help you recharge your batteries; that is going to give you knowledge and learning; it's going to make you think about yourself and your practice. I want each and every one of you to have the opportunity to leave Eastbourne on the Wednesday after Conference ready to re-engage with the children you provide your services to, to build better relationships with the children, to offer better play opportunities to the children and to find ways to support their families, their adults, their parents, and their caregivers.

Over the next two days of Conference, you will have the opportunity to hear from 41 different professionals, delivering 50 different sessions, across 12 tracks of linked content.

I want Conference to be different to any other CPD that you engage in and for the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference in 2024 I have tried my utmost to create a diverse programme bringing in people from around the world, bringing people from outside the normal playwork sector, so that we can be inspired and maybe think in different ways than we thought before.

This is the time to stretch your brain, make it steam, be brave, go to a different session than your friends or colleagues and share later. Take time out, sit in the lounge and chat to strangers. If you missed a session because you went to something else, use the facilitator photos at the end of the Journey Planner to help find them and talk to them outside of their session. Everyone is friendly, so don't be shy!!

Use your time at Conference to have conversations, yes, talk to your friends but also sit on a sofa with a stranger and introduce yourself and ask questions, stop at a lunch or breakfast table with people you don't know and listen to their conversations. There is so much wealth and knowledge gathered here that we would be just a little bit silly not to take advantage of it!

I also want you to get the most out of this Conference that you possibly can, and with a program as complex as this, offering so much, it is often a problem for participants to choose what sessions they are going to go to.

I am here to help you and if you have questions about what session you should go to who better to ask than the person who put the program together? I understand the content and I can help guide you and your colleagues to appropriate sessions.

If there is absolutely anything I, or the rest of the Conference Team, can



**I say:**  
**"We hold the child with**  
**UNCONDITIONAL POSITIVE REGARD,**  
**RESPECT IS GIVEN NOT EARNED"**

**MEYNELL GAMES**  
**01323 730500**



do to make your Conference experience better please find me or leave a message with Midah at the Conference reception and we will do the best we can to make that happen.

We want to Conference to be a safe space for all our participants, so if you experience anything that makes you feel uncomfortable please tell Midah on Conference reception immediately so we can take steps to deal with that negative experience. If we don't know about it we can't respond to it.

After all whilst it may be the Conference that Meynell Games designs, curates and puts on, the reality is that this is your Conference and we are here in your service.

The National Playwork Conference tries to hold on to the values that we apply in our everyday work with children in a playwork provision. The Rogerian approach of 'unconditional positive regard' where we show complete support and acceptance of a person no matter what they say or do, is as valid when working with adults as with children.

When I talk about playwork I describe it as the profession that exists to support all children's needs and rights to play.

Conference is set up and designed in much the same way as I would a play setting: I make many offerings trying to meet both the needs and preferences of the people who are going to be there and then I step back and see how it unfolds making interventions only when necessary but being available in the completeness of that word and accessible to everyone who is there.

So, in much the same way that a playworker could spend 'hours' getting something ready for the children only for the children to choose not to engage, our session facilitators may find that they too have spent 'hours' putting something together that may only get a few (or even no) participants. We make the offerings we think the participants want but you can never know in advance what the response to it is going to be.

Have a great Conference and don't forget to come and say hello to me because I want to meet and talk to each and every one of you, but please remember to introduce yourself because I am very likely to have forgotten your name! I blame that forgetfulness on age!

Conference is a complex experience but, in the end, it is up to you how you best use your time but if I may offer some advice: **Step outside of your comfort zone and try to really stretch yourself.**

I hope that the next two days will enable you to have a most excellent time!

Meynell

**REMEMBER:**

**If you spend all your time in sessions then you are not going to get that refreshing five-minute walk along the beach; you will miss out on the 'RO's' that will be taking place; or taking part in any other of the surprise offerings that always occur at Conference.**



## Midah Guilbaud-Walter Conference Manager



This year Midah has outdone herself with her work in the preparation for Conference, and the enormous number of hours she has spent in the office honing all the processes and doing her best to make sure that everything is just so.

You will all have heard from her in the build-up to Conference, as she has been behind nearly every single one of the emails you have received, the social media posts you have seen, and most times behind the camera calling 'action!' and telling Meynell to keep his eyes on the road.

She's the administrative brain who processes your bookings and makes sure all the session information is in the right place, so if you have a question or a query, she'll have the answer – and if she doesn't she'll know who does!

During Conference, Midah can be found at the Conference reception and if there is anything you need to make your experience the best it can be, she is the person to speak to.

When she's not helping to put together the National Playwork Conference, Midah works as a bookseller, blogs about Greek Myth Retellings [[www.midahgw.wordpress.com](http://www.midahgw.wordpress.com)], and follows her favourite bands around the country.

In September, she will continue her studies, undertaking a Classics MA.

# WITHOUT THIS BUNCH OF WONDERFUL HUMANS

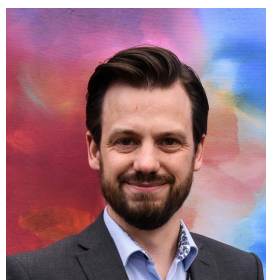


Tony

TONY HAS BEEN INVOLVED WITH THE NATIONAL PLAYWORK CONFERENCE SINCE THE EARLY DAYS IN BIRMINGHAM AND HAS BEEN WORKING SUPPORTING THE CONFERENCE AS PART OF THE TEAM SINCE 2007. ONE OF TONY'S GREATEST CLAIMS TO CONFERENCE FAME WAS LOBBING A NETWORK WIRE TO CONNECT TWO HOTELS ACROSS A ROAD FROM THE SECOND FLOOR! THIS YEAR AT CONFERENCE TONY WILL BE STRETCHING MINDS WITH HIS TWO SESSIONS AS WELL AS SUPPORTING TECH NEEDS AS AND WHEN THEY HAPPEN.

Libby

AS THE NEWEST MEMBER OF THE MEYNELL GAMES FAMILY, LIBBY IS PROUD TO HAVE BEEN SHARING HER SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE SINCE THE AGE OF THE DINOSAURS. SHE CONTRIBUTES MUCH TO OUR WORK, FROM CONVERSATIONS ABOUT HOW TO DO THINGS, TO HELPING US REFLECT ON OUR PRACTICE, AND A PARTICULARLY USEFUL SKILL FROM HER PAST LIFE IN THE WORLD OF STAGE AND THEATRE. SHE ALSO BRINGS US SMALL CHILDREN WHICH HELPS US REMEMBER JUST WHY WE'RE DOING WHAT WE'RE DOING! LIBBY WILL BE FOUND LOOKING AFTER THE TECH FOR THE PLAYWORK AWARDS.



DAVE

DAVE HAS BEEN PART OF THE TEAM SINCE TILIA WAS LITTLE, AND SHE REFERS TO HIM AS HER 'PLAYWORK UNCLE'. HE HAS VERY CLEAR WAYS OF THINKING AND BRINGS STRENGTH AS WELL AS KNOWLEDGE TO THE TEAM. AT CONFERENCE DAVE WILL BE FOUND UNDERTAKING CHILDCARE DUTIES WHILE PLANNING HIS PLAYLIST FOR THE EVENING DJING.

# CONFERENCE WOULDN'T HAPPEN

## GARY

GARY HAS A 'WE CAN DO THAT!' ATTITUDE, WHICH MAKES HIM THE MOST INCREDIBLE ASSET TO THE TEAM. I ONCE ASKED HIM IF SOMETHING WAS POSSIBLE, AND HE SAID 'ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE WITH ENOUGH TIME AND MONEY'! WHEN HE'S NOT WITH US, GARY IS SOLVING PROBLEMS ELSEWHERE, AS A COMPUTER SUPPORT TECHNICIAN.



## Sylwyn

I'VE BEEN BACKGROUND SUPPORT FOR THE NATIONAL Playwork CONFERENCE EVERY YEAR SINCE Midah WAS IN HER PRAM. MOSTLY I JUST HELP KEEP EVERYONE STANDING, BUT RECENTLY I HAVE TAKEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PLAYFUL DECORATIONS. FOR ME CONFERENCE TIME OF YEAR HOLDS A FEELING OF IMMENSE FAMILY WARMTH, WHICH EXTENDS FROM OUR LITTLE UNIT THROUGH ALL THOSE WHO REPEATEDLY LEND THEIR HELP AND TO EVERYONE WHO COMES AND BECOMES PART OF THIS SPECIAL HAPPENING, IT'S ALTOGETHER A VERY HAPPY HUGGY TIME.



## Tilia

FOR ME THE MEYNELL GAMES TEAM IS AN EXTENDED FAMILY. I HAVE BEEN HELPING OUT AT CONFERENCE FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, EVEN WHEN THAT WAS PROVIDING ENTERTAINMENT TO THE TEAM BY DOING BALLET ON THE STAGE WHIST THEY SET UP! I AM A THIRD YEAR STUDENT AT LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY WHERE I AM STUDYING CHILDHOOD, DEVELOPMENT AND PLAYWORK, AND I AM PART OF A SPOKEN WORD SOCIETY. LIKE ALL STUDENTS I LIKE TO DRINK COPIOUSLY SO FEEL FREE TO BUY ME A DRINK AT THE BAR AND HAVE A CHAT.





# The Magic Fairy Lady

<https://linktr.ee/sylwyn>



## WE HOPE YOU ENJOY ALL THE PLAY-FILLED DECORATIONS



These were all created by Sylwyn with help from the youngest member of our family, who has kindly also loaned her rainbow toys.



In creating the silhouettes on the windows and lanterns we used templates by Franziska Shelton @my\_seasonal\_treasury.  
<https://www.etsy.com/shop/LightOfTheStone>

The resources to create the rainbow stars and many of our wooden toys are available from:

<https://www.myriadonline.co.uk>



And

<https://consciouscraft.uk>





# OPAL Outdoor Play and Learning CIC

Proud sponsors of the 2024  
National Playwork Conference



[Outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk](https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk)



# Opal Q and A

## What is it?

OPAL Outdoor Play and Learning CIC is a national not-for-profit organisation that improves playtime in schools. We have 25 expert mentors drawn from the world of playwork and primary school senior leadership who deliver the OPAL Primary Programme to around 450 additional schools a year.

## What has it got to do with playwork?

Our mission is that every primary school child should have an amazing playtime everyday – no exceptions. We bring many of the skills, knowledge and values of the playwork profession and apply them to schools.

## Why schools?

Out of 7 years at primary school 1.4 years of a child's school life is playtime. Schools that have done the OPAL programme create the best possible play they can for their children. This means at least 45 minutes of amazing play every day for every child. We have already had an impact on the play lives of between .75 and 1 million children.

## What is a CIC?

It's a non-profit community interest company, meaning we invest what we make back into the playwork sector. OPAL sponsors this conference and sponsored places, Project Play to provide play for displaced children in northern France, policy lobbying to improve play in schools, research reports on play, and free online playwork training and online play conferences.

For more information see [outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk](http://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk)



## **YOUNG OFFENDERS:**

**from nursery rhymes to horrific crimes.**

**Camila Batmanghelidjh explores the relational dysfunction at the heart of emotional coldness.**

Today I sat in court with a slight 13-year-old boy. Last year his pockets had been full of crack cocaine, heroin and money. He was arrested for possession with intent to supply. The judge explained to the jury that no one would be wearing a robe or wig as the defendant was very young and they did not want to intimidate him. It was an extraordinary paradox. Here was a boy who had been involved with drug trafficking for the last 2 years; who carried a knife around with him and who attacked other people whilst travelling between one crazed dealer and another.

### **Why should wigs and robes intimidate him?**

On the one hand, it was heartwarming to think that the judge could maintain sensitivity towards the child, on the other hand, what sat before him was a perversion of childhood. I wish I could say that the boy I sat with is an exception; a freak accident of psychology but the reality is that the psychological profile he represents is steadily advancing within our society. The reasons for this are complex. But in my experience, the causes can often be traced to a breakdown of relationships in the home environment. The result is emotional coldness on the part of a growing number of children.

I am a psychotherapist working with profoundly vulnerable children who have referred themselves to our services at Kids Company. These children come from exceptionally challenging home environments. Almost 9 in 10 (87%) of them do not have a father figure living at home. From a young age, they have been exposed to relentless neglect and violence. They have witnessed all manner of horrors; skulls cracking, blood from syringes shot over walls, the mindless destruction of furniture, crazed sexual behaviours and frequent criminal activity. One of our children as a toddler had swallowed her mother's methadone. Three years later her mother took her to a dealer's house to collect her fix whereupon a man burst in with a gun and threw the dealer out of a multistorey window. The older sister of this child, barely adolescent, was already bringing home money from prostitution.

### **Emotional Coldness**

Unprotected children have no choice but to protect themselves.



Camila Batmanghelidjh was the founder and director of Kids Company. She died on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. In this paper from 2003, she explores the impact of abuse on children.

They cannot walk away from their carers but they can 'absent themselves' by shutting down their capacities to feel. Emotional numbness becomes a useful tool in protecting against the pain of trauma. The downside is that it also closes the door to a range of positive feelings. Without appropriate help, emotionally numb children soon grow into coldness. Removed from the capacity to experience emotions they lose their emotional thermostats and can no longer hold onto the memories of feelings.

Criminological studies confirm what common sense has always taught us, namely that our sense of moral right and wrong develops in the context of parental vigilance and the modelling of pro-social behaviour. But this form of moral education is only effective if we are able to distinguish between pleasure and pain in our lives and in the lives of others.

Fractured and chaotic homes are void of positive modelling of ethical behaviours. The paucity of tenderness and morality results in an emotionally vacuous environment. The sustained absence of feelings nurtures dangerous human beings who believe they are pain-free and that others are equally emotionally void. On a milder level their capacity to form meaningful relationships is impaired. Believing there is no genuine love for them, they behave as consumers in personal relationships; getting what they practically



need and giving what they think the other wants. The relationship functions merely as a cold contract in an emotionally deserted landscape.

## **The Absence of Feelings**

The more dangerous end of the spectrum presents itself in the absence of any capacity to experience empathy or remorse. It goes without saying that compassion can only exist in the context of empathy. You have to be able to recognize the pain in yourself and then be able to imagine it in others. Remorse follows the same principle. You can only regret causing another person pain if you are capable, empathetically, of feeling the pain you have caused to your victim. The child who repeatedly digs a knife into his robbery victim despite the victim's cries and pleadings shocks us with its violence. Such crimes are often described, particularly in the tabloid press, as a freak instance of evil. Much more alarming may be the logical normality of such actions that grow out of perverted emotional states. Why did the victim's pleadings not register with the offender? In large measure, it is because, from the offender's point of view, the act of violence was emotionally void. Its sole purpose was the acquisition of goods.

If emotionally void crimes are one end of the spectrum, the other end of the spectrum is crimes of extreme violence and hate. These are crimes where the purpose is solely to hurt the victim. The violence is opportunist in the sense that the victim just happens to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Yet such crimes are typically not the product of a loss of control. On the contrary, once begun they are sadistically completed. In my view, these crimes happen because the perpetrator has grown to despise vulnerability.

## **Despising Vulnerability**

As powerless and vulnerable children, these perpetrators had little resources to flee or fight. They may have deep-seated memories of themselves as crying children begging a powerful adult not to hurt them. Yet despite the pleading, the adult continued to inflict pain. This reinforced the child's sense of powerlessness, plunging them into humiliation.

Children who have been humiliated rarely hate their oppressor. This is because their survival on an everyday basis is dependent on keeping the relationship positive. Instead, they often turn their hate in on themselves, despising their own childlike vulnerability. They nurture a cold sarcasm towards the fragile in themselves and in others and they feel deeply ashamed at having been so powerless. When such a perpetrator attacks a vulnerable victim, the perpetrator does not recognize that, deep down it is himself that he is hating -

not the victim. The perpetrator simply sees a disgusting vulnerability and wants to eliminate it. Sadistic attacks upon the victim are a misdirected attempt to destroy a displaced image of a powerless child within the perpetrator. Something in the victim reminds the perpetrator of their own vulnerability and they hate it.

For this reason, it is pointless for a victim to plead with this sort of perpetrator. The perpetrator has no compassion for the victim because, fundamentally, he has no compassion for the child within himself. Pleadings simply fuel the hatred that the perpetrator has towards the vulnerable.

The same psychology operates when groups of children are found tormenting their prisoner. They laugh in manic recognition that, instead of being oppressed, they are now the ones with the power to oppress.

