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The Production and Performance of Workplace Hierarchies in Australian Outside School Hours Care

Bruce Hurst*, Kylie Brannelly**, Jennifer Cartmel***

Abstract: Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) provides play, leisure, care and education for significant numbers of Australian children. As government has become increasingly involved in the regulation of OSHC, the sector has become increasingly professionalised. OSHC practitioners are active participants in quality improvement processes and increasingly likely to have qualifications. Despite its growing social importance, there is little research about the OSHC workforce. This article draws on a research project conducted with OSHC practitioners who participated in a professional development program that introduced a set of professional standards for practitioners. The research investigated how participants engaged with the standards after completion of the program and demonstrated that uptake of the professional standards was complicated by workplace and sector hierarchies. Participants were less likely to use the standards for service leaders and short-term, casualised workers. These hierarchies formed in complex ways around dominant discourses that underestimate care and leisure work and position OSHC as a secondary consideration for school management. The findings in this research have important implications for the sustainability of the OSHC workforce, how it is perceived and how it engages with professional development programs.

Keywords: Outside School Hours Care, School Age Care, Extended Education, Workforce, Foucault

Introduction

Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services play a critical role for Australian society and increasing numbers of families. Whilst OSHC has mostly served a care function since the early 1980's, its other purposes have changed over time (Cartmel, 2007; Hurst, 2019). The Australian Government currently sees OSHC as having multiple purposes, providing children and their families with play, leisure and custodial care that contributes to children's learning and development (Cartmel & Hurst, 2021; AGDE, 2022). As the social functions of OSHC have changed, so too have the tasks that OSHC workers perform and therefore how they are perceived as professionals. This paper concerns itself with the professional roles available to OSHC workers and their workplaces. It draws on recent research conducted by Cartmel et al (2020) with a group of OSHC workers from Queensland, Australia who participated in a professional development program that introduced a set of professional standards for workers (The Standards) developed by the Queensland Children's Activities Network (QCAN). The purpose of the research was to investigate how participants had engaged with the program and

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The Standards. As well as providing insights into the effectiveness of the program, the analysis of the research data provided fascinating insights into workplace hierarchies that form around dominant discourses in OSHC. This purpose of this article is to investigate these hierarchies, which appear unique to OSHC and consider their implications for how workers engage with The Standards and their investment in staff development and training.

Changing Contexts in Outside School Hours Care in Australia

OSHC is a significant site of care, play and learning for large numbers of Australian children. In June 2017, 363,700 per day attended OSHC. Attendances favour children in the lower age range. Approximately 20.5% of 6 to 8-year-old children attended OSHC in 2017, compared to only 9% of 9 to 12 year-olds (ABS, 2018). Irrespective of its importance there is little peer-reviewed research investigating OSHC (Moir & Bunker, 2022; Simoncini, Cartmel & Young, 2015; Cartmel & Hayes, 2016; Cartmel & Grieshaber, 2014).

OSHC provision has undergone constant change. Recreational after school activities in Australia have existed for over 100 years (Cartmel, 2007), but growth in the amount and importance of OSHC began in the 1970s and 1980s with increasing participation of women in the workforce (Cartmel, 2007; Brennan, 1994; Simoncini, Cartmel & Young, 2016). OSHC provision has increased substantially over the last 30 years, driven by increasing workforce participation (Baxter et al., 2014; Winefield et al., 2011). The size of the OSHC workforce more than doubled between 1997 and 2013 and grew another 52% between 2013 and 2016 (Australian Government Productivity Commission, 2014; Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017).

OSHC serves multiple purposes that have shifted over time and is valued differently by a range of stakeholders (Cartmel & Hurst, 2021). Parents primarily use OSHC for the custodial care it provides in the hours after school. Similarly, Government places significant value on the custodial care function of OSHC and its role in supporting workforce participation (Cartmel & Hurst, 2021). Whilst adult perspectives dominate considerations about the purpose of OSHC, it is critical also to consider the perspectives of children. A growing body of research suggests that children value OSHC primarily for providing play, leisure and friendships (Bell & Cartmel, 2019; Cartmel & Hayes, 2014; Hurst, 2020, 2019, 2015). Since the Australian Government's regulatory reforms of early childhood education and OSHC in 2009, OSHC has increasingly been understood as a complementary site of education that supports children's development (Cartmel & Hurst, 2021). The Australian focus on play, leisure, care and education is most similar to the forms of extended education provided in Nordic countries (Bae, 2018).

