



TRAFFORD  
COUNCIL

# Play 4 All Summary



getting serious  
**about play**

“ Every child in  
Trafford has the right  
to access play  
opportunities ”

# Introduction & Contents

Play is of vital importance to all children and young people. It is nature's way of helping them to understand and make sense of the world around them.

Play helps children and young people to develop the power of concentration and many skills which will equip them for life.

The Play Strategy underpins all other strategies for children and young people. It is crucial to the personal, social, emotional, physical development, health and well being of all children and young people.

Play is about imagination, discovery and enjoyment; it is magical, creative, challenging and fun. Enhanced opportunities for play will enrich the lives and offer brighter futures to the children and young people in Trafford.

This is a short summary, full document is available from Sure Start.

*Shelagh Bailey, Trafford Play Champion  
Chair, Trafford Sure Start Partnership*

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“ UN convention states: Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. ”

Our vision is to create an environment where children and young people can actively participate in a secure and accessible environment within their local communities

The creation of play opportunities will endeavour to support the development of children's life chances, to help them stay healthy give them the opportunity to enjoy and achieve and ultimately make a positive contribution in their immediate community.

We will do this by working in partnership with statutory private, voluntary and community provision.

## We will do this by

- Assessing the current needs of children and young people in Trafford.
- Set out a vision for improving services to and outcomes for children and young people.
- Determine 12 priorities which will best improve outcomes.
- Set objectives and targets for each of the priorities for improving outcomes in the next 5 years, and actions to achieve these.
- Reorganise services for children, young people, and their families, and bring them together in multi-agency teams.
- Ensure that the local authority will work with everyone, including engaging children, young people, their families, staff in the statutory agencies, the voluntary sector and local communities.
- Ensure that the local authority monitors the delivery of high quality and improving services.



“ child led play is the right of every growing child and the joint responsibility of communities ”

Play Partnership Visioning Day May 06

# Rational

2.2.1

**Question:**  
*Why do we need a strategy for play?*

**Answer:**  
**The importance of a strategy with a focus on Play is to provide a framework for development**

- Local authorities will work with partners to develop and promote corporate play policies and strategies.
- The play strategy will help the local authority to meet the vision of improved outcomes for children and young people as set out in 'Every Child Matters'.
- The play strategy will inform an action plan which will provide a clear focus of what needs to be addressed within the borough.



“ Play is using the natural environment to stimulate mind and body through imagination, activity that is spontaneous and which is accessible for all ”  
*Play Partnership Visioning Day May 06*

# Definition of Play

1.1

**Play is a fundamental right.** It is a process and is freely chosen. It is the means by which children explore their world, their roles and their relationships. It can be cooperative, competitive or solitary, destructive or creative. It can be escapist imaginative, therapeutic,

adventurous, messy, challenging, structured or spontaneous. Play empowers children, affirms and supports their right to make choices and discover their own solutions. It encourages healthy emotional and physical development. It is a natural instinct that needs to be nurtured. Play has both educational and social benefits in that, through it, children learn about complex relationships and more importantly, about themselves. It also provides a basis of conceptual understanding that allows them to succeed in formal education. However, play is important for its own sake it shouldn't have to have a reason or an end. Play includes, but is more than, recreation. It is not an additional aspect of a child's life "it is a child's life".

*Susan Isaacs psychologist 1993*

“ Play is when a child's mind is allowed freedom of expression ”

*Play Partnership Visioning Day May 06*



The Children's Play Council definition of the three frees: **Freedom of choice**  
**Free to come and go**  
**Free of charge**

# Inclusive Play 2.5

There are around 770,000 (7%) of children in the UK who are disabled. Many barriers to play, leisure and making friends are put in the way of disabled children. Mainstream play and leisure are failing to meet the needs of disabled children and as a result they are denied the activities that most of us take for granted.

- Trafford have adopted the “KID’s” Inclusion Framework for Local Authorities. The Inclusion Framework has been funded by the DfES Sure Start Unit with the support from local, regional and national network meetings.
- “Inclusive provision is open and accessible to all, and takes positive steps in removing disabling barriers (both physically and socially), so that disabled and non disabled children can participate”.

*Alison John, Disability Equality Trainer*

- Traffords understanding of ‘Inclusive play’ states that non disabled and disabled children and young people, their parents and carers, should be able to access and use the play provision with ease and equal enjoyment.
- Inclusive play opportunities will be provided for all children with a variety of abilities, whilst considering a complex society diverse in culture and belief in line with all relevant legislation.



“ Play is nature’s training for life. No community can infringe that right without doing harm to the minds and bodies of its citizens ”

*Play Partnership Visioning Day May 06*

“ Inclusion is a process of identifying - understanding and breaking down barriers to participation and belonging ”  
*e National Children’s Forum inclusion definition 2003*



## These are some of the ways in which we will achieve this...

- **Trafford Inclusion Framework**
- **Audits**
- **Consultation and participation**
- **A local authority play policy incorporating a shared understanding of inclusion**
- **All services working together**

## children and risk

All children both need and want to take risks in order to explore limits, venture into new experiences and develop their capacities, from a very young age and from the earliest play experiences.

Children would never learn to walk, climb stairs or ride a bicycle unless they were strongly motivated to respond to challenges involving a risk of injury. Disabled children have an equal if not greater need for opportunities to take risks, since they may be denied the freedom of choice enjoyed by their non disabled peers.

