



Every Child Has the Right to Play

Play Strategy for Children & Young People in Cardiff



A Proud Capital
Prifddinas Falch

PLAY STRATEGY

Foreword

By Councillor Nigel Howells



“Play is a child’s first claim on the community. Play is nature’s training for life. No community can infringe that right without doing deep and enduring harm to the minds and bodies of its citizens. “

This quote from David Lloyd George in 1926 sums up perfectly the fundamental importance of every child’s right to play. This is something that was later recognised in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This Play Strategy should help our understanding about the importance of play in Cardiff and help to communicate the message of how essential play is in the healthy development of children and young people.

It has been written by a multi agency group from Cardiff and has undergone extensive consultation with children and young people as well as a range of adults.

It sets out a clear vision and mission for play across the City and focuses on seven key objectives.

We intend that this Strategy is an active document and is supported by an Implementation Plan which is a working document with targets to be achieved over the coming years.

The one key message from this document is that Cardiff is a place that values and actively makes provision for play.



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This 5 year strategy will cover all children and young people between the ages of 0 - 25 years, with the primary focus on 5 - 15 year olds and will be supported by an Action Plan that will detail the implementation. The Action Plan will clearly show responsibility for implementation for each item and will be co-ordinated by the Play Development Officer, Children's Play Services for Cardiff Council. In the first half of its life the Action Plan will help the Play Strategy to drive forward the work of implementing Priority 10 in the Cardiff Children and Young People's Plan 2008-2011. This priority will 'increase opportunities, and reduce barriers, so that all children and young people can participate in appropriate play'

What is Play

Play is a fundamental right and is enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This means that every child living in Cardiff is entitled to and has a right "to engage in play and recreational activities" (*United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 31*). A popular definition of play within the profession is that play is "freely chosen, personally directed, intrinsically motivated behaviour that actively engages the child" (*Hughes and King 1982*). The key implication is

that children choose WHAT they do, HOW they do it, and WHY they do it.

Play cuts across and has an important role in many different professions. It has a place in the work of many different service areas, organisations and groups. The provision and development of play opportunities in Cardiff is not the responsibility of one organisation or group, but of a wide range of different organisations, groups, individuals and communities who have a variety of reasons for being involved.

Benefits of Play

Play is critical for developing children and young people's emotional literacy. The Mental Health Foundation estimates that at any one time 20% of children experience psychological problems, which includes stress and anxiety. Children and young people need opportunities for graduated risk taking in unsupervised play. This builds self confidence and resilience which are two key preventative factors for mental health.

Play promotes a healthy lifestyle. It improves fitness and encourages children and young people to develop an active lifestyle as well as promoting mental health and social well being. Playing outdoors is one of the recommendations for promoting 60 minutes of activity per day.

There is a need to provide children and young people with opportunities to reconnect with nature, by being able to explore their environment from an early age, thus enabling children to become inquisitive adults, independent thinkers and learners who not only want to know more about the world but also recognise their reliance on it.

Recent research carried out "Increasing Children's Volume of Physical Activity Through Walk and Play" (Mackett and Paskins 2004), on behalf of University College London for the DCMS, revealed that play is considered to be the time of most activity, this was found accidentally when looking at modes of transport to and from school. It also showed children that walked to school are more mentally alert during school time.

Behavioural expectations and an understanding of rules are essential in an ordered society. Children learn these social rules during play, becoming aware of, and respecting the needs of others, learning to compromise and taking responsibility for their own actions. Through play they develop levels of social competence, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. This could lead to fewer problems with anti social behaviour in later years.