These changing purposes have likely been informed by the increasing regulation of OSHC, which has been subject to a succession of regulatory programs over the last 25 years, beginning with the voluntary National Standards in 1995, which were focused on health and safety. In 2004, OSHC joined early childhood education and care services in the national quality assurance scheme and then the National Quality Framework (NQF) in 2009. The NQF encompasses a suite of reforms including national benchmarks provided by the National Quality Standard (NQS), national health and safety laws and also a curriculum framework, My Time, Our Place Framework for School Age Care in Australia, which is specific to OSHC provision (ACECQA, 2019). My Time Our Place in particular marks OSHC's shift in purpose

Qualified and Unqualified Staff in German All-day Schools. An Exploratory Overview

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Abstract: In Germany, three groups can be identified who work in all-day schools and take on pedagogical tasks in extended education: Teachers, pedagogical staff, and staff without a pedagogical qualification (lay pedagogues). While the professionalisation debate on teachers and pedagogical staff already exists, there is a lack of knowledge on lay staff. In this article we consider the group of lay pedagogues. Findings from existing studies explore in more detail the expertise that personnel bring into all-day education.

Keywords: professionalisation, extended education, lay pedagogues

Introduction

Similar to many other countries, the field of extended education – especially in the context of after-school care¹ – is growing in Germany since the beginning of the 21st century (Bae, 2019; Stecher, Maschke, & Preis, 2018). Extended education in Germany is organised through child and youth services and/or schools. The children and youth service institutions could be public or independent (e. g. church, local institutions or clubs). While in the eastern part of Germany, the children and youth services are in most cases responsible for offering and organising extended education, respectively in the form of after-school care, it is in the western part the schools. However, even mixed forms with shared responsibilities and collaborative programs with partners outside school exist and in practice the different institutions cooperate with each other (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2020; Eßer, Graßhoff, Krinninger, & Schröer, 2022). Furthermore, the attendance extended education could be compulsory or voluntary for the students (Schuepbach & Lilla, 2020). Even within one school several organisations of extended education could be observed. Beyond schools and children and youth services, the local (sports) clubs and other out of school institutions are involved in the care of school children in the community (Schuepbach & Lilla, 2020; StEG-Konsortium, 2019), like football clubs, music schools, the local gardening club.

The discourse about extended education care for school children is closely related to the expansion of (so-called) all-day schools (Fischer & Klieme, 2013; Fischer, Theis, & Züchner, 2014; Steinmann, Strietholt, & Caro, 2018). In the recent twenty years, a large body of

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1 We use the terms after-school care and out of school care synonymously to extended education. However, extended education describes more a context which also includes extracurricular activities as a part of after school care. Along with Bae (2019) we use extended education as an “umbrella term”.

research concerning all-day schools and extended education emerged and even some of the research conducted in Germany is available in English. Most of the research concern effects on students' performance and the reduction of inequalities (Fischer et al., 2014; Steinmann et al., 2018) or social behaviour (Sauerwein, Theis, & Fischer, 2016) and the cooperation between teacher and staff offering extended education (Böhm-Kasper, Dizinger, & Gausling, 2016). However, little is known about the qualifications and the professionalisation of staff offering extracurricular activities. Furthermore, there is a lack of knowledge about the numbers of staff who are involved in extended education. This is of great importance because from 2026 there will be a legal entitlement for after-school care (Graßhoff & Sauerwein, 2021). This is linked to a further expansion of the infrastructure of extended education as well as to an increased need for personnel, which can hardly be covered by staff with a pedagogical qualification alone (Graßhoff & Sauerwein, 2022; Rauschenbach, Meiner-Teubner, Böwing-Schmalenbrock, & Olszenka, 2021). Recent estimates suggest a need for an additional 50,000 to 100,000 professionals, depending on the take-up of the legal entitlement for after-school care (Bock-Famulla, Girndt, Vetter, & Kriechel, 2022). The goal of this paper is to provide a focus on lay pedagogues, unqualified staff. First, it should be noted that in the literature on existing approaches to professionalisation, there are hardly any formulated requirements for the group of lays. Second, it can be seen that the employees at all-day schools are qualified in different ways. This diversification is particularly evident among lay staff. In a further step, the article deals with two studies in more detail in order to be able to make first statements about the relation between qualifications and the pedagogical orientations of the lay persons and the knowledge about quality.

