

# Community Play Boxes

## Report card

### Description

Work with organisations/volunteers to introduce storage play boxes within public open spaces providing children with access to loose parts to enhance their opportunities for play. Boxes are managed by organisations or local volunteers.

### Policy instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Duty
- Wrexham County Borough Council open space strategy

### People instigators and drivers

- Local volunteers
- Community councils
- Wrexham County Borough Council Play and Youth Support Team
- Wrexham County Borough Council environment department

### Resources/enablers

- All Wales Play Opportunities Grant
- Development of briefing paper
- Play boxes
- Loose parts

### Process

- Circulation of briefing paper and engagement from interested groups
- Securing permission and insurance for installation of the play boxes
- Training for volunteers
- Sourcing and replenishing resources
- Ongoing support when required

## Challenges

- Permission for installation of the play boxes at site
- Identifying roles and responsibilities – insurance, maintenance, replenishing resources
- Change of personnel/circumstances involved in project can lead to breakdown in regular opening of the play boxes
- Ensuring that loose parts are suitable, plentiful and of high quality

## Outputs/outcomes

- Further enhances the potential opportunities offered by a space for children's play
- Presents an opportunity for local residents to become actively involved in supporting children's play – contributing to increased community cohesion
- Promotes children's permission to play in a broader range of public open spaces by providing people with an indication that play is welcome in these areas

# Families First Holiday Club

## Report card

### Description

Partnership approach for playscheme delivery between Play Development Team, Social Services and Families First partners to ensure the play needs of children aged four to eleven requiring additional support are met. Club runs during the school holidays with the exception of Christmas.

### Policy instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Duty and findings from local authority's Play Sufficiency Assessment
- Welsh Government Families First programme
- Vale of Glamorgan Council Corporate Plan and Wellbeing Plan
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

### People instigators and drivers

- Local authority Play Development Team
- Experienced play staff
- Prevention and Partnership Manager – Additional Learning Needs and Wellbeing Team
- Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)
- Child Health and Disability Team (CHAD)
- Social Services
- Family Information Service
- Early Years, Childcare and Play service
- Cross-departmental working group consisting of above partners
- Now Education (recruitment agency)
- Community Facility Manager
- Parents/carers

### Resources/enablers

- Adult Education Centre
- Training
- Equipment
- Families First funding
- Senior Play Development Officer time (project lead)

## Process

- Initial need identified via Families First working group/partners around need for more respite for families of disabled children, to be delivered through supported play provision
- Families First funding provided to Play Development Team to part-fund a post to lead on the Families First Holiday Club and to resource the project
- Additional funding obtained via avenues such as the Welsh Government All Wales Play Opportunities Grant to support purchase of resources
- Initially referrals accepted from Social Services, then opened to more professionals, before opening to also include self-referral by parents/carers (referral process to ensure appropriate staffing capacity and needs can be met) – this resulted in a demand that could not be met so reverting back to referral via Social Services
- Cross departmental working group created to support planning and prioritisation
- Recent parental survey undertaken to gain a current picture of demand and needs which is being used to inform planning and prioritisation of resources
- Play Development Team arranges the staff recruitment and training, payroll, facility booking, administration of scheme, contact with families, timetable, 1:1/buddy support and covering medical needs

## Challenges

- Long term planning and sustainability – annually funded project so difficult to undertake long term planning; managing ever increasing costs with limited funding available
- Staffing – increasingly difficult to recruit and retain staff for the limited hours of work available
- Training – continuous need to train staff due to retention difficulties and lack of existing suitably qualified staff (time and cost resources)
- Lack of capacity to meet increased demand – ever expanding list of children who wish to attend with reducing resources – unable to offer opportunities to all children (prioritisation is undertaken in conjunction with Social Services)
- Managing expectations – due to the limited spaces, continual need to manage expectations/ disappointment of those who are not able to access the service

## Outputs/outcomes

- Children have access to play opportunities during school holidays
- The support needs of children with additional needs are catered for, providing confidence amongst families to enable their children to access community play
- Parents developing confidence with staff in the play setting
- Families are provided with respite opportunities, which also supports the work of Social Services and other Families First partners
- Children building play confidence
- Increased play opportunities for disabled children and children requiring additional support
- Contributing to Play Sufficiency Duty Matters B (providing for diverse needs) and D (community based play)

# Family Play in the Park sessions

## Report card

### Description

Play in the Park sessions across seven sites within the borough using safe green spaces where children and their families take part in fun, engaging activities. Over 2,500 participants attended the Play in the Park sessions.