"The right to play is the child's first claim on the community. Play is nature's training for life. No community can infringe that right without doing deep and enduring harm to the minds and bodies of their citizens." (David Lloyd George 1928)

	Cardiff		All Other SE Wales UA's	
	No.	%	No.	%
0 to 4	17,700	5.5	61,800	5.6
5 to 14	38,400	12.0	143,400	13.1
15 to 24	58,500	18.3	138,800	12.7
0 to 24	114,600	35.8	344,000	31.4

The Welsh Assembly Government believes that:

“Play is the elemental learning process by which humankind has developed. Children exhibit a behavioural imperative and instinctive desire to play. It has contributed significantly to the evolutionary and developmental survival of our species. Children use play in the natural environment to learn of the world they inhabit with others. It is the very process of learning and growth, and as such all that is learnt through it is of benefit to the child.”

Cardiff Definition of Play

Play means children choosing what they want to do, how they want to do it and when to stop and try something else. Free play has no external goals set by adults and has no curriculum. Although adults usually provide the space and resources for free play and might be involved, the child takes the lead and the adults respond to the cues from the child.

General

Background to Cardiff

Cardiff is the capital city of Wales and also the largest unitary authority in the Principality and is continuing to grow faster than any other city in Europe. The population according to the 2001 Census was 305,353 and has since grown to an estimated 319,700 (Register General's Office at the Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2005 mid year estimates). The population figure represents 10.81 % of the total population estimate for Wales in the same year.

Whilst Cardiff is perceived to be relatively prosperous through the results of private sector inward investment and urban regeneration initiatives (which are bringing many prestigious amenities to the city), some 50,000 of its residents are classified as living within the 10 % most deprived communities in Wales.

Over 35 % of the population of Cardiff are within the age range covered by this strategy. The distribution of population by age group in the 15 to 24 age bracket is slightly higher in Cardiff compared to the rest of South East Wales, due to the large student population.

Whilst the Census 2001 shows Cardiff's ethnic minority population to be 8.4 % compared to 6.1 % in the 1991 Census, more recent statistics estimate the figure to be 10.7 % . The Asian community represents the largest minority ethnic group in Cardiff (3.95 %), within this the Pakistani community account for 1.4 % and the Indian community constitute 1.25 % . The mixed community is 2 % of the population, Black communities are 1.28 % and Chinese or other are 1.2 % of the total Cardiff population (Census 2001).

In Cardiff, 10.9 % of the population (all ages) are able to speak Welsh. This ranks Cardiff as 16th out of 22 authorities in terms of the ability to speak Welsh.





This Strategy has been drawn up within the context of the work of the Cardiff Children and Young People's Partnership (The C&YPP). The C&YPP has responsibility for the planning and implementation of one of the four key planning documents which will support the local Community Strategy in Cardiff. This single plan for children and young people will be implemented from September 2008 and will replace all other local strategic plans in relation to children and young people.

The C&YPP in Cardiff is arranged according to guidance on local co-operation under the Children Act 2004 which has applied with statutory force since September 2006. This guidance is entitled 'Children & Young People: Rights to Action, Stronger Partnerships for Better Outcomes'. Cardiff County Council, its key partners and all other relevant local organisations concerned with the interests of children & young people are engaged through the partnership in co-operative local arrangements on behalf of children and young people.

A range of multi-agency task groups within the C&YPP assist with planning and implementation for particular areas of work and these groups are ultimately accountable to a C&YPP Board. The partnership's work is assisted across the range of its activities by investment in participation and evaluative mechanisms. Joint commissioning of services by the partnership is achieved through a group set up within the partnership structure explicitly for this purpose.

Implementation of the Children and Young People's Plan will be overseen by the C&YPP Board and by five Core Groups answerable to that Board. The Play, Sport, Leisure and Culture Core Group will take responsibility for overseeing implementation of the play strategy. A working group (or groups) will be set up for the purpose of implementation. The group will be supported by the Partnership and will report to the Core Group. Monitoring, evaluation and annual review of subsequent progress will be integrated with the C&YP Plan requirements.

The Partnership has given a particular impetus to the need to progress its aims by engaging with and consulting children and young people and the diverse communities of Cardiff which they represent. This has led to the detailed work of consultation and participation set out in this plan. This work is also illustrative of the Partnerships commitment to addressing issues of diversity and particularly culture, language, race equality and disability. Priority has been given to ensuring that engagement and consultation reaches all sectors of the community and is fully inclusive.

