



# Getting it Right for Play

A toolkit to assess and improve local play opportunities

## Foreword

Play Scotland works to promote the importance of Play for all children and young people, and campaigns to create increased Play opportunities in the community.

As a result, Play Scotland was delighted to receive funding from the Go Play Fund in 2010 to develop a Template and Toolkit for Play. The Toolkit and supporting documents are aimed at Local Authorities to help improve the design and provision of places and spaces for all children, so that they can feel safe and confident playing outside in their neighbourhoods.

Play Scotland appointed Issy Cole-Hamilton to lead the process and write the documents. The process for developing the Toolkit and supporting documents was very straight forward. A Reference Group was established to support the process which also involved a number of consultation events throughout Scotland in 2010/11. After taking full account of the Play Sector's views at these events, Play Scotland developed two types of Indicators: Play Sufficiency indicators and Child Friendly Community indicators. The four tools that were developed to illustrate the indicators were piloted in Aberdeen, North Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire Local Authority areas in 2011.

*"Children need the freedom to play. Play is not a luxury. Play is a necessity"*

Kay Renfield Jamieson

*"Play stands at the centre of human development, especially in the formative years, but its importance has to be defended by each generation anew, often on different grounds"*

Sturrock, Else & Russell (2004)

All the Indicators and Tools are relevant to Local Authorities. However, the Children's Survey and the Quality Assessment Tool can also be used by community groups to help them assess play opportunities and spaces in their local community.

The two supporting documents which are available in pdf with Getting it Right for Play are: the Power of Play, a comprehensive literature review of the benefits of play to children and the wider community; and the Scottish Play Policy Context which outlines the Scottish Government's commitment to Play in policy and guidance.

Play Scotland is confident that this practical and easy to use Toolkit and supporting documents will improve children's quality of life through play, and help make the Child's Right to Play a Reality in Scotland.

**Marguerite Hunter Blair**  
Chief Executive



# Contents

**Endorsements** 2, 41, 66, 75 and 87

**Section 1 Overview of the toolkit** 3

**Section 2 Introduction** 6

2.1 Introduction to the tools and indicators 7

2.2 Getting started 11

**Section 3 The tools and how to use them** 13

3.1 The Playing Out Survey 14

3.2 The Play Space Quality Assessment Tools 30

3.3 Guidance on mapping play spaces 49

3.4 Multi-agency working policy analysis tool 54

**Section 4 Local Authority Play Sufficiency Assessment** 76

**Appendix 1: The Playing Out Survey** 83

**Acknowledgements** 88



## The following documents are available in electronic form from Play Scotland

The Playing Out Survey (pdf)

The Playing Out Survey monitoring sheet (pdf)

Survey data entry sheet (Excel spreadsheet)

Play Space Quality Assessment Tools:

- How good is the play space?: children's assessment tool (pdf)
- Quality of Play Environment: providers' assessment tool (pdf)

# Endorsements

## Message from the Minister

Most of us carry great memories of playing outside as a child. However we regularly hear in the media and through research about how little time today's children spend playing outdoors. Outdoor activities that were part of growing up when I was young feature less and less in children's lives today. The Scottish Government recognises that Play is central to how children learn and develop, and how they are motivated to be physically active.

I am very pleased to endorse Play Scotland's seminal publication, *Getting it Right for Play*, which has been funded through the Scottish Government's Go Play initiative.

*Getting it Right for Play* is a timely and practical resource for everyone involved in providing increased quality play opportunities for children and young people in Scotland.

There are three parts to *Getting it Right for Play*, a strategic review of the evidence base outlining the benefits of play to children and the wider community; a comprehensive Scottish Play Policy context; and a Toolkit aimed at Local Authorities, to stimulate improvement in the design and provision of play opportunities for children to play outside in their neighbourhoods. Community groups and schools which are interested in their local neighbourhoods will also find some of the tools very useful.

### **The aspiration of *Getting it Right for Play*, is that:**

“Wherever they live, children and young people of all ages, abilities and interests, should be able to play in a variety of ways, in high quality spaces, within sight of their homes or within easy walking distance, where they feel safe whether or not they are accompanied by adults.”

Developing play spaces and play opportunities for children, and removing barriers to play is a priority in the Early Years Framework. I commend Play Scotland for their work in this area and I recognise the important contribution that *Getting it Right for Play* can make to improving children's quality of life through play.

I hope that Local Authorities and Community groups will use this practical toolkit to deliver improved play opportunities for our children and young people as part of our mission to make Scotland the best place in the world to grow up.”

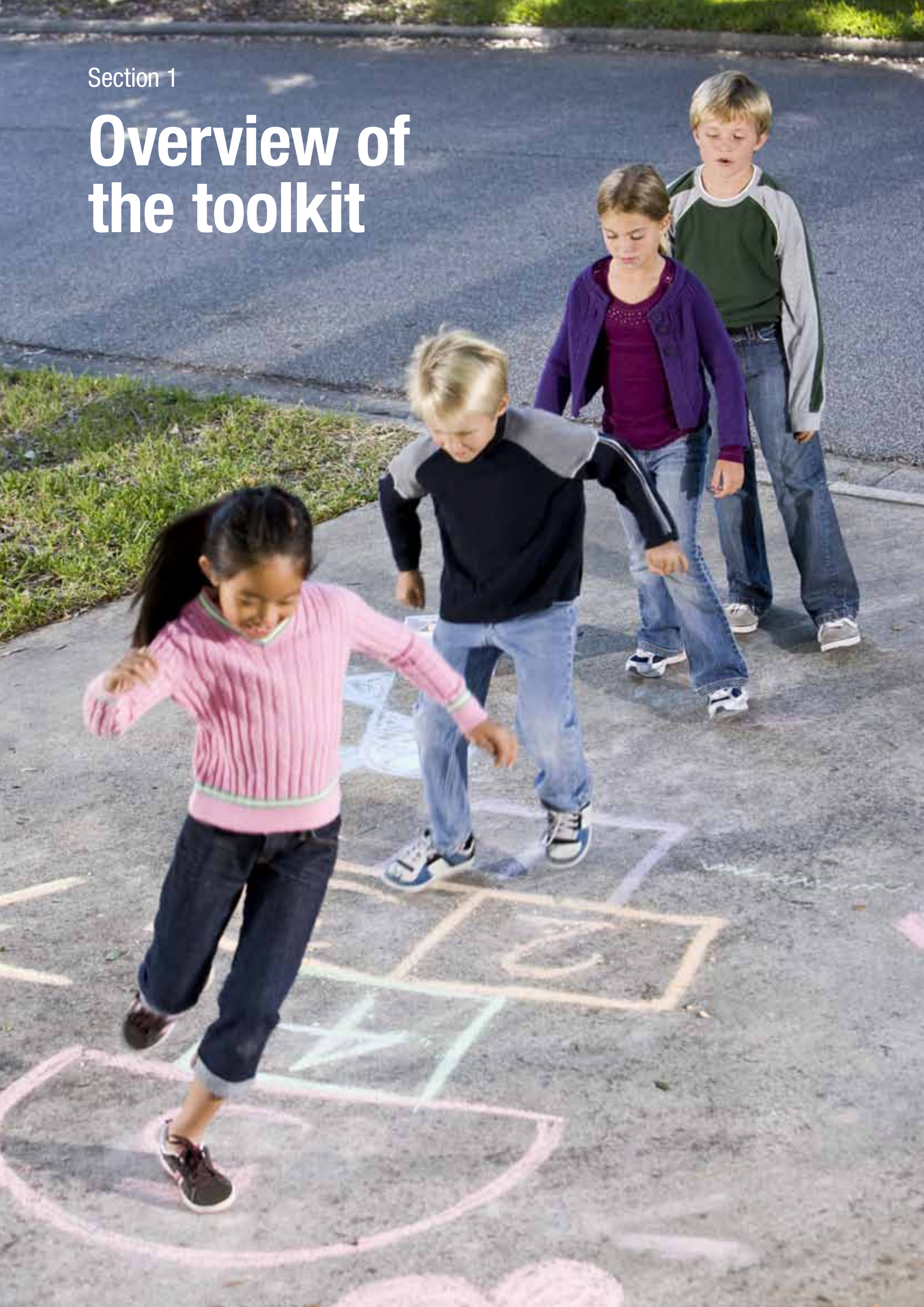
**Aileen Campbell, MSP**

Minister for Children and Young People



Section 1

# Overview of the toolkit



The *Getting it Right for Play* Toolkit is for all those interested in evaluating and improving local outdoor play opportunities and experiences for children and young people in Scotland. It shows how to use **4 tools** to collect and analyse sufficient information to measure against **8 indicators**.

Together these give a comprehensive picture of local outdoor play spaces and opportunities providing the information for the **Local Authority Play Sufficiency Assessment**.

## The tools and indicators

The 4 evaluation tools		The 8 indicators
A <b>Playing out survey</b> of children's views and experiences	which measures	1. How often children play outdoors 2. Children's satisfaction with their outdoor play opportunities and experiences 5. Children's involvement in planning and delivery 6b. Children's opportunities to experience excitement and the benefits of taking risks 7. Adult attitudes to children playing outdoors
A <b>Play Space Quality Assessment</b> tool for measuring the different elements that contribute to making a high quality space for play	which measures	3. The quality of local spaces for outdoor play 6a. Opportunities for children to challenge themselves and experience the benefits of taking risks
Guidance on Mapping Play Spaces in relation to where children live, supplementing existing open and green space maps	which measures	4. Children's access to different types of space for outdoor play
A <b>Policy analysis framework</b> for <b>Local Authority</b> policies and strategies.	which measures	8. The extent to which local agencies and Local Authority departments work together to plan and provide for outdoor play.



## Who the toolkit is for

**The Playing Out Survey of children's views and experiences, and the Play Space Quality Assessment Tools may be of use to:**

- **Community and neighbourhood groups** wanting to improve their area
- **Children's groups** unhappy about outdoor play opportunities where they live
- **Play and youth workers** concerned about local outdoor play opportunities
- **Community safety teams** interested in meeting the needs of children and young people
- **Local Authority play service staff** interested in assessing and evaluating local provision for children's outdoor play
- **Local Authority staff** involved in planning and developing **open spaces** across the area
- **Local Authority staff** interested in developing and promoting better **services and provision for children and young people**
- **Local Authority performance improvement staff** assessing the impact of local provision.



**The Guidance on mapping play spaces which shows how to supplement existing Local Authority open space audits may be of use to:**

- **Local Authority play service staff** interested in assessing and evaluating local provision for children's outdoor play
- **Local Authority staff** involved in planning and developing **open spaces** across the area
- **Local Authority staff** interested in developing and promoting better **services and provision for children and young people**
- **Local Authority performance improvement staff** assessing the impact of local provision.

**The Policy analysis framework which provides frameworks for auditing Local Authority Play Strategies and other Local Authority policy documents may be of use to:**

- **Local Authority play service staff or local play forums** interested in assessing the extent to which provision for outdoor play is seen as a multi-agency function across Local Authority services and provision
- **Play forums and associations** interested in assessing and engaging multi-agency working across an area
- **Local Authority staff** interested in developing and promoting better multi-agency cooperation in **services and provision for children and young people**
- **Local Authority performance improvement staff** assessing the degree of multi-agency collaboration.

## The structure of the toolkit

The toolkit is arranged around the 4 tools offering guidance on:

- how to use them,
- how to analyse the results, and
- how to interpret the findings and measure against the indicators.

Used together, the 4 tools can provide a comprehensive view of provision for children's outdoor play across a Local Authority area or can be used to assess provision in specific neighbourhoods. Each tool can also be used on its own to gain insight into different elements of play provision.

Section 2

# Introduction





## 2.1 Introduction to the tools and indicators

The aim of the *Getting it Right for Play* toolkit is to stimulate improvement in the design and provision of local places and spaces where children of all ages, disabled and non-disabled, feel safe and confident and are playing outside in their neighbourhoods. This is done through offering local authorities, their partners and people in local communities a series of indicators and data collection tools which, when looked at together or individually, give insight into the extent, nature and adequacy of local provision for outdoor play. It is then up to local providers to act on this information, make necessary improvements and monitor changes over time. The indicators and tools have been developed by Play Scotland in consultation with people from across the play and related sectors throughout Scotland.

The toolkit has been designed to complement other tools and resources being developed and used in Scotland as part of the *Getting it Right for Every Child* programme and the *Early Years Framework*. These include self-assessment tools in use in the play sector such as *How good is our culture and sport*<sup>1</sup> and the *Go Play Outcomes and Evaluation Framework*<sup>2</sup>. The way tools can be used together is outlined in section 4 of this toolkit on using the indicators to assess Play Sufficiency.

The toolkit describes how to use the four evaluation tools to assess the extent to which the outdoor play needs of children and young people are being met, identify the strengths and shortcomings in local provision, and identify ways to improve local opportunities for outdoor play. While the primary aim of the toolkit is to help local authorities and their partners evaluate provision across the Local Authority, some of the tools and indicators can also be used by community groups and individuals to look at their own neighbourhoods, and evaluate the play spaces and opportunities available to local children and young people.

*The assessments and analysis are based on the assumption that:*

Wherever they live, children and young people of all ages, abilities and interests should be able to play, in a variety of ways, in high quality spaces, within sight of their homes, or within easy walking distance, where they feel safe whether or not they are accompanied by adults



### People involved

While it is essential that one person and department take overall responsibility for managing the play indicators, the data collection and analysis can be undertaken by different people, groups or departments. Establishing a core group of people with a range of suitable skills and knowledge to support all stages of the process is an essential first step. The following section, summarising the tools and data collection methods, suggests who might be involved at different stages.

<sup>1</sup> HM Inspectorate of Education (2009) *How good is our culture and sport? A Quality Improvement Framework for culture and sport provision*, Livingston

<sup>2</sup> Inspiring Scotland (2011) *Go Play Outcomes and Evaluation Framework*, Edinburgh



## Definitions and descriptions

**For the purposes of these documents we have used the following definitions and descriptions:**

*Children:* children and young people from birth to 16 years old.

*Play:* what children and young people do in their own time, for their own reasons and free from the direction and control of adults.

*Outdoor play:* children and young people spending time outdoors, usually with friends, doing what they want to do, in their own time and for their own reasons. If adults are present they do not direct or organise the children.

*Free time:* time young people spend together when they are not being organised or directed in their activity by adults.

*Spaces and opportunities for outdoor play:* public open, outdoor spaces, whether or not specifically designed for outdoor play, where children and young people might play or spend their free time with friends, free of charge.

*Neighbourhoods:* Relatively small geographical areas where people live and spend most of their free time, and where children play in local outdoor streets, open spaces and parks. For the purposes of developing and measuring play indicators, local authorities will need to define their own neighbourhoods for data collection. These will be areas which make the most sense locally and might be based on learning communities, electoral wards, housing developments, village boundaries, or other criteria relevant to local population groups.



## The indicators

**To get a comprehensive picture of the success of provision for outdoor play opportunities across the Local Authority area there are two types of indicator:**

- *Play Opportunities and Experiences indicators.* Four indicators which illustrate the access children have to good quality spaces and opportunities for outdoor play, the extent to which they use these spaces and how satisfied they are with them.
- *Child Friendly Communities indicators.* Indicators which demonstrate the extent to which children's views and outdoor play needs are accepted and reflected in policy and planning, and in the communities where they live.

The overall Local Authority *Play Sufficiency Indicator* is developed by amalgamating the results of the four Play Opportunities and Experiences indicators and the four *Child Friendly Communities* indicators.