Staff in Extended Education

As far as we know, in Germany there is no systematic and comprehensive inventory of the personnel involved in all-day education. For the primary school sector based on analysis of available official data, it is estimated that around 96,000 people work in all-day programmes (schools and/or institutions belonging to children and youth service) (Autorengruppe Fachkräftebarometer, 2021). However, staff employed through cooperation partners is not recorded as well as the staff involved in institutions that are not directly cooperating with schools. At primary schools, 85% of the pedagogical staff can be classified as professional. They have a degree from a vocational training, university or other qualification. This group consists mostly of early childhood teachers with a vocational training degree (70%). The remaining 15% of the qualified staff have an academic degree from a university or a university of applied sciences. Around 14% of staff who work in extended education are without a recognised pedagogical qualification (Autorengruppe Fachkräftebarometer, 2021). Similar the child and youth service statistics show that 87% of the professionals working in all-day care have a relevant university or vocational degree (Autorengruppe Kinder- und Jugendhilfestatistik, 2021). For North Rhine-Westphalia (the most populous federal state in Germany) there are more detailed statistics available. The staff without relevant pedagogical vocational training provides the largest number of hours (94 hours at primary schools), followed by educators with 75 hours. Social workers provide only 37 hours and teachers only 13 hours (Altermann et al., 2018). Taken this together, it seems possible that qualified staff (teachers, early childhood teachers, social workers) is involved in extended education offered

“It shouldn’t be something you have to create on your own.”

Personal practical knowledge construction and professional learning for teachers in Swedish school-age educare.

Lena Glaés-Coutts*

Abstract: Teachers who work in school-age educare (SAEC) in Sweden possess a variety of educational qualifications. They hold a dual role working as teachers both within the compulsory program and school-age educare. This dual competence requirement means that their professional needs are unique and often different from that of their colleagues who only work in the compulsory school system (Berglund, Lager, Lundkvist and Gustavsson Nyckel, 2019). They reside in a complex context when it comes to opportunities for constructing their personal professional knowledge. Considering that already in 2021, the government announced the creation of a national professional learning program (Regeringen 2021), it is essential to understand what type of professional learning is deemed needed by the SAEC teachers themselves. Through narrative interviews with SAEC teachers, this study aims to map an understanding of how the teachers construct their personal professional knowledge as SAEC teachers. The main research question in this study is:

How do SAEC teachers describe the role of professional learning as part of creating and developing their personal professional knowledge?

The findings indicate a need for a systematic approach to recognize the qualification of experienced teachers and create a framework for professional learning opportunities for all teachers in SAEC.

Keywords: School-age educare, extended education, professional development, personal professional knowledge construction, teacher.

Introduction and Literature Review

One of the complexities of teacher professional learning (PL) is that it contains both elements of the micro (the teachers) and the macro (schools and governments) systems (Borko and Putnam, 1997; Opfer and Pedder, 2011). In Sweden, there is an added challenge to these multifaceted aspects for the teachers who work in school-age educare. Teachers who work in the extended education program, known as school-age educare (SAEC), have a wider variety of educational backgrounds than teachers within the compulsory school. This reflects how both the work itself and the qualifications for the work have changed over the years. As professionals in the compulsory school system, the teachers working in school-age educare in Sweden, often find themselves “betwixt and between” the roles that the teachers in the compulsory school and preschool inhabit (Ackersjö, Lindqvist and Nordäng, 2019). Being part of the compulsory school system, they occupy a dual role of working both within the

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compulsory program as well as the school-age educare program. This dual competence requirement means that their professional needs are unique and often different from that of their colleagues in the compulsory school system (Berglund, Lager, Lundkvist and Gustavsson Nyckel, 2019). This means that their work is situated within a context that reflects a more complex approach to PL. Ludvigsson and Falkner (2019) refer to school-age educare teachers as positioned in a “borderland” in the educational landscape as the teachers must navigate the two educational systems.