Early in 2007, Children and Young People were consulted in the preparation of the strategy. In total some twelve consultations involving over five hundred children and young people were carried out in over 15 settings across the City. The results of this consultation have been condensed and collected together under 7 key objectives. Each objective will in turn generate a series of actions to ensure its delivery over the life of the strategy. This 'Action Plan' will be the key driver in taking forward this strategy.



The Key Objectives

The seven key objectives covered by the strategy are:

Objective One

- Consultation & Working in Partnership

Objective Two

- Encouraging More Play Provision

Objective Three

- Play in Schools

Objective Four

- Play in the Community

Objective Five

- A Playwork Profession

Objective Six

- Actively Promote Play in a Positive Way

Objective Seven

- Increase Value of Play Spaces



Objective One – Consultation and Working in Partnership

Aim: To consult, observe, involve and work in partnership with children and young people and other agencies in the planning and delivery of the strategy and play services.

What needs to be considered?

Empowerment for all staff, volunteers, organisations, parents and carers, and most importantly children and young people, by ensuring their involvement in the development and delivery of services and provision.

Appropriateness, to ensure that different techniques, methods, engagement processes are used according to age, ability, gender and subject matter. Involvement, ensuring all children and young people have the opportunity to be involved by their choice.

Those excluded i.e. from school, or mainstream provision

Partnerships – Multi agency, Inter departmental, cross sector working

Regular and consistent consultation, carried out by confident and competent facilitators

How is this to be achieved?

- Using face to face consultation with younger children, e.g. liaison with play groups, parent and toddler groups, schools, playschemes, ensuring that a cross section of the community is consulted.
- Using questionnaires, conferences, working parties and any other suitable methods as agreed with partners.

- Engaging with established School Councils and other children and young people based forums i.e. The Sprout website, “Hear By Right”.
- Adapting methods of communication, including information provided in adapted formats to meet specific requirements.
- Engaging with members of the ‘Play Forum’ for Cardiff, Voluntary Action Cardiff and Cardiff Children, Young People and Families Network. Parents Network and Family Support Strategy.
- Ensuring local, linguistic and cultural needs are considered.
- Observation of children and young people at play, linking to theories, to ensure that children and young people are still able to play freely without adult interference.
- Producing consultation information database that identifies work already undertaken and any gaps for the future. This work will be carried out in conjunction with the Participation Officer in CYPP.
- Forming Focus Groups.
- Effective communication involving a broad range of media.
- Giving regular feedback.
- Linking with National and local organisations who have established data bases i.e. Children’s Commissioner for Wales, Children in Wales and Funky Dragon.

Who will Co-ordinate delivery?

- Play Strategy Partnership Working Group



Objective Two - Encouraging More Play Provision



Aim: To ensure that high quality, appropriate, accessible and resourced local play opportunities are available for children and young people within Cardiff.

What needs to be considered?

- All children and young people
- Equality of access
- Funding/resources
- Freedom of choice
- Transport
- Equality of opportunity
- Communication
- Bilingual provision
- Integrated Children's Centre's these are required to include open access play facilities within their networks.
- Flying Start Initiative which considers play for children between 0 – 3 in disadvantaged areas.
- Implementation, maintenance & replacement of all provision and services, e.g. Fixed Play Equipment, Play Rangers, and Community based projects and Play Centres Community Focussed Schools
- Involvement of communities in developing and sustaining provision
- Child Care Provision
- Youth Service Provision
- Community First Areas
- Family Support Strategy



How is this to be achieved?