# The Play Scotland Indicators

Title	Indicator	Short name
Play Opportunities and Experiences indicators		
The extent to which children and young people are outdoors playing and spending free time with friends.	The percentage of children and young people aged from birth to 16 years, from all social and ethnic groups, including those who are disabled, who play or spend free time outdoors with friends most days.	1: Time outdoors
The level of satisfaction with the play spaces and opportunities available to children and young people while spending free time outdoors.	The percentage of children and young people aged from birth to 16 years, from all social and ethnic groups, including those who are disabled, who say they play out in their favourite ways, while feeling safe in their local community.	2: Children's satisfaction
The quality of local spaces and opportunities for play and spending free time with friends.	The proportion of local play, green and open spaces with good or very good scores for quality as assessed using the Play Scotland quality assessment tool.	3: Quality
Children and young people's access to spaces and opportunities for outdoor play and spending free time with friends.	The proportion of neighbourhoods in the Local Authority area that meet the benchmark standards for outdoor play space set by the Local Authority in its open space audit and strategy.	4: Access
Child Friendly community indicators		
The meaningful involvement of children and young people in the design and delivery of spaces and opportunities for outdoor play and recreation.	The percentage of children and young people who say they have been asked about their outdoor play needs and think things have improved.	5: Involvement
Evidence of a risk-benefit approach being taken to allow challenging and exciting outdoor play opportunities.	The proportion of outdoor play spaces designed to offer exciting play choices and challenges.	6a: Risk opportunities
	<b>AND</b> The percentage of children saying they can play in exciting, daring ways in their community.	<b>AND</b> 6b: Risk experience
Adult attitudes to children and young people being outside.	The proportion of children and young people who consider adults think it is OK for children and young people to be out in the local area.	7: Adult attitudes
The extent to which different agencies are working together in a cohesive way to promote outdoor play and create quality play experiences.	The existence of a local play strategy group, with a play strategy and action plan, developed and supported by all relevant departments and agencies, which is regularly updated and monitored.	8a: Multi-agency play strategy
	<b>OR</b> The extent to which reference is made to the provision of outdoor play opportunities in the Local Authority's Single Outcome Agreement and all relevant Local Authority policy and planning documents.	<b>OR</b> 8b: Multi-agency policies

## The Play Scotland Indicators continued

Title	Indicator	Short name
Local Authority play sufficiency assessment		
The sufficiency of provision of high quality, accessible spaces and opportunities for outdoor play and recreation across the Local Authority area.	<p>The proportion of neighbourhoods in the Local Authority area assessed as having high scores for:</p> <p>1: Time outdoors 2: Children's satisfaction 3: Quality 4: Access 5: Involvement 6a: Risk opportunities <b>AND</b> 6b: Risk experience 7: Adult attitudes 8a: Multi-agency play strategy <b>OR</b> 8b: Multi-agency policies</p>	9: Local Authority play sufficiency.

## The tools

**All the data needed to illustrate the indicators can be collected using four tools. These are:**

- A **Playing out survey** of children's views and experiences
- A **Quality Assessment** for measuring the different elements that contribute to making a high quality space for outdoor play
- **Guidance on mapping** outdoor play spaces in relation to where children live, supplementing existing open and green space maps
- **Policy analysis framework** for Local Authority policies and strategies.

The table below summarises how these tools provide the data for each indicators.

Evaluation tool	Indicator	People who might collect data
<b>Children's Playing Out survey:</b> paper or on-line	1: Time outdoors 2: Children's satisfaction 5: Involvement 6b: Risk experience 7: Adult attitudes	Local Authority play lead; Local Authority performance management team; schools; community groups; children's groups.
<b>Quality Assessment Tool</b> for spaces for outdoor play	3: Quality 6a: Risk opportunities	Local Authority play lead; parks officers; schools planners; local children
<b>Guidance on Mapping Play Spaces</b>	4: Access	Local Authority planning department (open space)
<b>Policy Analysis Framework</b>	8a: Multi-agency Play Strategy 8b: Multi-agency policies	Local Authority play lead and performance monitoring; play forums

While all the indicators and tools are relevant to the Local Authority, the Children's Survey and the Quality Assessment may also be useful to play providers, schools and local groups and individuals, including children and young people, who are interested in their local neighbourhoods. This will offer them insights into the amount children actually play outside; what they think about the spaces and opportunities they have for outdoor play; how safe they feel and their experience of the adults in their local community.



## 2.2 Getting started

### Step 1:

Identifying  
and recruiting  
key partners

### Step 2:

Agreeing  
underpinning  
principles

### Step 3:

Defining  
neighbourhoods

### Step 4:

Identifying relevant  
characteristics of the  
local child population

As Local Authority areas vary widely in nature and population each will need to agree on their own local aspirations for children's outdoor play opportunities and, as children's outdoor play is by its nature a localised activity, the definition of neighbourhoods for data collection will probably be in the community where children live. Before any information can be collected it is essential to:

- Identify and recruit key partners;
- Agree underpinning principles;
- Define neighbourhoods, and
- Identify relevant characteristics of the child population to be considered



### Step 1: Identifying and recruiting key partners

A wide variety of knowledge and skills is needed to complete a comprehensive and robust analysis of the provision of local play spaces and opportunities. These include an in-depth understanding of:

- *the local people, policies, plans and delivery mechanisms* including the local child and family population and their needs and aspirations; play and play provision; spatial planning; transport planning; open space planning; community safety; public health.
- *technical procedures* including survey research, sampling and analysis; geographical mapping systems; performance measurement and performance management.

Every Local Authority will have officers with these skills and knowledge and, in the same way that providing for comprehensive opportunities for outdoor play depends on the actions of many different departments and agencies, so does the process of measuring and evaluating its success.

The first step in using this toolkit is therefore to identify and make contact with officers in the Local Authority or amongst its voluntary and private sectors partners, who can offer these skills.

The people with the skills, knowledge, interest and time to collect and analyse the data will vary in each Local Authority. They could be, for example:

- Local Authority play lead;
- Local Authority community services department;
- Local Authority performance management team;
- Parks Department;
- Local Authority Planning Department;
- Local Authority Education Department;
- Local Authority Department responsible for landscape and countryside Development;
- Schools staff;
- Community Group Leaders;
- Children and Youth Groups;
- Play Forums



## Step 2: Agreeing underpinning principles

It is essential to ensure there is general agreement to the underpinning statement for the provision of children's outdoor play spaces and opportunities. This forms the basis of standards to be measured against and should underpin the Play Strategy and other Local Authority policies.

### An example of an underpinning statement of principle:

*Wherever they live, children and young people of all ages and abilities should be able to play outdoors, in a variety of ways, in high quality spaces, within sight of their homes, or within easy walking distance, where they feel safe whether or not they are accompanied by adults.*



## Step 3: Defining neighbourhoods

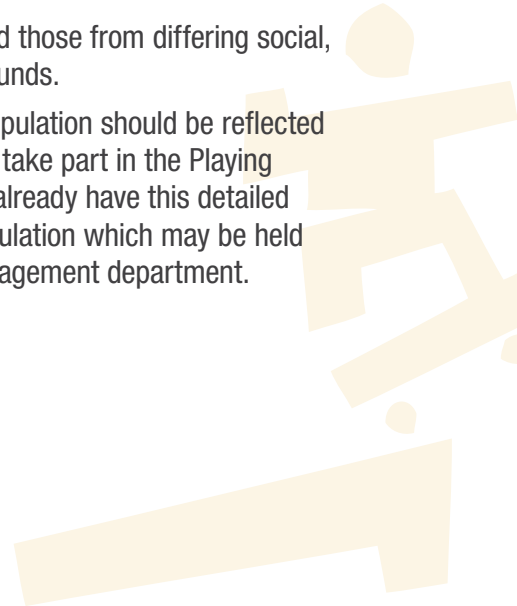
Local Authorities will need to define their own neighbourhoods for data collection. These will be areas which make the most sense locally and include the areas where children from one residential area might be expected to play outdoors or spend their free time with friends. They may be based on learning communities, electoral wards, housing developments, village boundaries, residential communities or other criteria relevant to local population groups.

## Step 4: Identifying relevant characteristics of the child population to be considered

To ensure that outdoor play needs of all children and young people are addressed in measuring the indicators it will be necessary to look at the composition of the child population living in each neighbourhood including:

- those of different age groups eg <6, 6-11 and 12-16;
- those who are disabled;
- those from all ethnic groups and those from differing social, economic and housing backgrounds.

The composition of the local child population should be reflected in the sample of children selected to take part in the Playing Out survey. The Local Authority will already have this detailed information about the local child population which may be held by the planning or performance management department.





# The Tools and how to use them





# The Playing Out Survey

The ***Playing Out Survey*** seeks the views and experiences of children and young people. It can be used with children of different ages and abilities but the methods used, and the explanations given by those administering the survey, will differ with children of different ages and abilities.

The questionnaire can be used on its own, for example, by local children's groups, community groups or play providers, or by the Local Authority to contribute to information for the **Local Authority Play Sufficiency Assessment**. For children unable to complete the questionnaire on their own, help from parents or other adults, may be useful.

## The Indicators

The Playing Out Survey provides information to illustrate the following indicators

- 1: Time outdoors
- 2: Children's satisfaction
- 5: Involvement

- 6b: Risk experience
- 7: Adult attitudes





## How to undertake the survey

The toolkit provides a paper-based questionnaire but the Local Authority may find it easier to adapt this into an on-line format which allows for automatic entry of the results onto a spreadsheet. If an on-line version is being developed we recommend you use the same questions to ensure results can be compared with others. In most situations children will need an explanation and guidance as they complete the questionnaire. There are a number of on-line survey tools available, some of which the Local Authority or local partners might be able to use or recommend.

The following approaches are recommended with children of different age groups:

Children < 6 years old:	<p>Adults can 'interview' individual children and complete the questionnaires with them. Puppets and other imaginative aid might be used.</p> <p>Children can be asked the questions in group games and discussions with the facilitator who notes the responses.</p> <p>The Mindstretchers website offers ideas and practical resources for consulting with young children: <a href="http://www.mindstretchers.co.uk">www.mindstretchers.co.uk</a> as does the SPPA website <a href="http://www.sppa.org.uk">www.sppa.org.uk</a>. The Office of the Children's Commissioner might be able to offer advice. <a href="http://www.sccyp.org.uk/">www.sccyp.org.uk/</a></p> <p>The National Children's Bureau website also offers some useful information on practical consulting techniques with young children.</p> <p><a href="http://www.ncb.org.uk/ecu_network/ycvn/ycvn_home/listening_to_young_children.aspx">www.ncb.org.uk/ecu_network/ycvn/ycvn_home/listening_to_young_children.aspx</a></p>
Children < 6 yrs (parents)	<p>Alternatively, the questionnaire can be sent home from school or nursery and parents asked to complete it with their children.</p>
Children 6-11 yrs	<p>On-line survey administered through schools or paper questionnaire administered through schools or community groups. Some explanation is likely to be required</p>
Young people 12-16 yrs	<p>On-line survey administered through schools or questionnaire administered through schools or community groups. Some explanation about the words used might be necessary.</p> <p>Explain that the term 'play' also includes spending free time with friends outside in the local area.</p>

## The sample of children

The size and nature of the sample needed for robust data will depend on the total number of children in the neighbourhood, the degree of accuracy the Local Authority or community requires and the nature of the sub-groups to be studied. Researchers in the Local Authority performance management team should be able to advise on the best sample size in each neighbourhood.

As a guide the following principles apply:

- The sample should be as representative of the whole child population as far as possible (but some additional work with children from under-represented groups could be useful)
- Where feasible the sample should be randomly selected but it is also possible to select a quota sample, based on population groups, if this is likely to give equally useful information
- The wider the likely variation in children's answers the larger the sample needs to be, although there will be an optimum sample size.
- Larger samples lead to more accurate results but there is an optimum sample size and a larger does one not always give significantly more useful results.



## Time of Year

Ideally the survey should be undertaken in October as this is a time when children may or may not be outdoors playing. Some Local Authorities might wish to undertake the survey at different times of year – for example in January as well as June – to give an overview of children's outdoor play at different seasons. However, undertaking the survey at different times of year will affect the results and they will only be comparable with other neighbourhoods and Local Authorities who have collected data at the same time.

## The questionnaire

The questionnaire, which can be printed and copied, is attached in appendix 1 and explanatory notes are given on the following pages.

Questions 2 and 4 do not form part of the indicators evaluation but are designed to broaden children's thinking about the outdoor play opportunities that might be available to them, even if they do not currently have access to them. (Appendix 1)



## Monitoring sheet

In order to ensure that the sample of children represents those of the different ages, abilities, ethnicities and interests in the locality, a monitoring sheet should be completed by the facilitator of each group of children completing the questionnaire. This is available as a pdf from Play Scotland.

## Data entry and analysis

You will need access to an electronic analysis programme to analyse the results of the surveys from each neighbourhood. It is possible to do very basic, simple analyses using a spreadsheet package such as Excel but for more sophisticated analysis you will need a specific programme, such as SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Your Local Authority will be using some form of questionnaire analysis software and it is best to liaise with the appropriate person and work with them to analyse the questionnaire responses. These people are most likely to be in a Local Authority research department or performance management team. When entering the data from the questionnaires be sure to note which neighbourhood the children live in. We have created a model spreadsheet in Excel which you can use to enter the data and you should be able to copy that into a more sophisticated package if one is available. This is appendix 3 of the on-line version of the toolkit.





## Playing Out Survey Explanatory notes

### Facilitator notes

#### The Playing Out survey

Explain that children need to think about the area where they live and the places they play when they are at home. We are not asking about school or nursery play times.

*“This survey is to find out what you think about your local places to play and time spent with your friends.*

*It is for children and young people of all ages.*

*Tell us what you think by answering these questions about playing out in your local area.”*



**A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix 1 and it can be downloaded from the Play Scotland website: [www.playscotland.org](http://www.playscotland.org)**

Q1. Provides the information for the indicator on the extent to which children play outside in their neighbourhood. (Indicator 1)

Remember this is about playing outside in the area where the children live and does not include nursery or school play times.

1. How often do you play outside? (not counting school playtimes)	Tick one
I play outside most days	
I play outside a few times a week	
I hardly ever play outside	
I don't like playing outside	

Q2. Children should tick the ways they **MOST** enjoy playing. This question is not used in the analysis for the indicators but is designed to get children thinking about what they enjoy before answering the next question. However, it may be useful for local groups or local authorities thinking about what opportunities they could be providing in an area.

2. What are your favourite <b>WAYS</b> to play ... (tick the ones you like best)			
	Tick here		Tick here
<b>Be active:</b> run, jump, slide, swimming, ball games, skip, chase.		<b>Be adventurous:</b> Climb, be daring, hang upside down, jump from high up, swing high, walk on logs	
<b>Hang out:</b> meet friends, chat, laugh, shout, sit around (generally hang around).		<b>Make things:</b> create, draw, paint, build things, make dens	
<b>Use wheels:</b> cycle, scooter, skate, skateboard		<b>Be quiet:</b> Imagine, dream, invent, hide, chill	
<b>Get wet or grubby:</b> paddling, mud, digging, buckets, mixing		<b>Feel free:</b> get out of the house, express yourself, away from adults, be yourself	

Q3 contributes to the indicator on children's satisfaction with local play opportunities and experiences. (Indicator 2)

Suggest to the children that they think about the things they have said they **MOST** enjoy in Q2, and ask how much they can do these things in the places near home where they play out.

3. When I am out playing in my local area	Tick one
I do <b>most</b> of my FAVOURITE things	
I do <b>some</b> of my FAVOURITE things	
I do <b>hardly</b> any of my FAVOURITE things	



Q4 is also designed to get children thinking about what might be possible – not what is possible. They should tick the places they **MOST** like playing even if there are none of these in their local area.

This question is not used in the analysis for the indicators but is designed to get children thinking about what they enjoy before answering the next question. However, it may be useful for local groups or local authorities thinking about what opportunities they could be providing in an area.

4. Which are your favourite PLACES to play? (Tick the places you would like playing best)			
	Tick here		Tick here
Your garden or friends' gardens		School playground	
Streets and corners near home		Places that feel safe from traffic, bullies, strange adults	
A local park or grassy area		Places I can get to easily by walking or cycling	
Natural places with trees, bushes, flowers, fields,		Play parks with water and sand: paddling pool, sandpit, fountains.	
Play parks: swings, slides, climbing frames, seesaws		Cycle track or skate park	
Football fields or sports pitches		Community centre or leisure centre	
Woods and forests		Beaches, the seaside, rivers	

Q5 contributes to the indicator on children's satisfaction with local play opportunities and experiences. (Indicator 2)

Suggest to the children that they think about the places they **MOST** enjoy in Q4 and ask how many places there are like this in their local area.

5. In your local area, which of these is true?	Tick one
There are <b>lots</b> of my favourite PLACES to play	
There are <b>some</b> of my favourite PLACES to play	
There are <b>hardly</b> any of my favourite PLACES to play	

*“The next questions are about what happens when you are playing outside in your local area.”*



Q6 contributes to the satisfaction indicator. (Indicator 2)

This is about how children feel when out playing and might enable them to express their concern about different things in their environment eg traffic, adults, other children etc.

