Sessional Play Worker - Partners in Learning Programme

Cities for Children is an international charity working to protect every child's right to a childhood. For us, that means the right to read, to play and to feel safe. We work alongside schools and communities in the UK and Pakistan to create opportunities for children affected by poverty or displacement, including children from refugee and asylum-seeking backgrounds, to learn, build friendships and feel a sense of belonging.

About Partners in Learning

Our Partners in Learning programme is a primary school-based initiative that uses a *child-to-child* model to support younger children through playful, experiential learning. Older pupils (Big Partners) are trained to become education champions, leading structured play and learning activities for younger pupils (Little Partners), with a strong focus on socio-emotional learning (SEL), confidence-building, and positive relationships. The programme has been implemented in diverse settings, from open-air schools in Pakistan to Schools of Sanctuary in the UK.

The programme will now be taking place in a primary school in Kensington, including children facing different forms of vulnerability. The sessions include creative play, science experiments, sensory exploration, and emotional learning activities aligned with the Early Years and KS1 curriculum.

Commitment: Approximately 2 hours a week, including session prep, delivery and debrief/documentation
Per session compensation: £50
Start date and duration: January 2027 - April 2027

Role Purpose

Working alongside Cities for Children and school staff, the role involves tailored support to older children to develop key socioemotional skills, and generalised support during the PiL sessions. The first four weeks will involve setting ground rules and values, getting to know Big Partners, setting individual SEL goals and sorting them into pairs, and demonstrating key activities. In the next six weeks they will be leading sessions for Reception children, and will need practical support from familiar adults.

Key Responsibilities

- Support the four-week training phase for Big Partners, creating detailed profiles and helping pupils prepare to lead younger children.
- Provide support during child-led play sessions, recognising when to step in and when to give Big Partners space to lead, solve problems and develop confidence independently.
- Help maintain a safe and inclusive environment where children feel comfortable participating, supporting positive interactions when needed.
- Prepare and organise activity materials, including setting up and tidying away after sessions.

- Help Big Partners reflect on their sessions, recognise successes and identify what they could do differently next time.
- Work with programme staff to document observations and contribute to impact reporting, aligned with the evaluation framework.
- Follow safeguarding procedures and report any concerns promptly and appropriately.

Requirements (essential)

- Experience working in an educational setting.
- Enhanced DBS check in place before starting.
- Demonstrable commitment to the rights-based values of Cities for Children.
- Proactive approach and sensitivity to varying needs including special educational needs.
- Confidence, calm and patience when supporting groups of children.
- Safeguarding awareness and understanding of professional boundaries and behaviour support.
- Strong communication and teamwork skills.

Desired

- Knowledge of trauma-informed approaches, child psychology or child development.

Please send your CV and a brief expression of interest to Alex Pagan at alex@citiesforchildren.co by 23 November 2026.