- Audit and full needs analysis for Cardiff to identify gaps in provision and service delivery.
- Review of all current provision to establish possibilities of joint working and sharing of resources and funding to maximise play opportunities.
- Working in partnership – from 2008 each local authority area will be required to have a children and young people's plan covering all services for those aged 0 – 25 years and maternity services. Strengthened partnership arrangements are necessary for development and delivery of these plans through effective joint working. Children and Young People's Partnerships are a requirement under the Children Act 2004 (Stronger Partnerships for Better Outcomes - Children and Young People – Rights To Action)
- Identification of new funding sources or pooled funding
- Maximising facilities and opportunities for all children and young people in order to meet their needs

Who will co-ordinate delivery?

Lead Officer – Play Development Officer in partnership with relevant agencies, voluntary, statutory and public sectors



What stops your play?

"over protective parent/carer"

Llanishen SPICE



Objective Three – Play in Schools

Aim: To ensure that consideration is given to providing and developing rich play environments that best meet the play needs of children and young people of Cardiff within the school environments, both during school hours and out of school hours.

What needs to be considered?

- The Foundation Phase for children from 3 – 7 year recognises the international evidence that children learn best through play and being actively involved in activities. School grounds, if well designed, landscaped, and managed, offer children and young people a valuable range of stimuli, ideas, resources and space for play. Recent research (London University) support the value and hence protection of breaks and playtimes within the school day.
- Extended Entitlement programme for the 11 – 25 group is founded on ten entitlements.
- One of these is “an opportunity for recreational and social opportunities in a safe and accessible environment.
- Teaching and Non teaching staff – it is important for staff to have knowledge of Play.
- There is no current statutory programme for Play for 7 to 11 year olds in this Country; therefore this strategy will identify a way forward ensuring that every child and young person has a recognised right to Play.

How is this to be achieved?

- Identification of Lead Officers working on the above initiatives
- Training for all school staff and other key members of staff on Play
- Funding sources to be identified
- Partnership working

Who will co-ordinate delivery?

Lead Officer – Play Development Officer and Lead Officer from Schools and Lifelong Learning



What is the most important thing to you when you play?

“My Friends

↳ Fun things to do”

Herbert Thompson Junior School





Objective Four – Play in the Community

Aim: To ensure that consideration is given to local needs particularly with relation to new developments.

What needs to be considered?

- Home Zones
- Local Development Plan
- Fields in Trust – Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play
- Technical Advice Notes
- Cardiff Supplementary Planning Guidance/ emerging local green space standards
- Planning Policy
- Parks and Green Spaces Strategy
- Transport Policy
- Safe Routes to School
- Self Build Structures
- Climbing Higher
- Physical Activity
- Housing Policy
- Existing Provision
- Communities First
- Community Safety Partnership
- Community Councils

How is this to be achieved?

- Identification of Lead Officers working on the above initiatives
- Training for key school staff and other key members of staff
- Funding sources to be identified
- Partnership working
- Consultation with residents

Self Build and Design (as in WAG Play Implementation Plan)

Who will co-ordinate delivery?

- Play Development Officer and Parks Partnership Officer



*“Playing is having fun,
keeping you occupied.”*
(Grangetown Play Centre)

Objective Five – A Playwork Profession

Aim: To continue to raise the quality of playwork practice by training, promoting and ensuring continuous professional development.

What needs to be considered?

- Legal requirements
- Quality Assurance schemes
- Emerging National Training Packages

How is this to be achieved?

- By working in partnership with external training agencies
- Regularly updating training that we deliver
- Continuous Professional Development
- Increasing knowledge of the playwork profession
- Childcare Action Plan
- Research already carried out
- Workforce Development

Who will co-ordinate delivery?

Lead Officer – Play Development Officer with a partnership group from across all sectors



What makes a good playworker?

“Someone who can understand you, they understand your problems.”

Thomas Herbert School

“Don't be afraid to make a fool of themselves”

Grangetown Play Centre





Objective Six – Actively Promote Play in a Positive Way

Aim: To raise the profile of play and promote the importance of play for children and young people's development.

What needs to be considered?