### Policy instigators and drivers

- Local authority Play Sufficiency Assessment
- Early years strategic plan
- Play holiday provision

### People instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency officer
- Early years
- Parks department
- Police/fire service
- Sport and leisure

### Resources/enablers

- Safer green spaces
- Early year staff
- Marquees (to enable sessions to still run in bad weather)
- Loose parts
- Messy play equipment
- Arts and crafts
- Internal/external providers
- Play holiday provision and early years funding

### Process

- Play in the park steering group (Play Sufficiency Officer, early years)
- Facilities booked through parks department
- Play Sufficiency Officer booked key partners to support delivery (for example, fire service, police and countryside)
- Early years staff facilitated activities such as, messy play, loose parts and crafts
- All activities are low cost to give families idea of things they can also do at home

## Challenges

- Due to weather some sessions were cancelled for safety reasons
- Access to some of the parks
- Staffing

## Outputs/outcomes

- Providing play opportunities in deprived areas
- Giving families ideas of low-cost play activities they can do at home
- Promote the value of play and the play department
- Bringing different stakeholders together to promote and deliver play



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# Play Activity Pods

## Report card

### Description

The Activity Pod is a play programme designed for primary schools. Schools are provided with a shipping container full of recyclable resources and teachers receive training on how to use the Activity Pod for play.

### Policy instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Duty
- Active Bridgend Plan
- Sport Wales Vision for Sport and Physical Activity

### People instigators and drivers

- Play Wales
- Bristol Scrapstore
- Primary schools in Bridgend – wellbeing/early years leads
- Shipping container company
- Active Young People Development (AYPD) Team

### Resources/enablers

- Shipping containers
- Loose parts
- Activity pod training package
- 'Poddley' as a resource to encourage the risk averse schools as it was deemed 'safer' by schools

### Process

- Research play/activity pods – good practice models
- Research benefits of play and active play
- Focus group meetings with primary schools' senior leadership level – consultation to find out if there was a need and if it was a viable project
- Source funding opportunities to fund the project
- Develop aims and outcomes of the project
- Research relevant partners to support and add value to the project
- Develop a plan of action for the project
- Build relationships with primary schools
- Develop resources to support the project
- Develop impact measures and tools



- Develop promotional and marketing materials
- Pilot the programme – deliver training and resources
- Review and evaluate the pilot and then amend to roll out across Bridgend
- Continually review and evaluate and amend projects where necessary

## Challenges

- Schools being risk averse and reluctant to take on the project
- Pre- and post-COVID-19 – lack of settings providing loose parts for the project to be delivered
- COVID-19 – schools couldn't deliver the programme due to lockdown and operating in 'bubbles' on return to school
- Site access for the delivery of shipping containers, had to source alternative storage for schools with smaller yards and difficult access
- Capturing accurate impact – tried a variety of methods but difficult to measure anything other than usage and observation of skill development
- Communication between schools and the service meant that progress was sometimes slow
- Whole school buy-in
- Turn over of staff after training had been delivered
- Scheduling training around teaching commitments and support staff/lunch time supervisors – difficult to find timing to suit both groups

## Outputs/outcomes

- Schools using the container and loose parts during curriculum and during extra-curricular activities
- Observation from key staff about the development of skills, for example communication, social, creative and personal
- Increased levels of physical activity
- Different age groups and gender playing together
- Schools developed and embedded play policies
- Staff trained to facilitate sessions to encourage children to freely play
- Whole school approach
- Children were more engaged and settled during curriculum lessons after lunchtimes and playtimes
- Low cost – the on-going costs after start-up of this project is minimal with sourcing loose parts from the community and with support from Active Young People Development Team
- No cost to children and families who live in areas of deprivation

# Playful Families Toolkit

## Report card

### Description

A toolkit designed to help families to audit how much time, space and permission their children have for play. The toolkit provides helpful suggestions on how to encourage more playful moments in everyday life and reduce the barriers they face.

### Policy instigators and drivers

- Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- Supporting families facing barriers
- Increasing time, space and permissions for play is a priority across Wrexham
- Play Sufficiency Duty

### People instigators and drivers

- Wrexham County Borough Council Play and Youth Support Team
- Play Development Worker
- Together Achieving Change (TAC) Team
- Wrexham Family Information Service

### Resources/enablers

- Used understanding of feedback from the play team's Inclusion Project
- Support of other organisations through feedback on arising issues for parents and families
- Families First funding
- *Playful Childhoods* website

### Process

- Used the team's knowledge of the benefits of play
- Developed and shared a toolkit draft with potential users for consultation
- Finalised toolkit and design
- Used toolkit with families during home visits as part of the play team's Inclusion Project
- Used toolkit during playful parenting drop in sessions
- Trained professionals who work with families in the use of the toolkit

## Challenges

- Getting parents to commit to the length of the course
- Shift in attitudes regarding professionals undertaking home visits
- Capacity of team to undertake with multiple cases

## Outputs/outcomes

- Supporting parents to feel more confident to let their children play out
- Supporting parents to be more creative and playful in their everyday life
- Increasing play opportunities for children outside of staffed play provision
- Offering support and ideas to families with disabled children/children with additional needs
- Supporting professionals to have a greater understanding of play

# Shared Values

## Report card

### Description

Co-production of eight shared values for adults who work with, or make decisions that affect children and their play. These values underpin the way in which we view play, children and childhood to provide consistency in our approach to children across Wrexham's play workforce.