## **The Healing Process**

In the context of such profound perversions of feeling, how do we operate a system of justice and reparation? Imprisoning emotionally cold individuals only reinforces their sense of detachment. Sending perpetrators to diversion programs or moralistic meetings where they are educated about their negative behaviours is equally redundant.

You have to help perpetrators regain emotional health before they can genuinely make amends to the victim. Prevention has to focus on children who are living in extreme stress. We need to set up systems in primary schools where children can be identified and offered immediate support. To make the delivery of help a practical reality there needs to be a rethink of how we organize child mental health services. Across social work, special education provisions and psychiatric health there is a need for extra resources and much more child-centered delivery.

Professionals may reassure themselves that they are doing the job by making lots of appointments at their offices. However, for relentlessly distressed children these appointments are redundant because they do little to address the level of chaos in the children's lives. There is a danger of appointments being experienced as tokens by clients who have multiple problems.

At Kids Company we have tried to provide a more comprehensive response to the problems faced by vulnerable adolescents. We have developed an innovative model of care which is delivered in a 'club-style' structure. Children are offered help either in their school or from our children's centre (which is called 'The Arches'). Our strategy assumes that the healing process is only made possible in

the context of sustained relationships where practical and emotional needs are addressed. We are open six days a week. Children can access our leisure facilities and receive three meals a day as well as clothes and basic necessities. They can make use of our social work, special education support, medical and psychiatric interventions under one roof.

## **The Return to Feelings**

As a service we have taken on board the reality of children who are not being parented as well as children whose carers actively traumatize them. The consistency of the programme facilitates an opportunity for children to form relationships. Many children initially respond to our service with disbelief and our staff are supportive to withstand the period of testing that often follows. Yet over time, emotionally cold children regain their capacities to feel. The return to feelings is a painful journey.

Along the way, many traumas are relived. Once a child has regained their capacity to safely experience emotions it becomes possible to help them imagine the pain of others, and in doing so, to make reparations to their victims or to refrain from crimes of violence. To encourage care for others there needs first to be care for oneself.

Children need to be able to imagine themselves as adults before they can have the motivation to train for a career. When they value their own future, they think twice about compromising their own freedom. Without the capacity to experience feelings and without an appetite for freedom or a future, our children are powerfully suicidal. They have nothing to lose. Our current penal system assumes there is a criminal who would be upset at losing their freedom and being prevented from enjoying life.

These emotionally cold children live in prisons of their own making and as such they feel no fear or loss. For this reason, governments must create policies that are informed by a need for relational strategies. The most powerful deterrent is risking the loss of esteem and love. It works better than any surveillance camera, provided people have held onto their humanity, the essence of which is a capacity to feel for ourselves and in doing so to care for others.

Kids Company was a charity offering practical and emotional support to exceptionally vulnerable children. The project worked in 15 schools across London as well as from its Children's Centre (The Arches) in London. The work at the Arches was unique because children self-refer off the street and have their needs addressed across education, social care, mental health and personal development.

## **INTERNATIONAL PLAYWORK OPPORTUNITY – ROMANIA 2024**

**The Transylvania Playwork Project 2024** is looking for **Volunteers** to work and host daily play sessions for the Roma children of Valea Rece in Targu Mures, Transylvania; a 5-day camp in a hosted countryside campsite with chalet accommodation; a pop-up play event on the village green in the charming farming village of Ormenis, in the Carpathian Mountains.

We require people who love to play, have fun and adventure while finding out about other cultures. You will be expected to supply some playful resources and children's clothes.

Translators/Playworkers from the children's village will be with us at all times to support play opportunities and also any language barriers.

UK-Romania return flights will be on 14<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024. Your accommodation will either be self-catering in a city centre apartment or at a 3-star hotel on a bed and breakfast basis.

You will be required to contribute £500. This will sponsor 5 children and yourself to attend camp. The cost will also include airport transfers in Romania, accommodation when not at camp, and the meals listed below.

Flights are to Targu Mures from London Luton Airport. *(Airlines and airport accommodation are not included and must be paid separately).*

Highlights include:

- Daily Play sessions in the children's home village
- 5-day (4-night) camp in the Romanian countryside
- A welcome traditional meal in Valea Rece
- Assisting with Gino's Cantina (providing hot food for 80-120 of the poorest village children)
- A pop-up play event in the village of Ormenis
- A traditional gypsy buffet in Ormenis
- A horse and cart ride through the beautiful Romanian countryside
- A final night barbecue with the Playworkers in their village
- A day trip of your choice (Dracula's birthplace, Sighisoara, is always a popular option)
- Visiting a local market (means an early start)!
- Time to enjoy sightseeing in the lovely cathedral city of Targu Mures
- Talking about Playwork and reflecting on practice

If you would like more information and are over 18 years of age, please contact:  
Joan Beattie by e-mail – [beattie9@googlemail.com](mailto:beattie9@googlemail.com) – **Closing date: 03 May 2024**





## HERE ARE MY KEY TIPS FOR HAVING A GREAT CONFERENCE AND TO MAXIMISE YOUR TIME HERE

I have some **KEY TIPS** that might help you get the best out of Conference:

You won't be able to attend every session that you want to go to. You will see, when looking at the Visual Timetable, that sessions start at random times; this is to try to make you slow down! So, I suggest you choose **three** sessions for the Tuesday and **two** for the Wednesday that you really want to go to and then if you comfortably fit in more, then do so

- 1) **BUT** please do not session hop (that is popping in and out of sessions just to get a little bit) as it is disruptive for both the facilitator and the participants and you will most likely not be able to engage in the content.
- 2) Not everything is on the programme or mentioned in this Journey Planner, so watch out for pop-up sessions on sofas or at tables as these semi-structured conversations will be happening randomly.
- 3) Check the landings to see if anything is there.
- 4) Visit the exhibitors
- 5) If you want to meet someone, there is a delegate list in this Journey Planner, tell Conference reception and we will find them for you.
- 6) Introduce yourself to strangers, sit at a table where a conversation is happening and listen in.



# HOW DOES CONFERENCE WORK?





## How does Conference work?

Hopefully you have already looked at everything online and now you are holding your pretty personalised Journey Planner, but what do you do next?

### Let me try to explain:

You have already made a journey to Eastbourne and Conference is going to extend that journey from the physicality of travelling to the intellectuality of thinking, reflecting, learning and hopefully a decent chunk of pleasure

Maintaining the theme of 'Journey' we have divided the Conference Programme into a series of parallel tracks and in each track there are a set of sessions linked to the theme of the track.

So, if there is a particular area or thing that interests you then you can follow it for the whole track but you don't have to and you can switch tracks at any point.

It is a matter of choosing the sessions that you think will give you the greatest Conference learning and experience and going to them. Indeed, if you think that you are going to get more out of Conference by hanging around and chatting to people outside of sessions well that could be your choice!

So here again, are some cautionary words for you:

### **"Do not try to do too much"**

I recommend that you choose **three** significant sessions on Tuesday and **two** on Wednesday and once you have put these into your plan see if there is anything else you can fit in.

Some people try to 'session hop', going in and out of sessions trying to get a bit from each. Please don't do this. You will disrupt the session taking place and spending just fifteen or twenty minutes in a session will not really give you anything worthwhile. You can always catch up with session facilitators in the lounge or at a table at lunchtime.



## Using the Journey Planner

After reading all the general information and hopefully all your questions being answered you will want to look at the track headings and the details of what each track is aiming to achieve. After that you will want to turn to the individual listings for each track. You will find the Tuesday sessions in the section with the pink edging and the Wednesday sessions in the section with a blue edging following these is a section with orange edging and this has details of all the session facilitators and their photos to help you find them.

We call them facilitators because they are going through a process in each session to help you learn and we call them sessions because they are delivered in a myriad of different ways.

If you are here with a colleague, **it could be considered really stupid** if you go to the same session as each other, double your outcomes by going to two different sessions and share the learning with each other over a cup of coffee or other beverage. I understand that it is more comfortable and reassuring to go into a session with a colleague because you know you have got someone with you who will look after you but you can rest assured that going into a session on your own will be safe, as here you are surrounded by kind, considerate and supportive playwork friends.

In our work as playworkers we would not do anything that would make the child or young adult not want to return to that setting on another occasion so we will avoid being mean; we would not embarrass children; or humiliate them; or put them down; or in any way make them feel uncomfortable. The same applies to my work with adults and this philosophy underpins the way sessions are delivered at this Conference. If something does happen that makes you feel uncomfortable make sure to tell Conference reception so we can sort it out. There is no space at Conference for any type of lack of respect.

There are other ways of choosing what to go to:

You do not have to choose by track. You can choose by:

- Looking for sessions on a specific subjects [like 'Risk', or 'Mental Health']

- Identify the person who is delivering. Be a facilitator groupie; choose who you want to listen to and follow them around!

- Or don't choose for yourself. Get a colleague to tell you where to go.

- Or find Meynell and ask him what sessions you should go to. After all, Meynell put the programme together, he knows what is happening and when and he will be very happy to help you decide what to do.



Using the Visual Timetable along with the Journey Planner should help you get to where you are going. We have done a bit of colour coding as all the sessions in a specific track will be taking place in the same room.

We do ask that you, in your playing, be aware of how others are playing as in such a confined space we need to be able to support everyone's play. Most specifically it can be disruptive to both participants and session facilitators if you turn up late to a session or leave before a session ends so you can go to another.

The Conference sessions are not a mountain to climb just because they are there! Trying to do more - just because they exist - could end up with you running from place to place and not actually enjoying the moments that you have. Slow down and remember to breathe! If you don't get to a session the facilitator will still be around and will be more than happy to talk to you over lunch or a beverage.

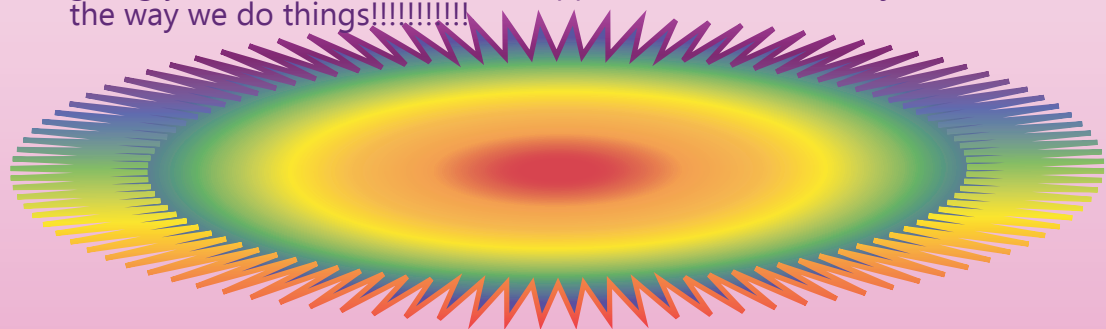
We have no way of knowing in advance how many people are going to be in each session - some sessions could have 40/50 people and some just a handful [or indeed none!]. This could lead to cramped rooms - so be prepared to squeeze people in. We have plenty of chairs so it shouldn't be too much of a problem and you can always sit on the floor!

Yes, we know there are far too many sessions, debates, discussions, papers etc. for you to get to do everything.

We get at least one person every day complaining that there is too much to do!

We could have offered only a limited number of sessions and we could have scheduled everything to run concurrently but then we wouldn't be working in the contexts that playwork works and we wouldn't be able to offer something that aims to meet the individual needs of each and every participant.

If we offered only a limited number of sessions then we wouldn't be giving you the widest number of opportunities and that's just not the way we do things!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



## Answers to Frequently Asked Questions and Questions you didn't think of asking!!

### Your Badge

When you checked in you got your personalised 'Conference Journey Planner' and an empty name badge holder. Your Conference badges can be found on the perforated flap at the front of the Journey Planner. Carefully tear out the correct badge [there is one for Tuesday, one for Wednesday and a ticket for the Annual Playwork Awards Ceremony] Please wear the correct badge at the right time or risk being ejected by Conference security! If you are coming to the awards dinner you will need to bring your ticket with you.

### WiFi

This hotel wifi is available throughout the common areas and session rooms.

### What do I do if I can't remember someone's name when I am talking to them - especially if they know who I am?

I hate it when this happens to me, but the older I get the more it seems to happen. Someone comes up to me with a big smile and a "Hello Meynell" and I have absolutely no idea who they are or where I have met them! What do I do?

The only option is to say [using your own choice of language] "Hi, I'm sorry but I have no idea who you are" Of course they may be upset that you don't remember them and you will be embarrassed as well but this is a reality of life. Sometimes we only see each other once a year and we simply don't remember.

Alternatively, you could fish for clues as to who they are but that is likely





to fail. Re-introduce yourself to anyone you don't know or whose name you have forgotten! It is perfectly okay to say: "Hi, I am (insert your own name) and if someone introduces themselves to you in this way respond by saying your name. That breaks the tension. If you respond with a 'How could you have forgotten who I am' or 'You really don't remember me?' then you are being rude, discourteous, and unkind and there is no need for being like that!

Having got past that moment you can then remind each other of who you are and when you met.

## **Annual Playwork Awards**

The Awards' Ceremony will take place in the Dining Room. See the information about the Awards evening further on in the Journey Planner.

## **Why do you call them sessions?**

We call them 'sessions' because each one may be delivered in a unique way. As always, the 'sessions' contain many formats: papers being presented; lecture/presentation; interactive hands-on; question/answer; experiential; discussions; interactive group work; workshops; PowerPoint presentations and debate; film and audio; practical or physically active and so much more! One might even make it to the beach!

## **When are the sessions taking place?**

Sessions will be taking place from 9:30 – 17:00 on Tuesday and 9:30 – 14:15 on Wednesday (with the final plenary at 14:30) and as they don't all start and finish at the same time - moving quietly from yours when it finishes will avoid disturbing the others that are still ongoing!

## **Where are the sessions taking place?**

They are taking place in the Library, which is off the lounge, and the bar on the ground floor, up the stairs by the Library, where we have a stair-climber to help with access [please ask at Conference reception if you need to use it] and downstairs. There will be some other stuff going on in hidden and out-of-the-way places. Check the landings. Either you will find them or you won't!

## **Are any sessions repeated?**

No, everything happens just the once – that's why we suggest you always come to Conference with a friend, go to different things and share later! Every year we try to record the sessions and then make them available. We have not yet achieved this! Ever!! At the time of going to print we are considering live-streaming some to the Meynell Games YouTube channel

## **Do I have to go to sessions?**

It's your Conference; you get to decide what you are going to en-





**Much like a play space:  
YOU GET TO DO WHATEVER YOU WANT TO DO, IN THE WAY  
THAT YOU WANT TO DO IT AND FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN  
YOU WANT TO DO IT!**

gaze in [a bit like a child and their play!]

### **Is there a limit to the number of people in a session?**

We only limit the number of participants in a session where it says specifically in the programme that there is a maximum number and no facilitator has asked for that this year.

If all the chairs are in use, not to worry, there will be more chairs nearby or you can sit on the floor!

The whole approach of 'freely chosen' applies to your movements around the Conference; all we do ask is that you recognise that sessions in the seminar rooms have a start and finish time and that the facilitator may have planned a session that is progressive, moving from the beginning to the end. All session facilitators will be given a sign that says:

**"Please respect that this session has already commenced and find yourself an alternative enjoyment"**

### **Can I arrive late to a session?**

If, as you plan your day, you discover that there is an unavoidable overlap between two sessions that you desperately want to be part of – how

about finding the facilitator and asking them if it is okay to arrive 10 minutes, 20 minutes late? All the facilitator's pictures are further along in the Conference Journey Planner or ask one of the very helpful Conference Team to point you in the right direction to finding them. The team have the mobile numbers of everyone on site so we can contact them if we don't know where they are.

We could have started and finished the sessions all at the same time. We don't. This is to force you to think about which session you want to go to and it also makes it hard for you to go to sessions back-to-back with each other. This means that you will get time to breathe in the sea air and time to reflect!

### **Where are the toilets?**

Toilets are all signposted or you could ask! If you are a Full Delegate, you also have your own personal toilet in your room!

### **Where do I smoke or Vape?**

You don't and you shouldn't

Cigarettes and tobacco kill hundreds of thousands of people every year. Each day in the UK, over 200 people die from smoking alone.

Cigarettes release thousands of different chemicals when they burn – many are poisonous and up to 70 cause cancer. Most of the harmful chemicals in cigarette smoke, including tar and carbon monoxide, are not contained in vape aerosol.

People who switch completely from smoking to vaping have significantly reduced exposure to toxins associated with risks of cancer, lung disease, heart disease and stroke.

The longer you smoke, the worse the damage becomes.