The SAEC teachers work in collaboration with preschool and compulsory school teachers (Skolverket 2022) and are responsible for the before- and after-school educational program. Today, the school-age educare centers employ staff who are educated as leisure time pedagogues, school-age educare teachers, early childhood educators, and other staff with other educational backgrounds. From 2019, a successful completion of a three-year university degree in Extended Education is, however, required to be licensed as a teacher in school-age educare. As part of the degree, they are also qualified to teach an aesthetic subject (music, art, physical education etc.) in the compulsory program. The major challenge faced is how to create PL for a section of teachers whose qualification and educational background has significantly changed over time. It is a complex but relevant question for the profession itself. The field of extended education is a growing area of interest in both Sweden and other countries that have extended education systems. However, most studies have focused on the effect extended education has on student achievement (Klerfelt, Ljusberg, Hippinen Ahlgren, 2020) rather than the PL needs of the teachers. The field of extended education remains very much an under-researched area in education and currently, no study has examined the PL needs of SAEC teachers.

A Brief Overview of School-age educare in Sweden

School-age educare is a non-compulsory section of the Swedish school system. Students ages 6–13 have the right to be enrolled in the school-age educare program, which is to a great deal subsidized by the government. The SAEC program is voluntary and available year-round with a focus on socialization, recreation and education for students aged 6–13. While it is not compulsory, a full 84% of students aged 6–9 attend the SAEC program as part of their school day (SOU 2020:34).

The teachers in SAEC work in different capacities both within the compulsory and the SAEC program. The title used to describe them has traditionally not been *teachers*, but *pedagogues*. While the Swedish language makes a distinction between the title *pedagogue* and *teacher*, these terms are usually seen as synonymous in English. Similar to extended education programs in other countries, the Swedish system reflects its society and represents the idea of society’s need to provide safe places for young children when parents are working. As a government institution, it reflects and promotes the values of the society within which it operates. The Swedish program evolved from being a place for children of the working class where they could learn practical skills to the 1960 s after-school centers known as *fritidshem*; (leisure home centers), to today’s school-age educare centers (Klerfelt, Ljusberg, Hippinen Ahlgren, 2020). The more recent shift to include a focus on pedagogy and teaching implies a more direct connection to compulsory school, which is also reflected in the latest term *school-age educare* (Skolverket/ Swedish National Agency for Education, 2022). The origins of

Patterns of Participation in Organized Leisure Activities of Young People in Low and Middle Secondary Educational Tracks in Germany

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Abstract: Organized leisure activities are an important component of learning with a great potential for positive youth development. The available research has grown in the past decade but is still lacking differentiated analysis of specific activity determinants and longitudinal designs. Based on retrospectively collected quantitative data ($n=1,547$) at the end of low/middle secondary schools in Germany (9th/10th grades), this study explores patterns of organized activity participation over the school years using LCA (Latent Class Analysis). Four latent classes could be identified on the basis of eight manifest activity determinants: *None-Actives*, *Minor-Actives*, *Multiple-Actives*, and *Committed-Actives*. Sociodemographic indicators as well as social, cultural, and economic capital predict the assignment to these classes.

Keywords: organized leisure activities, non-formal education, patterns of activity participation, LCA, disadvantaged young people

Introduction

Adolescence is a turbulent phase of life in which a variety of changes and demands need to be coped with. In addition to formal education in school, participation in non-formal education in leisure time can play a significant role in helping youth cope with these challenges and, hence, for positive youth development (Farb & Matjasko, 2012). Important settings for non-formal education are organized leisure activities in which youth participate regularly over an extended period of time and which are led by an activity leader. Examples of such activities are playing sports in a club or learning to play a musical instrument (Mahoney & Stattin, 2000). Young people use organized leisure activities to pursue their interests and to experience and develop self-determination and responsibility. Organized leisure activities can be seen as an important component of learning, which ties in with young people's interests (Mahoney & Stattin, 2000; Metsäpelto & Pulkkinen, 2014). The potential of non-formal activities goes even beyond the teaching of formal skills. For example, extracurricular educational processes are important for the acquisition of vocational goal orientation and determining future pros-

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pects of young people (Denault, Ratelle, Duchesne, & Guay, 2018; Hemming & Reißig, 2015).

