



Chwarae Cymru
Play Wales

Our impact report

April 2023 to March 2024

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Play Wales is the national organisation for children's play, an independent charity supported by the Welsh Government to uphold children's right to play and to provide advice and guidance on play-related matters.

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Chairperson's report

At most Play Wales Board meetings the Trustees are joined by members of the staff team for an agenda item on the work programme. They provide an overview of what they have been up to over the previous quarter and outline some of the challenges that lie ahead. It never fails to amaze just how much work they get through. The team may be small in number but their reach is impressive.

Play Wales exists to influence policy, strategic planning and practice of all organisations that have an interest in and a responsibility to deliver children's play. I've been a Board member since standing down as the Children's Commissioner for Wales in 2015. In all that time there has been little, if any, downtime and now that I'm the Chairperson of Play Wales I have an even closer appreciation of the significance of our work.

Children are like sponges. They soak up what's going on all around them. Sometimes they struggle to understand what's going on. They ask questions, they act out things that they see and they play. They play to make sense of things, they play to test things out, they play and take risks, and they play to have fun. Play is a learning experience and self-directed play provides some of the best times of their lives. That's important because the world children are in today is not an easy place to live.

There are environmental concerns for the planet, there is war and unrest, political instability, the cost of living is high and there are financial constraints on the public purse. Children are not immune to these things.

They see and hear things on mainstream media, they listen to the concerns of the adults around them and they consume all kinds of messages directly and indirectly on social media.

How important then is play for children?
As important as it gets.

As you read this report, I would ask you to reflect on how all the activity we outline improves things for children, for children's play and for the sector. That's the challenge we set ourselves as we plan and deliver our work programme. Sometimes things work out as we hoped and every now and again we reflect and talk through how we might improve things next time. Just like playing itself, we give it a go and learn as we proceed.

As ever, we are grateful to the Welsh Government who provides the majority of our funding. Wales has carved out an impressive international reputation as a country that has prioritised children's play and playwork. The Ministerial Review of Play has provided an opportunity for us to think through how our commitment to children's rights and children's play can be strengthened and developed further.

This report celebrates the work we have done over the year but of course however much progress we have made is always set against how much more there is to do!

Keith Towler

Chairperson, Play Wales

Director's report

Some readers may notice that it is four years since the production of our last impact report. In the intervening period some major pieces of work have come to fruition, some of which are featured in this impact report. Particularly our new film, *This is why play is so important*, premiered to considerable acclaim, at the International Play Association world conference in Glasgow in 2023.

Latterly, the production of *Playing and being well*, an important and timely tome that has grown and grown, to present the authors, translator and editor/designer with a significantly greater challenge than originally anticipated. As we had hoped, the briefing and summary introducing the literature review have been very well received, with an international readership. I anticipate the content of the full literature review, published in Autumn 2024, will influence thinking for many years.

We often find ourselves explaining that play is important to older children and teenagers as well as toddlers and younger children, so I should also mention a *Playful Childhoods* campaign that we undertook in the intervening years. 'When I was your age', a campaign that challenged assumptions around teenage behaviour in public spaces, became, possibly our most well received campaign to date.

These successes, and all those others described in this report, have been achieved at no small cost to the Play Wales workforce. We are a small and committed team, still endeavouring to meet the expectations that were established when our staffing compliment was three times what it is at present.

We have become practiced in focusing on how we can use our limited capacity to best effect.

We regularly commit time to considering what actions might have the greatest strategic impact. Sometimes requiring hard choices and as much as we might wish to continue our actions to increase awareness and understanding, particularly amongst parents, of the role and importance of play in their children's lives, we have to recognise that we can only do so much.

In our last report, we were welcoming the commencement of the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Ministerial Review of Play. Four years on we find ourselves working with Welsh Government officials implementing the recommendations of the review, all of which were accepted and supported by the then Deputy Minister for Social Services, Julie Morgan, in her response.

I should also thank Keith Towler for taking on the role of chairperson in December 2022, and thanking his predecessor, Mike Shooter, for his support and commitment throughout an occasionally challenging period, during his tenure as chairperson.

I have no doubt there will be future challenges that will influence our priorities, work and the service we provide, but then it has been said that Play Wales has always been nimble of its feet.

Mike Greenaway
Director, Play Wales



About Play Wales

The national charity for children's play in Wales

Our vision

A future where play is valued in Wales for being crucial to a healthy and happy childhood. A country where children can freely explore, discover, develop and grow through play.