The filter tips do not decompose and will last for up to ten years polluting the planet with cellulose acetate. Used filters are full of toxins, which can leach into the ground and waterways, damaging living organisms that come into contact with them. Most filters are discarded with bits of tobacco still attached to them as well, further polluting our environment with nicotine, which is poisonous

If you must: The beach is across the road. But you will probably get run over by a car as you cross the road! And if you make it to the beach – put your butts in a bin!

I believe the hotel has a smoking space outside in the car park but I don't know where as I don't really want to support you in achieving an early and painful death.

### **Where do I smoke?**

You don't. See previous page.

### **Where's the nearest cash point?**

The nearest machines are a 5-minute walk to the town centre.

### **What number do I call for a taxi?**

Call 01323 720720.

### **How do I meet someone whose name I have seen on the delegates list?**

Approach one of the Conference Team and we shall endeavour to introduce you. We have most people's mobile numbers so we can send them a text to help you meet up.

### **How do I get a drink?**

Tea, coffee and water are available throughout the Conference in the Ground floor area. We have made the decision not to open the bar for alcoholic beverages until 17:00 hours.

The Hotel bar will stay open till 2:00am and later if lots of people are still buying drinks. If you are drinking alcohol, remember that you want to be ready in the morning for more learning. Please respect the hotel and only drink refreshments purchased from the bar in the lounge area. Please drink responsibly: [Drinkaware.co.uk](http://Drinkaware.co.uk)

### **When do I have to check out?**

You will need to check out on Wednesday morning by 10:00am as the hotel needs to get rooms ready for bookings coming in on the Wednesday. We have a bag drop space.

### **Catering**

As ever, the Conference is proud to present high-quality and varied food during the event; we will try to meet all special dietary requirements. If you have any allergies that you have not already told us about, please let the Conference Team know on our reception desk and we will arrange food for you. Of course, there will also be best quality coffee from Nelson Coffee, Eastbourne's premier roastery and tea varieties throughout the days.

### **How, if I am going to sessions almost non-stop do I manage to get some food?**

Well, it's easy! Firstly, drinks are available all day long, tea and fine coffee. There will be small amounts of organic, oat and soya milk available for those who ask for them and jugs full of iced water! There are tables, sofas and chairs set up around the Hotel ground floor area for you to chill out or eat at.

Please do try to return your used cups and cafetieres to the drinks station.

**Lunch** will be served over a 2-hour period from **12:30 – 14:30**. We do this to avoid the carnage or the stampede that can occur when food is put out. It is only meant to be a light lunch so bear that in mind when you go to collect your food. Sessions do continue right the way though the lunch time period so the food serving is staggered to ensure food is left for the later eaters.

Our plan is that the food presented will cater to all obvious dietary requirements [not including Halal or Kosher laws]. The food will be clearly labelled and there will be sufficient variety to meet the needs of vegetarians, vegans, carnivores, and those who require a gluten-free diet. We aim for the lunches to be nut-free but in a commercial kitchen, we cannot guarantee that there will be no contamination. Where there is food specifically labelled for 'Gluten Free' or for 'Vegan' please ensure that you do not take it but leave it for those who really need it.

## Random Occurences



**Embroidery bookmarks** for the chill-out zone. Not too taxing to get stuck into while chatting about the conference/ cheap resources and light to carry around for a children's activity - with Joan Beattie



Wrapping sticks and telling stories - with The Glue Collective

And maybe hear about the House of a Thousand Knots.

Donne Buck  
1934 - 2023

- Donne Buck has been a playleader and campaigner for children's right to play since the 1950s.
- A significant figure in the history of play. In his long career Donne has established and run adventure playgrounds in London, Stevenage and Peterborough.
- He has been an active campaigner for children's rights and promoted the importance of play in education and social development, working with central government, local councils and international agencies.



Tribute to Donne Buck

and maybe more!!



# These are the Tracks

Finding the correct room for your session is nice and simple. There are three rooms downstairs, one off the lounge and one up the stairs from the lounge. The practical sessions will start in the bar.

## TUESDAY TRACKS

### Play

If, as playworkers, our purpose is to support and enable children's play, then we need to have an understanding of what play is, because if we don't, then how can we provide for the opportunity to play?

### Playwork

As a profession, we have a number of theories that underpin our professional approach. But these theories can be interpreted and interrogated in different ways. Can the playwork approach be varied depending on the context in which the playworker works?

### Playwork in Schools

The increasing raising of awareness of the importance of play within the education system has meant that hundreds of schools across the UK have been working to bring in the playwork approach, whether it is a whole school approach or restricted to lunchtime and other playtimes. We are going to explore the various options that have been adopted.

### Risk Taking

Whilst it is recognised that children need adventure and risk in their play, playworkers often struggle with how to justify the risk-taking opportunities provided for their children. It is also often forgotten that risk-taking is more than just the physical, but encompasses emotional and mental risk-taking as well.

### Play AND Playwork AROUND THE World

We have been amazed this year at the number of offerings that have been made by people to talk about their experiences of play and playwork in countries around the world. This track sets out to celebrate and learn from our international friends and colleagues.

### Playtime

Here is an opportunity for the Conference participants to get in some playing for themselves, as well as perhaps gain some ideas they can take back into their settings to offer to their children.

# WEDNESDAY TRACKS

## Play and Playwork

The Play and Playwork Track continues the themes from the Play track and the Playwork track on Tuesday, we need to understand Play so that we can be better at Playworkers, and in order to be better as Playworkers we also need to share thinking about our practice.

## TEENAGE Play

All children have a right and a need to play. The need to provide an appropriate play space for the older child is often missed, and for many playwork provisions, the top age of their participants is 12 or 13. Teenagers need to play too, and we need to understand the teenage brain, their need for play, and how we can resource this.

## Policy, supervision and fund-raising

When running a setting either as a senior work or as part of the management board we need to think about how do we create policies with our staff teams and support them with appropriate supervision and appraisal systems.

We also need to think about our approaches to fund-raising in these difficult times.

## CONTEXTS of Play and Playwork

In the world of playwork it is sometimes easy to forget that playwork can take place in many different places and in different ways across the diversity of children that we work with.

## Playwork Foundation

The aim of the Playwork Foundation is to promote playwork to policy makers, parents, the media, and the world at large, so that over time, more children benefit from the playwork approach.

Our aim is also to support the playwork community, working with partners and allies to strengthen our network.

This track is part of the Foundation's current thinking.

## BRAIN Food

I thought it would be grand to give you yet more excitement so created this track for the exciting sessions that couldn't be fitted in anywhere else.

Celebrating 51 years of general  
hanging about



[www.tivertonadventureplayground.co.uk](http://www.tivertonadventureplayground.co.uk)



# Play Gloucestershire

The local children's charity using the transformative power of play to support children, families, schools and communities, since 2007.

## Community Play

- Open access play in disadvantaged and rurally isolated communities
- Play Rangers taking play out to where children live.

## Play Nurture

- Therapeutic playwork supporting individuals and small groups
- In school, at home and in The Play Sanctuary.

## Play Advocacy

- Reminding people about the importance of play everywhere
- Campaigning for safer parks and more play in the public realm
- Providing 'DIY' play training for schools and communities
- Supporting our Young Volunteers and creating our future workforce.



Get Out  
and Play!



## Play Gloucestershire

Unit R7-9 City Works, Alfred Street, Gloucester GL1 4DF.

T 01452 505548 E [info@playgloucestershire.org.uk](mailto:info@playgloucestershire.org.uk)

 @Play\_Glos  [playgloucestershire](https://www.instagram.com/playgloucestershire)

 [facebook.com/playgloucestershire](https://www.facebook.com/playgloucestershire)

[www.playgloucestershire.org.uk](http://www.playgloucestershire.org.uk)

Registered charity number 1126562



## Here is some other stuff we should tell you

As well as all the wonderful sessions actually listed on the Visual Planner and in the Journey Planner there are a whole host of additional happenings!

The Market[ing] Place is a display point where you can provide literature for others to collect and take away. If you would like to add something to the Market[ing] Place please talk to the team on Conference reception.

We want the people who haven't come to feel like they are missing out so let's get the whole of Conference buzzing on social media. Feel free to live stream anything that is happening, keep the Tweets and Facebook updates going. On Facebook we are both Meynell G Ames and The National Playwork Conference; Instagram is meynelldoesplaywork and on Twitter it is @meynellgames and so make sure you tag us in everything you share and use the Conference hashtag **#natplayconf** so we can see your Conference adventures!

A couple of the book's authors are at Conference and would be pleased to be approached for signing your purchases – don't be embarrassed to ask, they love it! If you don't know who they are – ask the Conference staff and they can direct you.

## Making it to the end!

Make sure to programme in breaks and a decent amount of time to enjoy our superb lunch, see the exhibitors, network, browse the bookseller and drink tea or coffee.

If you have come with colleagues, it gives extra benefit to your employer if you plan your journey through Conference together. It's probably best not to go to the same sessions as colleagues.

Separate and take notes to share the information you gather. This is an opportunity for you to extend your learning further.

Once you have been in a session having to tell someone else about it is a good way of concentrating your mind, sharing information reinforces learning and aids reflection on the process.

And **DON'T FORGET** you are here to enjoy yourself and have a **POSITIVE** experience

# APIA

## Adventure Playground Inspectors Association

A network of independent Adventure Playground specialist health and safety inspectors.

APIA aims to disseminate crucial knowledge and practice in the sector and prevent Adventure Playgrounds from being restricted by people who do not understand the ethos and practice. APIA therefore supports Playworkers to facilitate the richest possible play experiences.

### **APIA APPROVED INSPECTORS CAN HELP WITH:**

- ✓ Independent annual and post-installation H&S inspections
- ✓ H&S training for Playworkers
- ✓ Advice and guidance for H&S concerns

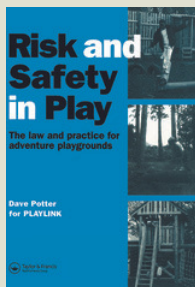
Keeping  
the  
Adventure

Visit APIA's website for a list  
of approved inspectors

**APIAUK.ORG**

**AND get your discounted  
copy of Risk and Safety  
in Play**

Info@apiauk.org



# Resources for playworkers

A series of four playwork guides for all those who work with playing children. The guides introduce and explore some of the theories and practices at the heart of playwork. We worked with Ludicology to produce these resources.



This guide looks at the role of play in childhood and the ethics of working in settings where children play.

It explores ideas and theories of child development and childhood and the role of playwork in settings where children play.



This guide is ideal for those who are new to playwork. It looks at ideas that enable those practicing playwork to identify, create or enhance places for playing.

it explores issues relating to risk and uncertainty in children's play, including approaches to risk and risk-benefit assessment (RBA).

**Volumes 3 and 4 are aimed at senior staff who have management responsibility in playwork projects and a good understanding of play and playwork theory and practice.**



This guide is underpinned by the Playwork Principles and looks at the practicalities of developing and managing the day-to-day delivery of playwork provision.

It also explores the managerial duties of senior playworkers.



This guide focuses on the managerial duties of senior playworkers. It looks at managing staff and supporting professional development.

It also explores working with other adults as well as handling conflict, criticism and complaints.

## **This is why play is so important**

A film to celebrate play and highlight its importance for every child. The film has a strong focus on children and teenagers' voices.

**[www.play.wales/play/film](http://www.play.wales/play/film)**





# Out of School Alliance

Help and support for out of school clubs



## Everything you need for your out of school club

- Guidance on setting up and running an out of school club
- Monthly newsletter with topical articles, updates on legislation, tips, special offers and new activities
- 15% off your insurance from Morton Michel
- Discounts and special offers from 20+ partner organisations
- Sample documentation (policies, forms, timesheets, etc)
- Advice on meeting Ofsted requirements
- Activity library containing 100s of ideas for games, crafts and other activities
- Job listing service for all your playwork vacancies
- Online forum to network with other out of school providers

[www.outofschoolalliance.co.uk](http://www.outofschoolalliance.co.uk)

# OOSA Academy

OOSA Academy is where school aged childcare providers can access a collection of hand-picked, specialist online and live training courses and CPD, all in one place

Both **members and non-members** now have access to courses and training across three tiers of engagement:

- induction level courses from our Emerging Practice stream.
- sessions for those who have some experience but want to develop their knowledge or skills in our Enhancing Practice stream
- training courses and programmes for ambitious practitioners and owners wanting to master their practice in our Expert Practice stream

Current topics include: business, inclusion, behaviour, mental health, HR, legal issues, playwork, practical playing and activity ideas, working with parents, safeguarding, inspection and registration guides, quality improvement and many, many more.

**[www.oosaacademy.co.uk](http://www.oosaacademy.co.uk)**

If you have a great idea for training you'd love to get in front of thousands of OSC providers, please get in touch with Rebekah Jackson  
Reece at [rebekah@outofschoolalliance.co.uk](mailto:rebekah@outofschoolalliance.co.uk)

**Out of School Alliance**  
Help and support for out of school clubs



## **[WWW.PLAYWORKENGLAND.ORG](http://WWW.PLAYWORKENGLAND.ORG)**

Formed in January 2024, Playwork England is a new Consortium aiming to facilitate the coordination of and collaboration between those involved in and representative of playwork education and training in England.

Playwork England exists in order to progress playwork training and education in England and work with the other UK nations to develop a co-ordinated approach to playwork education and training across the UK.

Playwork England is focused on supporting playwork trainers and training providers to deliver high quality playwork education, training and qualifications in England.

Anybody with an interest in playwork education and training (particularly practicing playworkers) is welcome to find out more or join Playwork England for free, by visiting the website.

# Play England



## Freedom to play

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Play England is the only national charity campaigning for children's right to play.

- We campaign
  - We partner
  - We raise awareness
  - We lobby
- 

**We want you to join us!**

Together we will build a growing movement to increase children's freedom to play

**Become a member at [www.playengland.org.uk](http://www.playengland.org.uk)**







Become a member of The Playwork Foundation and join us in promoting playwork for the benefit of children everywhere.

We are here for the playwork community, which includes: playworkers (paid and voluntary) and playwork students, trainers, managers, lecturers, researchers, writers, advocates and supporters.

Our aim is to promote playwork to policymakers, parents, the media and the world at large so that, over time, more children can benefit from the playwork approach. Our aim is also to support the playwork community, working with partners and allies to strengthen our network.