6. How safe do you feel when out playing in your local area?	Tick one
I <b>usually</b> feel SAFE when I'm out playing	
I <b>sometimes</b> feel SAFE when I'm out playing	
I <b>never</b> feel SAFE when I'm out playing	

Q7 contributes to the indicator on the potential children have in their local area to take risks and challenge themselves whilst playing. (Indicator 6a)

7. How exciting is it when you are out playing in your local area?	Tick one
I can <b>usually</b> play in EXCITING DARING ways	
I can <b>sometimes</b> play in EXCITING DARING ways	
I can <b>never</b> play in EXCITING DARING ways	

Q8 provides the information for the 'Adult attitudes' indicator (Indicator 7). It is not only about how they are treated as individuals, but also about how they think adults think in general.

8. What do grown-ups think about children playing out in your local area	Tick one
<b>Most</b> grown-ups think it is OK	
<b>Some</b> grown-ups think it is OK	
<b>Hardly any</b> grown-ups think it is OK	

Q9 provides information for the indicator on children's involvement in the planning and development of local provision. (Indicator 5) It is asking if they have ever been consulted by the Local Authority or anyone else, about what sort of play opportunities they would like in their neighbourhood.

9. This question is about whether people from the council or other adults have asked you about what you like when you are playing.	
Which one of these is true?	Tick one
I was asked what I like and now it is better	
I was asked what I like but nothing happened	
I have never been asked what I like	
I don't know if I have ever been asked	



*“The last few questions are about you”*



Q10 allows the facilitator to check that the people answering the questions are representative of the local child population.

10. Are you a boy or a girl ?	Tick one
Boy	
Girl	

Q11 allows the facilitator to check that the people answering the questions are representative of the local child population.

11. How old are you?	Write here

Q12 allows those undertaking the research to identify the group of children who have answered to questionnaire.

12. Which school or nursery do you go to?
Write here

Q13 can be used to identify the areas the children are referring to when answering the questions. Full postcodes are most useful for this, but in some areas these may identify individual children, so care should be taken when deciding how much information to gather.

13. What is your postcode at home?
Write here

## Analysing the survey and measuring the indicators.



# Time Outdoors

## Indicator 1

*Title: The amount of time children and young people are outdoors playing and spending free time with friends*

*Indicator: The percentage of children and young people aged from birth to 16 years, from all social and ethnic groups, including those who are disabled, who play or spend free time outdoors with friends most days.*

Data collection method: children's survey

## Survey Question

### 1. How often do you play outside (not counting school playtimes)?

- I play outside most days
- I play outside a few times a week
- I hardly ever play outside
- I don't like playing outside

## Data Entry and Analysis

In each of the four spreadsheet columns under "time" enter 1 for item ticked and 0 for items not ticked.

Calculate proportion of children scoring 1 in "most" column.

Analyse according to age group; disability; ethnicity; socio-economic group and compare with Local Authority breakdown of different groups in neighbourhood.

Enter into summary sheet (see section 4)



# Children's satisfaction

## Indicator 2

**Title:** The level of satisfaction with the play spaces and opportunities available to children and young people while spending free time outdoors.

**Indicator:** The percentage of children and young people aged from birth to 16 years, from all social and ethnic groups, including those who are disabled, who say they can play out in their favourite ways, while feeling safe in their local community.

Data collection method: children's survey

## Survey Questions

### 3. When I am out playing in my local area

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| I do most of my favourite things       | (score 2 points) |
| I do some of my favourite things       | (score 1 point)  |
| I do hardly any of my favourite things | (score 0 points) |

### 5. In your local area, which of these is true?

- |   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| There are lots of my favourite places to play       | (score 2 points) |
| There are some of my favourite places to play       | (score 1 point)  |
| There are hardly any of my favourite places to play | (score 0 points) |

### 6. How safe do you feel when out playing in your local area?

- |                       |                  |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| I usually feel safe   | (score 2 points) |
| I sometimes feel safe | (score 1 point)  |
| I never feel safe     | (score 0 points) |

## Data Entry and Analysis

In the spreadsheet columns "things", "places" and "safe" enter the score for each column ie: 2,1, or 0.

Total for each child should be entered in column "satis"

The percent of children scoring **five or six points** are counted as meeting the indicator level. For local use, analysis can be undertaken in relation to postcodes, disability, ethnicity, housing type etc.

Enter percentage of children scoring 5 or 6 points into summary sheet (see section 4).





# Involvement

## Indicator 5

*Title: The meaningful involvement of children and young people in the design or delivery of spaces and opportunities for outdoor play and recreation.*

*Indicator: The percentage of children and young people who say they have been asked about their outdoor play needs and think things have improved.*

Data collection method: children's survey

## Survey Questions

**9. This question is about whether people from the Local Authority or your neighbourhood have asked you about what you like when you are playing.**

Which one of these is true:

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| I was asked what I like and now it is better | (Score 1 point)  |
| I was asked what I like but nothing happened | (Score 0 points) |
| I have never been asked what I like          | (Score 0 points) |
| I don't know if I have ever been asked       | (Score 0 points) |

The percent of children scoring **one point** are counted as meeting the indicator level. For local use, analysis can be undertaken in relation to postcodes, disability, ethnicity, housing type etc.

## Data Entry and Analysis

In the spreadsheet column "asked" enter 1 if child scored 1, for all other answers enter 0.

Calculate the proportion of children scoring 1.

Enter the result on the summary sheet (see section 4).



# Risk – experience

Indicator 6b

Title: Evidence of a risk-benefit approach being taken to allow challenging and exciting play opportunities.

Indicator: The percentage of children saying they can play in exciting daring ways in their community.

This measure forms one part of the evaluation of opportunities for risk and challenge and should be used in conjunction with the Play Space Quality Assessment tool section on risk and risk-benefit assessment.

Data collection method: children's survey

## Survey Questions

### 7. How exciting is it when you are out playing in your local area?

- I can usually play in exciting daring ways (Score 1 point)
- I can sometimes play in exciting daring ways (Score 1 point)
- I can never play in exciting daring ways (Score 0 points)

The percentage of children scoring **one point** is counted as meeting the indicator level. For local use, analysis can be undertaken in relation to postcodes, disability, ethnicity, housing type etc.

If a more refined analysis is useful, score 2 for 'Usually', 1 for 'Sometimes', 0 for 'Never'.  
(This will require changes to be made to the spreadsheet provided)

## Data Entry and Analysis

In the spreadsheet column "risk" enter 1 for every child scoring 1 point.

Calculate the percentage of children scoring 1 point.

Enter the results on the summary sheet (see section 4).



# Adult attitudes

Indicator 7

Title: Adult attitudes to children and young people being outside.

Indicator: The proportion of children and young people who consider adults think it is OK for children to be out in the local area.

Data collection method: children's survey

## Survey Questions

### 8. What do grown-ups think about children playing out in your local area?

Most grown-ups think it is OK

Score 1 point

Some grown-ups think it is OK

Score 0 points

Hardly any grown-ups think it is OK

Score 0 points

The percentage of children scoring **one point** is counted as meeting the indicator level. For local use, analysis can be undertaken in relation to postcodes, disability, ethnicity, housing type etc.

If a more refined analysis is useful Score 2 for 'Usually', 1 for 'Sometimes', 0 for 'Never'. (This will require changes to be made to the spreadsheet provided)

## Data Entry and Analysis

In the spreadsheet column "adult" enter 1 for every child scoring 1 point. For all other answers enter 0.

Calculate the percentage of children scoring 1 point.

Enter the percentage into the summary sheet (see section 4).



## Summary of data entry for children's survey

This table relates to a simple excel spreadsheet which can be used for data entry and is available from the Play Scotland website: [www.playscotland.org](http://www.playscotland.org)

Excel Column	Question number	Indicator	Column name	Entry	No of columns and sub-names	Calculating scores*
A	Unique number	Give each response a unique number	"URN"		1 column	
B,C,D,E	Q1	1 Time: % playing out most days	"time"	Enter 1 or 0 in each of four columns	4 Columns: "most" "some" "hardly" "don't"	Calculate % children scoring 1 in "most" column
	Q2		Not inc	Question designed to widen thinking – not recorded for indicators		
F	Q3	Contributes to 2: satisfaction	"things"	Enter score ie: 2,1, or 0.	1 column	Add to G&H to form I
	Q4		Not inc	Question designed to widen thinking – not recorded for indicators		
G	Q5	Contributes to 2: satisfaction	"places"	Enter score ie: 2,1, or 0.	1 column	Add to F&H to form I
H	Q6	Contributes to 2: satisfaction	"safe"	Enter score ie: 2,1, or 0	1 column	Add to F&G to form I
I		2 satisfaction: score	"satis"	Total of scores from "things", "places" and "safe"	1 column	Add columns F,G,H:
J		PS-2 satisfaction: % playing out in favourite ways, whilst feeling safe	"sat tot"	Enter 1 for every child scoring 5 or 6 in column I, for all others enter 0	1 column	Calculate % scoring 5 and 6 points in column I

**\*Where a 1 or 0 is entered in a column the total number of children reaching the indicator is the sum of the column.**

**\*Analyse according to age group; disability; ethnicity; socio-economic group and compare with Local Authority breakdown of different groups in neighbourhood**

Excel Column	Question number	Indicator	Column name	Entry	No of columns and sub-names	Calculating scores*
K	Q7	6b Risk: % who can play in exciting ways “usually” and “sometimes”	“risk”	Enter 1 for every child scoring 1 point. For all other answers enter 0.	1 column	Calculate % scoring 1 point
L	Q8	7 Adults: % say adults “most” OK	“adult”	Enter 1 for every child saying “most”. For all other answers enter 0.	1 column	Calculate % scoring 1 point
M	Q9	5: Involvement: I was asked what I like and now it is better = 1 points All others = 0	“asked”	Enter 1 if child scored 1, for all other answers enter 0	1 column	Calculate % scoring 1 point
N,O	Q10	Gender: Boy or girl	“gend”	Enter 1 in “boy” column for boys; Enter 1 in “girl” column for girls; enter 0 in spaces	2 columns “boy” “girl”	Calculate total for each column
P, Q, R	Q11	Age: Convert age into age group: “<6”, “6-11”, “12-16”	“age”	Enter 1 in column representing age group, enter 0 in all spaces	3 columns: “<6”, “6-11”, “12-16”	Calculate total for each of column P, Q, & R
S	Q12	School / group	“sch”	Enter name of school / group as text	1 column	
T	Q13	Postcode	“post”	Enter postcode as text	1 column	

**\*Where a 1 or 0 is entered in a column the total number of children reaching the indicator is the sum of the column.**

**\*Analyse according to age group; disability; ethnicity; socio-economic group and compare with Local Authority breakdown of different groups in neighbourhood**

# The Playing Out Survey and Quality Assessment monitoring sheet

The assessment sheet below can be copied or it is available from Play Scotland in pdf format.

The information provided here allows the person running the survey or Quality Assessment to check if the sample of children they have responses from is representative of the local child population. It also ensures that the views of children who might not normally take part in this type of survey are gathered. The actual demographic details collected will depend on the Local Authority or organisational policy. All data should be compared with the same characteristics in the local child population. This information will be available from the Local Authority.

## Name and contact details of survey administrator

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## Time and date of survey

Time of day:

Date: (day, month, year)

## Location of survey

Where are the children from: (eg school or nursery name, playscheme, children's group, local area etc)

## Number of children taking part

Age group	Number of boys	Number of girls	Total
<6 years			
6-11 years			
> 12 years			
<b>Total</b>			

## Number of children considered disabled

Child's impairment	Number of children
Learning disability	
Visual impairment	
Hearing impairment	
Deaf-blind	
Physical or motor impairment	
Physical health problem	
Mental health problem	
Combination of impairments	
Unspecified	

## Number of children from different ethnic groups

Ethnic background	Number of children
Number of children	
Asian or Asian British	
Black or Black British	
Chinese or East Asian	
Mixed	
White British	
White from another country	

## Other relevant information

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# The Play Space Quality Assessment Tools

The location, nature and quality of the spaces available for children to play affects how they feel about those spaces, the ways in which they play and the benefits they derive from that play. Children must be able to reach play spaces easily and, as they get older, independently; the spaces should offer a range of play experiences, preferably including contact with the natural environment; and children should feel safe whilst in the space.

The toolkit provides two tools to assess the quality of spaces for play. The **How good is the Play Place?** Tool is designed for use by children and young people and the more detailed **Quality of Play Environment** assessment tool is primarily for use by professionals and others involved in the planning, development, provision and maintenance of public open space. These tools give valuable insights into provision and can be used in all types of space where children might play including local open and green spaces, designated play areas, play parks and staffed play provision for example in schools and play schemes.

The sections in the quality assessment tools relating to risk and challenge can be used to measure against Indicator 6a: opportunities for children to challenge themselves and experience the benefits of taking risks. (See page 48)

## The Indicators

The Play Space Quality Assessment Tools provide information to illustrate the following indicator:



## Quality

### Indicator 3

**Title:** The quality of local spaces and opportunities for play and spending free time with friends.

**Indicator:** The proportion of local play, green and open spaces with high scores for quality, as assessed using the Play Scotland quality assessment tool.

## A Choice of Tools

There are two tools for assessing the quality of spaces for play.



1. **How Good is the Play Place?** – designed for children and young people to complete, with adult facilitation or perhaps adult/parent assistance dependant on the child's age and ability. A number of individual or group assessments would be carried out on one place.

OR

2. **Quality of Play Environment: providers' assessment tool** – designed for adults/professionals to use to assess the Location, Accessibility, Features, Environmental Factors, Challenge/Risk as well as Play Opportunities. Normally one assessment would be required per play place.

These tools are included below and are also available to download from the Play Scotland website: [www.playscotland.org](http://www.playscotland.org)

Wherever possible, children and /or parents should help undertake the assessments. Play and parks' staff, or local community members, should lead, collect, collate and analyse the data.

Both checklists are designed to be used to assess the play quality, both of play spaces which are equipped eg playparks, as well as those where there is less/no fixed play equipment eg a woodland area or open/green space.

The emphasis is on the play environment and the play opportunities children have while playing within that space, rather than on the kind of play equipment there is to play on.

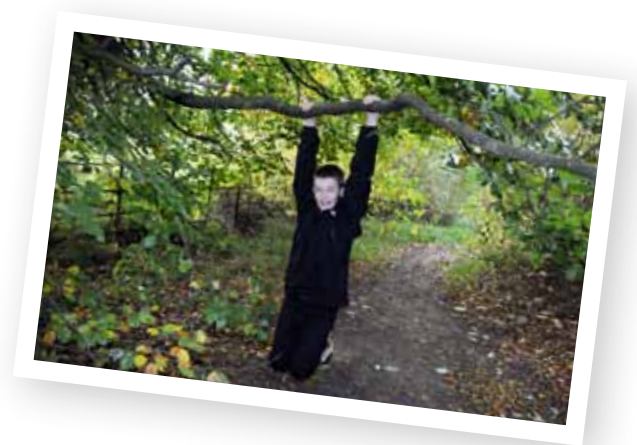
Therefore the checklists can also be used for play or childcare provision staff, to check that they are offering sufficient play opportunities for children to choose freely how they want to play in an outdoor area.

The assessment tools and guidance on their use are on the following pages.

### Alternative method

Many Local Authorities subscribe to the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) benchmarking service for Parks and open space. This benchmarking system uses the Fields in Trust Play Value Assessment for Playgrounds. ([www.fieldsintrust.org](http://www.fieldsintrust.org)).

Local Authorities already familiar with that system should find similarities with the Play Scotland Quality of Play Environment Tool but may wish to continue using the Fields in Trust system to avoid having to carry out two play area assessments. Compliance with the Quality Indicator 3 could still be judged. However, the Play Scotland checklist allows assessment of non equipped play places also as local green and open spaces can provide good quality places to play and are to be considered within this Indicator.



# Example Questionnaire

Below is an example “How Good is the Play Place?” Questionnaire.