### Policy instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Duty
- Wrexham County Borough Council Plan (2023-28)

### People instigators and drivers

- Play and Youth Support Team
- Play Development Worker
- Wrexham's adventure playgrounds (The Land, The Venture, Gwenfro Valley)
- Tŷ Pawb
- Wrexham County Borough Council Youth service
- Wrexham County Borough Council Together Achieving Change (TAC) Team

### Resources/enablers

- Professionals enthused by the concept
- Engagement from wide range of services
- Wrexham's City of Culture ambition
- Families First funding
- All Wales Play Opportunities Grant

### Process

- Values coproduced with diverse range of services
- Launch event showcasing values
- Training delivered with service specific team
- Train the trainer course delivered to enable further delivery across services
- On-going evaluation on the impact of adopting values

## Challenges

- Long term process
- Recruiting sufficient professionals to deliver training on values
- Funding for resources
- Evaluation of impact – tracking long term change

## Outputs/outcomes

- Raised awareness of children's play across a range of service areas
- Further understanding that play is integral to a healthy, happy childhood
- Support from senior officer and members through political process
- Approach to children is more consistent across service areas

# Stay and play pilot project

## Report card

### Description

Children and families are encouraged to stay after school to play on the grounds at schools in Merthyr Tydfil. The sessions are initially supported by Community Focused Schools officers and Family Engagement/Liaison Officers.

### Policy instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Duty
- Recommendations from local authority Play Sufficiency Assessments
- All Wales Play Opportunity Grant funding used to support purchase of equipment
- Community Focused Schools guidance

### People instigators and drivers

- Local authority Play Development Team
- Enthusiastic Community Focused School Manager
- Experienced Community Focused Schools officers
- Supportive head teachers and school staff
- Play Wales
- Family engagement and liaison officers (school based)

### Resources/enablers

- Officer time (Play Wales and Community Focused Schools)
- Storage and equipment provided
- Headteachers' willingness to be involved was increased due to recognition of lack of opportunities to play during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Parents are looking for more opportunities for children to play outdoors

### Process

- Agreeing model with school
- Agreeing roles and responsibilities
- Six-week pilot with ongoing monitoring
- Producing options analysis for sustaining the activity at school level

## Challenges

- Needs to operate and be implemented on a school-by-school basis
- Play might be seen as something that happens on a particular day or time

## Outputs/outcomes

- Responds to Play Sufficiency Action Plan
- Supports Community Focused Schools outcomes
- Supports family engagement
- Parents welcome opportunities for their children to play and to socialise with other parents
- More children playing when the school day ends
- Good use of community space
- Review of the *Use of school grounds for playing out of teaching hours* toolkit

# Toddle Waddles

## Report card

### Description

Toddle Waddles is a four-week programme which includes fun physical for those taking their first steps into physical activity. It is for children aged eighteen months to three years to play and have fun while exploring activities and resources with their parents/caregivers.

### Policy instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Duty
- Bridgend County Borough Council corporate plan
- Sport Wales vision

### People instigators and drivers

- Active Young People Development staff
- Halo Leisure
- Bridgend County Borough Council
- Early Years Wales

### Resources/enablers

- Equipment
- Session plan
- Risk assessment
- Partnership
- Venue for delivery
- Marketing and promotional material

### Process

- Research similar programmes – good practice models
- Research benefits of the toddle waddle for children aged eighteen months to three years
- Source funding opportunities to fund the project
- Develop aims and outcomes of the project
- Develop a plan of action for the project
- Complete risk assessments for the programme
- Develop session plans



- Develop resources to support the project
- Develop impact measures and tools
- Develop promotional and marketing materials
- Review and evaluate and programme, what works well and changes to be made for the next programme

## Challenges

- Venue availability
- Instructor availability
- Timings of sessions – a few parents had to leave early to get to schools to pick up older siblings
- Some children not engaging fully in the programme with wanting to be picked up by parents
- Capturing accurate impact of skills developed

## Outputs/outcomes

- Provide sessions for children to have fun while developing fundamental physical skills in a free play environment
- Encourage parent/caregiver and children engagement
- Encourage communication between families during play



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