[playworkfoundation.org](http://playworkfoundation.org)  
[facebook.com/theplayworkfoundation](https://facebook.com/theplayworkfoundation)





# TUESDAYS SESSIONS TRACK BY TRACK

<b>The Joy of Play/The Pain of Play: Intro to Dialudics</b>	9:30-11:00	<b>Professor Anna Beresin</b>
	1 Hour 30 Minutes	
<p>Play contains multitudes and this is what makes it deep. Light/heavy, silly/serious, direct/indirect, huge/miniature. Key play theorist Brian Sutton-Smith crafted a term 'dialudic' to describe play's power, rooted in the Latin word for play, 'ludic', and the words 'dialectic' and 'dialogue'. Together we will examine bite sized chunks of Brian's idea and test it as a lens for looking at play that each of us have witnessed. How is play a vessel for dialudic understanding? How does this concept expand our notion of what play is for (or not), and how might we plan for more of it? Anna will share images of her own studies of captive gorillas, her work with young artists, and her curiosity around trickiness of games.</p>		
<a href="https://www.annaberesin.com/">https://www.annaberesin.com/</a>		<a href="https://www.annaberesin.com/">annaberesin.com</a>

<b>Understanding play through a post-humanist lens</b>	11:15-12:45	<b>Dr. Yinka Olusoga</b>
	1 Hour 30 Minutes	
<p>The session applies a posthumanist lens, informed by Barad (2007) and Hollett and Ehret (2015), to consider children's playful and affective entanglements with the human and the more-than-human during the COVID-19 pandemic. It draws on text and images from the Play Observatory (2020-2022), a U.K. rapid response research project, which invited children and families to share examples of their play experiences via an online, multimodal survey. From a posthumanist perspective, entanglement is not static. Thus, these 'snapshots' of play from the survey, via being shared, encountered and discussed amongst those of us in this session, will enter into new, extended and emergent entanglements of affect, space, time and being.</p>		
<a href="mailto:e.olusoga@sheffield.ac.uk">e.olusoga@sheffield.ac.uk</a>		<a href="https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/education/people/academic/yinka-olusoga">https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/education/people/academic/yinka-olusoga</a>

<b>Play as the crucible of consciousness?</b>	13:00-14:00	<b>Tony Delahoy</b>
	1 Hour	
<p>In the past play has been attributed with a broad range of benefits for the child. We will home in on and explore the question "Is there a relationship between play and human subjective reality or self-consciousness?" and if so, what is the nature of that relationship? Is it possible that play may be the crucible of consciousness in humans? The notion of play as a continuously altering state of consciousness will be explored and the possibility that play is fundamental to the development of human consciousness across all levels.</p> <p>Much play theorising focusses on the objective aspects of playing rather than the less tangible subjective experience of what it feels like to play. Perhaps we should be more focussed on the subjective aspects of play. Which may in fact be the main motivational factor for its existence! This workshop will focus on the role of play in relation to human consciousness as we intuitively experience it, and draw on a broad range of academic perspectives and literature to play with the idea that without play, human consciousness may fail to develop beyond that of other mammals.</p>		
<a href="mailto:tdelahoy@gmail.com">tdelahoy@gmail.com</a>		<a href="https://interplay-training-and-consultancy.ueniweb.com/">https://interplay-training-and-consultancy.ueniweb.com/</a>

The Brain that Loves to Play	14:15-15:45	Dr. Jacqueline Harding
	1 Hour 15 Minutes	
Using bite-sized films and lively illustrations, I will explain the latest stunning brain research in terms of how creative and imaginative play works at a cellular level. I will also discuss the skillsets needed for a future generation and how these skills are fostered through sensory-based play activities. I will also explain how play impacts the nervous system and why laughter is undervalued! I challenge the historical division between play and learning in relation to the latest evidence-based brain research - drawing on my own research and that of colleagues too. I am privileged to be frequently asked to speak in the media so I enjoy breaking down complex concepts and having fun chatting.		
hello@drjacquelineharding.com		<a href="https://www.drjacquelineharding.com/">https://www.drjacquelineharding.com/</a>

Playing with Winnicott	16:00-17:00	Penny Wilson
	1 Hour	
<p>We will share a whistle stop tour around the work of Winnicott, a man who held children's play in high esteem and learned a great deal from it which he used in his writing and his psychotherapeutic practice. There are many overlaps between his work and our own that are well worth exploring.</p>		



<b>Whistle Stop tour of playwork theory</b>	9:30-10:45	Ali Wood
	1 Hour 15 Minutes	
<p>There is a wealth of playwork theory out there and we only have an hour! So we will be looking at some of the more 'basic' theory and specifically how this relates to practice, together with some teasers to get you wanting more!</p> <p>There is actually no such thing as 'basic playwork theory' but there are some theories that are more about how children play which is the better place to start – and not just start but regularly revisit to get a broader and deeper understanding of play. Without this understanding we will never be playworkers – we will be teachers, coaches, facilitators or carers. So this session is a beginning and/or a reminder that play is fundamental for human development and that the role of the playworker is an essential one in these times.</p>		
aliwood@meridenadventureplayground.com		www.donthaveawebsite.com

<b>Therapeutic playwork: Making theory from practice</b>	11:00-12:30	Pip Levett Wendy Russell
	1 Hour 30 Minutes	
<p>Come and find out about (and play with) our developing theory of therapeutic playwork that's emerging from Play Gloucestershire's Play2Nurture (P2N) project, now in its third year. P2N works at the intersection of playwork and play therapy. Sessions are offered to small groups of children living with emotional and/or economic hardship. They are supported by experienced community playworkers who are also trained play therapists, play rangers, young volunteers and a therapy dog. The ongoing evaluation is a blend of Theory of Change, creative mapping and regular dialogue. You'll have a chance to have a go at the evaluation methods and talk about how relevant this might be in your work.</p> <p>Background: The Play2Nurture (P2N) project seeks to develop Play Gloucestershire's emerging play nurture approach, which builds on 15 years' experience of running a universal Play Ranger service in disadvantaged local communities and targeted work in school settings. The play nurture approach works with small groups of identified children using the therapeutic power of play to offer respite from and to help children cope with the ups and downs of daily economic and emotional hardships. In this, the Play Rangers work at the intersection of playwork and play therapy.</p> <p>The project is led by highly experienced playwork practitioners, one of whom is also qualified in play therapy and a second who is completing a postgraduate course in therapeutic play skills. They work with a team of Play Rangers, young volunteers and a Pets as Therapy qualified dog, Rafa. Children can attend for one term one day a week after school, or Saturday sessions at The Play Sanctuary (a dedicated play space). Current and past children can also attend weekly open access sessions at a local park or holiday play days, held at The Play Sanctuary, the park or the beautiful natural grounds of the university.</p> <p>We have been developing a theory of therapeutic playwork through a participative approach the evaluation, which blends Theory of Change, creative mapping (what we call critical cartography) and regular dialogue.</p> <p>At this session, we will introduce the project, the evaluation approach and our emerging theory of therapeutic playwork. It will be a participative session, discussion is definitely encouraged, and you can have a go at some of the evaluation methods. We want to know what you think of the work, our theory, and how relevant this might be for playworkers.</p>		
wrussell@glos.ac.uk		<a href="https://playgloucestershire.org.uk/play_2_nurture/">https://playgloucestershire.org.uk/play_2_nurture/</a>

The heritage of adventure playgrounds	12:45-13:45	Professor Ben Highmore
	1 Hour	
Based on my book (Playgrounds, the experimental years - forthcoming in September 2024) this session will look at how adventure playgrounds emerged as a form of reparation for damaged lives in damaged cities in the years following 1945. Rather than seeing this history as belonging to the past, I want to show how it needs to be celebrated and remembered as a crucial aspect of youth heritage. To treat adventure playgrounds as living heritage has the potential of providing new forms of protection for limited resources. But even more importantly it connects us to a history whose social ambition was to facilitate the conditions for youth to flourish beyond the demands of our commercialised world.		
b.highmore@sussex.ac.uk <a href="https://profiles.sussex.ac.uk/p185339-ben-highmore">https://profiles.sussex.ac.uk/p185339-ben-highmore</a>		

Playwork stories	14:00-15:00	Mick Conway
	1 Hour	
A Zoom session in a room with Bridget Hanscombe helping me out to tell stories about play and playwork. Everybody is welcome to join and ask questions, put other points of view - think of it as chat in a good boozer but without the beer and the awful quiz night		

<b>I can't believe they told us to eat off a bush</b>	15:30-17:00	The GLUE Collective Faith Pearson, Jemima Graham, Simbi Folarin
	1 Hour 30 Minutes	
GLUE Collective are a group of artists and play workers. Working predominantly with SEND children and their families. How SPARK developed, stretched and grew as it popped up in different communities and future plans for a permanent home for SPARK to take root. Exploring the elements of SPARK, how it differs from a play space or adventure playground. Children don't visit SPARK alone, so how to engage adults in playful, creative and reflective ways that allow their children the space they need to play freely. Sharing examples of co-creation in indoor and outdoor spaces peppered with anecdotes gathered from children, parents and playworkers. Interactive session with an invitation to co-create.		
thegluecollective@gmail.com		
https://www.gluecollective.co.uk/		

## Play Responsive Education

9:30-11:00

1 Hour 30 Minutes

Suzanne  
Axelsson

The Original Learning Approach weaves playing, learning and teaching together, and the play responsive educator takes on three roles - teacher, facilitator and playworker. Using images and films from play and education environments around the world the session will aim to provoke our thinking about the education system and the role of play in learning, teaching and well-being. Creating time and place for play is about creating democratic spaces where social justice can evolve alongside cognitive development. Play and learning spaces should be safe and brave but not devoid of challenge and adventure. By being play responsive as educators we respond to children's autonomous play in order to create lessons.

Original Learning became a personal reflection space where play, teaching and learning could meet as equals. Eventually it became something shared with others, envisioned as a loom where play is the warp thread that teaching and learning are woven in to. Playfulness can be found in the teaching and learning threads but teaching is never found in the play threads. As educators we are mindful of the ten essential threads that we can weave into the life fabric - wonder, curiosity, joy, knowledge, imagination, interaction, risk, time, reflection and listening - that can help us create a learning flow that can have similarities with play flow. In the Original Learning Approach the educator is play-responsive, this means they take on three roles - teacher, facilitator and playworker. These roles are like a spectrum, there are no clear boundaries, but that they merge into each other just as dawn and dusk are various gradients of day and night.

Creating time and place for play is about creating democratic spaces where social justice can evolve alongside cognitive development as well as being mindful of children's rights and autonomy. Play and learning spaces should be safe and brave but not devoid of challenge and adventure. By being play-responsive as educators we respond to children's autonomous play in order to create lessons that are attuned to how the children are interacting with the world. The Original Learning Approach is neither child-centred or curriculum centred, but does not ignore either of these, but is rather a world-centred education as Biesta writes, where what we do as children is to scaffold them to interact, participate, learn about and be with the world as valued citizens rather than citizens to be.

Images and films from play and education environments around the world will be shared throughout the session in an aim to provoke our thinking about the education system and the role of play in learning, teaching and well-being. To inspire us to dare to imagine the utopia of a world where play takes a central place.

<b>Crossing Boundaries</b>	11:15-12:45	Yvonne Dalorto
	1 Hour 30 Minutes	
<p>The session will explore how my journey with Playwork not only changed my life personally regarding the importance of play, but as an educator how it has helped the children I have taught and teachers/educators I have worked with in many countries. There have been great moments and equally, challenging ones! The continuing understanding of cultural practices, play preferences and demanding curriculums. However, starting my Playwork journey over 20 years ago still ranks high as one of the best things I ever did. Additionally, one I always refer to with teacher training. During the session I will be sharing my experiences and how I am continuing my journey with play and facilitating it in some of the most unconventional ways!</p>		
yvonnedalorto@gmail.com		<a href="https://uk.linkedin.com/in/yvonne-dalorto-735a2186">https://uk.linkedin.com/in/yvonne-dalorto-735a2186</a>
<b>Design + Play Build for climate resilience</b>	13:00-14:00	Lizzy Fleming Llew Jones
	1 Hour	
<p>Using case studies from our 12+ years of co-designing and building playable landscapes in schools and APGs we discuss both the physical and practical, alongside staff behavior change through training. How can we provide meaningful connection for children to nature and play in the urban environment? How to overcome a culture of both risk and nature aversion in school staff? We share examples with plenty of photos and stories from delivering over 50 projects, with transferable tips to take back to your own settings or play build projects.</p>		
lizzy@madefromscratchltd.co.uk		<a href="http://www.madefromscratchltd.co.uk">www.madefromscratchltd.co.uk</a>
<b>On being a playworker in school.</b>	14:30-15:30	Vicky Edwards
	1 Hour	
<p>In this semi auto biographical session I am going to talk about and explore how my playwork knowledge and understanding impacts on the relationships formed with children, how these relationships are different than those of other TA's and staff within the school. I will tell antidotes and try to draw out how the power of being a playworker can make a difference in the experience of a child at school.</p>		
vicky.edwards.play@hotmail.co.uk		<a href="mailto:vicky.edwards.play@hotmail.co.uk">vicky.edwards.play@hotmail.co.uk</a>



## The national schools' Plan for Play campaign

16:00-17:00

1 Hour

Michael Follett  
Members of the  
OPAL Team

On March 12th, OPAL will launch a policy campaign called the Plan for Play at the House of Commons with support from the All Party Parliamentary Group on Fit and Health Childhood. The aim of the campaign is to get DfE and Ofsted to require schools to demonstrate how they will improve play opportunities for every child every day. To go along with the campaign, OPAL is developing a new NVQ level 3 for school playwork. If successful, it will open huge opportunities for playwork training providers and playworkers and bring more play to more children more of the time. Come and learn more about this campaign, why the focus is on schools and explore what opportunities it could provide in the playwork sector.

### The Plan for Play campaign

OPAL is a not-for-profit community interest company dedicated to bringing amazing play opportunities to as many children as possible for as much time as possible. We have chosen to work in schools because nearly all children go to school for 190 days a year and they spend 20% of their seven years at primary school in dedicated play time. This amounts to 1.4 years of primary school life. Schools can be a very cost-effective way to increase access to play because they already have the grounds, staff, and time, they even have some money. The missing link is knowledge and understanding about play and playwork and lack of strategic planning.

OPAL now has 43 mentors working in around 700 new schools a year helping create sustainable cultural change founded in the Article 31 of the UNCRC, the 'Right to Play' and playwork theory and practice. Schools are not the perfect place for playwork, but as it's where they keep the children, it's where we feel we can have the most cost-effective impact on their daily play lives.

Our mission is that every school should provide all their children with an amazing play-time, every day with no exceptions. We want to help as many schools as we can, but feel that play is such an important part of childhood that all schools should be expected to demonstrate how they are adopting an informed and strategic approach to this 20% of primary school life.

The Plan for Play campaign has one aim, to make it a requirement and expectation for primary schools to demonstrate how they are approaching the provision of quality, outdoor play for all their children. We want the DfE to make it an expectation and OFSTED and their equivalents in the nations to make it a requirement that schools have a plan for providing high quality play opportunities.

UK schools currently spend around £750,000,000 a year on the mediocre supervision of playtimes and virtually none of the approximately 120,000 staff supervising school play have any playwork knowledge or understanding or any relevant training. This is why, to go alongside the campaign, OPAL is sponsoring the development of an NVQ level 3 award, certificate, and diploma in Playwork in Schools. We only intend to develop the course and not deliver it, potentially providing a huge opportunity for playwork training organisations to provide training for schools.

The session will be partly informative about the campaign and then open to discussion about the implications for playwork trainers and playwork practice of the growing acceptance by schools that play matters.

### More about OPAL Outdoor Play and Learning CIC

OPAL began life within South Gloucestershire School Improvement Service. In 2011 it became an independent community interest company. In 2019 it was awarded a grant of a quarter of a million pounds by Sport England to enable it to reach far more schools in recognition of contribution better play makes to children's physical activity. The grant and growing demand allowed OPAL to grow from eight mentors in 2019 to forty-three in 2024. In 2023 OPAL won the Children Now national play award.

The OPAL Primary Programme is delivered by OPAL mentors over a period of eighteen months with the aim of creating sustainable cultural change in the school. In Scotland the programme is delivered in partnership with Play Scotland. Although the focus of OPAL's work is in working with UK state primary schools, the private international schools' sector is showing increased interest and as a result OPAL is currently working with schools in Poland, France, Spain, Malaysia, and Singapore.

**Play to Measure are experts in creating  
exciting and accessible spaces to  
support child development.**



**We specialise in  
designing and building  
quality bespoke  
structures tailored to  
your needs and budget**



**Our team have decades of experience in creating play  
opportunities that provide the foundation that children  
and young people need to make the most of their  
abilities and talents as they learn and grow.**

**Get in touch to book your consultation**

**[www.playtomeasure.co.uk](http://www.playtomeasure.co.uk) | [info@playtomeasure.co.uk](mailto:info@playtomeasure.co.uk)**

<b>The Risks we Take when Working with Children</b>	9:30-10:30	Nicole Talarico by Zoom
	1 Hour	
<p>When children and young people are regarded as citizens they will be recognised as key stakeholders of their communities and a rights based lens will be utilised to hear their thinking. We need a call to action to challenge the narrative of playworkers motivation. As adults, we need to take risk in our thinking to influence how we action our role to impact the settings we work in.</p> <p>We develop a strong sense of community to people and place through interactions with peers and responsive adults. It is time, we as playworkers, draw on higher levels of consciousness to radically rethink opportunities for children and young people to thrive. For us to be upstanders for ongoing change it requires us to critically examine our unique settings, consider our own bias, systemic barriers. By positioning ourselves as the learner, we can hold space, and attune to what children and young people really need. There are narratives in our cultures and sometimes those scripts cut people off. Do we provide more than what children and young people want to be? Let's disrupt the pattern of waiting and take risks because environments don't change until children are safe to reveal themselves. Is felt safety absent? Do we know our own languages of adversity and resilience?</p> <p>Exposure to well-designed learning environments afford children and young people opportunities to be active agents in their own learning.</p> <p>This session will give insight into recent Australian research and capability models that better support wellbeing and the ability to truly thrive in our education and care environments.</p> <p>Let's foster the inner cheerleader of children and young people and champion them as global citizens now</p>		
talaricoconsult@bigpond.com		www.linkedin.com/in/nicole-talarico-120973b5

<b>Managing risks in virtual reality (VR) scenarios</b>	11:15-12:45	Professor Ellen Sandseter Lise Storli
	1 Hour 30 Minutes	
<p>Would you like to try managing risks in VR scenarios? The research project ViRMa (Virtual risk management) explores children's risk managements skills through innovative methods such as VR data, eye-tracking and motion capture. These data are then analysed in combination with data on children's risk experiences (risky play, activities, parenting style etc.). In this session you will be able to try the VR scenarios included in this data collection and see how you manage the risks yourself.</p>		
ebs@dmmh.no		<a href="https://ellenbeatehansensandseter.com">https://ellenbeatehansensandseter.com</a>

Risk Taking and Culture	13:00-14:30	Maya Lan
	1 Hour 30 Minutes	

This session will look into the influences culture has on risk taking. We will look at three very different cultures, who have widely different attitudes towards seeing children climbing up tall trees, the factors that are influencing their attitudes to this subject area and how I worked alongside them to free the children and the adults - but only after I jumped head first into the freezing pacific ocean myself!