Our mission

Campaign for a play-friendly Wales by leading with intention, collaborating with inclusivity, educating with enthusiasm, and supporting with sensitivity.

In our work, we focus on three key areas:

- **Raising awareness:** we work to raise awareness about the need and right of children and teenagers to play.
- **Promoting good practice:** we promote good practice at all levels of decision making. We also promote good practice wherever children might play.
- **Providing advice and guidance across all sectors:** we provide advice and guidance to support everyone who has an interest in, or responsibility for, providing what is needed for children's play.

Our work includes:

- **Policy:** working with individuals, organisations and networks to inform the development of policy and other children's play issues.
- **Information service:** promoting the value of children's play by providing timely and current information to everyone who is interested in, or has a responsibility for, children's play.
- **Advice and support:** providing specialist knowledge about all issues that affect children's play.
- **Workforce development:** contributing to the professional development of the playwork and play workforces.

From October 2014 (to March 2024) the Welsh Government has funded Play Wales through the Play Wales Strategic Policy Grant to provide a range of strategic support to the Welsh Government, local authorities and other stakeholders.



Summary of achievements 2023-2024

Supporting national priorities

We work closely with local authorities and their partners to support the implementation of their statutory Play Sufficiency Duties.

Play Wales:

- Continued to work with commissioned researchers on a literature review and supporting resources to update the evidence on the value of play from a social policy, with a focus on Wales.
- Published a pan-Wales analysis of nearly 7,000 children's play satisfaction surveys.
- Undertook activity to sustain learning from the Community Play Ambassador Project (a three-year project funded by the Healthy Active Fund), including the development and production of a play and playwork course, endorsed by Play Wales.
- Secured funding to develop and provide resources for partners to implement after school play projects, and to pilot a project to understand and support the play needs of children living in temporary accommodation.
- Delivered four Playwork Education and Training Council Wales (PETC) meetings – supporting a dialogue between playwork employers, national organisations, Welsh Government, Social Care Wales and Qualifications Wales.
- Continued to work to actions within *A play friendly workforce for Wales*, Play Wales' plan for the ongoing development of the play and playwork workforces.
- Developed the infrastructure for the national delivery of playwork qualifications by supporting the development and continued operation of six training centres.
- Piloted *Chwarae o Safon*, a new quality assurance framework for playwork.
- Delivered four themed webinars, two face to face events, two film launches and a range of presentations and workshops to support the play and playwork workforces.
- Continued to develop the *Playful Childhoods* campaign and website. As well as helping parents, it's aimed at professionals working with families to provide practical ideas for giving children plenty of good opportunities to play.
- Responded to seven relevant national consultations.
- Developed a range of resources to support practitioners, including playworkers and teachers.
- Contributed to the UNCRC Monitoring Group's Civil Society Alternative Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Ministerial Review of Play

We contributed to the Welsh Government Ministerial Review of Play and actions arising from the review by:

- acting as secretariat and report writers to the Ministerial Review of Play Steering Group
- publishing a summary of the Ministerial Review of Play Steering Group report
- developing a children's version of the Ministerial Review of Play Steering Group report
- reviewing the Play Sufficiency Assessment Template and Toolkit, with local authority play sufficiency officers
- providing specific advice and guidance in relation to workforce issues to inform the Welsh Government's Ministerial Review of Play Action Plan.

Well informed professionals

The Welsh Government defines the play workforce as ‘anyone employed whose role has an impact on children playing – those who may either directly facilitate their play, design for playing, or those with the power to give permission for children to play, or not’ (*Wales – a Play Friendly Country*, 2025). The play workforce includes playworkers but also a huge range of other professionals from schools, planning departments, highways and transport, health and safety and childcare, as well as voluntary and community groups, town and community councils and elected members.

Play Wales has undertaken a range of activity to ensure that the play workforce has the opportunity to deepen their understanding of their role in ensuring children have increased opportunities for playing.

Delivering playwork qualifications

During the last year, we:

- delivered the Award in Delivering Dynamic Playwork Training (ADDaPT) to 21 learners.
- developed the infrastructure for the national delivery of playwork qualifications by supporting the development and continued operation of six training centres. This includes the quality assurance of L2APP, MAHPS and P³ qualifications, as well as supporting trainers and assessors, reviewing assessment methods and advising on delivery.
- supported the review of Agored Cymru playwork qualifications.
- worked with PETC Wales and other partners to identify funding for the sustainable delivery of playwork qualifications and build the infrastructure of trainers, using a range of funding models.