Name of the Play Place			
How often do you play here? (Tick one box)			
Most days <input type="checkbox"/>	A few times a week <input type="checkbox"/>	Less than once a week <input type="checkbox"/>	
Only now and again <input type="checkbox"/>	Haven't played here before <input type="checkbox"/>		
1. Is the play place easy to get to?	YES	NO	Comments
I can see my home from here.			
I can walk here on my own or with friends.			
I can only walk here if an adult is with me.			
I can only get here by car or bus.			
2. What is in the play place?	YES	NO	Comments
The play place has natural things to play on or with eg trees, logs, rocks.			
There are things to move around and play with in different ways.			
There is fixed equipment to play on.			
3. What can you play here?	YES	NO	Comments
<b>Physical play</b>			
Running, chasing, hopping and jumping.			
Climbing.			
Swinging.			
Sliding.			
Spinning or rocking.			
Balancing or crawling.			
Bike or scooter riding.			
Roller skating or skateboarding.			
Ball games like basketball, tennis, football, or rounders.			
<b>Creative play</b>			
Sand or soil for digging or making things.			
Water for pouring, measuring or splashing.			
Things or places for pretend play.			
Chalking, drawing or painting.			
A place to perform, sing or act.			
Building dens or other structures.			



# Example Questionnaire

Below is an example “How Good is the Play Place?” Questionnaire.

3. What can you play here?	YES	NO	Comments
<b>Social play</b>			
Quiet places to be on your own or with a few close friends.			
Other boys and girls to play with of different ages and abilities.			
Grown ups around to ask for help with play if needed.			
<b>Challenge/risk</b>			
You can make playing more difficult and take risks if you want to.			
<b>Inclusion</b>			
You can play with all the play things that are in the space.			
<b>Contact with nature</b>			
Long grass, wildlife, insects and plants around.			

4. Clean and Safe?	YES	NO	Comments
It's usually free from dog mess.			
It's usually free from too much litter lying around. (ie glass, cans, paper, etc.)			
There's no broken equipment or missing parts.			
There's no DANGER from traffic.			
You can cross any roads safely on the way to this place.			
Usually, there are no grown ups or other children around that make you feel scared.			
There are houses or buildings nearby with people who could help you if you were in trouble.			

<b>What would make this a better place to play in?</b>
<div></div>

<b>Where else do you play nearby?</b>
<div></div>

<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>
<div></div>	<div></div>

## Guidance: How good is the Play Place?

### When to use the questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed for children and young people to use to assess the quality and play value of a specific space. This may be a local open space, a park, a play park, the outdoor play area of a childcare setting, a school playground or any other space where children might play. The questionnaire can be used to assess places with or without equipment – rural or urban. It focuses on the opportunity to be involved in different types of play.

The questionnaire should be given to children and young people by the person instigating the audit and so the name of the place being assessed should be made clear to those completing the questionnaire at the start. The assessment should be carried out on site i.e. in the place that is being assessed. Responses should be made based on the circumstances found there on the day as well on children's previous knowledge of the place.

### Adult Facilitation

Depending on the age and ability of the child or young person, varying levels of adult facilitation may be required. The language is intended to be simple but some explanation may be necessary, so it may be useful to look at the questionnaire first with those completing it, to ensure that they are familiar with the questions and understand what is being asked of them. An adult should be available during completion to clarify any questions but should not influence the respondent's answer by giving their own view. It should be stressed to those completing the assessment that their own individual view is what matters and there are no right or wrong answers. A few children may want to group together to work through it and discuss what each other think but they may decide on different answers if they have different views on the quality of the play experience.

### Frequency of usage of the play place

This question is for background information which can be used when analysing the results. It will identify any responses which are from children who do not regularly play in the place and may explain some of their answers about what usually happens.

As described above, the questionnaire responses will be most useful from those who do regularly use the play place but there may be interesting reasons identified from those who do not regularly use the space, which explain why they do not use the space.

There are response options given and the box which most fits the respondent's circumstances should be ticked.



## Step by step

### 1. Is the play place easy to get to?

This section determines how far away the play space is from where the respondent lives.

**I can see my home from here** – means a doorstep play place close to home particularly suited for young children. Whether a child can walk on their own or with an adult may be about the age of the child as well as the distance but still means that the play space is sufficiently close.

#### *The premise of the toolkit is that:*

Wherever they live, children and young people of all ages, abilities and interests, should be able to play in a variety of ways, in high quality spaces, within sight of their homes or within easy walking distance, where they feel safe whether or not they are accompanied by adults.



If the children can only get to the play place by car or bus then access to the play space is limited by the distance needing to be travelled to get there. In this case the data from the questionnaire is NOT relevant to assess Play Sufficiency and no points would be scored for a 'yes' answer.

It would still be valid to use the children's play place quality assessment for a different purpose. A play provider may want to assess the quality of the play space they offer to those who use their provision and so the results are valid for the quality of play value alone and there is no need to be concerned with the distance it is from each user's own home. The questionnaire may have many uses other than as a contributor towards the overall *Getting it Right for Play* indicators.

### 2. What is in the play space?

The play place has **natural things** to play on or with – this may be because it is a natural place eg a woodland, a green space, or a beach, or it may be that the play place provider has especially put natural play items into the place e.g. logs, rocks, etc.

Play things that can be moved around and played with in different ways, we refer to as **loose parts**: play items of all kinds which can be used by those playing in a range of different ways. These may have been added to the space by play workers.

The presence of **fixed equipment** is not always necessary to make a good quality play space. Fixed equipment may be made from a variety of materials: metal; wood; natural or man made.

The best space would have all of these three factors, and when analysing the responses you would give one point for each 'yes' answer.

### 3. What can you play here?

This section considers three different types of play: physical play; creative play and social play. It also asks about whether there are opportunities to create greater challenges for themselves while playing, and whether the opportunities available are accessible to all ages and abilities.



## Physical play

- Running, chasing, hopping and jumping. You should be able to do all of these in the place. No particular equipment needs to be available but sufficient space is needed and the activities must be allowed in the place.
- Spinning or rocking would probably need some kind of equipment eg a roundabout or see saw and either opportunity is sufficient. The same applies to balancing or crawling
- Bike or scooter riding – this requires space, and perhaps there may be specific requirements for this eg a BMX track or similar. The respondent must actually be able to take part in the activity eg a bike, tricycle, scooter or similar is provided, or they are able to bring and use their own equipment.
- Roller skating or skateboarding – same principle as above.
- Ball games – there may be a special multi court facility, or it may be that these activities usually happen here and there. Is the space and equipment necessary to play the particular ball game. Opportunity to play any one of these is sufficient to get a 'yes'

## Creative play

- Sand or soil/earth which can be played with or in.  
This may be naturally available eg a beach or garden environment or may have been especially inserted into the place for playing eg a sandpit or sand tray.
- Water can be played with in many ways and a few are mentioned here – pouring, measuring or just splashing. Again, the water may be naturally occurring eg. a stream, pond or fountain, or may have been added to improve the play value eg. a paddling pool or water tray.
- Things or places for pretend play – this question is asking whether the play environment is conducive to opportunities for fantasy or pretend play. It may be that loose parts have been provided which encourage pretend play eg. dressing up clothes or it may be that the play space has structures within it which encourage fantasy play eg. tunnels, bushes, caves, pirate ship shaped equipment, covered areas for playing at houses, libraries, shops etc – the list is endless!
- Chalking, drawing or painting – the opportunity to do any of these should allow a 'yes'. It may be chalking on the ground or water painting on walls as well as drawing or painting on a smaller scale on paper as a seated activity. The materials to allow this play should usually be available.
- A place to perform, sing or act – this is about an environment which encourages and facilitates this kind of play. There may be a purpose built performance area or there may be a raised or shaped platform which is really part of another piece of play equipment, but which is used for this play purpose too.



- Building dens or other structures – this allows children to build and transform materials within the play place to create a new, unique structure of their own. Loose materials may be present and dens may be made from branches, twigs etc. Other structures such as towers may be built with rocks or cardboard boxes etc.

## Social play

- Are there quiet places to be on your own or with close friends? These are places maybe away from the view of others or maybe seated areas separate somehow from the busyness of the rest of the play place. These may be naturally occurring or created by built equipment.
- Other boys and girls to play with of different ages and abilities. Here respondents should draw on their knowledge of who is usually around in the place. The best play experiences can happen when there is a wide variety of others to play with so making for a rich play place.
- Grown-ups around to ask for help with play if needed – these grown-ups may be staff or parents or volunteers and they do not necessarily have to be in the play place all the time but children know they can seek adult assistance if they wish it.

## Challenge/risk/inclusion

This question is about being allowed, and having the opportunity, to take risks if they want to and to be able to increase the level of challenge and risk as their ability improves.

- You can play with all the play things that are in the space – this question is about inclusion.  
Are all the activities open to all to be involved in as and if they wish? Different children may use different play features differently but what's important is that a variety of play experiences are available to all children whatever their age or ability.  
If a respondent answers 'no' to this question you may wish to encourage a comment or explanation as to why they said this in order to address any actual or perceived limitations in the inclusion of the play place.

## Contact with nature

Many studies have shown that children benefit from access to natural environments. Wildlife and insects can bring a play place to life and provide lots of playful learning by playing alongside other creatures.

Long grass and wild flowers create colour and smells, bringing sensory experiences to the play place. Rural and urban play places may have these features. If not naturally occurring, they may have been introduced into the place by the provider in order to improve the play value.

## Scoring for Questions 2 and 3

The maximum number of (yes) answers is 23.  
So if a play place has all these possible play opportunities then it would score 23. See analysis of scores table on page 39.



## 4. Clean and Safe?

This is about the absence of barriers to play. There are seven possible environmental considerations which would prevent a play place from being of high quality regardless of how many play opportunities it might provide. The existence of these barriers can prohibit the use of the place.



1. **It's usually free from dog mess.** Answers should be based on “usually” rather than the fact they saw dog mess there once. If avoiding dog mess is not usually something they need to worry about when playing here, then the place is usually free from dog mess.
2. **It's usually free from too much litter lying around.** This means an unacceptable amount of litter not just one item and again a “usually” rationale should be used.
3. **There's no broken equipment or missing parts.** i.e that prevent you from playing on or using what's in the space.
4. **There's no danger from traffic.** There may be cars or traffic around or near the play place but this question aims to find out if any such traffic presents a danger to those using the play place. So the question is NOT “is there traffic?” It's “is traffic a DANGER?”
5. **You can cross any roads safely on the way to this place.**

A ‘yes’ response means that children think the place can be accessed safely. There may be speed restrictions such as bumps or one way at a time signage, or pedestrian crossings, or no roads or very quiet roads or it may be that children have the skills they need to feel that they can safely cross any roads. All these are a good thing.

A “no” here would necessitate further investigation into why children can't get to the place safely on foot and may be helpful for community groups in campaigning for speed reducing measures etc.

6. **Usually, there are no grown ups or other children around that make you feel scared.** There may be groups of older children intimidating younger ones or a gang culture that makes children feel scared to play there. The place may be used by adults who demonstrate anti-social behaviour or intolerant adults who make playing there difficult by complaining about noise etc.
7. **There are houses or buildings nearby with people who could help you if you were in trouble.** This question should identify if the play place is overlooked by houses which offers a degree of security to those playing. The place is not then too isolated. You may be able to choose to play in a secluded part of the play place but the place itself is located in what feels like a safe setting.



## What would make this a better place to play in?

This question offers an opportunity for respondents to offer suggestions about how to improve the play experience of this particular place. These suggestions may be useful in planning improvements and may show up other reasons why children think this place is not as good as it could be.

## Where else do you play nearby?

It is not usually the case that one local play place or space will be able to cater for all the possible play opportunities mentioned in the checklist and so recognition should be taken of other play spaces nearby that the child also has access to play within. It may be fairer when judging compliance with the Indicator to analyse results across all the local play spaces available to these respondents.



## Analysis of scores

1. Easy to get to?	Score	Comments
<p>An answer of 'yes' for the first three means the place is sufficiently accessible.</p> <p>A yes answer for "only by car or bus" means the place is not close enough for the quality assessment to count towards the Play Sufficiency indicator.</p>		
<p><b>2. What is in the play space?</b></p> <p>Score 1 point for each yes answer. Maximum of 3 points.</p>		
<p><b>3. What can you play here?</b></p>		
Physical – maximum of 9		
Creative – maximum of 6		
Social – maximum of 3		
Challenge/risk – maximum of 1		
Inclusion – maximum of 1		
Contact with nature – maximum of 1		
Maximum total 2 & 3 is 24 points		
<p><b>4. Clean and safe?</b></p> <p>Maximum total is 7 points</p>		
<b>Overall total is out of 31 points</b>		

**A GOOD place to play would score 20 – 25 points for questions 1 to 4, including a minimum of 4 for question 4.**

**A VERY GOOD place to play would score 26 points or more for questions 1 to 4 including a minimum of 4 for question 4.**



# Quality of Play Environment: Providers' assessment tool

## Name of the Play Place

1. Location	Y = 1 N = 0	Comments
Pleasant setting/ attractive site		
Signage welcoming play		
Area is overlooked by housing/offices		
Immediate outlook is mainly green/open space		
No dog mess or nuisance		
No vandalism		
No hazardous waste (needles, glass etc)		
Play area is more than 20m from a road and is unfenced.		
Total of 8 points		

2. Accessibility		
Close to public transport links		
Paths in good condition		
Play surfaces safe and in good condition		
Adjacent roads have safe crossing points		
Entrance and layout accessible to all in accordance with Disability Discrimination Act		

3. Features		
Overall condition well maintained and clean		
Litter bins		
Signage about control of dogs		
Bin for dog mess and fouling penalty information clearly visible.		
Lighting – working		
Adult seating		
Child seating		
Bicycle stands		
No Play prohibition signs		
Fencing /gates (if appropriate) in good condition		

4. Environmental factors		
Trees, bushes, shrubs		
Short grass		
Long grass (a habitat for wild flowers, insects and wildlife)		
Sunny/shady/sheltered areas (all 3 required)		
Undulating ground/mounding		
Rocks, boulders		
Sensory play opportunities		
Permanent water feature		
Free from traffic pollution		
Free from noise pollution		

5. Challenge and Risk		
Risk/benefit assessment used by play space provider.		
Play items offer exciting, daring play experiences.		

Possible 35 points for (1 – 5)		TOTAL
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I am pleased to support the Toolkit produced by Play Scotland which in my view is a valuable and much-needed resource that will help everyone who engages with children to understand the importance of promoting good opportunities for play.”

“Play is a fundamental right of children, and an international body of evidence recognises it as an essential part of every child’s development.

“I believe the Toolkit has the potential to promote a wider understanding of the importance of play, particularly outdoor play. As such, it will be a useful complement to NHS Health Scotland’s mental health indicators for children and young people, which identified the need to develop better measures around the access children and young people have to play opportunities.

**Tam Baillie**

Scotland’s Commissioner for Children and Young People





## 6. Play Opportunities

Physical play	0 – 5 yrs	6– 11 yrs	12 -16 yrs	Comments
Running, skipping, and hopping				
Climbing				
Swinging				
Sliding				
Jumping				
Balancing				
Crawling				
Rocking				
Rotating or spinning				
Gliding eg flying fox				
Ball play area				
BMX/Cycle track				
Skate park				
Inclusive for a variety of physical abilities				

Creative play	0 – 5 yrs	6– 11 yrs	12 -16 yrs	Comments
Sand or soil				
Water				
Loose parts – large and small				
Chalking, drawing or painting				
Sound making items				
Pretend play – places and materials				
Performance area				
Building or transforming the natural environment				
Inclusive for a range of differing abilities				

Social play	0 – 5 yrs	6– 11 yrs	12 -16 yrs	Comments
Quiet places to sit/chat/think				
Places to hide				
Interaction of children of different ages and abilities.				
Possible score of 26 for each age range				TOTAL

# How to use the assessment sheets

## 1. Location

This section contains a checklist about many of the barriers to play. It doesn't matter what play equipment is there if the barriers to play are significant, then children will not want to play in the space and so the space is not of sufficient quality for play.

For each of the eight questions, give 1 point for yes and 0 for no.