Cultural impact of risk taking in childhood.

Come with me on a journey through 3 countries in 3 very different parts of the world- over the past 20 years I have been fortunate enough to work and play alongside beautiful children in New Zealand, Israel and now Cyprus, and what a journey it has been!

When first arriving in New Zealand, and making my first friends- I was shocked to realize just how brave they were: They would jump into the freezing pacific ocean with its humungous waves, climb snowy mountains and bungy jump, leaving me behind, wondering why I was so scared to try out some of their adventurous ways?

Fast forward 20 years and here I am, living in Cyprus, wondering why on earth are children told not to climb trees? Being kept indoors when it rains and entering school in their Sunday clothes!

Fortunately, one of my favorite things to do it stir change, make people uncomfortably excited and free children- so they can teach us all a think or two about jumping in some cold water. Their impact on us adults and on society is huge, take me as a case study, jumping right into the ocean no matter the temperature!

mayakarinlan@gmail.com

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/maya-lan-5a181913b/>

<b>Would you risk it for a biscuit?</b> <b>The mace story</b>	16:00-17:00	Simon Rix
	1 Hour	
<p>We are all aware of the evidence and discussion around risk, the benefits of risk taking in play and risk management. Sometimes that makes us nervous - we are being asked to take risks. How do we approach that? This discussion will hope to explore how the real life implications in playwork practice.</p>		
<div>simon@designandbuildplay.org.uk</div> <div>https://apiauk.org/</div>		



**An Original Advocacy for Play**

9:30-11:15

1 hour 45 minutes

Meera Patel  
Juliette Liebi,  
Anna Petruccelli,  
Trishna Patel

The 21st National Playwork Conference will see the UK launch of an original advocacy tool for play, in the form of seven powerful and beautiful art panels, developed by artists with the participation of children in Knysna, South Africa. The panels are a representation of the children's lived experiences of play, the barriers they face, the value of play in their lives and a direct Call to Action from the children to help them access their fundamental right to play. In this session, we will be talking about how these panels and the themes captured within them emerged, the impact it had on the children that inspired the creation of these panels, and how the panels could be used to facilitate more play in children's lives around the world.

We invite you to join us and explore the themes represented in the panels with us. This session will also involve a fun interactive session where we will break into six groups and ask participants to jump into our fantasy world of 'Rocky Play Planet'! Each group will have an activity focused around one panel which will provide an opportunity for people to share their views and opinions and present them to the 'citizens of Rocky Play Planet' at the end. It will be wonderful for everyone to hear diverse expert opinions and thoughts, based on your unique experiences, and facilitate an improved understanding and impetus to facilitate more play in all children's lives.

rockstonetrust@gmail.com

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/18900241>**The Power of Play:  
Children on the move**

11:30-12:30

1 Hour

Katie Hall  
Rachel Sykes

This session focuses on the experience of working with children and families in transit in northern France, exploring the importance of play for children in situations of displacement, barriers to the right to play in these contexts and challenges for organisations seeking to bridge this gap.

katie@project-play.org

project-play.org

<b>Establishing playwork in a former socialist culture</b>	12:45-13:45	Nina Krašovec
	1 Hour	
We will discuss the establishment of an adventure playground in a former socialist culture, or in an environment where the concept of playwork and adventure playground is unknown and needs to be introduced. We will share how we have drawn rich theoretical knowledge from the United Kingdom and Germany, selecting examples of best practices and translating and adapting them to our local environment and culture.		
<a href="mailto:nina@igrisce.org">nina@igrisce.org</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/dozivljajsko.igrisce/">https://www.facebook.com/dozivljajsko.igrisce/</a>		
<b>Transylvania at Play</b>	14:15-15:15	Joan Beattie
	1 Hour	
Observations of Playwork in urban and rural communities in Transylvania will be discussed, but I think this session will lend itself to more of an informal Q. and A., so bring a coffee and come prepared to have a chat with others. Romania is a beautiful country, but culturally still holds prejudices towards the Roma. Do we help overcome these barriers through Play? The annual Playwork Project will be going ahead again in June this year and is always looking for fun-loving people to bring Play and kindness to the children of Valea Rece and Ormenis, so if you are interested in volunteering either this year, or be involved in future projects, you will get more information at this session about working with the Gypsy community.		
<a href="mailto:beattie9@googlemail.com">beattie9@googlemail.com</a> <a href="http://www.domain.com">www.domain.com</a>		
<b>Processing Trauma Through Play</b>	15:30-17:00	Maya Lan
	1 Hour 15 Minutes	
<p>This session explores the greatest gift the world's greatest expert in creative, imaginative thinking have: The ability to heal, to ask the right questions, to process and to vent - and all we have left to do is learn to truly listen, support and facilitate their healing. While this session may touch on some hard issues, it is an optimistic one, a message of hope during uncertain times.</p> <p>A few years ago, my American colleague, Danielle McRea and I, started off with this lecture after working together at a multicultural school in Israel- we worked alongside children and families who had suffered trauma and were creating ongoing processes to better our practices and support these children as best we could. One of the things that we noticed was that when children who have experienced trauma delve deep into dramatic and social play, they begin to make sense of the world around them, which allows us through quality observation and practical pedagogical tools, to support them from exactly where they are.</p> <p>Unfortunately the past year has been quite traumatic for many children in Palestine and Israel, Ukraine and Russia and many more countries, leaving empathy and relationship based trauma informed care at a higher importance than before, and I have been supporting the same school from afar. I will be discussing my past experiences relating to a child in Israel, a refugee from the Ukraine and a child in the US, and adding on some interesting modern parenting trends I have observed relating to processing this trauma- and how this parenting is being reflected back over play. This is going to be a fascinating talk, and I look forward to the discussion thereafter!</p>		
<a href="mailto:mayakarlan@gmail.com">mayakarlan@gmail.com</a> <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/in/maya-lan-5a181913b/">https://www.linkedin.com/in/maya-lan-5a181913b/</a>		

## Picture it, Draw it, Plan it, Build it

11:15-12:15 &  
12:30-14:00  
1 Hour / 1 Hr 30

Keith Rogers  
Glen Flurry, Sam  
Broadhurst

The session is spread over two timeslots, you can go to either or both. Unleash your creativity and learn practical skills with a hands-on workshop delivered by the Play to Measure team, where imagination knows no bounds! Join us in envisioning and crafting a limitless play space, exploring diverse timber types, fixtures, and fittings, and gaining insights into their practical applications. Discover an array of tools essential for bringing your vision to life. Engage in collective planning as we collaboratively transform ideas into tangible plans. In smaller, interactive groups, participants will have the opportunity to construct a unique element of the envisioned design. Choose our workshop and be part of a hands-on adventure that turns dreams into reality.

keith@playtomeasure.co.uk

<https://www.playtomeasure.co.uk/>

## The Suitcase Club

14:45-15:45  
1 Hour

Adele Cleaver

Playworkers know that children thrive when playing with loose parts in our settings, so how do we empower caregivers to embrace loose parts play when there aren't playworkers present? What are the risks of encouraging loose parts play without playworkers present? If you live and breathe loose parts as much as Adele does, and want to help her form the foundations of families filling suitcases with stuff from home for community-led play meet ups (aka The Suitcase Club) then please come along, join the discussion and share your thoughts on this new initiative.

bigblueplay@gmail.com

[www.bigblueplay.org](http://www.bigblueplay.org)

## Children say they need more play and better play. They tell us that...



*"Play is fun and important for our happiness."*

*"Relationships with friends and family are an important part of our play."*

*"Playing outdoors brings us lots of opportunities for being active, exploring and enjoying nature."*

*"Access to our local spaces is important to us but we are not always welcome."*

*"We need more choice and challenging spaces and activities."*

The **Play Types Toolkit** is Play Scotland's most popular publication and helps adults support different kinds of play so all children can have the wide ranging, high quality play experiences necessary for healthy development and a happy childhood.

To demonstrate why children should be further involved in place based decision making, Play Scotland is delighted to publish the **Children, Young People and Placemaking in Scotland: a literature and policy review**.



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[info@playscotland.org](mailto:info@playscotland.org)



Company Number: SC197785, Scottish Charity Number: SC029167.



Scotland's  
Play Strategy  
Young play, every day



# WEDNESDAY'S SESSIONS TRACK BY TRACK





<b>Ethnographies of Play and the Opie Archive</b>	9:30-11:00	Dr. Yinka Olusoga
	1 Hour 30 Minutes	
<p>Drawing on the 'Playing the Archive' and 'Play Observatory' research projects, this session presents some of the past and ongoing work being undertaken by researchers at the University of Sheffield and UCL centred on the British Academy Research Project 'Childhoods and Play: The Iona and Peter Opie Archive'. The session will explore ways in which we conceptualise the archive and seek to (re)animate it with children and young people, and intergenerationally, in order to create new knowledge about the history of childhood experience. Using creative and digital tools, our work opens out from the archive, to understand the sensory, affective and situated worlds of playful childhood experience, past and present.</p>		
<div>e.olusoga@sheffield.ac.uk</div> <div><a href="https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/education/people/academic/yinka-olusoga">https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/education/people/academic/yinka-olusoga</a></div>		
<b>This is it: Resonances from the Ludic Field</b>	11:15-12:45	Sam James
	1 Hour 30 Minutes	
<p>There are moments one may experience when working with playing children that might be likened to satori - a sudden flash of insight and understanding: The 'this is it' moments of meaningfulness that resonate deeply, in which it feels as though profound lessons have been learned from the relatively simple. In this eclectic session, I will share a few such resonances from my own Playwork practice, re-visiting the physics of space and time to derive possibly fundamental characteristics of play as a combination of space, time and interaction; alongside introducing some early reading into Eastern philosophy (Zen, Taoism) and how this may relate and resonate with the Playwork approach and understanding of play.</p>		
<div>sammy.james46@yahoo.co.uk</div> <div>sammy.james46@yahoo.co.uk</div>		
<b>Linking Play, Behaviours and Mental Health</b>	12:45-14:15	Niki Buchan
	1 Hour 30 Minutes	
<p>As professionals, we as Playworkers and Practitioners know the value of play. How can we convince others what play looks and feels like and of the vital importance of play for mental health and well-being. Many children who don't cope well and struggle with the traditional schooling system develop mental health issues. In 2004, one in 10 children aged 7 - 16 had a mental health problem, this increased to one in 9 in 2017 and one in 6 in 2022. In this research based session Niki will include opportunities for reflection, discussion, sharing of knowledge and problem solving.</p>		
<div>niki@naturalllearning.net</div> <div><a href="http://www.naturalllearning.net">www.naturalllearning.net</a></div>		

## Adolescents' sensation seeking and risk behaviour

9:30-10:30

1 Hour

Professor Ellen Beate Hansen Sandseter

In a study from 2001, I examined the relationship between sensation seeking and positive/negative risk-taking behaviour among adolescents. Perceived challenges and influences from school, parents, friends and social background were examined as contributing factors. Three hundred and sixty adolescents between 12 and 16 years of age participated in the study. The results indicate a strong relationship between sensation seeking and both types of risk behaviour, and that few challenges from both school and parents as well as poor social background could result in more negative risk behaviour. In this session I will present some data from the study and invite to a discussion around how we can provide positive risk experiences for adolescents.

ebs@dmmh.no

<https://ellenbeatehansensandseter.com>

## Home-growing playworkers

10:45-11:30

45 Minutes

Ainsley Stiling  
Emlyn Smith

This session features the journey of two young playworkers as they voyage from adventure playground attendees to young volunteers to playworkers in Tiverton Adventure Playground. The playground is a unique 3-1/2 acre wild and wooded site that demands a particular way of working, and which has built a distinct culture over the 50 years of its existence. Ainsley and Emlyn describe what they love about the playground and what has motivated them in their journey. They also describe some of the challenges they have faced and the particular aspects of the work that they enjoy - and some that they don't. They also offer thoughts and advice for other 'home-growing' organisations and young playworkers.

info@tivertonadventureplayground.co.uk

<https://www.tivertonadventureplayground.co.uk>

## Age Appropriate Play for Autistic Teens

11:45-12:45

1 hour

Adele Cleaver

Adele will share her learning and early playwork-meetsyouthwork experiences with 3 case studies, of a unique youth club that was piloted in Birmingham in 2009-2010.

This was a specialist provision that intentionally opened with only 3 young people who had previously faced barriers to attending "inclusive" play and youth settings. Over time more young people joined this thriving youth project.

bigblueplay@gmail.com

<b>The Importance of Policy Writing</b>	9:30-11:30	Janet Down MBE
	2 Hours	
<p>Whilst the topic always feels a bit dull and often gets put to the bottom of the 'to do' pile - the importance of sound policies that everyone contributes towards and owns cannot be underestimated. They help to frame your organisation, to set the standards for staff and volunteers. They keep people safe and give your staff the confidence to do their job well. They help to manage other people's expectations of your service and support your overall approach to risk. Janet will be looking to make this session fun, interactive and by the end of it you will love policy writing as much as she does! The aim is that you will take away some helpful hints about what policies you need and will stay awake for the whole session!</p>		
janetdownmbe@gmail.com		www.janetdownconsultancy.com

<b>Supervision and Appraisals</b>	11:45-13:15	Janet Down MBE
	1 Hour 30 Minutes	
<p>Your staff are your greatest asset and they need to be nurtured, supported and encouraged. Supervision (although Janet prefers the term catch up) and Appraisal (although Janet prefers the term review!) are powerful tools in helping you to journey with your staff, to harness their skills, to develop and grow their potential and to ensure that they are being the best they can be. When used in a systematic and recorded manner, they can also help you, as the employer, keep within the legal framework and ensure that you are fulfilling all of your statutory duties. In this session, Janet will be guiding you through good practice and helping you develop a framework that will work for you and your staff.</p>		
janetdownmbe@gmail.com		www.janetdownconsultancy.com

<b>Approaches to Fund-raising</b>	13:15-14:15	Janet Down MBE
	1 Hour	
<p>As austerity has hit, increased COVID funding has come to an end and the cost of living crisis is still a big issue, charities are finding it harder than ever to raise money. In this session, Janet will guide you through the variety of ways that organisations can raise funds as well as reviewing the pros and cons of different methods. You will be guided through some successful examples and look at how they might work for you. The aim of the session is to give you shed loads of ideas - some you will discount, but hopefully some will inspire you on to replicate them back at playground and raise lots of money!</p>		
janetdownmbe@gmail.com		www.janetdownconsultancy.com

<b>Inclusion is an action</b>	9:30-10:45	Nic James Siôn Edwards
	1 Hour 15 Minutes	
<p>This session explores the journey of establishing playwork provision for children and young people with neurodevelopmental conditions (e.g. autism, ADHD) on an adventure playground in Wales. It also outlines the experience of the neurodivergent playworkers who made it happen - how it impacted their practice, challenged their preconceptions, and changed the way they themselves were perceived and treated. What happens when the needs of the many collide with the needs of the few? What happens when the opinions of the powerful oppose the experience of the minority? Whether just starting out or already delivering inclusive provision, this session will share our (and your) practical tips and resources to make authentic inclusive play a reality.</p>		
njames@outlook.com		www.theventure.wales

<b>Play and playwork in health and healthcare</b>	11:00-11:45	Adrian Voce
	45 Minutes	
<p>This session will consider current developments within the NHS in England, which is increasingly considering the vital role of play specialists and playworkers in the care and treatment of babies, children and young people. NHS England is soon to publish new national standards and guidance for health play services, produced for it by a taskforce jointly convened with Starlight, who have also been commissioned to lead on a new workforce development strategy for the health play field. We will explore the implications of these developments for playwork; and, in this election year, how growing evidence of the role of play in children's health and wellbeing may hold out opportunities for wider policy gains for the play advocacy movement.</p>		
adrian.voce@starlight.org.uk		www.starlight.org.uk

<b>Playwork Practice within the Prison Sector</b>	11:45-13:15	Emma Booth
	1 Hour 30 Minutes	
<p>It is estimated that there are 312,000 children affected by parental incarceration in England and Wales. However, the continual rise of the prison population means that this number is only going to continue to grow. The literature surrounding the topic notes that children of prisoners face several adverse experiences which impact both their short and long-term well-being. Additionally, it is becoming increasingly recognised that one of the challenges for these children is a decline in play opportunities within the wider community due to them being seen as guilty by association. This is just one of the reasons why play provision during prisons is vital. This seminar will discuss the preliminary findings of my PhD research "An examination of Playwork Practice, with the Prison Sector". The focus of the session will consider the experiences and challenges of playworkers within this niche play environment. In addition, the session will explore the effects of the restrictions enforced by prison policy, effects the play provided during visits and what that means in terms of the practice of playwork within prison.</p>		
e.r.booth@leedsbeckett.ac.uk		www.domain.com



## If Playwork was for sale: A Manifesto

9:30-10:30

1 Hour

Anne-Marie  
Mackin  
Simon Bazley

If you were to put Playwork for sale on e-bay how would you "sell" it? As a General Election looms join Anne-Marie and Simon from The Playwork Foundation to create a manifesto to share with those who seek to represent us to help them see the importance of Playwork in the lives of children across the 4 Nations.

ammackin@aol.com

[www.playworkfoundation.org](http://www.playworkfoundation.org)

## Still here - Adventure Playgrounds Unite!

10:45-11:45

1 Hour

Siôn Edwards

How many adventure playgrounds are there in Great Britain and Northern Ireland? How have they survived? And what has been the cost? An Adventure Playground Network, inaugurated by The Playwork Foundation last year, has started to answer these questions. And, thanks to the selfless volunteer efforts of adventure playground workers, we're also beginning to uncover other contemporary issues, including: insurance, litigation, policy, and research. Join this session to find out what is affecting adventure playgrounds today, how adventure playgrounds are not just surviving but thriving, and what lessons from adventure playgrounds can be beneficial to playwork provision wherever you're playworking.

sion@theventure.wales

[www.playwork.foundation](http://www.playwork.foundation)

## The Playwork Approach

12:00-13:00

1 Hour

Ali Wood

What is the 'Playwork Approach'? These words are used more and more. What does it mean in both theory and practice? And can anyone learn it and use it anywhere? Come and join in and find out.....