Based on the resource model of coping with life (Fend, Berger & Grob, 2009) as a heuristic frame, organized leisure activities are understood as a developmental context for positive youth development. Accordingly, organized leisure activities are on the one hand affected by social background indicators (e. g. forms of capital; Bourdieu, 1983) and on the other hand can have positive effects on personal and social resources as well as coping with developmental tasks (Hemming & Tillmann, 2023).

The state of research shows that primarily achievement-oriented, socioeconomically better-off young people participate in organized leisure activities, a trend that can be associated with social selectivity (Lareau, 2002; Perrson, Kerr, & Stattin, 2007). At the same time, extracurricular educational processes can help to reduce the link between social background and academic achievement (Mahoney & Stattin, 2000). Currently, numerous studies exist that address the relationship between social background and the use of organized leisure activities (e. g., Goshin, Dubrov, Kosaretsky, & Grigoryev, 2021; Meier, Hartmann, & Larson, 2018; O'Donnell, Pegg, & Barber, 2019). But the available research is not very differentiated and there is a lack of specific analyses examining activity usage of young people over a longer period of time in order to trace changes and development (Gniewosz, Zimmermann, Langmeyer-Tornier & Alt, 2018).

Also, generally, research on non-formal educational processes in organized leisure activities is still limited. Even though this small but diverse and interdisciplinary field of research has developed substantially over the past decades (e. g., Farb & Matjasko, 2012; Fischer, Steiner & Theis, 2019; Modecki, Blomfield Neira, & Barber, 2018; Suter & Györi, 2021), the focus lies mostly on cross-sectional analysis and leisure contexts from a more general perspective. As is known, it is hardly possible to adequately capture learning processes in non-formal settings from a social science perspective (Moskaliuk & Cress, 2016). According to Dux and Rauschenbach (2016), these can only be surveyed indirectly through their effects on young people. Therefore, it is important to capture specific determinants, which characterize the engagement of young people in organized leisure activities more precisely (Busseri & Rose-Krasnor, 2009). Besides the type of activities (e. g., sports or music), specific activity determinants like breadth, variety, and intensity are noticed in current studies however they have mostly been considered individually so far (e. g., breadth and intensity: Busseri & Rose-Krasnor, 2009; Denault & Poulin, 2009) and there are only few studies that comprehensively consider different determinants (e. g., Urban, Lewin-Bizan, & Lerner, 2010; Fischer et al., 2019; Sauerwein, Theis & Fischer, 2016). Yet, there are also studies that work with classification analyses (see chapter “Analysis”) to identify and illustrate patterns in leisure time activities of young people. In these “classification” studies, however, only a few determinants of organized activities are included specifically. To our knowledge, there is no overview of existing studies that use classification analyses to identify activity patterns.

Accordingly, this paper follows three objectives: (1) to give an overview of studies that deal with “classification analyses” in the context of patterns of leisure time activities of young people, (2) to explore patterns of organized activity participation based on retrospective empirical data and specific determinants during school years, and (3) to describe those patterns in the context of social background characteristics to identify selective processes.

Using theories that pertain to space and geography in Australian Outside School Hours settings: Playworkers perspectives

Angus Gorrie*, Caitlin Jordinson

Abstract: This practitioner paper explores the positive impact playwork could have for Australian OSHC (Outside School Hours Care) environments and in turn, educators and children. Through a discussion of four theoretical perspectives pertaining to physical space from a playworkers perspective, the authors show how developing a conceptual understanding of these can support Australian OSHC settings nurture a place for play. With a focus on affordance theory, compound flexibility, liminality and psychogeography, this paper breaks down these theories and posits their practical applications within an OSHC setting.