- **Pleasant setting/attractive site** – this is subjective and requires the assessor to try to look at the overall area from a child's point of view. Does it look like the kind of place you'd like to play? Is the space appealing?  
The adult perspective is important because children may play there because they know no alternative.
- **Signage welcoming play** – this may be a sign with the name of the place which mentions that it is for playing in. Research has shown that it is important for children to feel they are allowed to play in a place and a sign inviting this is desirable.
- **Area is overlooked by houses/offices** – a good place to play is one which offers a degree of security to those playing there because they know there are people nearby that they could go to for help if they needed it. The place is not too isolated and so the location feels safe.
- **Immediate outlook is mainly green/open space** – a play area situated within green space or adjacent to it, makes for the most pleasant setting with the associated health benefits to those playing there of exposure to the natural green environment.
- **No dog mess or nuisance** – you are checking to assess if the area is free from dog mess and from dogs not on leads running round amongst children playing.
- **No vandalism** – checking there is no damage to any equipment or facilities within the area which may have been caused maliciously and intentionally.
- **No hazardous waste** – ie any waste which has been discarded which could cause harm eg needles, broken glass etc. This is more than just rubbish or litter which although unsightly is not necessarily dangerous. Litter is assessed within section 3 – Features.
- **Play area is more than 20m from a road and is unfenced** – give a point if this criteria is met as it represents an ideal standard for location. Any type of road should be considered.

**A total of 8 is possible for a quality location.**

**If the space achieves a score of 4 or less this makes the quality of the play location insufficient.**

**A score of 5 or 6 is good and 7 or 8 is very good.**

The scores for this section stand alone.

A play area scoring as insufficient in this section will be insufficient regardless of how it scores across the other sections.

A play area must score 5 or more in this section as a minimum and then the other sections' marks will be taken into account for an overall rating.



## 2. Accessibility

There are five questions. Score 1 for each YES answer.

The Equality Act 2010 brings together previous discrimination laws, including the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, into one single act. The act covers education providers, including nursery services working in schools, indoor and outdoor adventure playgrounds, play areas in public parks, playgroups, out of school care, and some private nurseries.

Service providers must avoid discriminating against disabled people and must make “reasonable adjustments” when their service is not accessible to disabled people. You can find full details of the Disability Discrimination Act provisions within the Equality Act 2010 at: [http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/ukpga\\_19950050\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/ukpga_19950050_en_1)

## 3. Features

Here you assess the features of the play space which contribute to the overall quality of the play experience. Although the existence of the feature is what you are looking for, if the feature is unusable for any reason then you would not allocate a point, and should make a note about remedial action required.

## 4. Environmental factors

This considers the presence of green space, natural elements and nature, and the environmentally friendliness of the area.

- Trees, bushes, shrubs – all three are not necessarily required depending on the quantity of each element that might be there.
- Short grass creating a safe surface for physical activities or just for relaxing.
- Long grass which creates a habitat for wild flowers, insects and wildlife.
- The play space should have access to sunlight as well as protection from it. Similarly shelter from wind or rain when required makes the space more attractive and usable in all weathers. All three conditions of sunny, shady and sheltered are required to make it possible to score 1.
- Undulating ground/mounding makes the surface more interesting and exciting and offers physical challenges in moving around it and creative opportunities for children to play in more imaginative ways.
- Rocks/boulders
- Sensory play opportunities eg. instruments, wind chimes or music playing may be an example of how the play space environment is enhanced by sound.
- Water is not a hazard but an exciting play opportunity. Obviously, different water features require different levels of supervision for different ages of children, but all ages will benefit from the opportunity to play in or with water. A permanent water feature might be a pond, loch, paddling pool, fountain, burn, river, the sea or similar.
- The absence of pollution is important ie fumes, smog as is the absence of excessive noise from traffic, building sites, factories, machinery etc.





## 5. Challenge and Risk

It is very important that play spaces or areas are designed to allow children the opportunity to take measured risks and to increase the amount of challenge that a particular activity offers them.

By offering the possibility of risk in play, children are given the opportunity to learn to recognise and assess risk for themselves and to test and expand their capabilities. There are powerful emotions generated by successfully taking risks ie anticipation, anxiety, exhilaration and joy in success.

Play Scotland, as a member of the UK Play Safety Forum, promotes and encourages a risk-benefit approach which requires considering the benefits of play opportunities first, prior to considering any possible risks associated with these opportunities and examining how they might be minimised.

For detailed information on providing acceptable risk-taking opportunities and on managing and assessing risk-benefit, see Managing Risk in Play Provision – Implementation guide <http://www.playscotland.org/assets/managing-risk-play-provision-guide.pdf>

A play space should be allocated 2 marks for the 2 questions in order to meet the Indicator criteria. In addition, there is another question on Risk experience within the Playing Out survey. The percentage of children responding positively to this question should be considered, alongside the Play Area quality assessments at a neighbourhood and/or Local Authority-wide area.

## 6. Play opportunities

This section looks at the different ways children might play, whether or not there is specific equipment. It has columns for each age range, and a large public play space should be catering for all of these age groups. A small play space within a housing area, or one attached to a nursery school, may be designed for and used predominantly by a younger age group. You would only assess and allocate marks within the appropriate column.

The best assessment will be possible when the play space is actually in use, and the assessor can see for themselves how the space is being used, rather than relying on a subjective adult view of how children might play there.

### Physical play

If there is the opportunity for the stated activity, score one mark for each age range which has that opportunity. So the score in each box would be 0 or 1. You are not counting the number of different climbing opportunities, only that climbing opportunities are available.

Most play experiences are self explanatory.  
Some may require equipment: others do not.

The last point asks about whether the play opportunities are inclusive for a varied range of children with differing physical abilities. You should answer either within the specified age range the place is designed to cater for, or for all age ranges that are applicable.

For physical play the maximum score per age category is 14.

**Creative play** should be scored similarly and the total possible is 9 per age range.

- Sand or soil may be naturally occurring eg. a beach or garden/planting area. Similarly it may have been provided and inserted into the space eg. a sand tray or sand pit or soil within grow bags or other containers.
- Water – this is any kind of water that children can play with, and includes any naturally occurring water feature as mentioned in number 4, Environmental factors. In addition you can count water play opportunities added to the space for play value eg. inflatable paddling pool, water tray, hoses' etc.
- Loose parts – these are bits and pieces of random objects which have been added to the space to stimulate children's imagination and can be used in any way the child chooses. Examples are endless but would include tyres, cardboard boxes, autumn leaves, pieces of wood, guttering, feathers, lengths of material, rope, shells etc.
- Chalking, drawing or painting – may be on paper with pens, crayons, paint etc or on walls or the ground with chalks, water, graffiti art.
- Sound making items may be wind chimes, large scale sound making structures, musical instruments, percussion, horns, floor keyboards to jump on etc.
- Pretend play – the space would contain spaces and places which encourage a variety of pretending games ie fantasy play, make believe. For example a play house or themed equipment. There may also be items present which encourage pretend play and enhance it eg. dressing up items or items which act as a stimulus for children's imagination.
- Performance area – this may be a purpose built stage or could be somewhere that the children use for this purpose eg a raised flat platform of some kind.
- Building or transforming the natural environment – being able to use what is around to build or make their own structures (dens/towers etc.) and making the environment look different by rearranging the contents in different ways.
- Inclusive for a range of differing abilities – can children with a range of ability levels take part in most creative opportunities?  
Consider this within the age range applicable or across all three when appropriate.

**Social play** has 3 criteria, making a total of 3 for each age range.

- Quiet places to sit/chat/think,
- Places to hide,
- Interaction of children with different ages and abilities – this would be witnessed by the assessor, as well as the layout of the area being such as to allow interaction to be possible.



## Analysis of scores

Play Place		
<b>1. Location</b>		
0-4	Insufficient	
5-7	Good	
8-9	Very good	
		Actual score
<b>2. Accessibility</b>		
Maximum of 5		
<b>3. Features</b>		
Maximum of 10		
<b>4. Environmental factors</b>		
Maximum of 10		
<b>5. Challenge and Risk</b>		
Maximum of 2		
Sections 2-5 – Maximum of 27		Subtotal:
<b>6. Play opportunities</b>		
Assessment over 1 age range – Maximum of 26		
Assessment over 2 age ranges – Maximum of 52		
Assessment over 3 age ranges – Maximum of 78		
<b>TOTAL SCORES</b>		
Total for sections 2-6 for 1 age range		Total: Max 53
Total for sections 2-6 for 2 age ranges		Total: Max 79
Total for sections 2-6 for 3 age ranges		Total: Max 105
<b>Assessed by</b>		<b>Date</b>



# Risk opportunities

Indicator 6a

Indicator: The proportion of outdoor play spaces designed to offer exciting play choices and challenges.

Data collection method: Play space quality assessment (see above: the tools can also be downloaded from the Play Scotland website: [www.playscotland.org](http://www.playscotland.org))

**From children's audit tool: How Good is the Play Place?**

**Section: What can you play here: challenge/risk**

**You can make playing more difficult and take risks if you want to.**

And

**From adults audit tool: Quality of play environment: providers' assessment tool**

**Section 5: Challenge and risk**

**Risk/benefit assessment used by play space provider.**

**Play items offer exciting, daring play experiences.**

Calculate scores from assessment sheets.

Calculate proportion of play spaces scoring high for risk and challenge on assessment sheets.

Enter results on Summary sheet (see section 4).



# Guidance on mapping outdoor play spaces

Wherever they live children of all ages should be able to play in good quality spaces that can be reached on foot or independently depending on their age, interests and ability. The best way to assess the extent to which children have access to these spaces is by geographic mapping against a set of agreed standards.

GreenSpace Scotland has been working with Local Authorities to develop a national map of green and open spaces and, where extensive mapping has taken place, dedicated outdoor play areas and play parks are likely to be included in this map. However the maps may not include more 'incidental' spaces where children play and these can be added to existing maps in order to assess children's real access to spaces and opportunities for outdoor play.

Standards for access, quality and quantity of open space for outdoor play have been suggested by Fields in Trust in the document Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play (2008) and these are recognised by APSE (the Association for Public Service Excellence) when assessing Local Authority policies and provision. However, Fields in Trust point out that their standards may not always be appropriate as residential locations vary widely in their nature, populations and density, and different local authorities are expected to set standards relevant to their populations.





# Access

## Indicator 4

*Title: Children and young people's access to spaces and opportunities for outdoor play and spending free time with friends*

*Indicator: The proportion of neighbourhoods in the Local Authority that meet the benchmark standards for outdoor play space set by the Local Authority in its open space audit and strategy*

Method of data collection: GIS mapping of all open, green and outdoor play spaces, publically and privately owned, in relation to the population of children and young people in a neighbourhood identifying children in different ages groups: eg < 6 years, 6-11 years, 12 – 16 years.

**Information for this indicator is best collected by the Local Authority and the data is mapped at Local Authority level. Mapping is based on neighbourhood units as defined in the preparation stage.**

## Steps in collecting comprehensive outdoor play access data

The mapping process outlined assumes that a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary group is overseeing this process as part of the Local Authority Play Strategy development and implementation. In most Local Authorities an open space audit and strategy has been completed, and this will have mapped many designated outdoor play spaces. The purpose of the process is to clarify the requirements of a comprehensive audit of spaces for outdoor play (both designated and informal). It also includes mapping physical and geographic barriers to children's access to outdoor play spaces. Some open space audits may have looked at the wider potential for play of informal spaces but many will not. The process described, therefore, will either reinforce or build on the open space audit.



# The mapping process

Stages and steps		Tasks	Comments
Stage 1: Background and preparation			
1	Agree underpinning principles.	Ensure there is general agreement to the underpinning statement for mapping of spaces for outdoor play. This forms the basis of all stages of defining and mapping spaces and opportunities for outdoor play and underpins the Play Strategy.	Eg: Underpinning statement of principle:  <i>Wherever they live, children and young people of all ages and abilities should be able to play outdoors, in a variety of ways, in high quality spaces, within sight of their homes, or within easy walking distance, where they feel safe whether or not they are accompanied by adults.</i>
2	Define neighbourhoods.	Neighbourhoods chosen as the basis for mapping will be areas which make the most sense locally and might be based on learning communities, electoral wards, housing developments, village boundaries, or other criteria relevant to local population groups.	Children's outdoor play is essentially a local activity and local geography, buildings, traffic routes and community networks will influence the siting of open spaces and the distances children can easily travel to reach them.
3	Agree characteristics of child population to be mapped.	To ensure that all children and young people have access to suitable spaces for outdoor play it will be necessary to look at the composition of the child population living in each neighbourhood including: those of different age groups eg. <6, 6-11 and 12-16; those who are disabled and those of all ethnic groups.	The Local Authority will have detailed information about the local child population and much of this data may be mapped on GIS (Geographic Information Systems) held by the planning or performance management department.
4	Define potential barriers to access to be mapped.	Identify barriers to access such as busy roads, railway lines, waterways, building sites, walls, fences and hedges, 'no-go' areas and other restricted areas.	Children are restricted from playing in many areas either by physical obstacles on their routes or by restrictions placed on their activities by adults (eg – no children, no ball-games etc).
5	Agree local definition of spaces for outdoor play.	Types of spaces to be mapped as suitable for outdoor play might include:  <i>Informal local spaces:</i> residential streets, neighbourhood open spaces, parks and green spaces, green corridors, beaches, rivers, lakes, woodlands, natural open spaces, routes to school and play areas, playing fields and recreation grounds, public squares and plazas, public rights of way.  <i>Staffed informal areas:</i> parks with rangers and gardeners, streets with wardens.  <i>Designated outdoor play spaces:</i> play parks, bike, skate and skateboard areas, ball courts, multi-use games areas, hang-out/youth shelters.  <i>Staffed outdoor play provision:</i> adventure playgrounds, open access play-centres, play ranger and outreach play projects, mobile play facilities.	Most outdoor play takes place in informal spaces not specifically designed for play. These spaces can offer as much, if not more, play value than specifically designed play parks, and should be recognised in Local Authority maps of spaces for outdoor play.  Fields in Trusts' <i>Planning and Design for ... and Play</i> offers some descriptions which can be used as a starting point.

Stages and steps		Tasks	Comments
6	Agree local standards for distance children might travel to different types of space and amount of space required, the type of space and the quality of the spaces.	These standards need to be agreed locally and will depend on the geography of the area, travel routes and safety issues in the neighbourhood. Distance criteria usually increase with age and children's growing independence. As a rule children should be able to walk or cycle to their spaces for outdoor play, with an adult when very young, but independently as they grow-up.	Spaces for outdoor play could include spaces suitable for children of different ages, spaces with natural features, spaces that offer a variety of outdoor play experiences, spaces designed for outdoor play and spaces designed for other purposes but where children often play.  This would include scores from Quality Assessment Tool.
7	Agree criteria to be mapped for each space/ neighbourhood.	This should include the play value of the space assessed using the Quality Assessment Tool as well as:  + type of space  + age group anticipated  + unique ref number  + grid reference  + general condition and age of site.	The criteria to be mapped may depend on whether the space is specifically designed for outdoor play or is an informal space where children might also be expected to play.
<b>Stage 2: Collecting data</b>			
8	Compare play mapping requirements with data mapped in open space audit.	Clarify which criteria have already been mapped and which still require collecting and mapping.	Most local authorities have completed open space audits and developed strategies. They will have looked at specially designed outdoor play spaces in the audit but may not have collected all the information required for a comprehensive outdoor play audit.
9	Identify additional mapping required in each neighbourhood.	Develop data collection sheets for use in defined neighbourhoods.	This might be common to all neighbourhoods or vary depending on the nature of the child population.
10	Work with relevant partners to collect additional data from neighbourhoods.	Local children and young people and community members might be part of this data collection process.	Local people understand their neighbourhoods and will be able to add useful information and expertise to the audit for mapping.
<b>Building the outdoor play space map</b>			
11	Build outdoor play map supplementing Local Authority open space strategy map as appropriate.	Work with others eg: planners, parks department, performance management team, highways department, open space audit team.	GIS mapping systems allow you to map information in layers to allow for better understanding of the implications of the data.