[aliwood@meridenadventureplayground.com](mailto:aliwood@meridenadventureplayground.com)

<https://playwork.foundation/>

## Co-creating an 'ivory bungalow' for playwork

13:15-14:15

1 Hour

Simon Bazley  
Anne-Marie  
Mackin

Some have said that playwork has suffered at the hands of people in ivory towers. If ivory towers are indicative of an elitist disconnection from practical concerns, how would we as a sector go about reconnecting them so that everyone is included and has a voice? Would the antithesis of an ivory tower be a metaphorical ivory bungalow? If so, how would we go about constructing such a thing? What parts already exist? What parts are missing? What would the foundations be made of? Who and why should they build it? Should they bother building it at all? Join us to explore some possibilities about how we could potentially collaborate to co-create more opportunities for working together to promote good practice and better support each other.

[simonjbazley@gmail.com](mailto:simonjbazley@gmail.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/playfulfutures>

## Playing on the edge: playwork and social ecology

9:30-10:30

1 Hour

Adrian Voce

This presentation will consider a play advocacy response to the climate emergency and the profound questions it raises about the sustainability of normative constructs of civilization, society, economics and education. We will look at playwork practice and some of its theoretical underpinnings within the context of ecological systems theory and, especially, the evolutionary perspectives of Bookchin's analysis of social ecology. This work informed some of the last writings of the late playwork theorist Gordon Sturrock. We will explore this engagement and endeavour to develop these ideas; to situate playwork theory within this discourse and consider what it might mean for policy and practice.

This presentation will consider a play advocacy response to the climate emergency and the profound questions it raises about the sustainability of normative constructs of civilization, society, economics and education. We will look at playwork practice and some of its theoretical underpinnings within the context of ecological systems theory and, especially, the evolutionary perspectives of Bookchin's social ecology.

Bookchin's analysis of the origins of civilization and the emergence of hierarchical social orders leads to a theory of evolution that finds human power dynamics and structures inseparable from the natural world. The presentation will identify intersections of these ideas with those of playwork thinkers such as Hughes, Lester and Russell; play theorists like Huizinga and Sutton-Smith; and the anarchist perspectives of Colin Ward. In particular we will look at some of the later writings of Gordon Sturrock, who identified Bookchin's theories as synergistic with the evolutionary perspectives of playwork.

We will consider Sturrock's response to Bookchin's theory of a 'third' or 'free' human nature emerging from the dissolution of the old hierarchies and suggest that playwork theory and practice, in rebalancing the power dynamics in adult-child relationships, and privileging children's immediacy, aliveness and connectedness to their environment over oppressive traditions of discipline and conformity, represents a potential solution to the urgent need for a new pedagogy; with the post-human and new materialist perspectives of such as Barad and Braidotti providing reference points for drawing new, playful lines between society and the natural world.

Adrian Voce OBE, MA`

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<http://playfulplanet.org.uk>

## How Covid Revealed the Social Life of Play

10:45-11:45

1 Hour

Professor Anna Beresin

Does anyone ever really play solo? Even when alone we play out stories connected to people, power, and culture. What has the time of lockdown taught us about play? Come ready to share stories about what you have observed about Covid times in your area. What might it mean for play advocacy if play is fundamentally social? What needs changing now? Check out Anna's free new book, coedited with Dr. Julia Bishop, 'Play in a Covid Frame: Everyday Pandemic Creativity in a Time of Isolation.' It includes writings by play workers, researchers, and advocates from 12 different countries and tips for play advocacy collected from discussions with the book's many authors. Anna will share images, too. [www.openbookpublishers.com/books/10.11647/obp.0326](http://www.openbookpublishers.com/books/10.11647/obp.0326)

[aberesin@uarts.edu](mailto:aberesin@uarts.edu)
[annaberesin.com](http://annaberesin.com)

## Reframing the role of smartphones in outdoor play

12:00-13:00

1 Hour

Dr. Chris Martin

Smartphones are commonly argued to have an adverse impact on children's outdoor play. I challenge these notions to demonstrate how they can contribute to play in rich, natural environments, offering creative and unique affordances which add complexities and depth. Through extensive fieldwork I highlight vignettes showing how smartphones can interweave with natural elements, enhancing moments of play in the physical spaces in which they are performed. I argue however that how smartphones integrate depends on the play-skills and experience of children, how well they have learnt to read and intra-act with the outdoor environment, and the affect of nonhuman bodies, such as trees, rocks and pathways which mediate the impact of technology.

This presentation introduces research uniquely exploring how children (10- 13) and smartphones engage in mutually constituted outdoor play. Emerging from a seven-year PhD project it critically examines how assemblages of children, environments and technologies provide playful moments in everyday lives, illustrating how modern, networked childhoods can still be full of play and wonder. Through examining how children combine play in digital spaces and with digital devices while still climbing trees, making dens, and chasing each other, it argues this new normal is no less important than any other childhoods in any other space and time, suggesting however different framings. Significant in this is through de-centring the playing child and reconstructing them in a complex assemblage which presents an alternative perspective to biosocial dualisms - the 'being/becoming' debate. An ethnographic approach was used throughout which considered children as co-creators of knowledge. The research was built around a strong core of participant observation from an adventure playground, augmented with focus groups and a reflective log, guided by Article 31 and the Playwork Principles.

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## Anarcho Playwork

13:15-14:00

45 Minutes

Tony Delahoy

This workshop will explore the anarchist perspective of play as a naturally occurring example of anarchy in action. This argument will be supported by literature and draw on some well established theories and ideas on play and will draw from a range of perspectives. We will then explore the implications for the playworker and their practice. The benefits and challenges of the anarcho-playwork approach will be explored and we will draw on established playwork and play theory to support the argument for anarcho-playwork. A new approach to playwork based on long established understandings offered by this model, which have been almost lost in the mists of time.

[tdelahoy@gmail.com](mailto:tdelahoy@gmail.com)
<https://interplay-training-and-consultancy.ueniweb.com/>

A child is lying on their back on a sandy beach, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and dark blue pants. They are positioned next to a large, circular, colorful structure made of sticks and stones. The structure has a tall, thin, colorful pole in the center. The text "ALL ABOUT THE SESSION FACILITATORS" is overlaid on the image in a large, colorful, outlined font.

# ALL ABOUT THE SESSION FACILITATORS





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## Adele Cleaver

Tuesday Track: Playtime

14:45-15:45

1 Hour

## The Suitcase Club

Wednesday Track: Teenage Play

11:45-12:45

1 hour

## Age Appropriate Play for Autistic Teens



Adele became a playworker by "a happy accident". She hadn't ever planned to work with children but when her playworker colleague was off sick and her team needed last minute cover she took off her office-based fundraiser hat and donned a playworker hat for the afternoon. She was wow-ed by the creative, empowering approach she saw through free play with loose parts and decided to train as a playworker. That was back in 2009 and since Adele has had a varied career working in and out of play settings but almost always with children with complex needs. Adele re-realised the importance of her playwork knowledge and practice when her first daughter was born. She is passionate about sharing playwork theory and practice with her peers and wrote the book "Children don't dissolve in the rain" to help more adults adopt a playwork approach in parenthood and in their community.

[bigblueplay@gmail.com](mailto:bigblueplay@gmail.com)

## Adrian Voce

Wednesday Track: Contexts of Play and Playwork

11:00-11:45

45 Minutes

## Play and playwork in health and healthcare

Wednesday Track: Brain Food

9:30-10:30

1 Hour

## Playing on the edge: playwork and social ecology



I have worked in children's play since 1979. I was a playworker in the 80s and early 90s before moving into play development, information, training and advocacy. I was the first director of London Play in 1998, developing the play policy of the first London Mayor and supporting the growth of play provision in the capital. In 2004 I moved to the Children's Play Council, first as chair, then becoming director of the Children's Play Council and then founding director of Play England, where I led the campaigns for a major lottery programme and a government play strategy, together bringing £390m of national funding into children's play in England. Since then, I have worked as a play consultant, completed a Masters in play, written a book, Policy for Play, and run several major play conferences. Covid saw me working again as a playworker, running Lollard Street adventure playground during the height of the pandemic. I am now head of policy and public affairs for Starlight, the national health play. I was awarded the OBE in 2011, for services to children.

[adrian.voce@starlight.org.uk](mailto:adrian.voce@starlight.org.uk) [adrian@playfulplanet.org.uk](mailto:adrian@playfulplanet.org.uk)



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## Ainsley Stiling & Emlyn Smith

Wednesday Track: Teenage Play	10:45-11:30	45 Minutes
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### Home-growing playworkers



Ainsley has been volunteering at the playground since 2013 and working as a playworker since 2017. He has learned as much by doing playwork as by attending in-house training and brings both his love of drawing and love of crashing through bushes and building dens to his work. When he's not patiently supporting children to build dens and light fires he can be found starting large-scale games of manhunt and clearing brambles to uncover new areas for play. Emlyn started as a paid playworker in 2023 after consistently volunteering during school holidays, starting in 2019. He virtually grew up on the playground as his mum is also a playworker (as is his sister). He's equally adept at lighting fires or hanging cargo nets, and his love of technology and YouTube has led to him making videos for the playground.

[info@tivertonadventureplayground.co.uk](mailto:info@tivertonadventureplayground.co.uk)

## Ali Wood

Tuesday Track: Playwork	9:30-10:45	1 Hour 15 Minutes
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### Whistle Stop tour of playwork theory

Wednesday Track: Playwork Foundation	12:00-13:00	1 Hour
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### The Playwork Approach



Ali has been playworking for nearly half a century now and is still fascinated by it and is still learning more about it and particularly loves observing, listening and learning from children about play. Over that time Ali has also been involved in research about gender and sexual play, affective play spaces and has co-written books about this and playwork in general (new book coming out later this year!). She has been involved at national and regional levels in designing and delivering playwork training and qualifications as well as training playwork trainers. For the last several years Ali has been co-managing Meriden Adventure Playground in Chelmsley Wood outside Birmingham which has been both exhausting and wonderful. Ali also chairs a partnership called Youth Opportunities Board in Solihull and is secretary for the Playwork Foundation.

[aliwood@meridenadventureplayground.com](mailto:aliwood@meridenadventureplayground.com)

## Professor Anna Beresin

Tuesday Track: Play

9:30-11:00

1 Hour 30 Minutes

### The Joy of Play/The Pain of Play: Intro to Dialudics

Wednesday Track: Brain Food

10:45-11:45

1 Hour

### How Covid Revealed the Social Life of Play



Anna Beresin is professor emerita at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She is the author of several books on play including, "Recess Battles: Playing, Fighting and Storytelling;" "The Art of Play;" "The Character of Play;" and "Group Motion in Practice" (a book of dance games coauthored with choreographers Brigitta Hermann, Manfred Fischbeck, and Elia Sinaiko.) Most recently, she coedited a free book with Dr. Julia Bishop, "Play in a Covid Frame: Everyday Pandemic Creativity in a Time of Isolation." She coedits the "International Journal of Play" and is known for really bad puns. A dancer and ukulele player, she is tickled to be a Fulbright scholar this spring at the University of Sheffield's program in Education, Culture and Childhood. Visit her there or at [annaberesin.com](http://annaberesin.com).

[aberesin@uarts.edu](mailto:aberesin@uarts.edu)

## Anne-Marie Mackin, Simon Bazley

Wednesday Track: Playwork Foundation

9:30-10:30

1 Hour

### If Playwork was for sale: A Manifesto



Anne-Marie works in the OSC sector as a Manager of a club in Dundee, teaches Playwork and Child-care from intro to Degree level and carries out QA assessments for the Scottish Out of School Care Network. She is also a Board Member of IPA Scotland and was until recently the National Rep on the World Council. She is Secretary of her local Outdoor Woodland Learning Group and enjoys swimming and pottering about doing a myriad of things

[ammackin@aol.com](mailto:ammackin@aol.com)

## Professor Ben Highmore

Tuesday Track: Playwork

12:45-13:45

1 Hour

### The heritage of adventure playgrounds



I'm a writer and teacher, working at the University of Sussex. I started researching playgrounds about seven years ago after being enthralled by photographs of children playing at the Lollard Playground in the 1950s. I've written about ten books, some of which are quite academic and others which are aimed at anyone who might be interested in my research areas. My book on playgrounds is for a general audience and has more than 80 images in it. It involved visiting seven different archives in Canada, USA, and UK. My recent work looks at how play became a political issue in North Kensington in the 1960s and how it brought together a diverse (and divided) community into demanding better conditions for the whole area. I am also interested in how playgrounds might respond to the challenges of climate change.

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## Dr. Chris Martin

Wednesday Track: Brain Food

12:00-13:00

1 Hour

### Reframing the role of smartphones in outdoor play



Chris is a playworker, writer/researcher, and playwork activist. He was awarded his PhD in 2023 from the University of Leicester, examining the playful intra-actions between children, smartphones and the outdoor environment. He is a board member of the International Play Association (England), a trustee and former playworker at Tiverton Adventure Playground, and a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. He has published and delivered academic and professional papers in the UK and internationally. Chris was the main writer and lead for the UK Play and Playwork Education and Skills Strategy 2011-2016; facilitated the All Party Parliamentary Group on Play, and was National Playwork Convenor for Unite the Union.

[chrispetermartin@me.com](mailto:chrispetermartin@me.com)

## Professor Ellen Sandseter, Lise Storli

Tuesday Track: Risk Taking

11:15-12:45

1 Hour 30 Minutes

### Managing risks in virtual reality (VR) scenarios

Wednesday Track: Teenage Play

9:30-10:30

1 Hour

### Adolescents' sensation seeking and risk behaviour



Ellen Beate Hansen Sandseter. Ph.d., professor at Queen Maud University College. Her primary research focus is on children's risky/thrilling play as well as physical environments for children's play, development and learning. She has also been involved in research on Norwegian children's experiences of participation and well-being in Norwegian ECEC institutions, and projects about safety work, child injuries and injury prevention in Norwegian ECEC institutions. Currently she is the project manager of a project exploring the effects of childhood risk experiences on children's risk assessment and risk management skills through the use of Virtual Reality (VR) technology as well as eye-tracking and motion capturing.

ebs@dmmh.no

## Emma Booth

Wednesday Track: Contexts of Play and Playwork

11:45-13:15

1 hr 30 Minutes

### Playwork Practice within the Prison Sector



Emma Booth is a Lecturer on Childhood Development and Playwork and Working With Children Young People and Families courses at Leeds Beckett University. Holding a BA (Hons) in Playwork, and currently completing her PhD, which is an examination of Playwork Practice in Prisons in the UK. Before her role at the University, Emma had over 8 years experience in the prison and probation sector. Starting her career as a Playworker, and then moving over Family Support Work. Emma is passionate about the role of play within prisons and how it can support in maintaining family ties and is currently focusing on this aspect within her role at the University.