Chwarae o Safon

We led the development of a new Quality Assurance Framework for playwork settings in Wales. Titled using the Cymraeg, Chwarae o Safon (Play of Quality), the framework is being developed with the support of an expert reference group including organisations and individuals involved in the broad range of settings where playwork takes place.

The framework is suitable for both registered and unregistered playwork settings as well as settings where playwork is not the prime function, such as schools that want to evidence quality playwork practice.

It will be available as a self assessment tool. Settings will be encouraged to go through a process of external assessment to receive a quality badge to demonstrate they have met the requirements of the quality framework.

UK Playwork NOS Consortium

Play Wales provides secretariat to the UK Playwork NOS Consortium. Membership includes Play Wales, Play Scotland, Play England, PlayBoard Northern Ireland and the Playwork Foundation. The purpose of the consortium is to plan strategically across the four nations for the future of workforce development and sector skills initiatives in respect of playwork.

During the year, the consortium developed a business case for the review of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Playwork on behalf of the UK Playwork NOS Consortium, in preparation for a future review. The UK Standards and Frameworks Panel approved this work, which will be taken forward during 2024-2025.

For more information about the consortium and the NOS review, visit:

www.play.wales/playwork/workforce

Events

Throughout the year we supported the development, organised and hosted a number of events and CPD opportunities for the wider play and playwork sector, including planning and delivering:

- our first national conference since 2019 to approximately 120 delegates from across Wales and beyond, on the theme of Ministerial Review of Play: what next? Keynote speakers included Julie Morgan MS – the Deputy Minister for Social Services, Dr David Dallimore and Professor Helen Dodd.
- a two-day outdoor Playworkers Forum for 49 participants, focusing on playwork in other contexts and practical skills. It gives playworkers the opportunity to learn from each other and experienced playwork trainers.

Tell us what you think...

This is what delegates from our 2023 annual national conference had to say about the day:

‘Extremely informative and inspiring day.’

‘It was great bringing everyone together face to face. It gave me the chance to build relationships with other play development officers from other local authorities.’

‘Really well managed & delivered. Interesting & varied programme. Inspiring to be here.’

And this is how attendees at the Playworkers Forum summed up their experiences:

‘I formed connections with other playworkers and I was able to gain a range of knowledge and skills from the speakers and activities.’

‘It brings together like minded people, sparks energy and enthusiasm makes the role of a playworker wholesome and real.’

‘Having only recently completed my L2APP it was then brilliant to see it “fleshed out” in people with years of experience, who were walking talking Playwork Principles in action.’

We also facilitated a range of free and well attended themed webinars, including:

- Exploring the links between playwork and youth work
- Reusing stuff for play
- What makes a great space to play
- Mud, mess and fancy dress – promoting *Playful Childhoods* to those working directly with families.

To raise awareness about the importance of play and playwork, our team has delivered a range of workshops. Examples include:

- a practical playwork skills workshop for playworkers in Denbighshire
- a series of Continuing Professional Development in-person workshops for Cardiff Play Services.

We also delivered a range of presentations for:

- Supporting Families and NEST Community of Practice
- Community Focused Schools in Caerphilly
- Cardiff University School of Geography summer school
- Supporting Children and Families Facing Crisis Conference.

Collaborating locally and nationally

On a local level, we:

- implemented the Play Awareness Project, funded by the Aneurin Bevan Gwent Public Health Team
- undertook an audit of play in hospital for Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Health Team
- developed and implemented an early years outdoor play project for Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Public Health Team.

And, nationally we worked with:

- the National Centre for Population Health and Well-being Research (NCPHWR) to pilot an app which supports children to rate their communities for play and physical activity
- Early Years Wales and Sport Wales on *Foundations Framework Wales: Good Practice in Physical Activity and Sporting Environments for Children aged 3-11 years*
- Starlight Children's Foundation to support Hospital Play Specialists in Wales.



Playday

The annual UK celebration of children's right to play. It is co-ordinated by Play Wales, Play England, Play Scotland and PlayBoard Northern Ireland. We represent Wales on the Playday Steering Group which co-ordinates the annual campaign.

At Play Wales, we see Playday as an opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of children's play and the need for quality play provision every day of the year in all areas of Wales.