Stages and steps		Tasks	Comments
12	Add details of child population to map.	Map the locations of children's homes and relevant demographic information.	This information will be available from Local Authority.
13	Highlight barriers to accessing spaces for outdoor play on map.	Eg. Busy roads, rivers, canals, railway lines, walls, social boundaries.	The barriers to map have already been agreed.
14	Input distance criteria agreed above. (step 6)	Draw buffer zones on map.	
<b>Stage 3: Analysing the data</b>			
15	Calculate the proportion of children in each neighbourhood with access to agreed variety of spaces for outdoor play. (step 6)	Analyse this by age group and the different characteristics you agreed in step 3.	This can be done using the mapping software.
<b>Stage 4: Calculating the indicator</b>			
16	Calculate the proportion of children in each neighbourhood with different levels of access to good quality spaces for outdoor play.	% children and young people in each neighbourhood, across all population groups, who have access to all types of space as defined in steps 5 & 6.	This result gives the information for specific neighbourhoods and allows for planning developments on the basis of each area. The figure of >75% is a temporary standard to be reviewed once sufficient data has been collected to agree a more formal standard.
17	Calculate the proportion of neighbourhoods in the Local Authority area in which >75% children have access to a suitable range of good quality spaces.	Proportion of neighbourhoods, in the Local Authority area where children have good access to all types of space as defined in steps 5 & 6.	This result is used in the Local Authority Play Sufficiency assessment. (see section 4)

## Summarising the data

Calculate the proportion of neighbourhoods across the Local Authority area, in which more than 75% children and young people across all population groups, have access to all types of space of acceptable quality.

Enter the proportion on the summary sheet (see section 4).

# Multi-agency working: policy analysis framework

The provision of good quality spaces and opportunities for children's outdoor play, in the areas where they live, depends on the actions of many Local Authority departments and their partners. For provision to be comprehensive and accessible these agencies must work and plan together. The two policy analysis tools here help identify the extent to which Local Authority departments and other agencies understand the outdoor play needs of local children, and are working together to provide for these.

The tools are designed for use by Local Authority staff and local play forums, networks or associations. They can be used to clarify the scope and nature of Local Authority commitment to children's outdoor play, and a multi-agency approach to developing and providing outdoor play opportunities. They aim to support thinking about how multi-agency working can be improved, providing users with the chance to discuss and think through future planning.

## Multi-agency working

Indicator 8

*The extent to which different agencies are working together in a cohesive way to promote outdoor play and create quality outdoor play experiences.*



## The performance indicator

There are two ways in which Local Authorities and their partners can get an indication of the extent to which all relevant departments and agencies are cooperating to promote the best possible opportunities for children's outdoor play.

- If the Local Authority has a **Play Strategy** this can be assessed to test its effectiveness in drawing people together and in improving local outdoor play opportunities.
- If there is no Play Strategy an **audit of Local Authority policies and strategies** can identify the extent to which departments and their partner agencies recognise and provide for children's outdoor play opportunities.

## Play Strategy

### Indicator 8a

*Indicator: The existence of a local play strategy group, with a play strategy and action plan, developed and supported by all relevant departments and agencies, which is regularly updated and monitored.*

*Data Collection – Document analysis: play strategy with action plan and minutes of strategy group meetings*

OR

## Policies

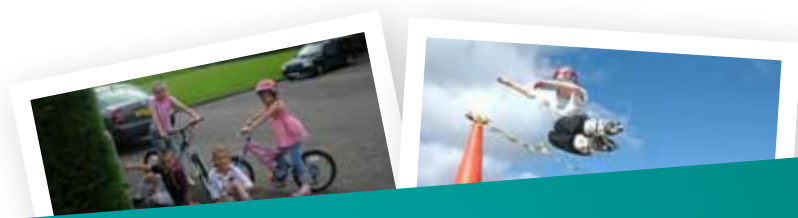
### Indicator 8b

*Indicator: The extent to which reference is made to the provision of outdoor play opportunities in the Local Authority's Single Outcome Agreement, and all relevant Local Authority policy and planning documents.*

*Data collection – Document analysis: of Local Authority policies and strategies that might impact on children's outdoor play opportunities.*



## Evaluating the play strategy



# Play Strategy

Indicator 8a

*Indicator: The existence of a local play strategy group, with a play strategy and action plan, developed and supported by all relevant departments and agencies, which is regularly updated and monitored.*

*Data Collection – Document analysis: play strategy with action plan and minutes of strategy group meetings*

The existence of a current play strategy, supported by a multi-agency play strategy coordinating group, with high level support combined with a clear analysis of children's outdoor play needs, and a timed, resourced action plan to address these needs, indicates the likelihood of productive, multi-agency working aimed at improving children's outdoor play opportunities and experiences.

## Play Strategy audit

### 1. Does the Local Authority have an active play strategy?:

YES / NO / In development

If YES go to question 2; if NO or "in development" go to section on Local Authority policy audit.

### 2. Is there an active *Play Strategy Coordinating Group* overseeing the implementation and future development of the Play Strategy?

YES / NO

If YES go to question 3; if NO go to section on Local Authority policy audit.





### 3. Which of the following departments, sectors and groups have their views and services represented on the *Play Strategy Coordinating Group*?

**Relevant** = exists locally and actions can impact on children opportunities for outdoor play.

Agencies and interests	Represented by (insert officer or department)	Relevant: fully involved	Relevant: and involved as required	Relevant: not involved	Not relevant
<b>Local Authority</b>					
Anti-poverty					
Chief executive					
Childcare					
Children's services					
Community development					
Community safety					
Culture and leisure					
Housing					
Parks and open spaces					
Performance management					
Planning					
Play service					
Schools					
Transport					
Youth services					
Other					
<b>Statutory partners</b>					
Police					
Public health					
Other					
<b>Voluntary and community sector</b>					
Active travel					
Childcare providers					
Community development					
Green space					

Agencies and interests	Represented by (insert officer or department)	Relevant: fully involved	Relevant: and involved as required	Relevant: not involved	Not relevant
<b>Voluntary and community sector</b>					
Play providers					
Road safety					
Volunteering					
Youth services					
Other					
<b>Interested groups</b>					
Black and minority ethnic groups					
Children and young people					
Disabled people					
Faith groups					
Parents					
Other					

## Summary of learning from analysis

### Strengths

(extent to which interests and groups are represented; possibilities for building on this)

### Weaknesses

(shortfalls in representation of relevant groups and interests; possibilities for reinvigorating interest)

### Actions

(to build on strengths and address weaknesses)

**4. Which of the following functions does the Play Strategy address and how effective is this?** (write score **0-4** in relevant box)

0 = Not mentioned in strategy

1 = In strategy but not followed up

2 = In strategy and slight impact in some areas

3 = In strategy and noticeable impact in a number of areas

4 = In strategy with noticeable impact on children's outdoor play opportunities across area

Strategy function	Across Local Authority area (inc provision by VCS and private sectors)	Local Authority provision only	Not at all
Clarifying aims and objectives for the provision of spaces and opportunities for outdoor play.			
Making the case for investing in outdoor play opportunities.			
Assessing the outdoor play needs of local children and young people.			
Championing the involvement of children and young people in planning and development of outdoor play spaces and opportunities.			
Setting standards for quality, quantity and access for outdoor play spaces and opportunities.			
Audit of non-staffed spaces and opportunities for outdoor play.			
Audit of staffed outdoor play provision.			
Make recommendations to address identified shortcomings in existing provision.			
Active implementation plan with timed actions and allocated resources.			

## Summary of learning from analysis

### Strengths

(Scope and extent of strategy, commitments and impact; possibilities for building on this)

### Weaknesses

(shortfalls scope and impact of strategy; possibilities for addressing these)

### Actions

(to build on strengths and address weaknesses)

**5. To what extent do the members of the *Play Strategy Coordinating Group* contribute to the following phases of the strategy?**

Phase	All relevant members contribute	A small group of keen members contribute	One or two committed members contribute	No one really does this
Developing and regularly reviewing the strategy.				
Ensuring strategy commitments are implemented.				
Seeking resources for strategy implementation.				
Considering future issues.				
Developing the next strategy.				
Other.				

## Summary of learning from analysis

### Strengths

(extent to which interests and groups are represented; possibilities for building on this)

### Weaknesses

(shortfalls in representation of relevant groups and interests; possibilities for reinvigorating interest)

### Actions

(to build on strengths and address weaknesses)



## Summary of findings from Play Strategy audit

### Strengths:

**Play Strategy Coordinating Group:**  
Membership

Activities

**Play Strategy scope and impact**

### Weaknesses:

**Play Strategy Coordinating Group:**  
Membership

Activities

**Play Strategy scope and impact**

### Actions

(to build on strengths and address weaknesses)

**Play Strategy Coordinating Group:**  
Membership

Activities

**Play Strategy scope and impact**





# Policies

## Indicator 8b

*Indicator: The extent to which reference is made to the provision of outdoor play opportunities in the Local Authority's Single Outcome Agreement, and all relevant Local Authority policy and planning documents.*

*Data collection – Document analysis: of Local Authority policies and strategies that might impact on children's outdoor play opportunities.*

Children's outdoor play is an issue for policy makers, planners and providers, across many Local Authority policy areas including:

- Parenting and family support
- Designing and managing local streets in residential neighbourhoods
- Parks and open spaces
- Social housing
- Schools
- Staffed play provision
- Out-of-school school provision,
- Early childhood provision
- Safeguarding children
- Public health
- Community safety
- Community development
- Anti-poverty strategies.

Policies, strategies and action plans in these service areas should identify ways in which they are promoting children's opportunities for time, space, suitable environments and encouragement to play freely, and free of charge in their own neighbourhoods. The table below outlines national guidance to local authorities on a range of functions that have an impact on children's outdoor play.

The **play sufficiency criteria** describe the level of detail that could be expected in local policies and strategies, to demonstrate a successful multi-agency approach to the provision of outdoor play spaces and opportunities.

The **audit tool** below uses the **play sufficiency criteria** to assess the extent to which providing for children's outdoor play spaces and opportunities is addressed across Local Authority planning and delivery. The policy analysis tool assumes that the Local Authority does not have a play strategy, as if there is one, it will have been assessed to provide the relevant information.

## Play sufficiency criteria based on national guidance

Local Authority policy areas affecting outdoor play opportunities  <i>Policy documents to assess</i>	National guidance	Play sufficiency criteria
<b>Community Planning Partnerships</b>  <i>Community Planning Board membership and terms of references</i>	<i>Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs)</i> are the mechanism through which local authorities and their partners are expected to plan and deliver local services. They are expected to share resources, work in partnership, involve the voluntary and community sector, and work closely with local people to deliver successfully integrated services.	There is a named person on the <i>CPP Board</i> who champions outdoor play opportunities in all relevant areas of planning and development.
	<i>The Early Years Framework</i> (2008) encourages Community Planning partners to ensure their approach to planning and service provision is focused on children's needs rather than on existing processes.	Children's views are represented on the <i>CPP Board</i> and are clearly reflected in the policies of the Local Authority and partners.
<i>Single Outcome Agreements (SOA)</i>  <b>Local Authority Single Outcome Agreement</b>	<i>Single Outcome Agreements</i> are the mechanism through which local authorities achieve better integrated services. The Single Outcome Agreement in each area should link closely to more detailed plans for children's services.	Promoting opportunities for children's outdoor play and recreation is an integral part of the Local Authority's <i>SOA</i> as a cross-cutting theme.
<b>Involving children, young people and other community members in decisions affecting them</b>  <i>Open space audit and strategy</i>	<i>Planning Advice Note 81: Community Engagement</i> – planning with people (PAN 81) offers planners advice on how they can involve local people, listen to their expressed needs and wishes, and incorporate these into local developments. If people are involved early in the planning process, they are more likely to feel respected and heard. and may be less likely to object at a later stage.	The Local Authority <i>play strategy</i> champions the involvement of children and young people in the planning and development of outdoor play opportunities.
	<i>The Early Years Framework</i> (2008) emphasises the importance of engaging and empowering children, families and communities, in service development and delivery.	The Local Authority <i>play strategy</i> champions consultation with community members at an early stage in all new and refurbished spaces for outdoor play.
	<i>Planning Advice Note 65: Planning and Open Space</i> (2008):The development of open space strategies and audits should take account of the needs of all population groups, including those who might not normally be involved in community consultations, and those with different interests	The views of children and young people are sought and respected in the development and implementation of the Local Authority <i>open space strategy</i> .

Local Authority policy areas affecting outdoor play opportunities		
Policy documents to assess	National guidance	Play sufficiency criteria
<b>Equality of opportunity</b>  <i>Open space strategy</i>  <i>Transport policy and strategy</i>  <i>Integrated children's services plan</i>  <i>Development plans</i>	<p><i>Planning Advice Note 81</i> on community involvement, describes different types of “communities” and offers advice and information to help ensure that everyone, no matter what their age, gender, or cultural background, can participate in ways that suit them in the planning decisions that affect their environments.</p>	<p>The following plans and strategies explicitly identify ways of ensuring that the needs of all groups, including those of differing ages; differing social and economic backgrounds; living in different types of housing and environment; those who are disabled; those from all ethnic, religious and cultural groups; and from groups frequently marginalised, are assessed and addressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Open Space strategy</i></li> <li>• <i>Transport policy and strategy</i></li> <li>• <i>Integrated children's services plan</i></li> <li>• <i>Development plans</i></li> </ul>
<b>Early childhood provision</b>  <i>Integrated children's services plan</i>  <i>Childcare plan</i>  <i>Education plan</i>	<p><i>Early Years Framework</i> (2008) aims to “Improve outcomes and children’s quality of life through play” and to ensure there are “High quality outdoor play opportunities in every community” and “increased outdoor play and physical activity”. (page 26)</p> <p><i>Getting it Right for Every Child</i> provides a detailed framework for the development of a range of services to children and young people.</p>	<p>The local policies and strategies developed to implement <i>Getting it Right for Every Child</i> and the <i>Early Years Framework</i> recognise and address the outdoor play needs of children of different age groups, interests and abilities.</p>





<p><b>Local Authority policy areas affecting outdoor play opportunities</b></p> <p><i>Policy documents to assess</i></p>	<p><b>National guidance</b></p>	<p><b>Play sufficiency criteria</b></p>
<p><b>Planning and developing residential areas</b></p> <p><i>Development plans</i></p>	<p>The <i>Early Years Framework</i> (2008) recognises the importance of housing services in addressing the needs of children and promoting their well-being.</p> <p><i>Scottish Planning Policy</i> (2010) states that “Providing play space and other opportunities for children and young people to play freely, explore, discover and initiate their own activities, can support their development. Access to good quality open spaces can encourage people to be physically active and aid health and well-being.” (para 149). Planning authorities are urged to “support, protect and enhance open space and opportunities for sport and recreation (para 149).</p> <p>The <i>National Planning Framework 2</i> (2009), the overall policy direction for housing, spatial planning and transport in Scotland, aims to “help build safer, stronger and healthier communities, by promoting improved opportunities and a better quality of life.” (para 44) The planning system must provide adequately for children and young people (alongside other groups) when considering provision for housing, transport and community facilities. (para 32) This involves promoting “development which helps to improve health, regenerate communities and enable disadvantaged communities to access opportunities.”</p> <p><i>Planning Advice Note 67</i> (2003) suggests that open space and outdoor play facilities should be designed into the network of movement routes in a housing development and not hidden out of sight on otherwise useless pieces of land.</p> <p><i>Planning Advice Note 77 (PAN 77) Designing Safer Places</i> offers guidance on the design and location of outdoor play areas in housing developments. It emphasises the need for careful thought in the planning and provision of children’s outdoor play spaces and facilities for young people. (page 10)</p> <p><i>Secured by Design</i>, a UK police initiative designed to help create safer, more secure environments proposes core principles of: environmental quality and sense of ownership; natural surveillance; access and footpaths; lighting and open space provision and management; all of which can be applied to spaces where children might play. (page 14)</p> <p><i>Planning Advice Note 65</i> (2008) recommends that agreed standards for open spaces, including outdoor play spaces, should include the three elements of quality (with a benchmark against which quality can be measured); quantity expressed in relation to the number of houses or people; and accessibility looking at distance thresholds and barriers to access. Geographic Information System (GIS) is recommended for mapping outdoor play spaces. Although it suggests the use of Fields in Trust’s <i>Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play</i> (2008) as a guide for spatial standards for outdoor play space, it says that any standards should be carefully adapted to meet local circumstances.</p>	<p><i>Local development plans</i> recognise and address the outdoor play needs of children of different age groups, interests and abilities.</p> <p><i>Local developments plans</i> include agreed local standards for the quantity, quality and access to spaces for outdoor play for children of different age groups, interests and abilities.</p> <p><i>The open space strategy</i> includes agreed local standards for the quantity, quality and access to spaces for outdoor play for children of different age groups, interests and abilities.</p> <p>The <i>Open Space audit</i> mapped all types of space children might use for play as part of its comprehensive mapping</p>

Local Authority policy areas affecting outdoor play opportunities		
Policy documents to assess	National guidance	Play sufficiency criteria
<b>Designing and managing local streets in residential neighbourhoods</b>  <i>Transport plan</i>	<p><i>Scottish Planning Policy</i> (2010) states that: “New housing developments should be integrated with public transport and active travel networks such as footpaths and cycle routes.... New streets should connect well with existing streets and with walking and cycling networks.” (para 79) Also that, as a priority, opportunities for walking and cycling should be planned into all new residential areas, making urban areas more attractive and safer for pedestrians and cyclists (para 169).</p> <p><i>Designing Streets</i> (2010) policy guidance on the design of residential and “lightly trafficked” local streets and roads, states that one of the primary aims of street design is to allow for and encourage social interaction, and that streets should be inclusive social spaces where children can play and others socialise (page 38). At the same time street design should aim to integrate natural landscaped features and encourage biodiversity (page 50). Planners should pay as much attention to walking and cycling as to motor vehicles, and the design of the street structure should consider pedestrians, including children playing, above motor vehicles (para 15).</p> <p><i>Planning Advice Note 67: Housing Quality</i> (2003) recommends that streets are designed and “furnished” as spaces for general public use, incorporating appropriate traffic calming and management measures, not merely as traffic routes.</p> <p><i>Planning Advice Note 65: Planning and open space</i> (2008) suggests that local authorities consider creating “Home zones”, giving street space in residential areas to pedestrians and preventing motorised traffic from dominating an area. Home zones offer children places to play on their door-steps.</p>	<p>The local <i>Transport Plan</i> recognises the importance of local streets, roads and walking and cycling routes in offering opportunities for outdoor play for children and young people of different ages, interest and abilities.</p>

Investing in children’s play is one of the most important things we can do to improve children’s health and wellbeing in Scotland. I think this Toolkit is a great way for Local Authorities and Communities to come together to encourage more play opportunities in local areas. Children playing outside contributes to the resilience of communities in Scotland.