Keywords: Outside School Hours Care (OSHC), playwork, affordance, psychogeography, liminality, liminal spaces, compound flexibility

Introduction

Throughout this paper, we will explore how Australian OSHC educators can create an environment conducive to play through an understanding of how space stimulates and cues play for children. As playwork practitioners working in an Australian OSHC, we understand that the physical environment of a play space is critical for children to engage in optimal play opportunities. As playwork practitioners, we facilitate play for plays sake, without alternative agendas in mind and thus, it is important to be critically aware of our own individual impact on the space. By combining the theories of affordance, compound flexibility, liminality, and psychogeography, OSHC educators will have a deeper understanding of how they can facilitate a space and place, both theoretically and in practice, that will invite play. These theories will also inform OSHC educators on the importance of their presence in the space and how they can support children and the play process, without input of alternative adult agendas into their own practice or the children's play. This paper will analyse through theory and practical application how OSHC educators can apply this within their own framework (National Quality Standard and My Time, Our Place) (ACECQA, 2018) (DEEWR, 2011), whilst still emphasising the duty to consider their own individual influence and responsibility to their respective play spaces. Although the authors acknowledge OSHC educators face challenges of perception and aesthetic, this paper considers how the optimal environment for play can still be achieved.

First, we must consider the role of both an OSHC educator and a playworker. Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) is a service provided in Australia for children in primary school (5–12 year olds) that require additional care arrangements before school, after school or during the school holidays. Most primary schools across Australia have some variation of this

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service however, this paper will refer to it as OSHC. Typically, there is a variety of individuals who undertake the roles in an OSHC setting. Generally, the role is known as an educator. However, there are also 'playworkers' present in some services across Australia. These playworkers are typically still labelled as educators. The authors of this paper are playworkers that work in an OSHC that uses playwork to govern their practice. This is not common amongst the Australian OSHC sector.

Australian OSHC educators hold a significant role in the workings of our contemporary Australian society, especially with the increase of formal care arrangement usage (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018). The OSHC sector in Australia is legislated by a National Quality Standard which includes the use of the My Time Our Place Framework for Australian School Age Care (ACECQA, 2022). The National Quality Standard contains seven Quality Areas which guide programs, as well as health and safety, and administrative standards. The Educators' Guide for My Time Our Place states that educators "are responsible for the interactions, experiences, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in a school age care environment designed to foster children's wellbeing, development, and learning." (Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2012). Although educators are solely present for children, the requirements of frameworks and legislation place significant pressure on the OSHC educator workforce to foster learning outcomes, document practice, while also upholding responsibilities such as mandatory reporting and being competent first aid responders. The My Time Our Place framework holds intentions to keep children's play at the forefront however, this can often be lost in the interpretation of the framework (Gorrie, 2022; Newstead, 2019).

Since the beginning of the adventure playgrounds movement in the 1940 s, playworkers have worked to define their role and their purpose with children. Allen and Nicholson (1975) stated that for an Adventure playground, "a leader of the right type was the key to success" but later said "there was no tradition to go on; no one knew what sort of person the leader should be or what he was expected to do." Lady Allen (Allen and Nicholson, 1975), also spoke about how "good leaders, with an instinct for following the children's interests, are born, not made...". This insight into the role of the playworker depicts how intuitive and complex the role can be. Since these initial observations by Lady Allen, the Playwork Principles have been developed. The eight Playwork Principles that govern the practice of playwork interweave the responsibilities and practices expected by playworkers, rooted in support, facilitation, advocacy, responsiveness, intervention, and reflection with the children always at the forefront (PPSG, 2015). Further, Brown (2015) has indicated the practice of the playworker is to remove barriers to play and to create flexible environments for children.

The inability for a universally accepted definition of playwork creates difficulty for the workforce, especially when justifying and explaining their practice to other fields. Newstead (2019) discusses the ongoing issues with the unclear professional role of a playworker, highlighting that the inability for a role and responsibilities outline has led to a decline in the holistic approach of the practice. Further, there are multiple interpretations of the Playwork Principles, sprouting practices claiming 'playwork' (Newstead, 2019). Despite this, playwork in all its holistic, intuitive practice exists within many settings such as OSHC.

When comparing the role of a playworker and an OSHC educator, much of the language and intention is the same however, OSHC educator roles can often be dictated more by frameworks and legislation than being responsive to the child. As playworkers, we see the value of playwork and the theories discussed in the following section as being applicable in an