As part of the 2023 Playing on a shoestring campaign, we made a range of bilingual resources available so families and event organisers could offer children low cost and no cost opportunities to play on Playday and throughout the summer holidays.

On behalf of all children in Wales we sent a letter to each Member of the Senedd to invite them to get involved in Playday 2023 events in their constituency.



International collaboration

As part of our wider international centre of excellence work, we:

- provided secretariat support for the International Play Association (IPA) Cymru Wales branch
- presented a range of presentations, workshops and poster presentations at the 2023 IPA World Conference
- provided support and guidance to colleagues at Play Aotearoa (IPA New Zealand), Sport New Zealand and Playright (Hong Kong)
- continued to provide support for IPA World to adhere to requirements as an international charity registered in England and Wales
- worked in partnership with the children's organisation, Jantje Beton to deliver the International Playwork: Foundation Practitioner course to 10 learners in the Netherlands
- collaborated with colleagues in Portugal to form an agreement regarding the use of Play Wales publications.

Academic collaboration

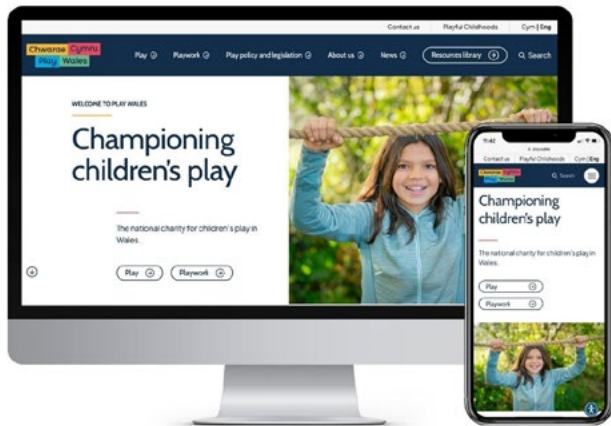
We continued research partnerships with University of Bristol, University of Gloucestershire, Swansea University and Cardiff University advising on a range of research topics, including:

- play in schools
- play and humour
- play in the early years and family engagement
- play, physical activity and wellbeing
- play and engagement with children.

We also worked with Cardiff University to host a student placement to gather data for all-Wales survey work.

Engagement and publications

Our resources are freely available on our website:
www.play.wales/resources-library



Website

In May 2023, we launched a new Play Wales website and brand – including a new logo. As well as redesigning and restructuring the website, we reviewed and updated all existing written content. During the year the Play Wales website attracted 160,000 page views from 55,000 users.

Every month we distribute an e-bulletin to 4,000 recipients. It offers a round-up of everything that's new on the website, from news and funding opportunities, to job vacancies in the sector and events and training opportunities.

Social following

We have over 17,000 followers on the Play Wales Facebook and X (Twitter) accounts. Combined with the 6,000 followers on our *Playful Childhoods* Facebook and Instagram accounts, this means we regularly share information and engage with over 23,000 interested people.

Evaluation

We conducted an evaluation of our information service via an online survey and one-to-one interviews with key partners. We received an overwhelmingly positive response to our work and constructive feedback to inform our future work.

Resources

Through the year we produced and distributed a range of new resources to help inform our audiences:

Play for Wales magazine

We published two issues and distributed to 4,000 recipients across print and digital. This year's issues:

- **celebrated 25 years of Play Wales.** The articles highlight key pieces of work that we have been involved in and collaborative work campaigning for children's right to play.
- **revisited the theme of playing and being well.** The articles show how time, space and freedom to play can greatly benefit children's mental health, relieving stress and reducing the harmful impact of trauma.

Ministerial Review of Play – A Play Wales summary

Our summary of the Ministerial Review of Play Steering Group Report sets out the context for the review, explaining the importance of play for children and emphasising the legal duty in Wales to protect and promote play. It also notes the importance of taking children's views into account when assessing the sufficiency of their opportunities to play.

Play deprivation information sheet

Written by Emeritus Professor Fraser Brown, it discusses the causes and consequences of play deprivation for child development, and the potential of playwork. It explores research on the links between a decline in children's opportunities to play and rising mental health and social issues.

Additionally, we:

- continued to distribute printed copies of our three storybooks – *Fun in the dungeon*, *Fun in the garden* and *Fun in the playground*
- updated our *Reading list for teachers – Supporting children's play in schools* resource.

Research

What children say about play in Wales: 2022

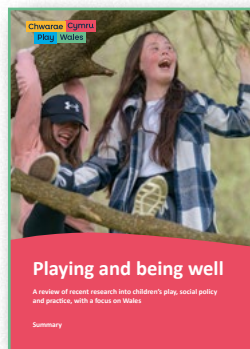
This report presents an analysis of responses from nearly 7,000 children and teenagers in Wales where they tell us about what's good and what's not so good about the play opportunities in their local area and how satisfied they are about when, how and where they can play. It also explores the impact of COVID-19 on their opportunities to play.

Written by Dr David Dallimore, the report provides a summary of information collected by local authorities across Wales as part of their Play Sufficiency Assessments in 2022. To emphasise children's voices throughout, it also features insightful quotes from children and teenagers of all ages from across Wales.



Playing and being well

Playing and being well is a review of recent research into children's play, social policy and practice, with a focus on Wales. The researchers are investigating the connections between play sufficiency and children's wellbeing. The review focuses on the role of play in children's wellbeing, children's play patterns, and adult support for children's play.



Throughout the year, work continued on the literature review. To introduce the review, we published:

- a summary, which includes information about the scope and approach of the literature review, and an overview and findings from each of the chapters.
- a briefing which includes information about recent developments in childhood and play research, policy developments, how playing contributed to wellbeing, as well as children's play today.

A Play Wales film

A new documentary film featuring children across Wales, celebrates play and highlights its importance for every child.

This is why play is so important has a strong focus on children and children's voices. They candidly tell us what play means to them. The film portrays why play is vital to children's development, health, wellbeing and happiness.

Narrated by actor Matthew Rhys – in English and in Welsh – the documentary was filmed over two years across Wales. From street play to playgrounds, living rooms to back yards, the film captures play in all its different guises and offers a unique insight into why playing is so important to children of all ages.

The film also includes interviews with adults reflecting on their first play memory and how it has left a lasting impression on them.

Play Wales commissioned the film to highlight to parents, carers, and adults working with children and families the importance of play in children's lives in Wales, and how we can all support it.

The film was produced by Working Word, who has since entered it into several international film festivals.

Following two successful and well attended launch events in Cardiff and Wrexham, the film has been shown to audiences across Wales, the UK and internationally. This includes a screening at the 2023 IPA World Conference in Glasgow. It is also available to view online: www.play.wales/play/film



New audiences and projects

Playful Childhoods

As part of our expanding work to engage with parents and carers we launched the *Playful Childhoods* campaign in September 2018 and we continue to develop useful and practical content for the website and social media channels.

Our mission for the *Playful Childhoods* campaign is to help adults give children a happy, healthy childhood through play. Every day.

It aims to help parents, carers, grandparents and community groups give children plenty of good opportunities to play. The website is also useful for local groups and town and community councils to provide play friendly neighbourhoods in their areas. The resources can also be used by professionals in their work with children and families.

The website provides:

- practical ideas about providing time, space, freedom and stuff to play with
- top tips, 'how to' guides and ideas for children's play
- information about raising awareness about the importance of play, advice about planning play areas and campaigning for play
- a selection of inspiring examples of projects and groups across Wales that are making sure children have opportunities to play.

Activity during the year includes:

- developing and launching a new-look website, which included a restructure to make it easier to use and navigate.
- attracting 50,000 page views to the website, by 33,000 users.
- continued to engage with our 6,000 and growing social media followers on a regular basis.
- using findings from an external evaluation of the website and social media to inform our work and to explore future development. For example, we commissioned new written content in response to constructive feedback we received.
- produced evergreen short video clips to help support parents give their children time, space and freedom to play at home and in their neighbourhood – all low-cost and free play ideas.
- engaged with the Welsh Government to share timely messaging as part of its Parenting. Give it time. campaign.

Playing on a shoestring campaign

Over the summer we developed and delivered a successful five-week campaign to raise awareness of the importance of play and spread the word about the *Playful Childhoods* website as a resource. During the Playing on a shoestring campaign we saw a 450% increase in traffic to the English website and over 700% increase on the Welsh website. We invested in advertorials for the first time, which was a key part of the campaign's success.

Let's talk about play

The Let's talk about play course has been designed as an introduction to play and playwork. It has been endorsed by Play Wales. The course provides a comprehensive package of teaching and learning resources which are available for delivery by any tutor who has successfully completed the Level 3 Award in Delivering Dynamic Playwork Training (ADDaPT).

The course consists of three sessions:

- **Why play?** focuses on developing an understanding of what play is and why it is important. This session is aimed at the play workforce – those in roles which might impact on the child's right to play.
- **What is play and playwork? and Why playwork?** introduce play and playing and develop an understanding of the role of playworkers. These sessions are aimed at volunteers, those new to the profession as an entry level course, or seasonal playworkers as a refresher.

The course aims to:

- develop a common understanding of what is meant by play and how it benefits children
- understand how adults working with children, or in roles where decisions are made about children's opportunities to play, can have a positive or negative impact on children's play experience
- foster an awareness of why children need to play and how adults promote the right to play and cultivate an environment where the child's right to play is upheld.

The course and teaching and learning materials are a legacy of the Play Ambassadors Project, funded by the Healthy Active Fund.

Play for children in temporary accommodation

To support the growing numbers of children living in temporary accommodation such as bed and breakfasts and hotels, we developed a project to support play in these places. Children have limited opportunities to play both in the living environment and in community-based provision.

Funding from The Moondance Foundation is enabling us to work with our network of play officers to understand the limitations and opportunities in temporary accommodation. We have sourced and supplied Play Packages, which included no-cost and simple ideas and resources for families to support play in limited living space in Caerphilly, Cardiff, Flintshire and Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Stay and Play

Following the pandemic, we worked with several organisations in various locations to further pilot the use of school grounds for child-led play when the school day ended. Schools' desire to provide such services has increased considerably. But they do need support.

Funding from the Millennium Stadium Charitable Trust and Future Valleys Construction's Communities Initiatives has enabled us to help local authorities to support schools.

Play development teams and community focused schools teams are working with schools to implement the Stay and Play project in Carmarthenshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire and Swansea, with two other areas being identified. Following the pilot, we will share the findings and update our *Use of school grounds for playing out of teaching hours* toolkit.



Enquiries from the public

In addition to the considerable information provided through our website, we received and responded to a broad range of telephone, social media and email queries from parents, elected members, learners, schools and small organisations during the last year.

The queries we have responded to, by providing information, advice and signposting include:

- appropriate qualifications for Care Inspectorate Wales registered play and childcare settings
- funding advice for play equipment and developing play areas in communities
- relevant qualifications required for running a playscheme
- learners wanting to undertake playwork training, in particular level 3 qualifications
- research queries from playwork and childhood studies students
- funding advice for play provision
- support for saving school playing fields and playtime
- advice on piece of land or play space design
- job advertising, in particular summer playschemes
- letters of support to communities campaigning for play areas and for funding applications.

These queries are regularly reviewed and used to inform the addition of new information on our website.



Play Wales Supporters

Become a Play Wales Supporter:
[www.play.wales/about-us/
support-us](http://www.play.wales/about-us/support-us)

Play Wales is a membership organisation. Become a Play Wales Supporter for free and join the movement to make Wales a play-friendly country, championing children's play across the nation.

At Play Wales, we always strive to make Wales a play-friendly country. That's why we need you to join us. Our free Play Wales Supporter membership is open to all organisations and individuals living or working in Wales. If you live outside Wales, you can become an International Play Wales Supporter – it's free, too.

Becoming a Play Wales Supporter gives you a range of benefits – from reduced rates at our events, exclusive early access to new resources to opportunities to help develop our campaigns.

Supporter benefits

- **Reduced rates to our events** – we organise regular events, both online and in person. As a Supporter, you'll receive discounted rates, making it even easier to be actively involved and to connect with likeminded people.
- **First-look at new resources** – Play Wales Supporters have early access to the latest publications, research and reports, keeping you informed about the latest play and playwork developments.
- **Contribute to campaign ideas and activities** – as a Play Wales Supporter, you will get the opportunity to have your say. You'll be able to join focus groups, take part in questionnaires, and answer research questions to help improve children's play opportunities locally and nationally.
- **Monthly e-bulletins** – our monthly e-bulletins will help you keep on top of all the latest news in the play and playwork field. Becoming a Supporter means you'll receive the latest news on children's play, all in one place.
- **Be notified about key consultations** – you'll be the first to know about upcoming consultations and be able to tell us what you think. These consultations are a great way of contributing to the development of a play-friendly Wales.
- **Lobby for change** – by joining us as a Play Wales Supporter, you'll be able to help us lobby for change wherever it's needed. Our work with the Welsh Government, local authorities and other organisations helps ensure that our work is factual, accessible, and changemaking.
- **Nominate and be nominated to the Play Wales Board of Trustees** – as a Supporter, you'll be able to nominate and be nominated to the Play Wales Board of Trustees.