I welcome this Toolkit which has been funded from the Go Play Programme and wish Play Scotland every success with their work in this area.

**Sir Harry Burns**  
Chief Medical Officer Scotland

Local Authority policy areas affecting outdoor play opportunities		
Policy documents to assess	National guidance	Play sufficiency criteria
<b>Parks and open spaces</b>  <i>Open space audit and strategy</i>	<p><i>Early Years Framework</i> (2008) Developing outdoor play spaces, and play opportunities for children and removing barriers to outdoor play is a priority. This has wider implications for development planning and particularly provision of open space and green space". (page 18)</p> <p><i>Designing Places</i> (2001) offers the policy context for planning policy, design guidance and advice on developing the built environment. Policy Advice Note 65, Planning and Open Space (PAN 65), (2008) on implementing Designing Places, covers most spaces where children might play.</p> <p><i>Planning Advice Note 65: Planning and open space</i> (2008) recommends that each local planning authority complete an <i>Open Space audit</i> and strategy, covering all types of public and private open space. This should assess the current and future needs of the population and protect all spaces that help meet these needs. The audit should take account of the quality, community value, accessibility and use of existing open spaces, as well as the quantity. A strategy should then be drawn up to develop open spaces in a way that best meets community needs. This audit and strategy should consider spaces for children's outdoor play.</p>	<p><i>The open space strategy</i> includes agreed local standards for the quantity, quality and access to spaces for outdoor play for children of different age groups, interests and abilities.</p> <p>The <i>Open Space audit</i> mapped all types of space children might use for outdoor play as part of its comprehensive mapping</p> <p>The <i>Open space audit</i> and strategy assess the current and future outdoor play needs of the population of children and young people and protects all spaces that help meet these needs</p>
<b>Staffed outdoor play provision</b>  <i>Childcare strategy</i>	<p>The <i>Early Years Framework</i> (2008) aims to ensure that, in every community, children and families have access to integrated pre-school and childcare services.</p>	<p>The <i>Childcare Strategy</i> offers guidance and assessment tools to ensure local childcare providers understand the importance of and promote regular outdoor play as a routine aspect of the care they provide.</p>
<b>Schools</b>  <i>Education plan</i>	<p><i>Early Years Framework</i>: through the <i>Curriculum for Excellence</i> will, with local partners, continue to promote play-based learning, including in early primary education.</p> <p><i>Early Years Framework</i> (2008): HMIE, is to focus on the quality of energetic and outdoor play in all its inspection activities. In the medium-term nurseries and schools are expected to support outdoor play and to try out innovative approaches such as "nature kindergartens". (page 26)</p> <p>The Government review of <i>Equally Well</i> (2010) recommends that community planning and school colleagues work together to prioritise and plan jointly to support the health and well-being needs of the local community.</p>	<p>The <i>Education plan</i> offers guidance and assessment tools to ensure local schools understand the importance of and promote regular outdoor play as a routine aspect of the service they provide.</p>

Local Authority policy areas affecting outdoor play opportunities		
Policy documents to assess	National guidance	Play sufficiency criteria
<b>Safeguarding children</b>  <i>Child protection policy</i>  <i>Children's services plans</i>  <i>Play Strategy</i>  <i>Health and safety policies</i>	<p><i>The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland: (2010)</i> provides a national framework for the development of local child protection policies and procedures. The local Child protection plan is developed by a <i>Child protection committee</i> as part of the <i>Community Planning</i> process.</p> <p>The <i>Early Years Framework</i> (2008) commits the Scottish Government, the Care Commission, Play Scotland and the police to lead a debate on understanding and balancing the benefits of play against the risks. In his foreword to the Play Scotland publication <i>Managing risk in play</i> provision, the Scottish Minister for Children and Early Years Adam Ingram, stated "Through the debate on risk and in order for play to be truly accepted by our communities, we have a responsibility to ensure that practitioners, parents and even the children themselves know the benefits that play and risk can bring to their education and wellbeing – we all have a part to play in promoting risk management rather than risk aversion."</p> <p>The risk-benefit approach to assessing spaces and opportunities for children's outdoor play has also been endorsed by the Health and Safety Executive.</p>	<p>The <i>Child Protection Policy</i> recognises children spaces and opportunities for play as areas to be considered in the community response to child protection procedures.</p> <p>The <i>Children's Services Plan</i> explicitly recognises the value to children of being able to experience risk and challenge while outdoors playing, and endorses the risk-benefit approach to health and safety assessments.</p> <p>The <i>Play Strategy</i> explicitly recognises the value to children of being able to experience risk and challenge while outdoors playing, and describes and endorses the risk-benefit approach to health and safety assessments.</p> <p>The local <i>Health and Safety policies</i> explicitly recognises the value to children of being able to experience risk and challenge whilst outdoors playing and endorses the risk-benefit approach to health and safety assessments.</p>





Local Authority policy areas affecting outdoor play opportunities		
Policy documents to assess	National guidance	Play sufficiency criteria
<b>Community safety</b>  <i>Community safety partnerships:</i>	<i>Community Safety Partnerships</i> (CSPs) bring together representatives from the Local Authority, police service and other relevant agencies, often including health, education and other public services. They aim to reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime, and to promote safer, more inclusive and healthier communities.	<p>There is a named person on the <i>Community Safety Partnership</i> champions outdoor play opportunities in all relevant areas of planning and development.</p> <p>Children's views are represented on the Community Safety Partnership and are clearly reflected in the policies of the Local Authority and partners.</p>
<b>Public health</b>  <i>Physical activity strategy</i>  <i>Child and adolescent mental health strategy</i>	<p><i>Start Active, Stay Active: A report on physical activity for health from the four home countries'</i> (2011). Makes detailed recommendations for physical activity levels for children including active outdoor play.</p> <p>NHS Health Scotland have developed Mental Health Indicators for children and young people and have identified the need to develop better measures around the access children and young people have to play opportunities. The Toolkit will be a useful complement to the play indicators identified which currently have no national data set.</p>	<p>The Local Authority <i>Physical Activity Strategy</i> identifies the importance of providing for opportunities for active outdoor play for children of different age groups.</p> <p>Assessment of encouragement, support, and ability to access imaginative, spontaneous indoor and outdoor play.</p> <p>Assessment of time spent in spontaneous play.</p>



## Policy analysis scoring sheet

Score	Evidence
4	There are clear policy statements, strategic goals and specified, timed actions, with resources attached, which will be / are being / have been implemented and enhance children's outdoor play opportunities.
3	The play sufficiency criteria is recognised in policy, strategies and action plans, and is likely to inform and influence the work of implementation officers.
2	The play sufficiency criteria is recognised in policies or strategies, but prompting and support will be required if they are to make a difference and enhance children's outdoor play opportunities..
1	The play sufficiency criteria is recognised briefly in the text, but this is unlikely to have any impact on officers' actions or children's outdoor play opportunities.
0	There is no evidence of play sufficiency criteria in policy, strategy or actions plans.

Policy document assessment criteria	Score 0-4	Comments	Suggested actions
<b>Community Planning Board membership and terms of references</b>			
There is a named person on the <i>CPP Board</i> who champions outdoor play opportunities in all relevant areas of planning and development..			
Children's views are represented on the <i>CPP Board</i> and are clearly reflected in the policies of the Local Authority and partners			
Total score: max = 8			
<b>Local Authority Single Outcome Agreement</b>			
Promoting opportunities for children's outdoor play and recreation is an integral part of the Local Authority's <i>SOA</i> as a cross-cutting theme.			
Total score: max = 4			
<b>Integrated Children's services plan</b>			
The <i>Children's Services Plan</i> explicitly recognises the value to children of being able to experience risk and challenge while outdoors playing, and endorses the risk-benefit approach to health and safety assessments			

Policy document assessment criteria	Score 0-4	Comments	Suggested actions
The <i>Children's Services Plan</i> in implementing <i>Getting it Right for Every Child</i> and the <i>Early Years Framework</i> recognises and addresses the outdoor play needs of children of different age groups, interests and abilities.			
Total score: max = 8			
<b>Open space audit and strategy</b>			
The <i>Open space strategy</i> explicitly identifies ways of ensuring the needs of all groups of children, including those of differing ages; differing social and economic backgrounds; living in different types of housing and environment; those who are disabled; those from all ethnic, religious and cultural groups; and from groups frequently marginalised, are assessed and addressed.			
The <i>open space strategy</i> includes agreed local standards for the quantity, quality and access to spaces for play for children of different age groups, interests and abilities.			
The <i>Open Space audit</i> mapped all types of space children might use for outdoor play as part of its comprehensive mapping			
The <i>Open space audit</i> and strategy assesses the current and future outdoor play needs of the population of children and young people, and protects all spaces that help meet these needs			
Total score: max = 16			
<b>Transport plan</b>			
The local <i>Transport Plan</i> recognises the importance of local streets, roads and walking and cycling routes in offering opportunities for outdoor play for children and young people of different ages, interest and abilities.			

Policy document assessment criteria	Score 0-4	Comments	Suggested actions
The <i>Transport plan</i> explicitly identifies ways of ensuring the needs of all groups, including those of differing ages; differing social and economic backgrounds; living in different types of housing and environment; those who are disabled; those from all ethnic, religious and cultural groups and from groups frequently marginalised, are assessed and addressed			
Total score: max = 8			
<b>Development plans</b>			
Local <i>Development Plans</i> recognise and address the outdoor play needs of children of different age groups, interests and abilities.			
Local <i>Developments Plans</i> include agreed local standards for the quantity, quality and access to spaces for outdoor play for children of different age groups, interests and abilities.			
Local <i>Development Plans</i> explicitly identify ways of ensuring the needs of all groups of children, including those of differing ages; differing social and economic backgrounds; living in different types of housing and environment; those who are disabled; those from all ethnic, religious and cultural groups and from groups frequently marginalised, are assessed and addressed.			
Local <i>Developments plans</i> and associated strategies recognise the principles of <i>Getting it Right for Every Child</i> and the <i>Early Years Framework</i> and address the outdoor play needs of children of different age groups, interests and abilities			
Total score: max = 16			



Policy document assessment criteria	Score 0-4	Comments	Suggested actions
<b>Education plan</b>			
The <i>Education plan</i> offers guidance and assessment tools to ensure local schools understand the importance of and promote regular outdoor play as a routine aspect of the service they provide			
The <i>Education plan</i> , in discussing the implementation of <i>Getting it Right for Every Child</i> and the <i>Early Years Framework</i> , recognises and addresses the outdoor play needs of children of different age groups, interests and abilities			
Total score: max = 8			
<b>Childcare policy and strategy</b>			
The <i>Childcare Strategy</i> offers guidance and assessment tools to ensure local childcare providers understand the importance of and promote regular outdoor play as a routine aspect of the care they provide.			
Total score: max = 4			
<b>Child protection policy and strategy</b>			
The <i>Child Protection Policy</i> recognises children's spaces and opportunities for outdoor play as areas to be considered in the community response to child protection procedures.			
Total score: max = 4			
<b>Health and safety policies</b>			
The local <i>Health and Safety policies</i> explicitly recognise the value to children of being able to experience risk and challenge while outdoors playing and endorse the risk-benefit approach to health and safety assessments			
Total score: max = 4			

Policy document assessment criteria	Score 0-4	Comments	Suggested actions
<b>Public health policies</b>			
The Local Authority <i>Physical Activity Strategy</i> identifies the importance of providing for opportunities for active outdoor play for children of different age groups, and contributes to the development of outdoor play opportunities for children and young people of different ages, interest and abilities.			
The local <i>Child and Adolescent Mental Health Strategy</i> recognises the importance of outdoor play in contributing to children's physical activity levels and contributes to the development of outdoor play opportunities for children and young people of different ages, interest and abilities			
Total score: max =8			
<b>Overall score: max = 88</b>			

## Policy audit narrative summary

### Brief description of:

#### Strengths

#### Weakness

#### Future action

## Follow-up action to policy audit

Name of Local Authority policy	Implementation / revision date for policy/strategy	Council member and officer responsible for policy/ strategy	Proposed action	Action lead	Action by date
Community Planning Board membership and terms of references					
Local Authority Single Outcome Agreement					
Integrated Children's Services Plan					
Play Strategy					
Open space audit and strategy					
Transport plan					
Development plans					
Education plan					
Childcare policy and strategy					
Child Protection Policy and strategy					
Health and Safety policies					
Physical Activity Strategy					
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Strategy					