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**Dr. Jacqueline Harding**

Tuesday Track: Play

14:15-15:45

1 Hour 15 Minutes

**The Brain that Loves to Play**

Hello! I'm Dr Jacqueline Harding. Do come and chat to me at this wonderful conference! Meanwhile, here's just a brief bio: As an international child development and education expert, Jacqueline is recognised for her work advising government, practitioners and parents. She is an Honorary Visiting Research Fellow at Middlesex University. She also represented the UK in developing essential digital criteria and establishing best practice for broadcasters, parents and teachers across Europe. She works for children's TV shows, such as Peter Rabbit, Teletubbies, Clangers and Bing. She is a frequent speaker in the media and author of best-selling books for parents, practitioners and children. Her latest book is called: The Brain that Loves to Play. She is a former BBC Education Editor, Government Consultant, and Headteacher. Dr Jacqueline Harding MA, Cert Ed, SFHEA

[hello@drjacquelineharding.com](mailto:hello@drjacquelineharding.com)

**Janet Down MBE**

Wednesday Track: Policy, Supervision, and Fund-raising

9:30-11:30

2 Hours

**The Importance of Policy Writing**

Wednesday Track: Policy, Supervision, and Fund-raising

11:45-13:15

1 Hour 30 Minutes

**Supervision and Appraisals**

Wednesday Track: Policy, Supervision, and Fund-raising

13:15-14:15

1 Hour

**Approaches to Fund-raising**

Janet Down MBE has worked in the voluntary sector for more years than she cares to admit to. For the majority of her career she has worked as CEO with a large charity working in the field of learning disability employing over 300 staff. During that time she raised over £7,000,000 and grew the organisation from £500 in the bank to a £2,000,000 turnover in 18 years. Her organisation under her leadership maintained an above average retention level, particularly in her middle and senior management. She knows from personal experience the importance of good supervision and appraisal. She is a firm believer that you spend too much time at work for it not to be enjoyable and has always injected creativity and fun into all aspects of her work. She now works as a self employed consultant offering training, fundraising and governance skills to voluntary organisation. She has also worked with a number of organisations and charities, supporting them with fundraising, bid and tender writing, staff and volunteer management, and event planning. Additionally, she has run a number of events herself, as a volunteer, and successful raised money for a local charity that she is now chairs. In her spare time you will find her in the garden talking to her flowers (and doing the odd bit of weeding and planting).

[janetdownmbe@gmail.com](mailto:janetdownmbe@gmail.com)

## Joan Beattie

Tuesday Track: Play and Playwork Around the World

14:15-15:15

1 Hour

### Transylvania at Play



Having worked in Play and ELC since the 70s (nursery, ASC, youth work, ASN, guiding, volunteering, training/lecturing/assessing) it was time to hang up an official work title and head to an official retirement title a few months ago. I continue the 20 year journey of volunteering with the Transylvania Playwork Project working with the Gypsy community and taking up to 100 children aged 7-12 to an annual camp in the beautiful Romanian countryside. I'm looking forward to meeting and catching up with everyone again in Eastbourne.

[beattie9@googlemail.com](mailto:beattie9@googlemail.com)

## Katie Hall, Rachel Sykes

Tuesday Track: Play and Playwork Around the World

www

1 hour

### The Power of Play: Children on the move



Project Play is a grassroots NGO who has facilitated play and learning for over 7000 children in and around Calais since 2018.

Rachel has dedicated her career to educational inequality. Starting as an English teacher, she has gone on to hold literacy specialist roles in primary and secondary schools. In 2018, between roles, she left for Calais where she co-founded Project Play. Originally an outdoor instructor and forest schools enthusiast, Katie has shifted focus to children's rights, migration law, policy and campaigning. She joined our team in 2022, and is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Strathclyde, focusing on justice and human rights in border spaces.

[katie@project-play.org](mailto:katie@project-play.org)

## Keith Rogers, Glen Flurry, Sam Broadhurst

Tuesday Track: Playtime

11:15-12:15

1 Hour

12:30-14:00

1 Hour 30 Minutes

### Picture it, Draw it, Plan it, Build it



Keith Rogers has devoted his career to enhancing play opportunities for children. His early career focused on supporting disabled children, young people and adults at Autism West Midlands, KIDS, and MENCAP. With a pivotal role in Dudley's award-winning Sycamore Adventure Playground, Keith oversaw its development and management for 11 years, earning six national awards. Keith then founded Play to Measure, crafting inspired play environments tailored to diverse needs, passionately facilitating children's self-directed access to nature. Every Play to Measure project is unique, creating spaces where play knows no boundaries.

[keith@playtomeasure.co.uk](mailto:keith@playtomeasure.co.uk)

## Lizzy Fleming, Llew Jones

Track: Playwork in Schools

13:00-14:00

1 Hour

### Design + Play Build for climate resilience



Lizzy and Llew met while studying on an Msc in Environmental Architecture at CAT in Wales 2009, and have been dreaming, designing, and creating playable landscapes across London since, as Made From Scratch Ltd, a non profit social enterprise. Between us we have a varied background in everything from youth work, play work, music production, performance, theatre, carpentry, textile art, landscaping, public art, set build... the perfect yet random recipe for our Adventure Playground inspired practice. We specialise in co-designing unique playable landscapes with children, teaching wood-work and practical design skills to children along the way, and training risk and nature averse adults in the joy and potential of play.

[lizzy@madefromscratchltd.co.uk](mailto:lizzy@madefromscratchltd.co.uk)



## Maya Lan

Tuesday Track: Risk Taking

13:00-14:30

1 Hour 30 Minutes

### Risk Taking and Culture

Tuesday Track: Play and Playwork Around the World

15:30-17:00

1 hour 30 minutes

### Processing Trauma Through Play



Maya Lan is an accredited pedagogical expert, with her passions being inclusive, anti-bias education, progressive education and democratic education. She used to direct a bilingual, reggio inspired, progressive school in Tel Aviv. One that held Palestinian and Jewish families, as well as Ukrainian refugees. Through her work she came to learn the importance of recognising trauma and providing trauma informed care, and as usual - the children ended up teaching her much more than she them. She has studied, worked and lived in New Zealand, Israel and Cyprus and has traveled extensively, researching educational innovation in early childhood. In her free time, actually she doesn't have that! She is raising her daughter Mika, her dog Blueberry, is an international pedagogical advisor, and is completing her second MA in inclusive education. In her free time she sleeps!

mayakarinlan@gmail.com

## Meera Patel, Juliette Liebi, Anna Petruccelli, Trishna Patel

Tuesday Track: Play and Playwork Around the World

9:30-11:15

1 hour 45 minutes

### An Original Advocacy for Play



Rockstone & Pebbles (RSP) is a UK registered charity that works to improve and increase opportunities and spaces that support children to access their right to play. The trustees of RSP are not play experts, but they are supported by play experts in the charitable programmes they carry out and last year they ran 3 play projects that supported nearly 600 children and young people across 3 continents. The panels are a result of a collaborative project ran between RSP and another charity, MADaboutART, involving over 30 playful workshops with children and young people. MAD have a centre based in a township near Kynsna, South Africa and use art as a platform for healing and igniting hope and imagination. They are experts in creating art for advocacy and using a rights-based approach and without them the creation of these incredible panels would not have been possible.

rockstonetrust@gmail.com



## Michael Follett and Members of the OPAL Team

Tuesday Track: Playwork in Schools

16:00-17:00

1 Hour

### The national schools' Plan for Play campaign



Despite hobbies that included blowing things up, lighting fires and falling off things, Michael survived childhood in the seventies with only a few scars and a love for the freedom of play. His first job in playwork was driving a play bus. While he was part of the South Glos school improvement team, he started experimenting with how to bring the benefits of playwork to the schools. His boss rejected the working title of his project, Play in State Schools (PiSS), for unknown reasons, but Outdoor Play & Learning (OPAL) was accepted. Due to the chaos of redundancies and his friendship with the head of legal services, who was also losing his job, the local authority accidentally signed over all the I.P. rights to OPAL for £1, which was in cash to the head of education on his final day. He is the author of Creating Excellence in Primary School Playtimes and is now the director of OPAL CIC.

[michel@opalcic.org](mailto:michel@opalcic.org)

## Mick Conway

Tuesday Track: Playwork

14:00-15:00

1 Hour

### Playwork stories



I've been working in playwork since 1978 in every sort of job imaginable. And on the side helped create Playday and Quality in Play.

I helped to create London Play and Play England. And was delighted to be asked by Bob Hughes to help with development of the Playwork Principles. But what has really stuck with me has been the playwork with the kids all those years ago and then again back in my adventure playground natural habitat in Islington and Hackney until a couple of years ago.

I don't work in playwork or practice development any more but I have memories of all the ups and downs over the last 40-odd years

[mickplayfile@gmail.com](mailto:mickplayfile@gmail.com)

## Nic James, Sion Edwards

Wednesday Track:  
Contexts of Play and Playwork

9:30-10:45

1 Hour 15 Minutes

### Inclusion is an action



Nic is a playworker at The Venture Integrated Children's Centre (ICC), home to Wales' largest and oldest adventure playground. Nic began his playwork journey as a volunteer, helping to design playwork provision for children and young people with neurodevelopmental conditions (e.g. autism and ADHD). He soon became a playworker in his own right, undertaking playwork training and taking on the role of Coordinator for the project, before expanding the project by helping to develop youth provision, and later going on to join the open-access play team. Nic is autistic and passionate about advocating for the right of all children to play in their own way. He also works for NHS Wales, coordinating volunteers at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd in Denbighshire, and is a freelance graphic designer.

[njames@outlook.com](mailto:njames@outlook.com)

## Nicole Talarico

Tuesday Track: Risk Taking

9:30-10:30

1 Hour

### The Risks we Take when Working with Children



Nicole has most recently written a book about Asserting a Culture of Child Safety to guide education and care services to create and maintain physical, emotional, spiritual and culturally safe environments. Nicole is a Reconciliation Ambassador and member of council for the Association of Graduates of Early Childhood Studies, a committee member of Early Childhood Australia Victorian Branch and sits on the Early Childhood Australia National Reconciliation Advisory Group, as well as a member of Social Justice in Early Childhood. Nicole's mentoring strategies have been outlined in a range of early childhood sector publications, and podcasts, with her insight being shared at conferences both nationwide and overseas.

[talaricoconsult@bigpond.com](mailto:talaricoconsult@bigpond.com)

## Niki Buchan

Wednesday Track: Play and Playwork

12:45-14:15

1 Hour 30 Minutes

### Linking Play, Behaviours and Mental Health



Niki Buchan - International Educational Consultant. Niki has 40 years' experience in Early Education working directly with children in South Africa, United Kingdom and Australia. For the past 25 years she has also worked internationally as a popular conference keynote speaker, nature pedagogue, trainer and mentor. She is an award-winning author and has written books about nature based practice, risky, adventurous play and STEM with her latest book being released soon. Niki is a strong advocate for children's right to a high quality childhood, their health and wellbeing and offering opportunities for risky adventurous play. Her concern about the increase in mental health issues and disruptive behaviours has led her to do her own research on the link between children's behaviours, wellbeing, trauma and play. Her book on this subject will be published in 2024.

[niki@naturallearning.net](mailto:niki@naturallearning.net)

## Nina Krašovec

Tuesday Track: Play and Playwork Around the World

12:45-13:45

1 Hour

### Establishing playwork in a former socialist culture



Nina Krašovec, a social worker, youth worker, and playwork practitioner, I connect formally acquired knowledge with experiences working with children and youth. For the past 12 years, I have been managing the first adventure playground in Slovenia and have many plans for the future. I aspire to co-create a higher quality environment for the growth of our youngest ones, influencing the development of a family-friendly society.

[nina@igrisce.org](mailto:nina@igrisce.org)

## Penny Wilson

Tuesday Track: Play

16:00-17:00

1 Hour

### Playing with Winnicott



Penny Wilson studied art and then in the mid 1980s, discovered she was really a playworker. She has worked on an inclusive Adventure Playground a Play Association (Tower Hamlets) estates and parks, schools (a bit,) galleries and museums. She has travelled round talking about play and Playwork, written a few bits and pieces and now holds AssemblePlay - part Assemble studio. You can read some of her work at [www.theinternationale.com/pennywilson](http://www.theinternationale.com/pennywilson) and see what it looks like on instagram @assemble-play

[Play@assemblestudio.co.uk](mailto:Play@assemblestudio.co.uk)

## Pip Levett, Wendy Russell

Tuesday Track: Playwork

11:00-12:30

1 Hour 30 Minutes

### Therapeutic playwork: Making theory from practice



Wendy Russell is the external evaluator for the P2N project. She is a researcher and a Visiting Fellow at University of Gloucestershire, where she co-developed and taught on the MA in Professional Studies in Children's Play. She has worked in the play and playwork field for [mumble] decades. Her research focuses on children's play, particularly policy, the politics of space, and ethics. Pip Levett began her career in 1984 at Gloucester's White City Adventure Playground. After 5 years in a play development role, first locally and then nationally, she founded Play Gloucestershire in 2007, which still delivers an award-winning community play ranger programme. Pip's growing interest in therapeutic playwork led her to develop the play nurture concept and to qualify as a therapeutic play practitioner. She currently works on the Play2Nurture project with help from Rafa, her springer spaniel.



[wrussell@glos.ac.uk](mailto:wrussell@glos.ac.uk)



**Sam James**

Wednesday Track: Play and Playwork 11:15-12:45 1 Hour 30 Minutes

**This is it: Resonances from the Ludic Field**



Hi, I'm Sam: a Playworker with a penchant for thinking deeply about play! I've been involved in playwork for 9 years; and play for much longer! I entered the world of playwork quite by accident, starting as a volunteer for the Vale Play Team- what was, originally, supposed to be a short term thing. However, I very quickly began to feel a sense of vocation for playwork, so much so that I decided to pursue it long term; and am currently employed as a Play Leader for the Vale Play Team and as a Senior Playworker for a Primary school in Penarth. I have worked on a variety of different types of play provision over the years: open access playschemes, specialist playschemes for children with disabilities, play rangers, forest schools, respite play sessions during the COVID lockdowns and before/after school and holiday clubs.

sammyjames46@yahoo.co.uk

**Simon Bazley, Anne-Marie Mackin**

Wednesday Track: Playwork Foundation 13:15-14:15 1 Hour

**Co-creating an 'ivory bungalow' for playwork**



Simon Bazley is Chief Executive Playworker at Playful Futures. He was previously CEO of NEW Play and is one of the founding trustees of the Playwork Foundation. He enjoys advocating for a playwork approach from grassroots to policy level. A frequent associate consultant and trainer for Play Wales for whom he has written numerous guidance papers. He has worked in over fifty schools and is excited to now be increasingly be working in pupil referral units and care homes too. Ultimately, Playful Futures is all about supporting adults everywhere to see that playwork is the best methodology for supporting children's play and sharing that message as enthusiastically as possible.

simonjbazley@gmail.com

## Simon Rix

Tuesday Track: Risk Taking

16:00-17:00

1 Hour

### Would you risk it for a biscuit? The mace story.



Simon has been in playwork in various roles for over forty years. These have included face to face playwork, play development, training and structure building. He is currently Co manager of Martin Luther King adventure playground, part of Islington Play Association, and an H&S inspector and consultant with APIA (Adventure Playground Inspectors Association) with the Childrens Play Advisory Service. Simon is a trustee of the Playwork Foundation

[simon@designandbuildplay.org.uk](mailto:simon@designandbuildplay.org.uk)

## Siôn Edwards

Wednesday Track: Playwork Foundation

10:45-11:45

1 Hour

### Still here - Adventure Playgrounds Unite!



Siôn is a playworker at The Venture Integrated Children's Centre, Wrecsam, and is Chair of The Playwork Foundation. Siôn enjoys the variety Wales' largest and oldest adventure playground affords - such as managing comms, managing an inclusion project, and being a tutor on an alternative learning project. Amongst other tasks, through The Playwork Foundation, Siôn also supports fellow Trustee Penny Wilson to host free weekly online reflective practice sessions, "Playwork in Progress". Siôn was diagnosed with ADHD just over a year ago, and has enjoyed exploring how this influences his own life as well as hearing the experience of other neurodivergent people - in particular, how this can inform better playwork provision for all children and young people. Siôn is currently studying Playwork Level 5 at Belfast MET and completing a Level 3 Forest School Leader qualification with Campfire Cymru.