International Supporter benefits

Our International Supporter membership benefits are restricted because Wales is our registered area of charitable benefit.

International Supporter benefits include:

- First look at new resources
- Monthly e-bulletins
- Notifications about key consultations
- Opportunities to lobby for change.

Support and advocacy

Wales

Play Wales was involved in a variety of Wales-wide working groups to ensure that children's play gets the status it deserves:

- Wales UNCRC Monitoring Group
- Early Years Action Group
- Children's Rights in Early Years Network
- Children in Wales Policy Council
- Active Healthy Kids Wales Expert Group
- Welsh Government Building a Healthier Wales Task and Finish Group – Ministerial Priorities
- Welsh Government Anti-Racist Wales Childcare and Play Governance Group and associated sub-groups
- Welsh Government Childcare and Play Stakeholder Group
- Welsh Government Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Action Plan Stakeholder Group
- Senedd Cross Party Group for Children and Families
- Care Inspectorate Wales Childcare and Play Working Group.

UK and international

We were also involved in a variety of UK and worldwide policy groups, and attended meetings of relevant organisations to ensure UK-wide initiatives reflect development and best practice in Wales:

- Play Safety Forum
- Children's Play Policy Forum
- National Playday Steering Group
- UK Playwork NOS Consortium
- International Play Association (IPA) Cymru Wales and IPA World
- Learning through Landscapes.

Consultations

We responded to several relevant national consultations:

- Child Poverty Strategy for Wales
- Structure of the school day
- Professional registration of the workforce
- Use of Dormant Funds
- National Practice Framework
- Do disabled children and young people have equal access to education and childcare? (inquiry undertaken by the Children, Young People and Education Committee)
- Children, young people and the built environment (co-ordinated by the UK Government Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee).

During the year, our services were used by:

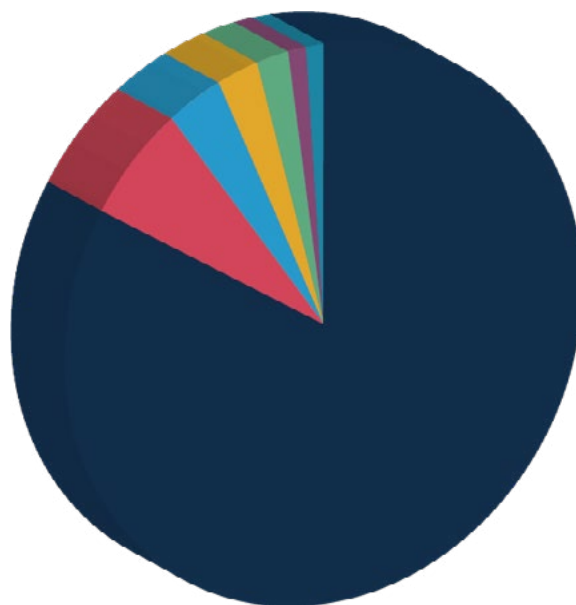
- academics and university institutions
- government officials
- members of the public campaigning to establish or preserve play provision
- organisations providing children's play services – local authority and voluntary sector, as well as community councils
- organisations providing or supporting children's services – local authority and voluntary sector
- parents and carers
- playwork trainers and managers of playworkers
- playworkers, play development workers and play development officers
- professionals in sectors such as childcare and youthwork, early years, education policy, further education, health and social care, public health, town and country planning.
- teachers, head teachers, governors and educational psychologists.

Financial review – summary

Play Wales income and expenditure reports
for the financial year ending March 2024.

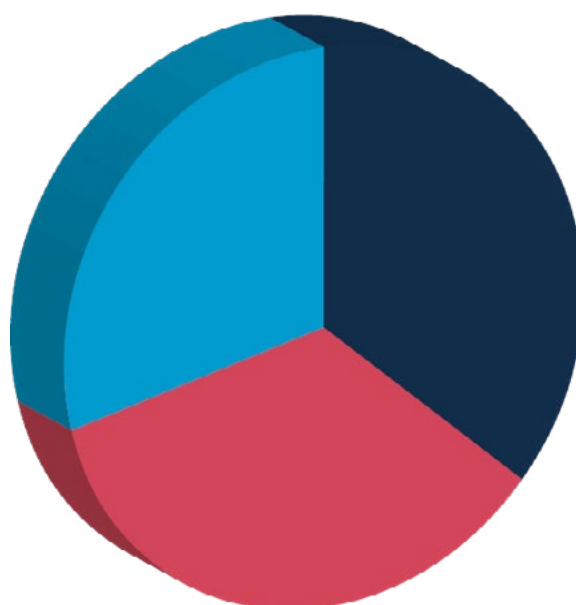
Total income: £502,283

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|------------------------|----------|--|
| Welsh Government grant | £420,000 | |
| Other income | £32,681 | |
| Other grants | £17,150 | |
| Investments | £11,852 | |
| Donations | £10,075 | |
| Publications | £5,760 | |
| Events | £4,765 | |



Total expenditure: £516,326

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|--|
| Play policy, support and advocacy | £187,115 | |
| Workforce development | £180,627 | |
| Information Service | £148,584 | |



Plans for the future 2024-2025

Play Wales will continue to work to promote children's play and act as an advocate for children and their play needs. Particularly, we anticipate that we will undertake the following:

- Continue to support providers of play opportunities to respond to changes in the social, political and financial landscape in a play friendly way.
- Support the Welsh Government to achieve the milestones set out in the Ministerial Review of Play.
- Continue to deliver a communication service aimed at our broad constituency through the provision of focused publications, direct mailing and up to date websites as well as social media engagement.
- Contribute to and inform local, national and international advocacy through project work and membership of committees and groups.
- Support local authorities and third sector organisations to engage and respond to national policy through events, network facilitation and advice.
- Continue to work with The National Centre for Population Health & Wellbeing Research (NCPHWR) to identify what children say about access to play and what they would like in terms of play.
- Review and implement *A play friendly workforce for Wales*, our workforce development plan based on findings from the Welsh Play Workforce Study undertaken by Swansea University.
- Pilot and launch Chwarae o Safon, the playwork quality assurance framework.
- Work with approved centres to ensure that the delivery of Agored Cymru playwork qualifications, and other training, continues to be of quality and responds to the needs of the workforce.
- Work with local Public Health Teams to agree and share messages regarding children's play.
- Undertake and publish a pan-Wales report of surveys completed by children across local authority areas in Wales as part of their Play Sufficiency Assessments in 2025.
- Deliver a range of *Playful Childhoods* campaigns to support parents and carers to provide sufficient opportunities for children to play at home and in their communities.
- Continue to promote our latest film to celebrate children's play in Wales and promote the importance of play in every child's life.
- Develop and deliver a range of events and training opportunities for playworkers and others whose work impacts on children.
- Review, update and implement our Fundraising Strategy to enable delivery of additional projects.
- Work with Starlight Children's Foundation to support the health play sector in Wales.
- Lead the review of the National Occupational Standards for Playwork, on behalf of the UK Playwork NOS Consortium.
- Work with international partners to support them to deliver endorsed playwork training.

To ensure these services are developed and delivered as effectively as possible we will continually review and develop Play Wales' operational plan.

Play Wales Board of Trustees – governance

We have a Board of Trustees that oversees the running of Play Wales to ensure that we meet our objectives effectively and efficiently within the law. There are also a number of Observers to the Board who support the Trustees but who cannot vote. Our Trustees are elected by our membership or co-opted so as to represent an area of expertise.

(as at March 2024)

Dr Rhian Barrance
Cardiff University

Dr Anne Crowley

Matluba Khan
Cardiff University

Malcolm King OBE

Professor Ronan Lyons
Swansea University

Keith Towler (Chairperson)

Dr Jacky Tyrie
Swansea University

Elsbeth Webb

Hanna Hersi

Observer organisations

Catherine Davies
Welsh Local Government Association

Hugh Russell
Children in Wales

Play Wales team

(as at March 2024)

Danielle Beattie
Operations Manager

Diana Wilczyńska Fiuk
Administration and Events Assistant

Mike Greenaway
Director

Martin King-Sheard
Workforce Development Officer

Marianne Mannello
Assistant Director: Policy, Support and Advocacy

Ruth O'Donoghue
Finance Officer

Angharad Wyn Jones
Communications Manager



www.play.wales

Play Wales is the national organisation for children's play, an independent charity supported by the Welsh Government to uphold children's right to play and to provide advice and guidance on play-related matters.