It is the job of all those responsible for children at play to assess and manage the level of risk, so that children are given the chance to stretch themselves, test and develop their abilities without exposing them to unacceptable risks. This is part of a wider adult social responsibility to children. If we do not provide controlled opportunities for children to encounter and manage risks then they might be denied the chance to learn these skills. They may also be more likely to choose to play in uncontrollable environments where the risks are greater.

When children sustain or witness injuries they gain direct experiences of the consequences of their actions and choices and through this an understanding of the extent of their abilities and their competences. Children have a range of physical competences and abilities, including a growing ability to assess and manage risk, which adults arguably underestimate.

However children typically have less experience than adults of assessing the broad range of risk and hazards that they may encounter. So it is important to give them appropriate controlled environments in which they can learn about risk.

## conclusion

Safety in play provision is not absolute and cannot be addressed in isolation, play provision is first and foremost for children and if it not exciting and attractive to them then it will fail, no matter how "safe" it is.

*NCB-Managing Risk in Play Aug 2002*



“ Play is the ability to experience together, independently, exploration and experimentation ”



Play provides enriching experiences that can help develop children's emotional and social skills. Research highlights the importance of children being able to learn about risks and use their own initiative. It also suggests that it is essential for them to have opportunities to practice making and consolidating friendships and to deal with conflict – the basic skills needed in order to become “emotionally literate”. This is borne out by children who say that meeting and spending time with their friends is one of the most important opportunities offered by play and play provision.

Research also shows that play is particularly relevant to children's health.

Advice from the Chief Medical Officer states that “children and young people should achieve a total of at least 60 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity each day”

## benefits of play for children and young people

- resilience
- negotiation
- making friends
- having fun
- feeling good
- taking risks
- making choices
- solving problems
- developing solutions



“Resilience, seeing your strengths and building your skills so you can stay strong and bounce back”

# Barriers to Play

Despite the emerging acknowledgement of the value of play and the need to provide adequate opportunities, it is still apparent that many children are deprived of the play opportunities they need and deserve

“Far too many children have nowhere safe to play.

They either don't get out to play or they play in places which are unsafe. So they are deprived of the pleasure and stimulation of being able to play with their friends or they are in danger”

*Getting Serious About Play:  
A review of children's play 2004*

## barriers to play

- **discrimination**
- **the lack of provision for those with SEN/disabilities**
- **inappropriate consultation.**
- **poverty and social issues**
- **no single body responsible for its effective implementation**
- **the lack of a joined up approach**



“ Play is essential to their development, their right, flexible to a child's imagination and can be done anywhere ”

*Play Partnership Visioning Day May 06*

# Every child Matters

Every child matters: Change for children is a new approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19.

Children learn through their relationships and interactions with other people. Young children are deeply influenced by their social environment. The quality of the social environment for children and young people is important for their experiences.

The aim of the play strategy for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, is to have the support they need to:

- **be healthy**
- **stay safe**
- **enjoy and achieve**
- **make a positive contribution**
- **achieve economic well-being**

Children's and young peoples learning is an expression of optimism and hope. There is a creative human spirit which shapes us as unique people even as we remain part of our cultures and our communities. People, and the quality of their relationships, are an integral part of children and young people developing attitudes and beliefs.

“Children's play is what they make it, it is their right and it aids development understanding and is fun”  
*Play Partnership Visioning Day May 06*



# Strategic priorities for Play

- access for all children disabled and non disabled children and young people
- local neighbourhood play opportunities
- information about play opportunities for children and families
- all services working together
- pooled budgets
- sustainable and long lasting projects
- participation and consultation with children and young people
- workforce development of play and leisure staff
- more opportunities for play for the over 8's
- improved routes to play opportunities
- monitoring and evaluation of play



## *play partners*

The following services and organisations are represented on the Play Partnership:

Services of Trafford MBC:

Sure Start

Safeguarding Children

Community Services

Sports & Health Development

Leisure Services

Youth Service

School Sports Partnership

Youth Offending Team

Young People, Children & Families

Bollin Valley Partnership

Community Foundation for Greater Manchester

Children's Society

Early Years

Regeneration

Social Care

Environmental Services

Strategic Planning

Access and Assessment

Children's Fund

School Improvement Service

Mersey Valley Countryside Warden Service

Trafford NHS

# Trafford Play Scheme Comments

Matthew has really enjoyed his time here. He has been so excited to return each time. The staff have always been so friendly to both children and parents and have been fantastically helpful and approachable. Thank you! D. Sharp.

I think it was brilliant and I am desperately coming next year. Sam.

I think this play scheme is brilliant. George.

I think it was brilliant and great. I might come next year. Angelica.

I enjoy play scheme very much

I like play scheme. Tom

Sean & Christopher really enjoyed playing in the session. They didn't really want to come but when I came to pick them up didn't want to leave! Thanks very much to all the staff for making them feel so welcome and giving them a good time.

Ann Higgs

Harrison has had a really nice time and he has done some really fab things - well done to you all x.



“The right to play  
is a child's first claim on  
the community”  
*David Lloyd George 1925*

Trafford Children's Information Service (CIS)  
provides free **information** and **advice** across the  
0 - 19 age range including:

- ▶ childcare
- ▶ early education
- ▶ leisure activities
- ▶ help with childcare costs
- ▶ careers in childcare
- ▶ family support services

Contact Trafford CIS on:

 **0161 912 1053**

Email: [childcare.information@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:childcare.information@trafford.gov.uk)

Web: [childcarelink.gov.uk](http://childcarelink.gov.uk)

Minicom: 0161 912 2101 user id 1053