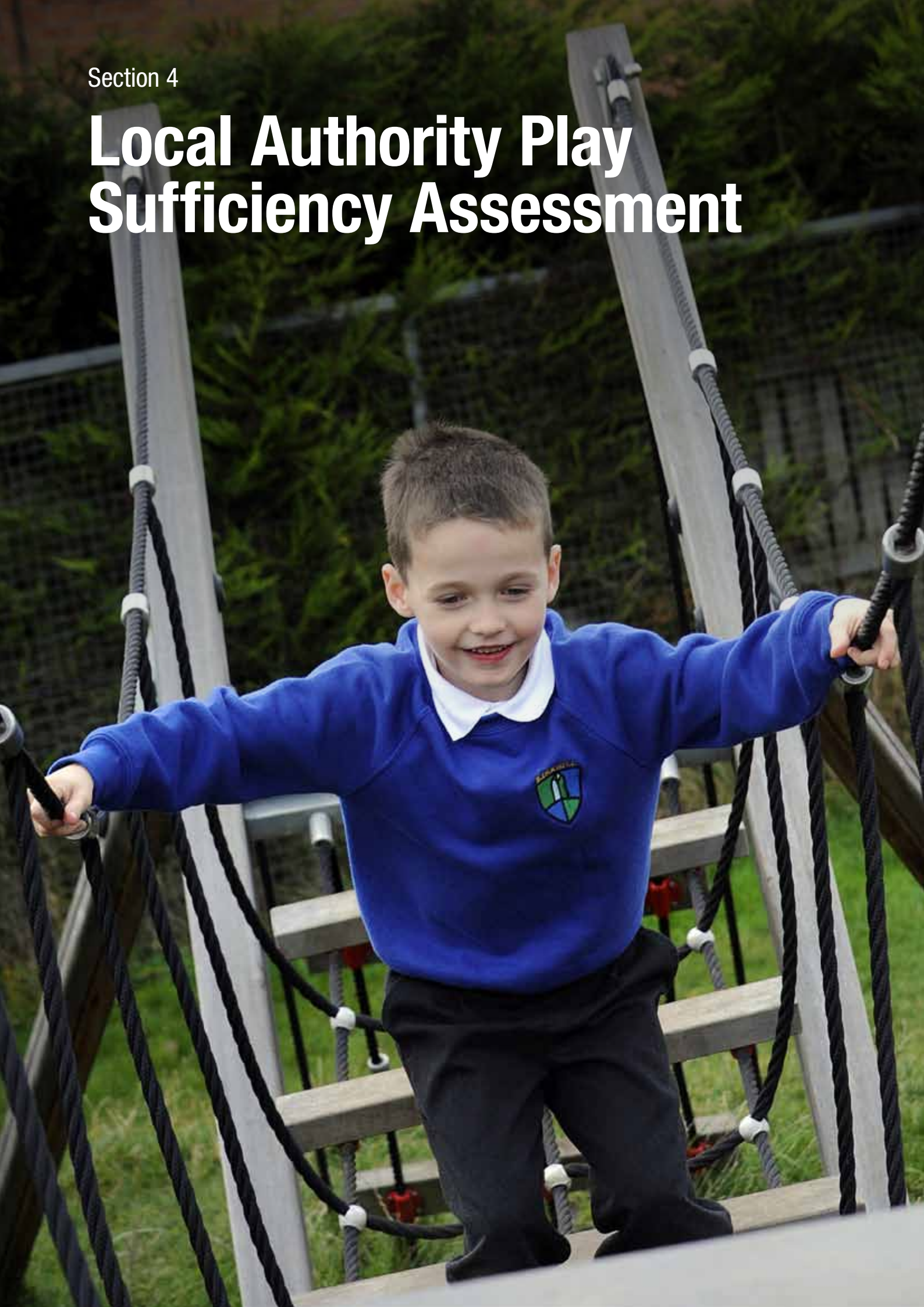
Stimulating improvement in the design and provision of local places and spaces for play is an important goal. It is doubly so knowing, as we do, that play is of fundamental importance to children. Yet many children in Scotland do not have ready access to satisfying, enriching play spaces on their doorsteps or in their neighbourhoods. Children can and will play almost anywhere and their choices may not be those of adults, but we have a responsibility to ensure their right to play is translated into opportunities on the ground. In grappling with a complex area the Toolkit offers achievable steps in understanding the local context for play, helping to pave the path towards improvements.

### Theresa Casey

President, International Play Association: Promoting the Child's Right to Play

Section 4

# Local Authority Play Sufficiency Assessment





The **Local Authority Play Sufficiency Assessment** is based on the amalgamation of data collected for each of the indicators in each defined neighbourhood. As, in some Local Authorities this will be a major undertaking, it is suggested that there could be a rolling 3 year programme of assessments undertaking 1:3 neighbourhoods each year and reporting on these.

The results for each of the eight indicators should be entered in the **Summary Assessment Sheet** (later in this section) and the Local Authority team should discuss and rate their own provision for outdoor play opportunities, agreeing priorities for action and future developments. If other Local Authorities have used the same tools in the same way it will be possible to compare findings with other similar local authorities and develop realistic benchmarks.

In time, each indicator would be measured against national benchmarks set after the first year's data collection and one would expect to see year-on-year improvements until an agreed level of "excellence" is achieved.



# Local Authority Play Sufficiency Assessment

Title: The sufficiency of provision of high quality, accessible spaces and opportunities for play and recreation across the Local Authority area.

- Indicator 1: The amount of time children and young people are outdoors playing and spending free time with friends
- Indicator 2: The level of satisfaction with the play spaces and opportunities available to children and young people whilst spending free time outdoors.
- Indicator 3: The quality of local spaces and opportunities for play and spending free time with friends.
- Indicator 4: Children and young people's access to spaces and opportunities for outdoor play and spending free time with friends.
- Indicator 5: The meaningful involvement of children and young people in the design and delivery of spaces and opportunities for outdoor play and recreation.
- Indicator 6: Risk experience: children's views on the degree of excitement they experience
- AND Risk opportunities ie evidence of a risk-benefit approach being taken to allow challenging and exciting outdoor play opportunities
- Indicator 7: Adult attitudes to children and young people being outside
- Indicator 8: The extent to which different agencies are working together in a cohesive way to promote outdoor play and create quality play experiences.

The Local Authority play sufficiency assessment can be used on its own as a self-assessment tool or can be used with the *Self-evaluation for improvement* process described in *How good is our culture and sport*. It can also be used for collecting evidence to demonstrate outcomes when using the *Go Play Outcome and Evaluation Framework*.

## Working with *How good is our culture and sport*<sup>3</sup>

Information collected using the Getting it Right for Play toolkit and developing the Local Authority play sufficiency assessment can be used to help answer some of the questions in *How good is our culture and sport*. These include:



### ***How are we doing? and How do we know?*** **.. in relation to three of the six high-level questions:**

- How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders (service users);
- How good is our delivery of the key processes;
- How good is our management?

### **In so doing it provides information for Local Authorities to:**

- Report on standards and quality;
- Plan for improvement;
- Make improvements.

From combining the results of the key elements of play sufficiency the **Local Authority Play Sufficiency Assessment** will assess Local Authority provision of places and opportunities for play as:

Level 6: Excellent:	outstanding, sector leader
Level 5: Very good:	major strengths
Level 4: Good:	important strengths with areas for improvement
Level 3: Satisfactory:	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
Level 2: Weak:	important weaknesses
Level 1: Unsatisfactory:	major weaknesses

In order to do this most effectively it will be useful to compare scores for each indicator with other, similar Local Authorities.

The following table shows how the local play indicators can be used to illustrate the elements of *How good is our culture and sport*.



<sup>3</sup> HM Inspectorate of Education (2009) *How good is our culture and sport? A Quality Improvement Framework for culture and sport provision*, Livingston



HGIU... adapted theme	Key elements of play sufficiency	Data collection and analysis	Comments
<b>Impact on service users:</b>			
The extent to which children are actively involved in outdoor play.	The <b>amount of time</b> each week children and young people are outdoors playing and spending time with friends.	Children's survey: Q1 about how frequently children play outdoors	Neighbourhood assessment: Data collected at neighbourhood level as decided by Local Authority.
The extent to which children enjoy playing in the spaces and opportunities offered to them	The level of <b>satisfaction</b> with the play spaces and opportunities available to children and young people whilst spending free time outdoors	Children's survey: Q's 3,6, and 6 about ways to play, places available and if they feel safe in the local area.	Neighbourhood assessment: Data collected at neighbourhood level as decided by Local Authority
	Opportunities exist for children to take <b>risks</b> test and challenge themselves whilst out playing	Children's survey: Q7 about opportunities for daring, exciting play.  Quality Assessment of spaces.	Neighbourhood assessment: Data collected at neighbourhood level as decided by Local Authority
<b>Impact on the community</b>			
	The extent to which <b>adult attitudes</b> make children feel welcome whilst out playing	Children's survey: Q8 if children think adults are happy about them being out in the local area.	Neighbourhood assessment: Data collected at neighbourhood level as decided by Local Authority
<b>Process and delivery</b>			
Planning and providing quality, accessible spaces	The <b>quality</b> of local spaces and opportunities for play and spending free time with friends	Assessment of individual, or clusters of spaces for location, play value, care and maintenance, using QA tool	Neighbourhood assessment: Data collected at neighbourhood level as decided by Local Authority
	Children's <b>access</b> to play opportunities including location, size and variety of age appropriate spaces and opportunities in relation to where children live	GIS mapping as part of open space audits, using definitions and standards agreed by Local Authority and based on local research or recommended benchmarks – eg Fields in Trust	Local Authority area assessment: Data mapped at Local Authority level and analysed in relation to Local Authority data on child population.
Engaging and developing communities	The <b>involvement</b> of children and young people in the design and delivery of spaces and opportunities for play	Children's survey: Q9 about if children were asked for their views on play opportunities in their neighbourhood	Neighbourhood assessment: Data collected at neighbourhood level as decided by Local Authority.
<b>Policy development and planning</b>			
Appropriate policies and strategies	The existence of <b>multi-agency</b> working as demonstrated by a play strategy with a working action plan and explicit links to the Single Outcome Agreement and other relevant Local Authority plans and strategies	Document analysis	Whole authority approach – bringing together all elements of assessments.



## Evidencing the *Go Play Outcome and Evaluation Framework*<sup>4</sup>

The process described in the *Go Play Outcome and Evaluation Framework* aims, in part, to encourage better use of spaces and places where children might play and to improve the quality of areas specifically designed for play. It also encourages the active involvement of children in decisions about provision for their play.

The evidence collected using the *Getting it Right for Play* toolkit could be used to illustrate progress towards the following outcomes described in the framework.

Go Play Outcome and evaluation framework outcome indicators (appendix 3)	Getting it Right for Play indicators
Policies that affirm the value of, and support, play	Indicator 8: using document analysis
Increased confidence to allow children to play freely	Indicator 1: the frequency of children play outside
Make better use of natural and other places in the community	Indicator 1: the frequency which children play outside
Improved play spaces	Indicators 2 and 3: children's satisfaction with and the quality of spaces for play
More playable space	Indicator 4: access to spaces for play
Increased voice in development of spaces	Indicator 5: children's involvement
Greater acceptance by adults of children being out in their area	Indicator 7: adult attitudes to children
More play	Indicator 1: the frequency of children play outside
Better play	Indicators 2 and 3: children's satisfaction with and the quality of spaces for play



<sup>2</sup> Inspiring Scotland (2011) *Go Play Outcomes and Evaluation Framework*, Edinburgh

# Local Authority play sufficiency assessment sheet

## Scoring summary sheet

### \*Self assessment:

Level 6: Excellent:	outstanding, sector leader
Level 5: Very good:	major strengths
Level 4: Good:	important strengths with areas for improvement
Level 3: Satisfactory:	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
Level 2: Weak:	important weaknesses
Level 1: Unsatisfactory:	major weaknesses

Indicator	Measure	Score	Self assessment*	Comments	Actions
1: Time outdoors	% children playing out most days				
2: Satisfaction	% children scoring 5 or 6 points for “do”, “places” and “safe”				
3: Quality	Proportion of spaces with “good” or “very good” scores for Quality				
4: Access	Proportion of neighbourhoods meeting agreed standard for access to quantity of play space				
5: Involvement	% children scoring asked and resulting changes				
6a: Risk opportunities AND	The proportion of play spaces offering exciting play choices and challenges AND				
6b: Risk experience	% children with some or lots of opportunities for exciting daring play				
7: Adult attitudes	% children saying most adults like children playing				
8a: Play Strategy OR	Summary of strengths and weaknesses OR				
8b: Policies	Summary of strengths and weakness				



Appendix 1

# The Playing Out survey





# The Playing Out survey

This survey is to find out what you think about your local places to play and spend time with your friends? It is for children and young people of all ages.

**Tell us what you think by answering these questions about playing out in your local area.**

1. How often do you play outside? (not counting school playtimes)	Tick one
I play outside most days	
I play outside a few times a week	
I hardly ever play outside	
I don't like playing outside	

2. What are your favourite WAYS to play ... (tick the ones you like best)			
	Tick here		Tick here
<b>Be active:</b> run, jump, slide, swimming, ball games, skip, chase.		<b>Be adventurous:</b> Climb, be daring, hang upside down, jump from high up, swing high, walk on logs	
<b>Hang out:</b> meet friends, chat, laugh, shout, sit around (generally hang around).		<b>Make things:</b> create, draw, paint, build things, make dens	
<b>Use wheels:</b> cycle, scooter, skate, skateboard		<b>Be quiet:</b> Imagine, dream, invent, hide, chill	
<b>Get wet or grubby:</b> paddling, mud, digging, buckets, mixing		<b>Feel free:</b> get out of the house, express yourself, away from adults, be yourself	

3. When I am out playing in my local area	Tick one
I do <b>most</b> of my FAVOURITE things	
I do <b>some</b> of my FAVOURITE things	
I do <b>hardly</b> any of my FAVOURITE things	





#### 4. Which are your favourite PLACES to play? (Tick the places you would like playing best)

	Tick here		Tick here
Your garden or friends' gardens		School playground	
Streets and corners near home		Places that feel safe from traffic, bullies, strange adults	
A local park or grassy area		Places I can get to easily by walking or cycling	
Natural places with trees, bushes, flowers, fields,		Play parks with water and sand: paddling pool, sandpit, fountains.	
Play parks: swings, slides, climbing frames, seesaws		Cycle track or skate park	
Football fields or sports pitches		Community centre or leisure centre	
Woods and forests		Beaches, the seaside, rivers	

#### 5. In your local area, which of these is true?

	Tick one
There are <b>lots</b> of my favourite PLACES to play	
There are <b>some</b> of my favourite PLACES to play	
There are <b>hardly</b> any of my favourite PLACES to play	

The next questions are about what happens when you are playing outside in your local area.

#### 6. How safe do you feel when out playing in your local area?

	Tick one
I <b>usually</b> feel SAFE when I'm out playing	
I <b>sometimes</b> feel SAFE when I'm out playing	
I <b>never</b> feel SAFE when I'm out playing	

#### 7. How exciting is it when you are out playing in your local area?

	Tick one
I can <b>usually</b> play in EXCITING DARING ways	
I can <b>sometimes</b> play in EXCITING DARING ways	
I can <b>never</b> play in EXCITING DARING ways	



8. What do grown-ups think about children playing out in your local area?	Tick one
Most grown-ups think it is OK	
Some grown-ups think it is OK	
Hardly any grown-ups think it is OK	

9. This question is about whether people from the council or other adults have asked you about what you like when you are playing.	
Which one of these is true?	Tick one
I was asked what I like and now it is better	
I was asked what I like but nothing happened	
I have never been asked what I like	
I don't know if I have ever been asked	

The last few questions are about you:

10. Are you a boy or a girl ?	Tick one
Boy	
Girl	

11. How old are you?	Write here

12. Which school or nursery do you go to?
Write here

13. What is your postcode at home?
Write here

Thank you for your help.



# Endorsements

Stimulating improvement in the design and provision of local places and spaces for play is an important goal. It is doubly so knowing, as we do, that play is of fundamental importance to children. Yet many children in Scotland do not have ready access to satisfying, enriching play spaces on their doorsteps or in their neighbourhoods. Children can and will play almost anywhere and their choices may not be those of adults, but we have a responsibility to ensure their right to play is translated into opportunities on the ground. In grappling with a complex area the Toolkit offers achievable steps in understanding the local context for play, helping to pave the path towards improvements.

**Theresa Casey**

President, International Play Association: Promoting the Child's Right to Play

*Investing in children's play is one of the most important things we can do to improve children's health and wellbeing in Scotland. I think this Toolkit is a great way for Local Authorities and Communities to come together to encourage more play opportunities in local areas. Children playing outside contributes to the resilience of communities in Scotland.*

*I welcome this Toolkit which has been funded from the Go Play Programme and wish Play Scotland every success with their work in this area.*

**Sir Harry Burns**

Chief Medical Officer Scotland

*I am pleased to support the Toolkit produced by Play Scotland which in my view is a valuable and much-needed resource that will help everyone who engages with children to understand the importance of promoting good opportunities for play."*

*"Play is a fundamental right of children, and an international body of evidence recognises it as an essential part of every child's development.*

*"I believe the Toolkit has the potential to promote a wider understanding of the importance of play, particularly outdoor play. As such, it will be a useful complement to NHS Health Scotland's mental health indicators for children and young people, which identified the need to develop better measures around the access children and young people have to play opportunities.*

**Tam Baillie**

Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People

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*The Power of Play*

Author: Issy Cole-Hamilton

*The Power of Play Summary*

Author: Issy Cole-Hamilton

*The Scottish Play Policy Context*

Author: Issy Cole-Hamilton

*Getting it Right for Play Toolkit*

Author: Issy Cole-Hamilton with Jane Crawford



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