- The positive promotion of children and young people's play
- Scope and diversity of provision and services
- Active promotion of play to all members of society
- Children's Information Service
- Value and benefit of play for all
- Minimum standards for play provision and services
- Producing a Parents Handbook
- Promotion of National Playday
- Health and Safety
- Role of School Governors

How is this to be achieved?

- Production of marketing material
- Working in Partnership with all agencies
- Working with Parents and Families

Who will co-ordinate delivery?

Play Strategy Partnership Working Group



Where do you play?

"Anywhere with friends"

(Llanishen Primary School)

"On a Safe Road"

(Herbert Thompson School, Ely)

Objective Seven

– Increase Value of Play Spaces

Aim: To increase the value of play spaces in the Cardiff area in terms of design, location, and maintenance so they meet the needs of the children and young people.

What needs to be considered?

- Design
- Safety – including Risk Assessment, British and European Standards
- Lighting
- Legislation
- Inspection & Maintenance
- Equipment
- Location
- Duplication
- Access
- Gender specific/Cultural differences/ Special Needs/ Children and young people in Hospital/ Prison
- Forrest Schools
- Green and Brown Spaces
- Asset Renewal Plan for fixed equipment playgrounds
- Revision / updating of the Children's Playground Strategy

How is this to be achieved?

- Partnership working with all relevant agencies, service areas, communities and children and young people
- Regular maintenance regime, redevelopment and funding
- Develop hospital playgrounds

Who will co-ordinate delivery?

Play Strategy Partnership Working Group



What are the most important play spaces?

"My Special Garden"

Rhwibina Rascals

"The Playcentre, Playstuff"

Ely Playcentre



Strategic Context – National

The Welsh Assembly Government has set out its vision for children and young people in three key documents:

Children and Young People: A Framework for Partnership;

Extending Entitlement: supporting young people in Wales

Children and Young People: Rights to Action.

These are based on a number of core themes:

- a foundation of principle in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- entitlements to services based on the needs of the child or young person;
- listening to and acting on the views of children, young people and families;
- giving the highest priority to those most in need; and
- a commitment to partnership working between different local organisations as the only way in which these aspirations can be achieved.

Strategic Context – Local

Cardiff Council Corporate Plan 2006-2009

Cardiff Physical Activity & Health Strategy 2007

Meeting the Challenge. The Cardiff Health, Social Care and Well-Being Strategy 2005-2008. Cardiff Health Alliance.

Parks and Green Spaces Strategy, Cardiff Council (2006)

The Home Zones Project

Cardiff Local Development Plan – Cardiff Council 2006

Local Transport Plan - 2003



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Becky Cole - Direct Services

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Rosie James - Direct Services

Adrian Jones - Direct Services

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David Evans - Highways and Waste Management

Alison Jones - Strategy and Enterprise

David Howell - ICT

Helen Witham - Communications and Media

Ros Wood - Neighbourhood Planning

Sarah Southern/ Marianne Manello/
Michelle Jones - Play Wales

Lizzie Kenyon - Voluntary Action Cardiff

Chris Kelly - ReCreate until March 2008

Chris Southern - ReCreate from April 2008

Ulrika Ljungstrand - Cardiff and the Vale Parents Federation

Jackie James - South Riverside Community Development Centre





Supporting strategic documents and initiatives

Play Policy Implementation Plan, Welsh Assembly Government (2006)

Climbing Higher – The Welsh Assembly Government Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity, Welsh Assembly Government (2005)

Well Being in Wales
– Welsh Assembly Government (2002)

The Learning Country
– Welsh Assembly Government 2001

Health Challenge Wales

Creative Future – A Culture Strategy for Wales, Welsh Assembly Government (2002)

Extending Entitlement

Wales: A Better Country

Community Focused Schools Initiative
- Welsh Assembly Government

The Foundation Phase
– Welsh Assembly Government

National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services (NSF)

Safe Routes within the Communities
– Road Safety Unit

Healthy Schools
– Welsh Assembly Government Initiative



SPACE TO PLAY

Jottings & Doodles:

