



Play Sufficiency Assessment Form

Local Authority: Monmouthshire County Council

Responsible Officer: Rebecca Hall

Job title: Play Development Lead

Date of completion: June 2025

An Executive Summary of the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) 2025: The state of play in Monmouthshire Local Authority.

1. Local Authority Summary Statement

The Council recognises the importance of play in children's lives, for both its recreational value and for the important part that it plays in children's physical and emotional health and well-being and in their personal development.

Accessible play opportunities contribute to children's lives and to the well-being of their families and communities, thereby contributing to the well-being objective to provide children and young people with the best possible start in life. Play is an important aspect of achieving the vision of the Council's Corporate Plan.

- A Fair place to live where the effects of inequality and poverty have been reduced.
- A Safe place to live where people have a home and community where they feel secure
- A Connected place where people feel part of a community and are valued.
- A Learning place where everybody has the opportunity to reach their potential.

These strands of our corporate plan mirror the objectives of Welsh Play Policy where children should have time, space and permission to play as part of their community.

Our goal as an authority is to ensure that there is sufficient access and opportunity for children and young people to participate in play. The

2. Methodology

The Play Development Lead held initial meetings with the play strategy group to discuss and plan how the PSA was to be completed. Members of the Play Strategy group include representatives from the following departments

- Active Travel
- Community infrastructure
- Community Focused schools
- Community and Wellbeing team

- Early years and Childcare
- Flying Start
- Sport and Community
- Play Development.
- Leisure Services
- Children's Disabilities team

Using part of the Play Wales Tool kit we identified stakeholders both externally and internally that should be contacted and should report into the PSA. Each of these stakeholders were asked to complete a document to report on what work they have completed since the last PSA that pertains to children's right to access time space and permission to play. Play development lead met with cluster heads to discuss the play duties and how schools play a part in that. Schools were asked to complete documentation on how they include play into their school day and how they make space available. All of these were in relation to themes of the PSA.

Using the playing out survey we went to all schools using playmakers teams to consult with children and ask them to complete the questionnaire. We held two focused groups at the Bronze young ambassador's day using some of the questions from the playing out survey to facilitate open dialogue on how children viewed their opportunity to access play and if play needs where met. Focus groups were facilitated using the same methods at 5 schools. This provided a wider range of ages and abilities. We added some questions to the playing out survey to gather information on children's views on play in their schools.

All leisure centres and libraries advertised using QR codes links to parent questionnaires and children's questionnaires within their centres. These were also shared on social media. These services have been fully updated on the progress not just of the completion of the current PSA but developments for play throughout the authority as forward facing to the public.

To ensure we reached children with additional needs/disabilities we used Action for children to consult with children in their sessions. We also reached out to our schools with specialist units to complete with their children.

The council works with local town councils who support with some funding of activities within their locality. We meet regularly with these councils to provide updates on provisions within their areas and they share with us their own consultation with constituents. This was also considered when preparing for the PSA.

All departments whose work pertains to themes of the PSA completed update documents to include how their work has met the criteria, what work has been completed, any challenges and future projects and any data. These were sent to the Play

Development Lead who inputted them into the 2025 PSA. These were then approved and edited where necessary by those relevant departments. These departments were also responsible for providing actions to inform the action plan.

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Responsible department</i>
Population [Matters A, B, E].	<i>MonLife Play</i> <i>Data team</i> <i>Children with Disabilities team</i> <i>Early Years and Childcare</i> <i>Communities and Wellbeing team</i> <i>Youth Service</i> <i>Sport Development team</i> <i>Children's Services</i>
Places where children play [Matters C, F and I]	<i>MonLife Play</i> <i>Heritage and Attractions</i> <i>Leisure services</i> <i>Town and Community Councils</i> <i>Community infrastructure</i> <i>Active Travel</i> <i>Traffic and road safety</i> <i>Education</i> <i>Communities focused schools</i>
Supervised provision [Matters D and G]	<i>MonLife Play</i> <i>Monlife Sport and community</i> <i>Youth service</i> <i>Children with Disabilities team</i> <i>Town and Community Councils</i> <i>Action for Children</i> <i>Family information Service</i> <i>Early years and Childcare</i> <i>Flying start</i> <i>Heritage and Museums</i> <i>Workforce</i>

Policy, engagement, advocacy and information [Matters F, G, H, I]	<i>MonLife Play</i> <i>Education</i> <i>Communities and Wellbeing team</i> <i>Community focused schools</i> <i>Active Travel</i> <i>Traffic and road safety</i> <i>Countryside's</i> <i>Leisure services</i> <i>Marketing team</i> <i>Family information services</i> <i>Workforce Development</i>
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3. How engagement with children and families has informed the Play Sufficiency Assessment [max 2,000 words]

Using the playing out survey we went to all primary schools as part of the PlayMakers Award program. Using playmakers teams to consult with children and ask them to complete the questionnaire. We added some questions to the playing out survey to gather information on children's views on play in their schools. The PlayMaker Award is an introduction to leadership skills. It gives children knowledge of how to organise small games and activities that can be used in school, in community groups, and with family and friends. The PlayMaker Award helps learners develop leadership skills such as organisation, communication and teamwork. While completing the playmaker sessions in schools staff worked with year 5 and 6 children to complete the questionnaire alongside the set activities. They then attended lunch and breaktimes to access the rest of the children in the school to get a wider range of ages.

We held two focused groups at the Bronze Young Ambassador's Day. These days have 2-3 children from each primary school, and they participate in a variety of workshops such as learning on sport delivery, play delivery, wellbeing, disability awareness. These workshops are intended to develop children and young people's leadership skills.

A play theme is included at every event. In 2023 the play workshop involved talking to the children about the importance of play. The UNCRC and what play means to them. They were provided with the opportunity to discuss how they felt schools allowed them to meet their play needs at breaktimes. They produced feedback on how they can advocate for improvements to their break time

sessions. The information gathered here informed play sufficiency assessment and work began to develop play further in schools starting with two pilot schools in 2023/2024.

This year's play theme for the ambassador's event used some of the questions from the playing out survey to facilitate open dialogue on how children viewed their opportunity to access play in their area as well as schools and if play needs where met. Children openly discussed what they liked to play and how and if they can access this.

To reach further children Focus groups were facilitated using the same methods as above at 4 schools. The schools chosen covered rurality, high percentage of free school meals and schools located in busy urbanised areas. This provided a wider range of ages and abilities.

These discussions have been used to feed into the PSA and to evaluate actions that can be put into the 2025 PSA action plan.

To gauge parents and carers thoughts on play for their children we used Play Wales parent survey. This was promoted via social media and our website. We also used QR codes at all four leisure centres, libraries and the councils stay and play sessions. Teams who had close contact with families were also asked to share the questionnaire with parents. This included the communities and wellbeing team, and Flying Start. During the school holidays inclusive stay and play sessions staff members encouraged parents to complete questionnaires and had open conversations regarding their thoughts on children's play.

These responses have been considered within the assessment however questions regarding spaces locally for children to play did not marry with the same questions asked to children. Parents stated that there was not enough places and opportunities for children to play the things they like however this was not the case when children were asked in their consultations. It was also interesting to note that a higher percentage of children stated they were able to play out in their neighbourhood and a low percentage of parents stated they allow their children to play out. From this piece of work, it is felt that improvements parents would prefer is more access to free supervised provision and this is what is being considered in the action plan.

A common theme noted in both children and parents' consultations is that one of the barriers to playing out is road safety and the speed of cars. This is already noted in works completed by active travel and has been used to assess the sufficiency of access within the PSA.

To ensure we reached children with additional needs/disabilities we used Action for children to consult with children in their sessions. We also reached out to our schools with specialist units to complete with their children. The same survey that was used

for all children was used in this instance. We had a very small response using these methods. Given the short amount of time these children have in these settings and the ability to engage in changing tasks led to this not being an accessible approach. More parents responded providing their thoughts on play for their children with additional needs. Two points were highlighted, a need for more specialist provision and for more inclusive play equipment in parks. This has an impact on a lot of the matters of the PSA. All new developments have included more inclusive equipment in parks and these views from parents highlight that this needs to continue to be assessed and acted upon as necessary. Feedback on specialist provision is included in matters pertaining to supervised provision and providing for diverse needs.

It should also be noted that external providers Action for Children and Parents Carers network complete their own consultations with families of children with additional needs on what the needs are for their children. These consultations are regularly shared with the play team, and this informs sufficiency assessment and actions as well as the consultations we completed ourselves.

Consultations with young people ages 11+ was completed using the Make your Mark survey. As part of Monmouthshire's Community and Corporate Plan 2022-28, under the objective of "A Fair Place to Live," the annual Make Your Mark survey is a key instrument for measuring progress against the aim, "Citizens are able to participate in council and community decision-making and take actions which enable them to shape their own futures." Make Your Mark is a cornerstone of engagement initiatives for young people in Monmouthshire, orchestrated by Monmouthshire Youth Service. This consultation aimed to identify critical issues for local young people aged 11-18. Youth Service will focus on addressing the most pressing of these issues, selected from a list of 10 key topics. This has been fed into the PSA.

School Sports surveys are completed every 3 years. These surveys seek to gather the views on children and young people's access to sport, physical activity and space to apply these. Using this data the sports team has completed capital grants to improve astroturf and MUGAs. Decisions on where these have been developed has been based on the views of the children from the sports survey. Comparing this data to the consultations completed with children as part of the current PSA MUGAS and sports areas are a destination that a lot of children want access to therefore this sports survey also informs the PSA.

The Active Travel team conduct an annual hand 's up survey. This survey gathers information on how children get to school whether that be walking, cycling or non-active travel. The data from this survey identifies areas where active travel routes are to be developed. This data allows us to assess the sufficiency of access for travel for children and young people.

4. Maximising resources

The Council has not previously had a dedicated play budget, however as a result of the 2022/23 budget round a new Play Development Lead post was funded to contribute to the strategic direction and delivery of play right across Monmouthshire.

This post, based in MonLife's Community and Sport and Team coordinates the statutory play duties, manages delivery of the Playworks Holiday Project fund to support actions of the PSA, chairs the Play Strategy Group and liaises with stakeholders and Council departments whose work can impact play.

Over the last three years the Council has directed play funding to work on the priorities identified in the 2022 Play Sufficiency Assessment and subsequent Action Plans. Across service budgets there are revenue resources used by the Council to support children's access to play opportunities. As well as its coordination role MonLife services provide supervised play opportunities, promote recreational and sport involvement, secure improvements to fixed and green space play provision and provide playful spaces within attractions and heritage sites.

Play forms an important part of the Council's early years and pre-school provision and it is also an important element of the foundation phase once children enter the formal education structure. Children's Services use their budget to support families with children with disabilities to access suitable play provision. Neighbourhood Services manage green spaces and 109 fixed play areas across the county.

Progress on supervised provision includes targeted family engagement for families with children with additional needs as well as cross partnership working with wider stakeholders of children with additional needs to ensure a wide-reaching program. A consistent approach to open access holiday provision throughout all holidays has been developed utilising Playworks Holiday Project funding and Town and Community Council Funding. These programmes run alongside an expanded Food and Fun offer which now includes elements of play in its planning.

The Council and its partners will continue to prioritise available play budgets to concentrate on priorities identified as a result of ongoing consultation and demand from local communities.

The Welsh Government programmes and funding provided through AWPOG, Holiday Playworks, have been used locally to extend provision beyond the school summer holiday period, to work in partnership with more agencies, to increase provision for disabled and more vulnerable children and, in respect of capital funding, to improve and increase play value in a number of the Council's fixed play sites. Grant via the WLGA supports the Food and Fun scheme and the continuing contributions from Town and Community Councils support open access play provision.

5. Monitoring

The Play development lead is responsible for leading on the strategic direction of play within the local authority. This is supported by the Sport and Community lead. All strategic direction filters in the Councils Corporate and community plan which includes yearly development plans and KPI's. This is monitored by the development and performance manager with quarterly updates and monitoring.

The Action Plan is managed by the play development lead who monitors progress regularly and provides updates to Welsh Government on an annual basis. There is a play strategy group (PSG) which consists of representatives from the following departments

- Active Travel
- Community infrastructure
- Countryside
- Community Focused schools
- Community and Wellbeing team
- Early years and Childcare
- Flying Start
- Sport and Community
- Play Development.
- Leisure Services
- Children's Disabilities team

The group has been reestablished since the implementation of the Play Development lead with quarterly meetings. The purpose of these quarterly meetings is to discuss work being completed by members and how this relates to Play. The PSA action plan is reviewed at these meetings with progress updates and actions identified. The Play strategy group were instrumental in the development of the full 2025 PSA. The team established timelines, identified stakeholders, reviewed own work in line with the PSA and supported in the marketing of the consultation work needing to be completed. The Play development lead chairs these

meetings providing an agenda and completing minutes and actions post meetings. These meetings are also used to plan play events such as National Play Day which provides opportunities for cross department support to keep costs to a minimum.

The Play Strategy Group provides sufficient benefits for Play. It ensures that Play is a focus on all agendas and that officers understand the importance of play being a whole authority approach. Monmouthshire is recognised for its successful cross department networking and resources sharing and the Play Strategy Group is a large part of this success. There are difficulties in maintaining attendance at these meetings due to the high levels of workloads across all departments. It is also recognised that there are some gaps in representation. This is continually monitored, and all members of the group are proactive in identifying where there is a need for representation from other departments.

6. Conclusion

There has been a great deal of development across the local authority since the 2022 PSA. Cross department working has strengthened and key messages around play have been adopted by all departments whose work directly affects children's access to time, space and permission to play. The appointment of the Play Development Lead in 2022 has ensured that there is a consistent focus on play both in terms of providing opportunities for quality play sessions but also in terms of play being a standing agenda on a range of policies and work plans across the authority.

Play being repositioned into the sport and community team has proven to be a sector leading success. With sports development working alongside play development this has ensured that play is included in sport objectives as far as possible, and this has been recognised by other authorities as a positive. All sport development officers are now Level 2 Playwork trained and advocating for play in all their work. Training has also been provided to heritage and museum staff which has contributed to the development of playful spaces at all our heritage sites include castles and a 300-year-old courthouse. Again, this is unique as most of these places are not usually seen to be child friendly. We encourage children visiting to play.

There are close links with play and active travel with active travel officers ensuring they are considering how their work can encourage play for children. The Williamsfield park Monmouth project providing a play park within an active travel route has been a big success and seen an increase in families walking to and from school. It is a good demonstration of how cross department working can provide positive results and meet many agendas as well as providing the most out of funding. This was identified by Welsh Government as a good example of best practice and as such was chosen as the venue for the launch of the 5 million Capital funding for Local Authorities to develop their parks and open spaces. It has been identified that this funding will be used to complete a similar project in Chepstow

There is a consistent program of activities for play co-ordinated by the Play Development Lead. These consist of open access play, stay and play, inclusive stay and play, playschemes for children with disabilities and Food and Fun. This has progressed since the last PSA with focus on developing a quality and consistent program for children and families. To achieve this, we utilise the Playworks Holiday Program grant funding and town council contributions. We are able to access funding for Food and Fun and some families first CCG funding to support children with disabilities. Without these streams we would not be able to hold such a consistent program. It is recognised though that these streams are fully utilised and without additional funding we could not expand on this further.

The direction of travel for play within Monmouthshire has been positive and it continues to grow and reach more stakeholders and departments. Our biggest action is to continue the trajectory of cross partnership working and to ensure that the strategic direction is consistently monitored and evaluated. There will be a big focus on workforce development in the 2025 PSA cycle with a target to train 40% of leisure assistants. This will not only support open access play but also The Monmouthshire Games Programme. This is a structured sport programme which falls within the exceptions order. With the exceptions order being reviewed and a drive to maintain and improve quality, training staff in Playwork will support these objectives. We will continue to develop our CPD with focus on additional needs training for all play staff. With regard to open spaces and active travel we have proposed actions to improve the play value in our parks and to continue to link active travel and play within walking routes. We also intend to continue to work with schools to develop the use of school grounds for play and to provide support in offering a playful experience during break and lunch times.

7. Theme analysis

Population:

Matter A: The number of children in respect of each age range within its area

Matter B: The needs of children from different cultures and backgrounds within its area Matter E: Whether there is a charge for play provision and where there is a charge	
What children have told us: <p>Primary age children were consulted for the PSA with an age range of 5-11. Although all children responded it was apparent that children from age 8+ were more vocal in stating their play needs as well as having more opportunity to be able to play in their neighbourhood. We received a very limited response from children with additional needs compared to those in mainstream. Of the responses we did have half of the children did not play outside of their house or bedroom while the others could but with strict supervision. Reasons given for this is that the children's needs meant they needed a securer environment with appropriate adults.</p> <p>Of the 332 children who responded to the consultation 65% elected to answer the question on ethnicity. 13.8% identified as either Asian or Asian British, Black or Black British, Chinese or Mixed. There were no comments made that children from different cultures or backgrounds did not feel they didn't have their play needs met or understood as a result of their background, however it is not fair to deduce that this was the case as they were not asked this question directly and may not have felt able to comment on this.</p>	
Strengths <p>The council provides opportunities for children's voices to be heard. They are consulted on their play needs both in schools and outside.</p> <p>There are play provisions available for children to access which are free. There is also low-cost sport specific activities that children can access.</p>	
Weaknesses <p>There needs to be further work done on ensuring that younger children can voice their play needs in the same way that older children can. A different process for consulting with children with disabilities and children from different cultures is desirable.</p>	
Opportunities <p>Play Sufficiency Lead has good links with schools and organisations supporting children with additional needs to draw upon their expertise in identifying more robust consultation methods to meet all needs.</p>	
Threats <p>There is limited funding and threats of budget cuts to some departments. Although we do well cross department working this could be a risk down the line</p>	
Places where children play: Matter C: The space where children can play, including open space, and any other space Matter F: Traffic measures that are used to promote access to play Matter I: The extent to which education and local development planning policies take into account the need to enhance play opportunities for children	
What children have told us: <p>Using the playing out survey 40% of children stated that there were most of their favourite places to play in their area. 48% said there were some of their favourite places and only 12% said there were hardly any. Children were asked where their favourite places were to play. A high percentage of children said it was theirs or a friend's garden, a local grassy area or sports pitch or local parks and school playgrounds. Although not excessively low less children said that community</p>	

centres/leisure centres, skate parks or spaces with sand and water came out lower than those stated above. It could be noted that most of these spaces are more adult led and controlled.

Children were asked what adults could do to help them play out more often and the highest suggestions were to find safe ways to crossroads to get about, ask dog owners to pick up dog mess and the help parents understand that it's okay to play out.

Regarding enhancing play opportunities in schools only 5% of children reported that they could play hardly anything they like with an almost even split between being able to play *lots* and *some* of the things they like. In consultation with children the majority said they would like to see more equipment; particularly open-ended items and it came up repeatedly that football was either an issue in as much it stops others from accessing space or that schools are limiting football to avoid negative behaviours.

Strengths

All schools understand the importance of freely chosen play to children's wellbeing and development. Schools have good links to the sport and play team and most are keen to engage with these teams to further enhance children's opportunities for freely chosen play.

Some schools have found ways to balance the concerns noted with footballs, so all children feel their play needs are being met.

The Active Travel team input to all planning applications focused on creating safe, non-vehicle access to any proposed site. At this point play enhancements are also considered for the local community through the allocations of section 106 funding.

Regular monitoring of active travel schemes takes place to look at usage and impact for walking, wheeling and cycling on creating/improving traffic calming and segregated infrastructure. Regarding motorized vehicles, our road safety team also carry out regular speed monitoring work to check compliance.

Weaknesses

Capacity within the Play team makes supporting every school in the authority to develop their breaktimes to be more playful difficult.

There is limited funding available for schools to purchase additional equipment to support play at breaktimes.

There is no play priority signs within the community to allow children to feel they have permissions to play. Capacity to build on this from the previous PSA has not allowed work to be completed on this.

Opportunities

As funding becomes available priority will be given to develop the play team to allow for more capacity. Close partnership working with sports development and community and wellbeing teams offers a solution to support this and there is a willingness to further strengthen this as this team is moving into MonLife. This closer alignment provides opportunities for development.

MonLife Play team have developed strong links with town and community councils. These councils are positive towards providing opportunities for children's play and working with these can allow for more priority focus on play within in the community being more visible.

Threats

Cuts to public spending and council funds will adversely affect further development. There are plans to further develop our parks and open spaces to increase play value and although these have been reviewed and designed and fit into a workplan there is always a risk with building that problems can arise. We will need to treat this as and when it could arise.

Supervised provision: Matter D: Supervised play provision Matter G: Playwork training and workforce development	
What children have told us: The council operates a range of inclusive play provisions which offer rich play environments for the children following the Playwork Principles. These included supervised provision for 1 hour and 55 min which includes the option to use the leisure centre pool to play freely and a packed lunch. Since the last PSA the amount of provision that is available has increased and has become a regular timetabled feature in all holidays providing consistency to residents. There is evidenced feedback from children & families with high satisfaction ratings. We continue to monitor, expand and adapt where needed. Children's voices in these provisions determine how we develop the quality of these provisions. The average uptake percentage across all provisions is 67%. This meets the national average.	
Strengths The appointment of a Play lead since the last PSA has allowed for even more contact with other partners providing Playwork. Work has been completed to provide knowledge of Playwork to partners in a variety of departments whose work has a direct effect on children's play. Sport Development team collaborate alongside the play team promoting Playwork. Ensuring it is incorporated into the outcomes delivered for Sport Wales and Monmouthshire County Council. PDL is a qualified trainer and assessor with high level qualifications in play so is able to deliver training to staff and stakeholders which reduces the cost of training and provides a bigger reach of people.	
Weaknesses Capacity may affect the amount that can be achieved. There is only a Play development lead within the team and sports development officers that can be used to support play tasks, but this is a big remit.	
Opportunities The delivery of play training to more on the ground staff can support the capacity in the longer term.	
Threats Staff retention. A lot of staff who work in holiday provision where our programmes predominantly sit are usually just temporary as they progress to further careers. This could have an effect for consistency across the programmes.	
Policy synergy, engagement, advocacy and information: Matter F: Measures used to promote access to play, including the provision of information, publicity and events Matter G: Training opportunities for the play workforce Matter H: The level of community engagement and participation Matter I: The extent to which other policies of a local authority take into account the need to enhance play opportunities for children	
What children have told us:	

<p>MonLife Play team has been working with MonLife Marketing team to develop a more robust area of the MonLife website. This includes information on what is available for play provision and spaces for play within Monmouthshire. The area also contains information on the importance of play, linking to a variety of information portals that can provide families with advice and guidance on play. It also contains all reporting and updated and historical PSA documents. Social media teams for MonLife also promote available provisions and as part of their “soft content” engagement, promote play importance, rights and guidance. From consultation with parents for the 2025 PSA it was identified that 52% of parents use MonLife/MCC social media and website to access information on opportunities and guidance on play.</p>
<p>Strengths</p> <p>There are good cross department partnerships across the authority which enables play to be a fixture in all agendas. MonLife marketing team work closely with the play team to ensure that play opportunities and play importance is promoted across all platforms. There are good links with schools for the promotion and development of play as well as a means of communication to parents.</p>
<p>Weaknesses</p> <p>Priorities of other policies can run the risk of taking precedence over play.</p>
<p>Opportunities</p> <p>The Councils senior leadership team priorities play within its decision making and strategic direction which can ensure focus across departments.</p>
<p>Threats</p> <p>Changes to staff and departments could set us back in our progress.</p>

Play Sufficiency Assessment Form

As well as establishing a baseline of provision, the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) will enable the following:

- Identification of gaps in information, provision, service delivery and policy implementation
- Support the establishment of evidence to give an indication of distance travelled in relation to play sufficiency
- Highlight potential ways of addressing issues relating to partnership working
- The input and involvement of all partners increasing levels of knowledge and understanding
- A monitoring system which will involve and improve communication between professionals
- The identification of good practice examples
- Increased levels of partnerships in assessing sufficient play opportunities
- The identification of actions for the Securing Play Sufficiency Action Plan, which accompanies the Play Sufficiency Assessment

This template is a technical tool to support a corporate appraisal of the matters that need to be considered as set out in the [Statutory Guidance](#). It is set out in themes which allow the local authority to assess the matters set out in The Play Sufficiency Assessment (Wales) Regulations 2012 and [Statutory Guidance](#):

- Matter A: Population
- Matter B: Providing for diverse needs
- Matter C: Space available for children to play
 - Open spaces
 - Outdoor unstaffed designated play spaces
 - Playing fields
- Matter D: Supervised provision
 - Playwork provision
 - Structured recreational activities
- Matter E: Charges for play provision
- Matter F: Access
 - to space/provision
 - to information; publicity; events
- Matter G: Securing and developing the playwork and the play workforce

- Matter H: Community engagement and participation
- Matter I: Play within all relevant policy and implementation agendas

A guide to completing the template is included in the PSA Toolkit. The template informs a *State of Play* report to the Welsh Government, which will include:

- The local authority's statement: Aims, vision for play in the area
- The methodology for undertaking the PSA
- How resources are maximised for play sufficiency
- How the PSA is monitored
- How the views of children have shaped the PSA
- An analysis of each theme, which identifies strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats

The *State of Play* reports can include examples of actions taken locally to support children's play that the local authority wishes to highlight. A report card template, inspired by play sufficiency research, is included in the Play Sufficiency Assessment Toolkit.

Criteria

This section contains the “matters that need to be taken into account” as set out within the [Statutory Guidance](#).

The criteria column: sets out the data that needs to be available and the extent to which local authorities meet the stated criteria.

The RAG status columns (Previous PSA RAG status and Current PSA RAG status)

Red, Amber, Green (RAG) status is a tool to communicate status quickly and effectively.

Criteria fully met.	Green - Fully met
Criteria partially met.	Amber -Partially met
Criteria not met.	Red - Not met

The evidence to support strengths column: To be used to provide the reason for the chosen criteria status and how the evidence is held.

The shortfall column: To be used to explain the areas in which the local authority does not fully meet the criteria.

What would address the shortfalls? Use this column to highlight potential solutions and/or facilitators.

Additional comments: Use this section to add in anything of relevance that is not covered elsewhere.

Theme: Population

This theme relates to:

Matter A: The number of children in respect of each age range within its area

Matter B: The needs of children from different cultures and backgrounds within its area

Matter E: Whether there is a charge for play provision and where there is a charge

The Play Sufficiency Assessment should provide an overview of population and demographic data of children aged 0-17 used locally to plan for providing opportunities to play.

Criteria to consider:

- The play needs of children of all ages are understood and provided for
- The play needs of children living in areas of deprivation and low income families are understood and provided for
- The play needs of children living in isolated rural areas are understood and provided for
- The play needs of Welsh language speaking children are understood and provided for
- The play needs of ethnic minority children are understood and provided for
- The play needs of Gypsy Traveller children are understood and provided for
- The play needs and support needs of disabled children are understood and provided for
- The play needs and support needs of children with Additional Learning Needs are understood and provided for
- The play needs of girls are understood and provided for

- The play needs of children in emergency or temporary accommodation are understood and provided for
- The play needs of LGBTQ+ children are understood and provided for
- The play needs of asylum seekers and refugees are understood and provided for
- The play needs of care experienced children are understood and provided for
- The play needs of disabled children and children with additional learning needs are understood and provided for
- The play needs of young carers are understood and provided for
- Play projects and providers have access to a range of resources which support inclusion
- There is a well-known and agreed mechanism which is used to identify the need for separate provision for children with Additional Learning Needs
- There is a well-known and agreed mechanism which is used to identify the need for separate provision for disabled children and those with additional support needs
- Premises and spaces used for play provision are provided at no cost or low cost to providers
- The local authority provides grants or subsidies for providers offering opportunities to play
- Subsidised transport for children travelling to provision, which offers opportunities to play, is provided for

Complete the table for ‘population’ using the ‘criteria to consider’ list and ensuring that the following points are covered:

- Provide an overview of population and demographic data used locally to plan for providing opportunities to play
- What has changed in terms of population and demographic trends since the last Play Sufficiency Assessment?
- How has/will the local authority use its population data to plan for sufficient opportunities to play locally?
- How has data been used (or how will the data be used) to address the barriers that children with diverse needs/protected characteristics face in accessing opportunities for playing?
- How is the local authority ensuring that children have access to no or low-cost provision?
- Has the local authority worked with other local authorities on regional projects?
- Have there been challenges? If so, how can these be overcome?
- Have there been successes? If so, please expand
- Actions considered for Play Action Plan

- Actions agreed for Play Action Plan
- Rationale for action prioritisation

To what extent does the local authority meet the criteria?

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	The play needs of children of all ages are understood and provided for			The appointment of Play Development Lead has allowed for more focus to be given to consulting with children. Work has been completed using Play Wales Play sufficiency tool kit for children's consultations. These have been completed in playmaker sessions in schools, young ambassador's workshops and used as guide questions for conversations in focus groups. 332 completed the questionnaire across the authority proving a wide range of ages views. Children are consulted regularly at the regular open access play	It was recognised in reviewing of consultation that more children in the foundation phase needed to be reached. Responses were very heavy for older children and so we need to consider this in future consultations.	Look at a different way to consult with younger children.

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				<p>sessions; family stay and play programs and Food and Fun. Evaluations and fun ratings are completed at each session with options for children to provide what they need in future sessions. Flying start services use regular sessions with families and children to understand the needs of all children under age 5. Children and young people services meet regularly as part of the CCG funding and support team. Outcomes are shared with partners and support where needed from cross services is implemented regularly. All these services ensure there is a good understanding of</p>		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				the play needs of children across the authority.		
	The play needs of children living in areas of deprivation and low income families are understood and provided for			The local authority holds information on children living in areas of deprivation at ward and LSOA level and in the Census 2021 population and household estimates for Wales. We have updated PLASC data (updated March 2025) which shows us where the levels of eFSM are as well as those with additional needs. This information is used with eligibility for Food and Fun provision.	It is understood that there are families who may not be living in areas of deprivation who may still be facing work poverty which can affect the wellbeing of children and young people. All our open access play and stay and play sessions are open to anybody with no stigma around a need to identify those most in need. Due to the nature of funding the food and fun program which supports up to 480 children during the school holidays means that only schools with 16% or higher can access. We work with schools to identify those that are in need and would benefit from the scheme	

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					outside of this eligibility, but we do understand that we may not meet all children who are on a low income based on this percentage eligibility.	
	The play needs of children living in isolated rural areas are understood and provided for			Most supervised play provision takes place in the county's four main settlements and Magor and Undy which has recently been given town status. In most rural communities, children have access to fixed play areas and the majority of these are managed by the county council although some are the responsibility of town and community councils. Pilots of outreach play sessions within these rural areas have taken	It is understood that there are pockets of children in rural areas whose needs are not fully met in comparison to other children, however regular consultations have highlighted that there are appropriate areas for children to access play within their areas.	

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				place over the past three years, but these have not been well attended. The LA has also attempted to use transport to bring children from rural areas to supervised play provisions in the main towns. Again, this was not well attended. We have consulted with children in the rural areas and the consensus found that they felt their play needs were being met within their local area. This was due to access to open spaces, woodland areas and farms which have quality play appeal. most who want to access supervised play provision can travel.		
	The play needs of Welsh language speaking children are understood and provided for			The commitment to providing opportunities to use the Welsh language in the	We have rated this as amber. This is due to there being no exclusively Welsh language	

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				community is a vital part of the council's 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy which aims to contribute towards the Welsh Govt vision of creating a million Welsh speakers by 2050. There are two Welsh schools within the LA and both have after school club in the medium of Welsh. Although there are no fully Welsh speaking holiday provisions provided by the LA play services 50 % of the workforce are either fluent in Welsh or identify as Welsh learners. All provisions are promoted bilingually and for children who want to communicate in Welsh at all our provisions there is a Welsh speaking staff member	holiday provision, however this has been attempted in the past but not been well attended. We actively ensure that all our play provisions are bilingual with a good number of Welsh speaking staff.	

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				available.		
	The play needs of ethnic minority children are understood and provided for			The LA seeks to ensure there is updated data of children from all ethnic minorities. We also have teams who support refugees.	There are no	
	The play needs of Gypsy Traveller children are understood and provided for			Extensive work has been completed by the council to assess and evaluate the needs and locations of Gypsy Travellers. This has included The Gypsy and Traveller Advocacy Group, Travelling Ahead, who have worked with Council Officers over many months, running two training sessions for Elected Members to raise awareness of Gypsy and Traveller's needs. As of January 2025, there are 4 children attending schools in Gilwern	Consultation did not take place in the travelling community although it was completed in the schools that they attend. As a whole the council has good ongoing working connections with the community but an action from this PSA is to join those officers in this capacity with the play team to further assess any needs that the play team could support with	

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				and Usk.		
	The play needs and support needs of disabled children are understood and provided for			<p>There is 1:2:1 support for disabled children to attend After School Clubs and Holiday Clubs. This is managed by the Early years and childcare team to support with paid childcare.</p> <p>The council commissions Action for Children to operate out of school's clubs and holiday provision across each holiday for children with disabilities (CWD) Since 2022 MonLife Play team, Children's disabilities team and action for children have worked together to establish a wider offer for all children. This includes holiday provision operating from the same premises to allow</p>	<p>Appropriately trained and qualified staff to support disabled children is difficult to find and retain. There is limited funding to support the need for the extra staff that is needed to support all the children's needs</p>	<p>It is important that this is consistently monitored, and we always look for improvements. Seeking additional funding when and if it becomes available,</p>

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				families to access provision for the children they have who need additional support as well as children they have that can access the more mainstream provision. This has allowed consistency for families. It also offers opportunity for integration between the two provisions to allow those with additional needs to access play provisions with the support of their 1:1. Work has also been completed to provide water play for those with disabilities across all leisure centers throughout the holidays. Since the last PSA there has been an increase in the number of opportunities is available for (CWD)		

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				The council also works closely with the QB Project to provide additional family sessions for children with more complex needs. When improvements have been made to the Council 's fixed play areas, the proportion of accessible items of equipment has increased both in overall terms and on a number of the individual sites that have been upgraded.		
	The play needs of girls are understood and provided for	N/A		Within our sports development team an area of work focuses on Women and Girls- "Provide wellbeing opportunities for women and girls to engage in a physically active	There is no direct consultation with girls on their play needs although they are consulted within whole play consultations	

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				lifestyle.” Within this remit girls are consulted with regularly with actions such as the development of specific classes to meet their needs. Although this is sport and physical activity focused the lead for this is playwork trained and able to sign post if there are play needs identified		
	The play needs of children in emergency or temporary accommodation are understood and provided for	N/A		There are links between the play team and the social services team. Funded places for our TMG program have been regularly provided to the social services team to issue to those in need.	Although links exist no work has been done to directly assess the play needs of those in emergency or temporary accommodation.	The lead for social work will be asked to become a member of the play sufficiency group to allow for awareness across the teams to become a focus
	The play needs of LGBTQ+ children are understood and provided for			The Youth Service (MYS) staff are trained in aspects of LGBTQ+ and they ensure that young		

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				<p>people from this community have access to provision and support where required. There is an LGBT+ Group operating in four locations in each of the four main town centres, these operate as a mixed approach between support and social action. Following previous very successful events in 2018 and 2019 the groups are planning a further Youth Pride event and there are plans for another, larger event to promote equality and inclusivity in summer 2023, which will be organised as a coalition between MYS and young people from the LGBT+</p>		

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				community.		
	The play needs of asylum seekers and refugees are understood and provided for	N/A		<p>Beginning March 2022, the council provided a play development worker on site at the hotel with the young people initially and then through the holiday periods once the young people were enrolled into school.</p> <p>Subsidised leisure centre access and playschemes were provided as well as a few local football clubs who invited the young people to play.</p> <p>Youth service provision was offered 5 evenings a week from Innovation House.</p> <p>Schools have supported greatly with transition for children and young people with refugee</p>	There is no specific funding to have a specific pro-active program in place incase of the event of mass refugees but the council access those that do become available as the need arises	The Communities and wellbeing team continue to be the point of contact to support those in need of support and will liaise with the Play Development need if it is identified that support is needed

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				status. These children continue to be signposted to the Food and Fun program		
	The play needs of care experienced children are understood and provided for	N/A		There are links between the play team and the social services team. Funded places for our TMG program have been regularly provided to the social services team to issue to those in need.	Although links exist no work has been done to directly assess the play needs of those in care.	The lead for social work will be asked to become a member of the play sufficiency group to allow for awareness across the teams to become a focus
	The play needs of young carers are understood and provided for			Monmouthshire has a Carers Strategy and there is a young carers provision operating in the county delivered by Crossroads Care Southeast Wales. There is also regular contact between the Young Carers Group and the Youth Service		

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	Play projects and providers have access to a range of resources which support inclusion			Play projects run by the Council have access to resources that support inclusion. Inclusion packs Including sensory equipment is available as part of a kit library that can be shared with voluntary organisations and projects supporting inclusivity. Monmouth leisure center has had a refurbishment to its soft play center to include more inclusive and sensory equipment. Over the past three years there has been an increase in the number of resources purchased to support inclusivity. MonLife Play service has provided wall mounted equipment, soft furnishings and inclusive sensory	We have rated this amber even though there is a good range of resources and developments since the last PSA. However, we are continuing to develop this and work with sport development team to enhance their kit library to include play equipment including inclusive resources.	We are including into our action plan that we will further develop our kit library and have robust procedures in place to ensure inventory and replenishments.

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				activities to Monmouth, Caldicot and Chepstow leisure center to be fixed within their cafes/public sitting areas for children to participate in play while waiting and or using cafe areas with parents.		
	There is a well-known and agreed mechanism which is used to identify the need for separate provision for children with Additional Learning Needs			The Council's policy and practice is to support inclusive provision wherever possible. In response to requests from families with diverse needs an action from the previous PSA 2022 was to introduce-disabled only sessions. The Children With Disabilities Team have been commissioning these and through CCG funding MonLife Play team are contributing to there being an increase to the		

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				<p>number of sessions available.</p> <p>Action for Children (AFC) are commissioned to run these sessions with an aim of these sessions to build confidence and resilience so that these children can transition into mainstream provision.</p> <p>There has been exceptional growth in this over the past three years. These sessions now operate alongside MonLife play provisions where it makes it possible for partnership working to integrate children into the mainstream provision and to support in enhancing the disabilities provision.</p>		

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	Premises and spaces used for play provision are provided at no cost or low cost to providers			The council does not provide indoor premises free of charge but it does provide outdoor space free of charge for play provision.		This would not be able to be changed as the need for a hire charge supports keeping the buildings operating. There is no additional funding to provide free facilities but costs to play providers are kept low and can be covered using the Playworks Holiday Project funding.
	The local authority provides grants or subsidies for providers offering opportunities to play			Monmouthshire Early Years provides an out of school childcare grant for additional support at holiday clubs and after school clubs in the county. There is a limited budget available for this and it is only available to children		

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				with additional needs. Also, the grant funds a 1:1 worker but does not subsidise the place for the child. Food and Fun in the summer holidays provides grant funding for opportunities to play. The funding is for an education program, but planning ensures it includes opportunities for freely chosen play. However, this is also a targeted provision and only children attending eligible schools or identified as in need through schools and social services can attend		
	Subsidised transport for children travelling to provision, which offers opportunities to play, is provided for			This is currently not provided; however, this is something that has been provided for in the last PSA and uptake for the		We will continue to monitor the need for this provision and act accordingly were reasonably practical.

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				service was not high enough to justify sustainability.		

*(Type in green, amber or red)

Population: Additional comments

A variety of data assessment tools are used to support in the planning of play assessments and provisions. These include the 2021 census and Data Cymru Dashboard, this allows us to view each ward in Monmouthshire by a number of themes such as people, transport, housing, and skills & employment. The Council has created a Wellbeing assessment, The assessment has been produced following a range of engagement and draws on a wide range of data, reports, and academic studies to develop an evidence base to help us understand well-being in our county. Updated PLASC data shows us the levels of eligible free school meals in schools to allow us knowledge of low income and areas of deprivation.

Monmouthshire is geographically large compared to many local authority areas in Wales. It is semi-rural in nature and is often perceived as leafy and affluent. The county covers an area of approximately 880 square kilometres, with an estimated population of 95,164. There is a higher-than-average proportion of older people in the county which is forecast to rise further. In contrast, the number of under 18s is forecast to decline by 2033.

As a predominantly rural county, with 53% of the total population living in wards defined as being in urban areas the rurality of our county needs to be considered when planning for play. Historically we have funded transport to allow those in rural areas to be transported into the main towns to access supervised play provision; however, the uptake of this was limited and could not be sustained. We provided outreach stay and play sessions in these rural areas but again this was not well attended. During consultation periods for the current Play Sufficiency focus groups were held with children within rural schools. It was voiced by the children that due to the environment of their locality it allows for quality play and meets their needs. Approximately 70% of children in rural schools stated they play and hang out with their friends most days. The percentage of children across Monmouthshire as whole that said they play and hang out most days was 42%. Trellech primary school, a rural school has opened the school grounds for play after school once a week for children to stay behind with those collecting to continue playing.

This has been positively received, and it is highlighted in the action plan that MonLife Play will continue to work with and encourage further schools in rural areas to offer this as an option for families.

Given Monmouthshire's location in the South-East corner of Wales, as well as its shared border with England, there is a general perception that Welsh language use is low. However, the 2011 Census showed that Monmouthshire was one of only two local authorities in Wales to see a rise in Welsh language speakers over the previous decade, from 9.7% to 9.9%. A likely factor in this rise is the growth of the two Welsh-medium primary schools, based at either end of the county: Ysgol Gymraeg y Fenni in Abergavenny, and Ysgol Y Ffin in Caldicot. This is recognised and the authority continues to develop its Welsh Language offer. At recent recruitment for summer holiday play assistant, it was stated as desirable for candidates to be Welsh speaking. Of the 208 applicants who applied 50% stated they were either fluent in Welsh or were Welsh learners. This will allow for all holiday provisions to have a high level of Welsh speaking staff and allows us to confidently say that we provide bilingual provision throughout the authority.

As a local authority we pride ourselves on our cross departmental collaboration. MonLife Play team, Children's Disabilities team and schools with SEN units work closely to ensure children can access appropriate provisions. The sport and community team provides services for the re-engage team where they work with children and education services to provide provision and support to children who struggle to access school. It is felt that this collaboration allows for good knowledge and opportunity to continually assess the play needs and act accordingly. During the consultation process for the PSA Action for Children, the Children's disabilities teams and SEN schools all worked to consult with their children using the consultation surveys. Although there were responses from these children, they were very limited, and it can't be said that we reached an appropriate amount of these children to say we heard their voice. It is felt that we need to develop a different approach to consultation in the future to ensure consistency with this demographic. This will be an action from the PSA.

Since the last PSA the councils play provisions has developed in quantity and consistency. Using a mixture of funding pots to ensure there is a mix of supervised provision, family provision and inclusive provision. This continues to grow and is an action of this PSA to continue to grow this program. All of these are free at the point of access.

Theme: Places where children play

This theme relates to:

Matter C: The space where children can play, including open space, and any other space

Matter F: Traffic measures that are used to promote access to play

Matter I: The extent to which education and local development planning policies take into account the need to enhance play opportunities for children

Criteria to consider:

- An up-to-date record of all designated play space, as described in the [Statutory Guidance](#), is kept
- Designated play areas and playgrounds are assessed for play value and potential to increase in play use
- Public spaces are assessed for play value and potential to increase in play use, as set out in the [Statutory Guidance](#)
- An Open Space Assessment (OSA) that maps areas that are used, or might be used for playing as listed in the [Statutory Guidance](#), has been undertaken
- Open Space Standards in accordance with the advice and requirements of [Planning Policy Wales](#), have been developed
- Green spaces are assessed for play value and potential to increase in play
- Neighbourhood spaces are assessed for play value and potential to increase play
- Access audits are undertaken at all designated play spaces and proposals are implemented to improve access and safety
- A new fixed play provision standard has been developed and agreed
- Brownfield sites owned by the local authority are assessed for the potential for the site to be reclaimed to provide for children's play
- The Smoke-free Premises and Vehicles (Wales) Regulations 2020 that require playgrounds in Wales to be smoke-free, are adhered to
- 'No ball games', or similar signs have been removed, to encourage more children playing in the community
- Play Priority Signs or similar, have been erected to encourage more children playing in the community
- A recognition of the importance of playing fields to children's play is included when any disposal decisions are made
- Children and their families are included in any consultations regarding decisions to dispose of playing fields
- Access audits for all settings, as described in the [Statutory Guidance](#), are undertaken

- Guidance around creating *accessible* play space is referred to when refurbishing or developing new playgrounds
- Partners collaborate to identify a mechanism for assessing the impact of speed reduction and other road safety measures on the opportunity for children to play outside in their communities
- There is a plan to reduce the negative effect of busy roads and junctions through the introduction of speed reduction measures and provision of safe crossing points/routes for pedestrians and cyclists
- There is a plan(s) to improve walking and cycle access to parks, outdoor play facilities and local leisure centres from residential areas. To be included on the Active Travel Network Maps
- Road safety grants and/or other funding is used to provide pedestrian safety training and cycling training for children
- There is an accessible and well-promoted way of arranging temporary road closures, to support more children to play outside their homes
- [Active Travel Act guidance](#) is used when considering new developments and changes to the highway network/urban realm to ensure that safe and convenient routes for walking, wheeling and cycling are incorporated from the start
- Child pedestrian road accident casualty data is used to inform the location and design of interventions which help children get around independently in their communities
- Active Travel Fund, Safe Routes in Communities and Road Safety grants and/or other funding is used to support access to opportunities to play
- The Local Development Plan recognises and addresses the outdoor play needs of children. An example of this is school street schemes which are funded through the [Safe Routes in Communities Grant](#). They create opportunities for play at the start and end of the school day
- Schools ensure that children are provided with a rich play environment for breaks during the school day
- Schools provide play opportunities during out of teaching hours
- Schools provide access to school grounds for playing out of school times
- Guidance to ensure schools understand and ensure that regular outdoor play is not curtailed, is provided
- The importance of play is considered as part of the local delivery of the [Community Focused Schools](#) initiative
- The importance of play is considered as part of the local delivery of the [Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme](#)
- The Health and Safety policies explicitly recognise the value of children being able to experience risk and challenge
- The Health and Safety policies and procedures incorporate a benefit-risk approach to health and safety assessments as recommended by ISO, the International Organization for Standardization
- The local authority offers the provision of insurance through the local authority scheme, to all third sector play providers and community councils

Complete the table for 'places where children play' using the 'criteria to consider' list and ensuring the following points are covered:

- What children have told us about the places where they play
- Please highlight successes of collaboration across policy areas to improve access to opportunities for playing
- Have there been challenges?
- How can these be overcome?
- Actions considered for Play Action Plan
- Actions agreed for Play Action Plan
- Rationale for action prioritisation

To what extent does the local authority meet the criteria?

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	An up-to-date record of all designated play space, as described in the Statutory Guidance , is kept			The council keeps an up to date record of all designated play spaces in its ownership and is aware of those that are not in its ownership. We also maintain a number of sites not in council ownership.	Some sites used as designated play spaces are in the ownership of other parties.	
	Designated play areas and playgrounds are assessed for play value and potential to increase in play use			A further Audit was completed in June 2024. 6 of the 11 play areas assessed were	It has been identified that there are a lot of parks with a low play value. Although	We will be reassessing parks this financial year

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				also assessed in 2019 and improvements since the last audit have shown an increase in the value of all 6 of these place spaces. When The competition of the Castle Dell works in Caldicot are completed, we will have a destination play area with a play value ranked as "good" in each of the five main towns	work has been completed to enhance 6 parks to have a destination park in all 6 main towns there are still a lot of parks that fall short particularly in areas of deprivation. We have identified Chepstow is a high priority for investment. Castle Dell has been completed but this is in the main town, and this is too far from the Bulwark side of town which is in higher deprivation. There is a need to develop Bulwark park but also Piggies hill including the skatepark. This has been identified by children and young people. It is also noted that since the decommissioning of school transport	for play value. It is noted that some will increase from work that has been completed since the last assessment. We will be using capital funding to develop Chepstow play areas this financial year

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					this area has become an access for children walking to school. Investment here would greater benefit communities as a whole	
	Public spaces are assessed for play value and potential to increase in play use, as set out in the Statutory Guidance			Audits have been carried out at most but not all sites. A lot of work on the play requirements for the new Local Development Plan, with specific proposals for the 18 sites are currently contained in the consultation document.		
	An Open Space Assessment (OSA) that maps areas that are used, or might be used for playing as listed in the Statutory Guidance , has been undertaken			As part of the preparation of the replacement local development plan (RLDP) for Monmouthshire, an updated OSA has been prepared, which identifies standards of public		

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				open space and recreation, including fixed play, designated play space and casual play space.		
	Open Space Standards in accordance with the advice and requirements of Planning Policy Wales , have been developed			The Monmouthshire Greenspace Study from 2010 has been updated as part of the preparations for the Monmouthshire RLDP		
	Green spaces are assessed for play value and potential to increase in play			Access audits have taken place at most sites and the audits are reviewed when an changes or improvements are made on an ongoing basis	There are a number of open spaces that are in the ownership or control of some of the town and community councils in Monmouthshire and they are responsible for their own access audits.	
	Neighbourhood spaces are assessed for play value and potential to increase play			The Local Authority has adopted the Fields in Trust Six Acre Standard in relation to parks and open spaces but has developed		There is a move away from providing LAPs (local areas for play), as they offer very limited play value.

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				its own categorisation for fixed play provision.		Instead, we are seeking to provide, both on existing sites and in new developments, a number of new LEAPs (local equipped areas for play) which offer better standards of play value – and, in some locations, NEAPs (neighbourhood equipped play areas).
	Access audits are undertaken at all designated play spaces and proposals are implemented to improve access and safety			Since the original independent play value assessment of all local authority play areas in 2019 a number of sites have been substantially improved, and we re-assess those sites to measure the improvements in play value.		These audits are helpful in identifying areas where action may be necessary in the future, as and when funding permits.

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	A new fixed play provision standard has been developed and agreed			<p>We have adopted the Fields in Trust Six Acre Standard in relation to play provision and use this as guidance. However, we now concentrate on installing LEAPs (Local Equipped Area for Play) and NEAPS (Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play) rather than LAPs (Local Areas for Play) due to the fact that traditional LAPs offer limited play value.</p> <p>Also, in the main urban centres (the six Town Council areas), we try to ensure that at least one of the NEAPs is regarded as a destination play area (i.e. a play area that is likely to attract families and children from a</p>		

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				wider geographical area).		
	Brownfield sites owned by the local authority are assessed for the potential for the site to be reclaimed to provide for children's play				We do not assess brownfield sites for their play potential, however the number of such sites in council ownership is limited.	
	The Smoke-free Premises and Vehicles (Wales) Regulations 2020 that require playgrounds in Wales to be smoke-free, are adhered to			Smoke free signage, in the designated format, has been installed on all fixed play sites in council ownership. Guidance has also been given to those Town & Community Councils that manage their own playgrounds.		
	'No ball games', or similar signs have been removed, to encourage more children playing in the community			The council has removed the majority of "no ball games" signs but a small number	A small number of such signs exist but these are mainly on sites	

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				still exist in some areas, usually in areas with a high concentration of social housing	not in council ownership	
	Play Priority Signs or similar, have been erected to encourage more children playing in the community				No play priority or similar signs have been erected	
	A recognition of the importance of playing fields to children's play is included when any disposal decisions are made			The council recognises the importance of children's play where disposal decisions are made – this is also picked up in Future Generations Evaluations and Equality Impact Assessments		
	Children and their families are included in any consultations regarding decisions to dispose of playing fields			There have been very few cases of the council disposing of playing fields. When this took place in Caldicot		

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				and Govilon, the views of families were sought as part of the consultation process. The council would continue to include this in their consultation process if this became the case in the future.		
	Access audits for all settings, as described in the Statutory Guidance , are undertaken			Active Travel mapping looks at access to a range of destinations which will include access to play spaces. This work is uploaded to councils GIS system and data map Wales to look at improving access to AT standards.	Audits do not extend to all sites that are in the ownership of, or managed by other bodies such as Town & Community Councils	
	Guidance around creating <i>accessible</i> play space is referred to when refurbishing or developing new playgrounds			The council does take into account guidance on accessibility when refurbishing		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				or developing new playgrounds and increases the amount of accessible equipment when existing playgrounds are upgraded		
	Partners collaborate to identify a mechanism for assessing the impact of speed reduction and other road safety measures on the opportunity for children to play outside in their communities			Regular monitoring of active travel schemes takes place to look at usage and impact for walking, wheeling and cycling on creating/improving traffic calming and segregated infrastructure. Regarding motorised vehicles, our road safety team also carry out regular speed monitoring work to check compliance.		Continue to monitor active travel, travel to school and modal share data, through Drakewell in-house data dashboard, PHW Travel to School survey and other specific user group qualitative and quantitative data gathering, as a tool to assess the effectiveness of Active Travel and road safety interventions.

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	There is a plan to reduce the negative effect of busy roads and junctions through the introduction of speed reduction measures and provision of safe crossing points/routes for pedestrians and cyclists			Through core AT funds, the team run a series of large strategic schemes and smaller quick win interventions to support a cohesive network to facilitate walking and wheeling. Alongside the infrastructure improvements, AT funding supports behavior change and promotional activities to raise the visibility of active travel and convert short car trips into active travel journeys, to reduce car use and increase driver awareness.		
	There is a plan(s) to improve walking and cycle access to parks, outdoor play facilities and local leisure centres from residential areas. To be included on the Active Travel Network Maps			Monmouthshire County Council's Active Travel Strategy focuses on journeys of three miles or less. This means making active travel the first natural choice		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				for local journeys by improving walking and cycling infrastructure to connect people to key destinations within communities.		
	Road safety grants and/or other funding is used to provide pedestrian safety training and cycling training for children			Road Safety Grants are used to deliver Cycle Training via an external company who follow the National Standards scheme. Welsh Government Funding has been received to deliver Level 1 and Level 2 funding to 4 schools in Monmouthshire in 25/26, with Level 1 (on yard) training, being offered to every other primary school, delivered by the RSO. A		

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				<p>six week child pedestrian training programme is offered to all schools in the county to enhance the knowledge and understanding of children in years 1 and 2 around being safe at the roadside and how to cross safely. Active travel workshops are offered to the foundation phase within schools in Monmouthshire. These include "scoot2school" that teaches children how to share footways, whilst underpinning key road safety messages. "Cool kids</p>		

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				wear lids” teaches children the importance of wearing a helmet when using bikes, scooters and skateboards, etc. School transition training is offered to year 6 pupils and is an interactive workshop, highlighting the key road safety issues to this age group, as well as discussions around active travel and their new comprehensive school.		
	There is an accessible and well-promoted way of arranging temporary road closures, to support more children to play outside their homes			MCC have previously delivered playing out pilot and have an agreed process		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				with the road safety management team how to implement within the community. Wider promotion of this through the community network team and play service can be focused on linked to increased marketing of play provision.		
	Active Travel Act guidance is used when considering new developments and changes to the highway network/urban realm to ensure that safe and convenient routes for walking, wheeling and cycling are incorporated from the start			AT refer to the Manual for Streets, ATAG and Planning Policy Wales when commenting on planning applications to push for high quality accessible routes and facilities in communities. All projects are designed in accordance with the AT (Wales) Act 2013 and to national AT design guidance standards. In		

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				financial year 23/24 MCC was allocated the highest funding in Wales based on the work being developed (7.49 million).		
	Child pedestrian road accident casualty data is used to inform the location and design of interventions which help children get around independently in their communities			AT network maps have been informed on a data led approach and consultation. Any projects which progress through AT are done in line with the WeITAG process to ensure community input and options appraisal at each stage. Our Road safety team monitor the accident and casualty data.		
	Active Travel Fund, Safe Routes in Communities and Road Safety grants and/or other funding is used to support access to opportunities to play			The AT team input to all planning applications focused on creating safe, non-vehicle access to any proposed site. At this point play		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				enhancements are also considered for the local community through the allocations of section 106 funding.		
	The Local Development Plan recognises and addresses the outdoor play needs of children. An example of this is school street schemes which are funded through the Safe Routes in Communities Grant . They create opportunities for play at the start and end of the school day			The adopted LDP contains a policy requiring the provision of open space and play provision in accordance with the Council's adopted standards. The adopted Green Infrastructure (GI) Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) recognises the need to increase both formal and informal play opportunities as a distinct benefit and a key design consideration. A more coordinated approach in responding to pre-application enquiries and to	Funding to repair weather damage and wear and tear to play spaces and equipment has been identified across some schools	Further collaboration with the LA play team to support schools in further developing play times

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				submitted planning applications has been implemented. This encapsulates comments relating to green infrastructure, ecology & biodiversity, play & recreation, trees, landscape & street services		
	Schools ensure that children are provided with a rich play environment for breaks during the school day			All schools within the authority have developed their outdoor space to encourage play. All schools have a mixture of areas including yards and field areas. All schools were asked to provide details of opportunities to report with the PSA. Over 50 % of schools responded and it was evident that all schools have climbing equipment, game markings, trails,		

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				quiet and sensory areas, wooden equipment and tires with children having access to play equipment. All schools are involved in the playmaker and young ambassador program. Children part of these programs play an important role in advocating for quality play opportunities at break and lunch time. Children have attended workshops on how to deliver play activities to others and most schools reported that these children are implementing this within thier schools. Trellech primary school took part in a pilot project to train LSA's in playwork. As a result of this they		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				have further developed break times to include a play pod where children can access loose parts. It has been reported that this has improved behavior at breaktimes, and children are engaging more. There are plans in place to offer this support to further schools.		
	Schools provide play opportunities during out of teaching hours			All schools hold a plethora of extracurricular activities that children can choose to participate in. Alls schools offer the EG breakfast clubs where they also offer opportunities to play and provide play equipment. 12 schools provide the school grounds for out of school childcare where		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				provision is run using the playwork principles. In 23/24 2 schools were supported to provide the school grounds for stay and play afterschool with support from Play Wales.		
	Schools provide access to school grounds for playing out of school times			Most schools provide school grounds to accommodate supervised play and childcare provisions. 2 schools allow the grounds to be used for family stay and play sessions at the end of the school day. Outside of these, schools close the school grounds, so they are not accessible to children outside of school. It is reported that the reasons for this is security and risk to	The security and risk to property damage prevents schools from opening the grounds for freely accessible use	Play development lead will continue to work with schools to develop the use of school grounds for play utilising the stay and play offer piloted and supported by Play Wales, Community focused schools and the Play Development team.

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				damage of property		
	Guidance to ensure schools understand and ensure that regular outdoor play is not curtailed, is provided					
	The importance of play is considered as part of the local delivery of the Community Focused Schools initiative					
	The importance of play is considered as part of the local delivery of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme					
	The Health and Safety policies explicitly recognise the value of children being able to experience risk and challenge			This is not recognised in the main health and safety policy but is covered in the Trips and Visits policy under "hazardous pursuits" and "adventurous activities".		
	The Health and Safety policies and procedures incorporate a benefit-risk approach to health and safety assessments as recommended by ISO,			The council works & operates in line with the All Wales Guidance for Educational		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	the International Organization for Standardization			Visits - a safety guide for learning outside the classroom, which embraces the HSE principles of sensible risk Management. MonLife's open access play services follow policies in line with CIW and therefor includes RBA		
	The local authority offers the provision of insurance through the local authority scheme, to all third sector play providers and community councils			The council does not offer the provision of insurance through its own scheme and can see difficulties in doing so, particularly the transfer of legal liabilities.		

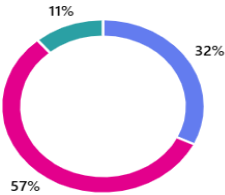
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Places where children play: Additional comments

Consultation has taken place across the local authority to gauge how children feel about their access and spaces to play. Across an online questionnaire, attendance at all schools during playmaker sessions, young ambassador's events and focus groups in schools we were able to gain 332 responses from children aged 5-11. When asked about their favourite things to play and if they can play these things in their neighbourhood 40% said they could do most of their favourite things, 48% said they could do some of their favourite things while only 12% said they could do none of their favourite things. When children were asked, what grown-ups can do to help them play out more there were two suggestions that came out the most- Find safer ways to cross the roads to go out/get around" and "help my parents understand that it's okay to play and hang out" Children were asked about their neighbourhood:

In your neighbourhood, which of these is true?

There are lots of my favourite places to play or hang out	107
There are some of my favourite places to play or hang out	188
There are hardly any of my favourite places to play or hang out	37



Children were consulted on the quality of their play opportunities at lunch and breaktimes in school. 49% of the children asked said they could play most of the things they like in school break times with only 5% stating they couldn't play any of the things they like. All schools within the authority have developed their outdoor space to encourage play with all schools having access to large fields and play yards. 50% of schools responded to provide detail for the PSA and it was evident that most of the schools have opportunity for climbing, physical play, natural play, quiet areas and a variety of equipment for children to access. Schools are very understanding of the importance of freely chosen play and provide for this as much as possible. In consultation with children the majority said they would like to see more equipment; particularly open-ended items and it came up repeatedly that football was either an issue in as much it stops others from accessing space or that schools are limiting football to avoid negative behaviours. Some schools have found ways to balance this need, so all children feel their play needs are being met.

All schools provide opportunities for extracurricular activities in a range of interests with 12 schools providing their premises for after school childcare operating with the ethos of the Playwork Principles. 2 schools have implemented stay and play after school allowing use of the school grounds for play after school hours.

Audits for play value and potential to increase play use have been completed across all parks in the council's ownership. 6 out of 11 parks have been reassessed in 2024 and all have increased in value to be rated as good. These have been improved because of information gained through previous assessments. Castle Park playground in Caldicot is near completion and once this is complete there will be a destination play area with a play value ranked as "good" in each of the five main towns.

Theme: Supervised provision

This theme relates to:

Matter D: Supervised play provision

Matter G: Playwork training and workforce development

Criteria to consider:

- An up-to-date record of all supervised playwork provision, as described in the [Statutory Guidance](#), is kept
- Playwork provision offered by the local authority provides a rich play environment, as described in the [Statutory Guidance](#)
- The local authority ensures that partners offering playwork provision are supported to offer rich play environments, as described in the [Statutory Guidance](#)
- Staffed playwork provision that the local authority provides meets the regulatory requirements and the Welsh Government's [National Minimum Standards \(NMS\) for regulated childcare](#) for children up to the age of 12 years
- Staffed playwork provision that the local authority funds meets the regulatory requirements and [NMS](#)
- Staffed playwork provision that the local authority's partners provide meets the regulatory requirements and [NMS](#)
- Staffed playwork provision that is not registered under the Child Minding and Day Care Regulations is supported to ensure staff suitability and quality of opportunities for children to play
- Staffed playwork provision across the local authority works to a recognised quality assurance programme
- Settings assessed as part of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessments (CSAs) have been assessed in respect of the quality of play opportunities they provide and offer
- Local authority sport, physical activity, and active recreation plans are contributing to increasing access to play and recreational activities.
- The sports agenda contributes to the provision of sufficient recreational activities for children
- The cultural and arts agenda contributes to the provision of sufficient recreational activities for children.
- The playwork workforce in regulated provision is supported to achieve the qualification level required by the Welsh Government's [National Minimum Standards \(NMS\) for regulated childcare](#) for children up to the age of 12 years
- The playwork workforce in unregistered provision has access to training and qualifications in playwork
- The Local authority has a staff development budget ring fenced for play, including playwork

- There is a comprehensive range of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities available for playworkers in the area
- Playwork is included within local Workforce Development strategies
- Family support initiatives provide up to date information and support for parents to enable them to support their children to play
- The local implementation of the Families First programme recognises the importance of play and contributes to the provision of opportunities to play
- Early years and Flying Start plans and services recognise the importance of play and contribute to the provision of rich opportunities to play for younger children

Complete the table for ‘supervised provision’ using the ‘criteria to consider’ list and ensuring the following points are covered:

- What is the organisational structure of play policy and play sufficiency in the local authority? Who manages the play policy area of work? Who is responsible for workforce development?

To what extent does the local authority meet the criteria?

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
D1	The Local Authority keeps an up to date record of all supervised playwork provision as described in the Statutory Guidance			Up to date records of supervised play settings are kept by the Family Information Service which provides the initial access portal to this information for families and their children. This database holds	This area has improved since play has been repositioned into its own team. As a result, there is more focus on ensuring this information is up to date. It is difficult to be	

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LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				information on open access play and childcare that provide sessions using the Playwork ethos. MonLife co-ordinates and manages council open access play across the authority. This is held centrally within MonLife and shared with the family information service, schools and other stakeholders before each holiday. A working group on provisions for children with diverse needs consisting of stakeholder groups and MonLife Play Development lead meet regularly and share information on what provision is available and this is shared and held by each stakeholder.	100% accurate all the time due to any ongoing changes but links are stronger to monitor this	
D2	The Local Authority offers playwork provision which offers a rich play environment as described in the Statutory Guidance			The council operates a range of inclusive play provisions which offer rich play environments for	Although this has greatly improved since the repositioning of play in the LA	

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				the children following the Playwork Principles. Since the last PSA the amount of provision that is available has increased and has become a regular timetabled feature in all holidays providing consistency to residents. There is evidenced feedback from children & families with high satisfaction ratings. We continue to monitor, expand and adapt where needed. Children's voices in these provisions determine how we develop the quality of these provisions.	there is an ongoing need to monitor and increase provision where need is identified. The increase to provision would need a larger workforce which at present is still being developed. It is also funding dependant.	
D3	The Local Authority ensures that partners offering playwork provision are supported to offer rich play environments as described in the Statutory Guidance			The appointment of a Play lead since the last PSA has allowed for even more contact with other partners providing Playwork. Work has been completed to provide knowledge of playwork to partners in a variety of departments		

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				whose work has a direct effect on children's play. Sport Development team collaborate alongside the play team promoting playwork. Ensuring it is incorporated into the outcomes delivered for Sport Wales and Monmouthshire County Council. This has been recognised as sector leading by Welsh Government and other partners.		
	Staffed playwork provision that the Local Authority provides meets the regulatory requirements and National Minimum Standards			The open access schemes that we operate are not required to be registered with the CIW but they do meet the regulatory requirements and the national minimum standards. The Play Development lead is highly experienced in CIW processes and regulations and ensures that policies, safeguarding and		

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				registration procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure they meet the national minimum standards.		
	Staffed playwork provision that the Local Authority's partners provide meets the regulatory requirements and National Minimum Standards			The council works with Action for Children, with the Quest Busters programme and with other partners to deliver playwork provision that meets the regulatory requirements and the national minimum standards		
	Staffed playwork provision across the Local Authority works to a recognised quality assurance program			The Play Development lead has been developing the provisions provided by the local authority since taken up the role in 2023. They have been working to develop the consistency of the provisions by developing a regular workforce at each provision where focused		

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				training is provided. Using observations and feedback from children they have purchased resources and changed planning processes to improve quality. In 2024 a Play Quality Audit - (First Claims) was used as a baseline assessment to all provisions and this also informed improvements including the implementation of use of the swimming pools for play across 3 of the sites. This audit will be completed again in 2025 by the site leads who will take ownership of the development plan with support from the Play Development lead		
	The Local Authority prioritises quality issues when engaging with/ commissioning the private sector to deliver recreational activities for children.			The council works with third sector partners to deliver activities for children and in those cases		

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				<p>where it does quality issues are Prioritised. The council commissions Action for Children (AFC) to provide holiday play provision for children identified through the disabilities team as having additional needs. In these cases, the environment that AFC can provide is better suited to the children's needs. The relationship between the operational team of AFC has developed exponentially over the past 2 years. Both councils led provisions and AFC provisions now operate alongside each other at most venues to allow for consistency for the whole family who may have a need for both provisions. We also work together on planning where the</p>		

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				council can support in enhancements and where accessible integrate the children with support from ACF staff into council led provisions. This has enhanced the quality for both provisions.		
	Local authority sport, physical activity, and active recreation plans are contributing to increasing free play and recreational activities			<p>Monmouthshire provide and collaborate with partners to provide free, enriching activities for children and young people. The following programmes are delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parkruns • Free Swimming Initiative (targeted and open splash) • Positive Futures • Active Play • Stay and Play • Food and Fun • Playmaker award • Ambassador programme 		

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subsidised memberships <p>Through these programmes they are providing free opportunities to participate in sport, play, arts and crafts activities. These contribute to children and young people building their confidence, skills, friendships and connection with the community.</p> <p>LA's play duties sit within the sport and community team and as such there is sector leading collaboration to ensure that play features heavily within sports agendas.</p>		
	The sports agenda contributes to the provision of sufficient recreational activities for children			Monmouthshire is committed to creating a wealth of sporting opportunities for children and young people. The programmes are underpinned by frameworks		

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				<p>provided by Education, Government, National Governing Bodies and Sport Wales.</p> <p>These opportunities are delivered through the following pillars of work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Education • Health and Wellbeing • Workforce • EDI • Community <p>Through these pillars of work, opportunities are delivered through key programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Festivals • Sport specific sessions • Leadership activities • Targeted education provision • Diversionary activities • Adaptive sessions • Community sports provisions 		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteering <p>The above information is governed and monitored by Sport Wales to ensure that Monmouthshire is delivering the priorities set out for physical activity. Data, insight and learning is captured through attendances, case studies and feedback. The work delivered in Monmouthshire has been acknowledged as good practice by Sport Wales and other National Governing Bodies.</p>		
	The cultural and arts agenda, is contributing to the provision of sufficient recreational activities for children			A playful places audit has been undertaken at the council's museums and heritage & cultural attractions to explore the physical infrastructure of the sites as well as the human and		

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				<p>cultural conditions that support the development of play and playful opportunities for children and families.</p> <p>The staff at these sites have also received training around the nature and value of play and developing and supporting playful approaches and working with heritage sites and collections. The attractions learning manager works closely with the Play Development Lead to continuously enhance the playful spaces and provide activities during the school holidays</p>		
	The Local Authority Youth			Monmouthshire Youth		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	Service provides for children's opportunities for leisure and association			Service (MYS) provide opportunities on a regular basis for young people aged 11 years+ to engage in leisure and recreational activities in youth drop-in centers, more traditional youth club settings, village halls and outreach sessions. The service regularly provides trips for YP which are well attended. Residentials and camping trips took place in summer 2024. MYS also provides services to young offenders, support with anti-social behavior intervention and co-ordinates the shift project which supports YP with emerging mental health and wellbeing and emotional issues. In		

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				summer 2023 MSY made 2598 contacts, and this increased to 3123 contacts in summer 24. MYS completed a Make your Mark survey with young people in 2024 This consultation aimed to identify critical issues for local young people aged 11-18. Youth Service will focus on addressing the most pressing of these issues, selected from a list of 10 key topics.		
	The playwork workforce in regulated provision is supported to achieve the qualification level required by the Welsh Government's National Minimum Standards (NMS) for regulated childcare for children up to the age of 12 years			The council keeps up to date information regarding the Early Years and After School play workforce and this is updated as part of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. The Council works closely with Clybiau Plant Cymru to be able to provide Level 2 and 3 playwork qualifications and transitions to		

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				playwork as and when this is needed.		
	The playwork workforce in unregistered provision has access to training and qualifications in playwork			As of 2022 there was a more defined play management structure within the authority with a level 5 Playwork qualified Play Development Lead who oversees all aspects of play sufficiency and supervised play. Play sits within the Sport and Community team who have all now become qualified to level 2 in Playwork. All staff that work within the open access and stay and play provisions have received an introduction to playwork training and have the opportunity for CPD in Play provided by the play development lead. All departments within MonLife that support with play have opportunity to access		

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				training and qualifications in play via the Play development lead		
	The Local authority has a staff development budget ring fenced for play, including playwork			There is no ring fences budget for play within the local authority, however the Play Development lead (PDL) now manages the Playworks Holiday Program funding. As per the criteria the PDL ensures that a portion of that budget is used to provide training for staff to further develop Playwork Knowledge. There is also scope within this budget to fund qualifications if needed but for the past two years and for the next two years there is funded places available for Playwork qualifications through Clybiau plant Cymru		
	There is a comprehensive range of Continuing Professional Development			The council promotes CPD to	The provision, whilst valuable	

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	(CPD) opportunities available for playworkers in the area			play workers, also providing underpinning knowledge courses – for example, food hygiene, Safeguarding health & safety and Manual handling. Childcare providers who offer registered provision providing Playwork have access to CPD Via the Early years and Childcare team including all mandatory training. The Play Development Lead has a suite of Play training that they can deliver to those who need it and continues to source CPD from external providers when these are available and financially viable.	and constantly evolving, does not cover all play workers in the area and it cannot be classed as comprehensive.	
	Playwork is included within local Workforce Development strategies				The workforce development strategy for the LA does not include Playwork,	There have been initial meetings with the LA training, learning and

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
					however, there has been further development since the repositioned work on increasing the amount of playwork training available has increased.	development team to implement play on thingi- the LA's learning system. This will allow play to be an option for all employees but a mandatory training badge for all those employed to work with children in a recreational capacity.
I12	Family support initiatives provide up to date information and support for parents to enable them to support their children to play			There is a plethora of family support initiatives throughout the authority. Flying Start provide a variety of opportunities for family support and promotes the importance of play within these programs. MonLife Play team provides Stay and Play sessions for families and inclusive stay and		

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				<p>play for those families with children who have additional needs. The importance of play is promoted heavily at these sessions.</p> <p>The play section on MonLife's website has a dedicated section for parents where links can be accessed to up-to-date information on how to support children's play as well as signposting to Playful childhoods website.</p>		
	The local implementation of the Families First programme recognises the importance of play and contributes to the provision of opportunities to play			<p>There are a range of programs that are funded through the Families First program within the LA. The Families First Program in Monmouthshire is small compared to other areas. The projects that are funded through Families First are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Acorn Centre • Watch Wait and 		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				<p>Wonder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years Disability • Inclusive Play • Young Carers • Building Strong Families • Face to Face Creative Therapies <p>Play threads throughout most of the program with some providing direct opportunities for children to play. Where appropriate these programs promote the benefits of play to their families. The FF program sits under the CCG umbrella. Regular meetings of all recipients of funding from CCG occur. The Play Development Lead sits on this group and provides advocacy for play here.</p>		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	Early years and Flying Start plans and services recognise the importance of play and contribute to the provision of rich opportunities to play for younger children			<p>The council's Early Years Policy deals mainly with early education and promotes the importance of play as an important educational tool. The fundamental principle of the Foundation Phase Framework is that learning should be active/play based and should take place both indoors and outdoors.</p> <p>The council's service specification agreement with approved early education providers states that all children must have access to a stimulating, safe & secure outdoor learning environment</p>		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				during every session.		

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Supervised provision: Additional comments

The council operates a range of inclusive play provisions which offer rich play environments for the children following the Playwork Principles. These included supervised provision for 1 hour and 55 min which includes the option to use the leisure centre pool to play freely and a packed lunch. Since the last PSA the amount of provision that is available has increased and has become a regular timetabled feature in all holidays providing consistency to residents. There is evidenced feedback from children & families with high satisfaction ratings. We continue to monitor, expand and adapt where needed. Children's voices in these provisions determine how we develop the quality of these provisions. The average uptake percentage across all provisions is 67%. This meets the national average.

The appointment of a Play lead since the last PSA has allowed for even more contact with other partners providing Playwork. Work has been completed to provide knowledge of Playwork to partners in a variety of departments whose work has a direct effect on children's play. Sport Development team collaborate alongside the play team promoting Playwork. Ensuring it is incorporated into the outcomes delivered for Sport Wales and Monmouthshire County Council. This has been recognised as sector leading by Welsh Government and other partners.

The open access schemes that we operate are not required to be registered with the CIW but they do meet the regulatory requirements and the national minimum standards. The Play Development lead is highly experienced in CIW processes and regulations and ensures that policies, safeguarding and registration procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure they meet the national minimum standards.

The Play Development lead has been developing the provisions provided by the local authority since taking up the role in 2023. They have been working to develop the consistency of the provisions by developing a regular workforce at each provision where focused training is provided. Using observations and feedback from children they have purchased resources and changed planning processes to improve quality. In 2024 a Play Quality Audit - (First Claims) was used as a baseline assessment to all. This audit will be completed again in 2025 by the site leads who will take ownership of the development plan with support from the Play Development lead.

Continued professional development has increased with the implementation of the Play Development Lead. There is a suite of training now available that can be delivered by the play development lead (PDL). The PDL has recently become qualified to be able to deliver the L2 APP. Agored Cymru Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice – this course provides a broad introduction to Playwork. It is the entry requirement for the P3 route and has to be completed successfully before progressing to the other qualifications in the series. As a standalone qualification, it is also suitable for those working in holiday playschemes. It includes information about the importance of play, inclusion, Playwork theory and creating spaces for playing. An action of the 2025 PSA is to provide this training to 50% of leisure center staff to support them in ensuring the Leisure Centers can be developed into a playful space. This will also support The Monmouthshire Games program. With consideration to the review of the exceptions order this will prepare the TMG program for the possibility that there could be a need to register with CIW as part of an appropriate standard.

There have been initial meetings with the LA training, learning and development team to implement play on Thingi- the LA's learning system. This will allow play to be an option for all employees but a mandatory training badge for all those employed to work with children in a recreational capacity. This will be an action of the PSA.

The Play Development Lead is responsible for the completion of the PSA. Their role sits within the Sports Development team. This is unique across Wales and has been recognised as sector leading. All sports development officers are trained in Playwork and use this knowledge as part of their work in developing the sports agenda across the authority. Play now plays an integral part of the leadership program, young ambassadors and playmakers program. With the implementation of Sport Wales Foundation Framework, play sits appropriately into this. Our sports Development team continuously endorses play in the implementation of the Foundation Framework.

Theme: Policy synergy, engagement, advocacy and information

This theme relates to:

Matter F: Measures used to promote access to play, including the provision of information, publicity and events

Matter G: Training opportunities for the play workforce

Matter H: The level of community engagement and participation

Matter I: The extent to which other policies of a local authority take into account the need to enhance play opportunities for children

Criteria to consider:

- There is a clearly identified section on the local authority website, which gives information about opportunities to play as described in the [Statutory Guidance](#) (play areas, playwork provision, clubs and their accessibility)
- Information on access to play opportunities and contact for support if required
- Events which encourage opportunities to play and events for children and families are publicised and supported
- Information which contributes to positive community attitudes to play is publicised
- Information and support for parents to help them encourage their children to play is publicised
- The local authority engages with the media to encourage the positive portrayal of children playing in the local area
- A comprehensive training needs analysis for the play workforce, as defined in the [Statutory Guidance](#), has been undertaken
- There is a variety of learning and development opportunities offered to staff so that they can consider their role in supporting play
- There is a comprehensive range of continued professional development opportunities for a range of professionals who work with children
- Play sufficiency and other training awareness sessions are available for professionals and decision makers whose work impacts on children's opportunities to play
- Initiatives to engage relevant groups in enhancing play opportunities for children in its area, are promoted

Community engagement is promoted in:

- Making space available and suitable for play

- Organising play events
- Positive attitudes towards children and play
- Training on the importance of play
- There is a named person on the Local Public Service Board who champions children's play
- The Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan contribute to, and are incorporated within, the Well-being Plan
- The local Public Health Team supports play and play sufficiency
- There is a named person on the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) who champions children's play
- The Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan contribute to, and are incorporated within the work of, the RPB
- Plans to reduce the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences recognise the importance of play and contribute to the provision of rich play opportunities.

Complete the table for Policy synergy, engagement, advocacy and information using the 'criteria to consider' list and ensuring the following points are covered:

- What are the successes across policy areas and advocacy for play?
- Have there been challenges?
- How can these be overcome?
- Actions considered for Play Action Plan
- Actions agreed for Play Action Plan
- Rationale for action prioritisation

To what extent does the local authority meet the criteria?

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	There is a clearly identified section on the local authority website, which gives information about opportunities to play			Work with marketing partners in 2023 was		

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	as described in the Statutory Guidance (play areas, playwork provision, clubs and their accessibility)			undertaken to develop the play portion of MonLife website. This has now been live for 12 months. The website has clear tabs to provide clear information. These include "what's on"- this takes residents to all activities available for children and young people with focus on the open access provisions and stay and play. A section on places to play which holds information on outdoor parks and spaces within the authority. A section on play information which links to playful parenting websites and other play related information		

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				website. The final tab has all our play reports and completed PSA		
	Information on access to play opportunities and contact for support if required			Information is updated on the Play unit of MCC website. It is also shared before each holiday on social media platforms with contact information to include the central play email address where all queries are addressed by the sport and play team. Information is also shared with the council's family information service who share it on their information site and signpost to the play team as needed.		
	Events which encourage opportunities to play and events for children and families are publicised and supported			Events are publicised and supported by the FIS, they advertise specific events on the FIS website and through social		

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				media throughout the year. All public events planned via MonLife Play and partners are advertised via MonLife social media and website.		
	Information which contributes to positive community attitudes to play is publicised			There is a dedicated page on the play section of MonLife that provides links to the importance of play for children and communities. Local communities are collaborated with on activities to promote positive community attitudes to play and these links promote this within their own mediums.		
	Information and support for parents to help them encourage their children to play is publicised			There is a dedicated page on the play section of MonLife that provides links to the importance of play for children with ideas on how to support their		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				children with play. National and international days of play are promoted on all social media with ideas of how to access play opportunities.		
	The local authority engages with the media to encourage the positive portrayal of children playing in the local area			The council has an effective engagement with the media, and we promote positive portrayals as and when there is an opportunity to do so.		
	A comprehensive training needs analysis for the play workforce, as defined in the Statutory Guidance , has been undertaken			Work has been completed since the implementation of the Play Development lead to assess the current workforce and its training to date. A training program has been developed to provide staff working in open access play to undertake and introduction to	The casual nature of those employed to work the school holidays provisions makes it difficult for them to attend full play qualification training. The development of the play workforce is ongoing, and this has developed to a good standard since the last PSA, but we continue to look at avenues to	Continuing collaboration with partners to access appropriate training routes that can accommodate our workforce. Continuing to provide CPD and update training on the importance of play to ensure all staff maintain

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				playwork. All Play and sports development officers have level 2 playwork with pathways to level 3. Links between Clybiau Plant Cymru, Play Wales and the early years and childcare team to access qualifications when needed.	further develop this area,	their knowledge and skills as far as reasonably practical.
	There is a variety of learning and development opportunities offered to staff so that they can consider their role in supporting play					
	There is a comprehensive range of continued professional development opportunities for a range of professionals who work with children			The council promotes CPD to All professionals working with children. CDP we provide doesn't just involve introduction to playwork and opportunities to access qualifications but also underpinning knowledge		

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				<p>courses for example, food hygiene, safeguarding, autism awareness, first aid and health and safety. The council has recently introduced a central learning management system which includes all induction and mandatory training as well as CPD. There are plans to include play-related training to this system in the future.</p> <p>The Early Years and Childcare development team provide CPD and update training to all childcare providers who offer out of school childcare and holiday care.</p>		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	Play sufficiency and other training awareness sessions are available for professionals and decision makers whose work impacts on children's opportunities to play			Since the implementation of the Play Development lead (PDL) the Play Strategy Group has been reinstated with a robust structure. This group meet quaterly to discuss the development of play across the authority and what the various departments are planning and how these impacts play and play sufficiency. The group consists of many decision makers and those who can influence policy. The PDL meets regularly with town councilors who support with funding to provide play opportunities. These meetings are an opportunity to further promote	It is felt that the council completes a lot of work to ensure that all professionals are providers with awareness and play is very much seen as an important priority across the council. The messages and work need to be a regular discussion with all professionals continuously. Specific training sessions would be difficult to implement across all professionals but there are resources to deliver this if there is capacity. It is felt that a continuing focus on including play on all agendas and regular meetings to continue to have play as a focus is	

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				the importance of play. Work pertaining to play is a regular agenda item with the Department Managers Team meetings and this is fed further up the council to The CEO and senior team. Training has been available to schools on play sufficiency and how schools can provide a more playful experience during break and lunchtimes.	sufficient	
	Initiatives to engage relevant groups in enhancing play opportunities for children in its area, are promoted			Feedback is routinely obtained from parents and children at every supervised play session run by the council and those commissioned through external agencies such as Action for Children and some of the activity providers we use to		

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				<p>deliver active play and recreation sessions. When improvements are planned to fixed play sites we engage with local children and families about the revised layout. equipment schedule and border treatments. We also consult on the items of accessible equipment to be included in the revised provision. The council also engages regularly with a number of Friend Groups across the county, set up to promote improvements to green open spaces and outdoor fixed play</p>		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				sites		
	<p>Community engagement is promoted in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making space available and suitable for play • Organising play events • Positive attitudes towards children and play • Training on the importance of play • There is a named person on the Local Public Service Board who champions children's play • The Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan contribute to, and are incorporated within, the Well-being Plan • The local Public Health Team supports play and play sufficiency • There is a named person on the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) who champions children's play • The Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan contribute to, and are 			<p>There is a strong emphasis via the planning process on making space available and suitable for play and for the provision of play and recreational opportunities for children and young people. Cross department working is a high priority within this council, and this works especially well with the promotion of play. Leisure centers, Youth centers, outdoor parks and natural areas, heritage and attractions are all focused on providing space for children to play. There is a strong membership in the play strategy group who meet regularly</p>	<p>Due to workloads attendance at all meetings for LPSB and RSB can sometimes be sparse. This is something that needs to be addressed with support for the Play Strategy Group.</p>	<p>Including other boards as a standing agenda item on the Play strategy group meeting to join up on feedback and to see where gaps might be.</p>

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	<p>incorporated within the work of, the RPB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans to reduce the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences recognise the importance of play and contribute to the provision of rich play opportunities. 			<p>to assess how these spaces can continue to be developed and utilised for play. The Play Development lead works alongside Leisure center managers to provide open access play within their buildings as well as outdoor education centers. Museums and castles are arranged to be playful spaces for freely chosen play and play events. The play strategy group works together to plan National Play Day events annually drawing on shared resources. There has been an increase on available play training since the 2022 PSA and this will continue to be</p>		

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				rolled out to a variety of departments and stakeholders. Members of the play strategy group sit on the local public services boards and regional service boards to represent play.		

*(Type in green, amber or red)

Policy synergy, engagement, advocacy and information: Additional comments

Monlife Play team has been working with MonLife Marketing team to develop a more robust area of the MonLife website. This includes information on what is available for play provision and spaces for play within Monmouthshire. The area also contains information on the importance of play, linking to a variety of information portals that can provide families with advice and guidance on play. It also contains all reporting and updated and historical PSA documents. Social media teams for MonLife also promote available provisions and as part of their “soft content” engagement, promote play importance, rights and guidance. From consultation with parents for the 2025 PSA it was identified that 52% of parents use MonLife/MCC social media and website to access information on opportunities and guidance on play. It is an action of the 2025 PSA to continue to promote play through our social media and online platforms. Cross partnership working continues to ensure that the councils Family Information Service is utilised to promote opportunities for play within the local authority.

2024 National Play day was celebrated by offering a full day of play opportunities within the Caldicot area. All opportunities were free at the point of access and the importance of play was promoted throughout the day. The event saw a variety of activity including fire building, climbing wall, sumo wrestling, den building, messy play and sport. Departments across the local authority provided activities at no cost including, youth service, heritage and attractions, leisure services, Monmouthshire housing association and communities and wellbeing. The event was promoted as being accessible for the whole local authority. There were approximately 400 people who attended the event. It has been approved that this will happen again in 2025 with the option to hold two events one in the North and one in the South. As well as the event, play was regularly promoted on social media using posts to provide ideas on low-cost play.

The communities and Wellbeing team are being relocated into MonLife as of March 2025. This team links to the communities of Monmouthshire supporting with a variety of services. These include, community focused schools, tackling poverty and promotion of community support. Historically this team has produced a way of delivering street play which supported the closure of roads within housing estates to allow children to play in the street. With changes to management and structure, work on this has been halted, however, the structure is still robust to continue this, The PDL already has strong links with this team and the repositioning will allow for this to develop further.

Community focus school lead has worked with the PDL and Play Wales to support two schools to open their grounds for the use of play after school. This has proved successful with strong case studies. An action of the PSA is to further develop this work with more schools with particular focus on schools in rural areas.

Museums and Heritage completed a play audit in 2022 and produced an action plan to create all museums and castles to be playful spaces. The heritage education manager continues to assess and promote these spaces for children to play. As part of the Cultural Strategy Plan which is currently being developed an action highlighted in this is “Support and develop partnership

working with heritage, libraries and museums to develop and promote playful spaces through a young ambassador's programme". This will be included in the 2025 PSA action plan.