[sion@theventure.wales](mailto:sion@theventure.wales)

## Suzanne Axelsson

Tuesday Track: Playwork in Schools

9:30-11:00

1 Hour 30 Minutes

### Play Responsive Education



Suzanne Axelsson works as a pedagogical consultant using experience, inspiration and research in listening, philosophy with children and Indigenous Knowledge to guide creating democratic learning and play spaces in early childhood education. She holds seminars on intersectional approaches to inclusive play as part of the Preschool Teacher Programme at BUV, Stockholm University. Suzanne is published in books and articles in English, Swedish, Turkish, Hebrew, Italian, Croatian, etc covering topics such as risky play, art, and the Reggio Emilia Approach™; and has written two books - The Original Learning Approach, Weaving Together Play, Learning and Teaching; and Risky Play and Teaching (in Swedish).

saxel177cm@gmail.com

## The GLUE Collective: Faith Pearson, Jemima Graham, Simbi Folarin

Tuesday Track: Playwork

15:30-17:00

1 Hour 30 Minutes

### I can't believe they told us to eat off a bush



GLUE Collective - We have been Growing and Learning in Urban Environments for a long time as individual artists, gardeners, activists and playworkers and as a collective since 2014. In 2021/22 we developed SPARK, an interactive art installation for the Commonwealth Games Birmingham2022 festival which toured Birmingham's parks and community gardens. It was co-created with different groups and continued to grow at our live festival of play in 2023. SPARK has popped up for Birmingham Weekender festival since 2019, making marks, mud and loose parts play in city centre spaces. GLUE partner with The Parakeet in Growing up Green Week in Northfield and FLOW Children's art biennial. We deliver training, consultation, advocacy, placemaking and creative workshops, projects and events.

thegluecollective@gmail.com

## Tony Delahoy

Tuesday Track: Play

13:00-14:00

1 Hour

### Play as the crucible of consciousness?

Wednesday Track: Brain Food

13:15-14:00

45 Minutes

### Anarcho Playwork.



I have always been a playworker and started out as a volunteer at the age of nineteen. Now in my fifty ninth year of life, I can honestly say that I'm as excited about play and playwork as I was then. I have worked at every level from face-to-face playwork right up to national, and on occasion, international level. I completed a master's degree under the supervision of Professor Fraser Brown in 2012. Which I consider a major achievement considering I only had a single GCSE when I began my academic exploration into play and playwork. Although nowadays I don't do many hours as a playworker, my love of playwork hasn't diminished over time and I still find the children and their play to be inspiring in so many ways. If anything my love of playwork has grown and I now spend much of my time reading about play and playwork. I wouldn't want to be doing anything else. I now believe play to be fundamental to being human, and still agree with what Arthur Battam said: 'play is what it is to be human'.

[tdelahoy@gmail.com](mailto:tdelahoy@gmail.com)

## Vicky Edwards

Tuesday Track: Playwork in Schools

14:30-15:30

1 Hour

### On being a playworker in school.



I am a playworker who has over 16 years experience, currently working within a primary school as a Teaching Assistant, Swimming Teacher and a Playworker. I started my playwork journey working at afterschool club and then onto work at an adventure playground in Crawley as a Senior Playworker. Following this I also worked as a playworker in settings such as youth clubs, festivals and open spaces. Before moving to work at my current school I took on the role as an intervention worker for Albion in the Community, working with 14 - 25 year olds in the community. To hear more pop along to my session all about being a playworker within a school, but don't worry if you miss me, you will more than likely find me hiding out near the bookseller with a cuppa in my hand. I have attended the National Playwork Conference for many years, and look forward to returning after missing the last couple.

[vicky.edwards.play@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:vicky.edwards.play@hotmail.co.uk)



**Dr. Yinka Olusoga**

Tuesday Track: Play

11:15-12:45

1 Hour 30 Minutes

**Understanding play through a post-humanist lens**

Wednesday Track: Play and Playwork

9:30-11:00

1 Hour 30 Minutes

**Ethnographies of Play and the Opie Archive**

Dr Yinka Olusoga is a lecturer in education and is Course Director of the BA in Education, Culture and Childhood at the University of Sheffield. Her research and teaching focus on play and children's cultural worlds, past and present. She is interested in children's creative and digital literacies and the intergenerational co-construction of play and storytelling. Before becoming an academic Yinka taught in schools in Birmingham, Liverpool and London, specialising in early years and in the teaching of history. She is co-author (with two of her siblings) of the forthcoming Macmillan children's book 'Black History for Every Day of the Year'.

e.ulusoga@sheffield.ac.uk

**Yvonne Dalorto**

Tuesday Track: Playwork in Schools

11:15-12:45

1 Hour 30 Minutes

**Crossing Boundaries**

An Early Years/Primary Teacher and former Head-teacher, mainly in Spain where I worked mainly in and ESL environment. I am currently working as a Community Coordinator for Global Trainers which enables educational projects to be delivered to educational partners in both the private and charitable sectors. One current project is AI in the classroom and how this also impacts on children's learning and play.

yvonedalorto@gmail.com

# Quest Training

caring • supporting • achieving



## Recognising the Playwork Sector

Quest are proud to be sponsoring the Professional Development Award at The National Playwork Conference. Quest have worked in the childcare and playwork sector for 20 years, training thousand of practitioners across England. A huge congratulations to all the nominees, and for representing this fantastic sector.

Tyron Wain, Managing Director of Quest Training

## Who are Quest Training?

Quest are a work-based training provider who have been delivering training since 2007. Based in the South East we work with hundreds of employers across a range of professional sectors. We deliver work-based training across the Childcare, Education, Business & Sports sectors. We are proud to be consistently delivering apprenticeship success rates above the national average.

**Quest Training**

- caring
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- achieving



## Our Playworker Offering

Our Playworker programme is designed for learners wanting to develop their skills, knowledge & behaviours for a job role involving supporting play. Quest offer the Playworker Level 2 Apprenticeship and the Level 3 Diploma. The Playworker programme has been developed to include a wide variety of roles within the playwork industry, and Quest can offer this nationally.

## Early Years

Early Years is one of our most popular offering, we work with a variety of different settings from schools and nurseries to play centres. Our programmes are designed to allow learners to develop the skills necessary to work in both mainstream education and residential settings and with children with diverse needs and backgrounds.



**“Apprentices gain significant and valuable vocational skills to help them make a good contribution in their settings” – Ofsted Report July 2022**

## Get in Touch!



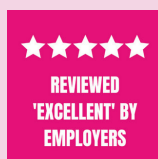
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# 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Playwork Awards

**Praising  
ourselves**

**Praising  
each other**



Taic do Chluiche



**Play  
England**

Freedom to play



[www.playscotland.org](http://www.playscotland.org)



**Chwarae Cymru**

**Play Wales**

**Quest Training**

caring • supporting • achieving

The Awards evening is taking place in the restaurant at the Cavendish Hotel.

It is a 'Black Tie and Ballgown optional' event.

Details of all the shortlisted Award nominees will be found in the Awards brochure on your table at the Awards Dinner and on the Awards website:

<http://playworkawards.org.uk/>

The restaurant doors open at 6:30pm so you can get a drink in the Lounge bar before heading on in!

Here is the **timetable** for the evening:

- 18:30** Doors open at the venue with Live Music and you can find a table where there will be delicious food awaiting your taste buds
- 18:45** The food is served
- 20:30** The awards ceremony begins with the opening monologue
- 20:45** The 1<sup>st</sup> award is introduced and presented.
- 21:00** The 2<sup>nd</sup> award is introduced and presented.
- 21:15** The 3<sup>rd</sup> award is introduced and presented.
- 21:30** The 4<sup>th</sup> award is introduced and presented
- 21:45** We honour our dead
- 21:50** The final award is introduced and presented
- 22:05** The closing monologue
- 22:15** The Ceremony finishes and you can, at your leisure, return to the lounge bar for conversation or stay in the Restaurant for the dancing till 12:00 midnight



# DELEGATE LIST

Delegate Name	Place of Work
Adele McLaren	Cambridge Kids Club
Adele Cleaver	Big Blue Play
Adrian Voce	Starlight Children's Foundation
Aidan Lysaght	KIDS
Ainsley Stiling	Tiverton Adventure Playground
Alfie Goodwin	Inspire Youth Zone
Ali Wood	Meriden Adventure Playground Association
Alla Khlivniuk	Cambridge Kids Club
Amber Molyneux	Leeds Beckett University
Amy Masini	OPAL East Midlands
Amy Campbell	OPAL
Ana Ardelean	OPAL
Andrea Caine	OPAL North East
Angel Seymour	Merton Council
Angela Day	London Borough of Hackney
Anna Dutson	OPAL
Anna Petrucci	RockStone & Pebbles
Professor Anna Beresin	UARTS
Anna Powell	Coleg Y Cymoedd
Anne-Marie Mackin	Freelance
Annette Barnard	Brighton & Hove City Council
Antonio Bergonzi	London Borough of Hackney
Ash Monahan-Waters	OPAL
Becky Willans	OPAL
Ben Rodgers	The Toy Library
Professor Ben Highmore	University of Sussex
Bethan Morgan	OPAL
Beverley Nunn	Pitsmoor Adventure Playground
Bex Skewes	Gwealan Tops Adventure Playground
Bridget Handscomb	Gwealan Tops Adventure Playground
Caitlin Blythe	Inspire Youth Zone
Caroline Denman	Leeds Beckett University
Charlotte Vincent	Funzone Ltd
Charlotte O'Neill	Seren in the Community
Dr. Chris Martin	Tiverton Adventure Playground
Christina Kerr Barnett	Clwb Y Ddraig
Claire Henry	Norfolk County Council
Craig Judson	MASKK: Manor After School & Kids Klubs
Dave Poulton	Meynell Games
David Buchan	Natural Learning Educational Consultancy
Dawn Bunn	Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs

Demi Dack	Leeds Beckett University
Dominique Wicks	Make-Do Play
Donna Eastman	Gwealan Tops Adventure Playground
Eleanor Whittaker	Leeds Beckett University
Ellen Foley	KIDS
Professor Ellen Beate Hansen Sandseter	Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education
Ellie Jackson	Seren in the Community
Emily Holt	Norfolk County Council
Emlyn Smith	Tiverton Adventure Playground
Emma Okpalaeke	MASKK: Manor After School & Kids Klubs
Emma Booth	Leeds Beckett University
Es Fenn	Leeds Beckett
Faith Pearson	GLUE Collective
Finley North-McKeown	Islington Play Association
Gary Freeman	Meynell Games
Gavin Alexander	The Toy Library
Glen Flurry	Play to Measure
Grainne Pickles	OPAL
Hannah Bingham	Leeds Beckett University
Hollie Shepherd	Norfolk County Council
Holly Jewell	Seren in the Community
Hope Stannage	The Children's Garden
Ilona Ramm	Inspire Youth Zone
Ingrid Wilkinson	OPAL North East
Isabel Macfarlane	The Children's Garden
Jackie Boldon	Sussed and Able
Jacqueline Harding	Middlesex University
Jemima Graham	GLUE Collective
Joan Beattie	Transylvania Play
Joanne Nolan	Norfolk County Council
John Fitzpatrick	Gwealan Tops Adventure Playground
Julie West	OPAL
Julie Moore	Merton Council
Julie Lavender	Merton Council
Juliette Liebi	RockStone & Pebbles
Kate Gallon	OPAL North East
Kate Smith	OPAL/Tiverton Adventure Playground
Katie Hutchinson	The Children's Garden
Katie Hall	Project Play
Keith Rogers	Play to Measure
Kerri Burton	Make-Do Play

# DELEGATE LIST

# DELEGATE LIST

Kerry Raymond	Gwealan Tops Adventure Playground
Kevin Johnson	Meriden Adventure
Kubra Gul	Islington Play Association
Kurti Birkenbeil	OPAL
Laura Osborn	The Children's Garden
Libby Truscott	Meynell Games
Lise Storli	Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education
Liz Williams	Gwealan Tops Adventure Playground
Lizzie Pringle	OPAL
Lizzy Fleming	MFS Ltd
Llew Jones	MFS Ltd
Louise Taylor	Norfolk County Council
Lucy Halstead	Sharrow Community Forum
Majeed Mohammed	London Borough of Merton
Martin King-Sheard	Play Wales
Maya Lan	Independent
Meera Patel	RockStone & Pebbles
Melian Mansfield	London Playn
Meynell	Meynell Games
Michael Holt	Cambridgeshire County Council
Michael Follett	OPAL
Michael Fontillo	London Borough of Hackney
Midah Guilbaud-Walter	Meynell Games
Mike Jones	Earth Writghts Ltd.
Nancy Low	OPAL
Neil Beresin	Spouse
Nic James	Y Fenter   The Venture
Nichola Green	OPAL
Nicola Barrett	OPAL
Niki Buchan	Natural Learning Educational Consultancy
Nina Krašovec	Zavod Igrišče Maribor
Olivia Cleminson	Leeds Beckett University
Paula Harris	OPAL
Penny Wilson	Assemble
Pip Levett	Play Gloucestershire
Rachel Murray	OPAL
Rachel Sykes	Project Play
Rashann McDowell	London Borough of Hackney
Rebecca Polley	Norfolk County Council
Rebecca Bennett	Coleg Y Cymoedd
Reiss Baker	London Borough of Hackney
Richard Carling	Seren in the Community
Rosa Curtis	Pitsmoor Adventure Playground

Sam Broadhurst	Play to Measure
Sam James	Vale Play Development
Samantha Fletcher	OPAL
Sarah Buffey-Hichens	OPAL
Sarah Turton	Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs
Sarah Truman	Pitsmoor Adventure Playground
Sarah Owen	Starlight Children's Foundation
Sarah Wilson	SWAPA / APIA
Simbi Folarin	GLUE Collective
Simeon Marriott Dixon	London Borough of Hackney
Simon Barnett	Pitsmoor Adventure Playground
Simon Rix	Independent
Simon Bazley	Playful Futures
Siôn Edwards	Y Fenter   The Venture & The Playwork Foundation
Steven Pool	Pitsmoor Adventure Playground
Suzanne Axelsson	
Dr. Sylwyn Guilbaud	The Magic Fairy Lady
Tilia Guilbaud-Walter	Leeds Beckett
Tom Ardelean	
Tony Delahoy	School For Inspiring Talents
Trishna Patel	RockStone & Pebbles
Tyler Clancy	Islington Play Association
Vanessa Pound	The Toy Library
Vicky Cornwell	Cambridgeshire County Council
Vicky Edwards	St Lawrence CEP School
Wendy Syalon	OPAL
Dr. Wendy Russell	University of Gloucestershire
Will Tremayne	Gwealan Tops Adventure Playground
Yan Gough	The Toy Library
Yanina Koszalinski	Pitsmoor Adventure Playground
Yanis Chan	Cambridge Kids Club
Dr. Yinka Olusoga	The University of Sheffield

# DELEGATE LIST





# **Proud to sponsor the Altogether Different Award**

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[www.ipaengland.org](http://www.ipaengland.org)

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## **Conference Organiser -- FOOTNOTE**

This Conference has been organised and put on by Meynell Games. If you have not come across us before, we are a small non profit distributing organisation working towards making a difference in the play lives of children.

We are an organisation that still gets our hands messy with frontline playwork services so all the playwork training that we run is also underpinned by our current practice.

**Make us your first call if you want to put on some CPD or qualification programmes for your staff**

We are all struggling so let's try to keep all the finances in the sector and not give them to some faceless corporate!

Thank you for being part of this event - and see you again soon,

Meynell

OFFICE: 01323 730500, MOBILE: 07403 617149

[meynell@meynellgames.org.uk](mailto:meynell@meynellgames.org.uk)

[www.ringworld.org.uk](http://www.ringworld.org.uk)

That's a wrap then.

I hope it was as good as you expected.

We are already planning for 2025 so put those dates in your diary

A mahoosive **THANK YOU** to everybody who helped make this happen and to you, **ESPECIALLY**, for being here

**22<sup>nd</sup> National Playwork CONFERENCE**  
Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> & Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025  
**EASTBOURNE**