



Play for All Project

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Who is Play Midlothian?

Play Midlothian is a registered UK charity and works to improve and increase children's opportunity to play, because we know how important play is for their health, wellbeing and development. It is important for their lives in the here and now as well as for their future life chances.



What do we do?



We provide services for children and their parents / carers ...

- **Out 2 Play Project** (Play Ranger type provision in the community - children attend with or without an adult and ages can vary)
- **Holiday Playschemes** (Free Play sessions held in the school holidays for children aged 5 - 12 years)
- **Play in the Park** (outdoor play sessions for children aged 0 - 4 and their parents/carers)
- **Stay for Play** (sessions for parents/carers and children aged 0 - 3 years)
- **Annual Play Day** (an organised event - around 700 children and their adults attended this year)

What do we do?



We provide services for other groups / adults who work with children ...

- Annual Play Conference**
- Training**
- Practical Support**

We also advocate for the child's right to play and undertake work / projects to advance this.

- Worked with the local council to develop the Play Strategy**
- Carry out projects to explore specific issues - such as Play for All**

Play for All - Where did the idea come from?

- Having carried out some focus group work with children and parents to look at play provision within Midlothian the issue of accessibility to play parks and the need for more inclusive play provision repeatedly came up.**
- In addition to this, Play Midlothian members (play practitioners and providers) expressed the need for support around the area of inclusive play.**

As an organisation we managed to obtain some funding to allow us to explore these issues further - funding was obtained from the Big Lottery Fund and so we began our Play for All project.

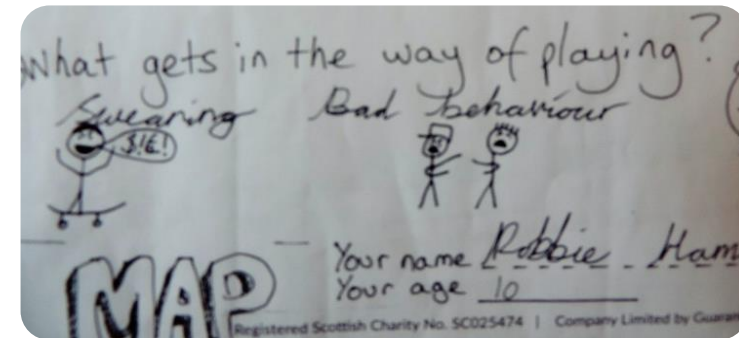
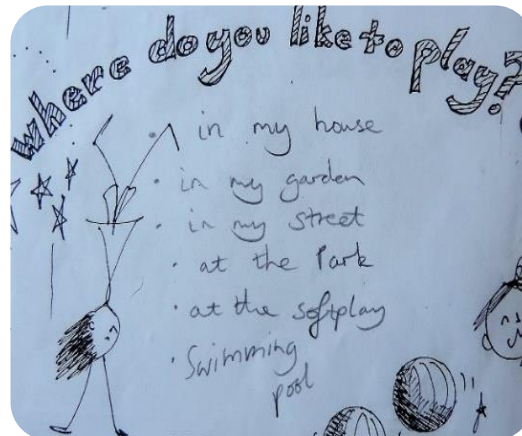
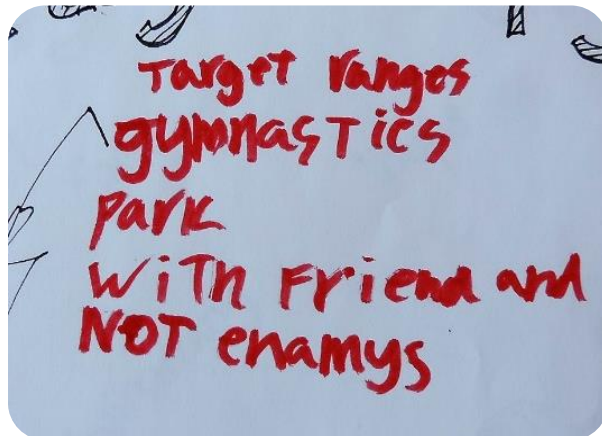
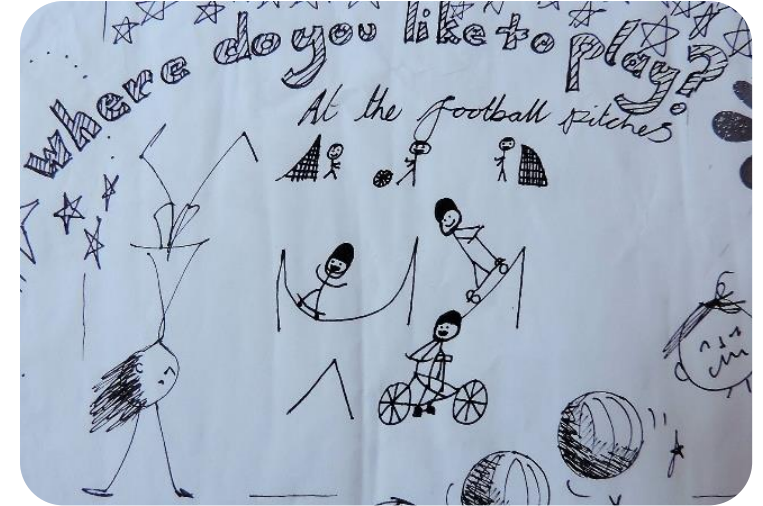
Play for All - What are the aims of the project?

The aims of the Play for All project are to:

- Increase participation of disabled children in local play provision (includes staffed provision as well as public parks etc)**
- Improve the quality of local play provision to ensure it is providing genuinely inclusive play (meaning something more than children just being in the same place together)**

Consultations - with children

- Use of scribble sheets for children (with or without adult support) to write or draw what their thoughts were about their play experiences.
- Small discussion group at an afterschool club about what 'inclusive play' was and how we can make people feel included.



Consultations

- Parents

Online survey, group discussions, telephone consultations and drop in sessions

- Practitioners

Visits to various settings to meet with staff / volunteers along with feedback from questionnaires

Site Visits

During the Play for All project we went out and about into the community (over the whole county) to look at some of the play spaces that had been identified as 'inclusive'.

We also went visits to various settings to explore the provision available to disabled children and their families.



Support Sessions

Support sessions were made freely available to any settings who wanted to access them. Sessions were developed specifically for each setting.

Sessions were made up of things like:

Informal visits - including advice, guidance and information sharing

Practical examples - sharing practice

Team building sessions - looking at their approach to inclusion

Development of resources

Support in the playground

Types of settings who accessed the support sessions was afterschool clubs, playgroup, primary school and a woman's domestic abuse project.

Postcard Project - Low Key Everyday Actions

Postcards were completed by children, parents/carers and practitioners from various settings (afterschool clubs, nursery, playgroups etc). Students who were attending the local college completed some too.

A handout was created from the completed postcards. This has been shared out to various people and settings throughout Midlothian.



Recommendations - areas to be considered

- 1. Spaces to Play - adding sensory elements to spaces, local toilet facilities, accessibility for children (particularly in wheelchairs)**
- 2. Information for Parents / Carers - sharing information with families of disabled children, increase awareness of Play Midlothian, mapping of play spaces**
- 3. Support for parents / carers - practical support (indoors and outdoors), befriending, development of a parent network, partnership working**
- 4. Transport - consider options available, share information to providers**
- 5. Support to practitioners and settings - possibility of funding a new post to continue and develop support for settings (this will encompass support for other identified areas too)**
- 6. New Housing - rebuilding communities, creating spaces for all ages and abilities**

Play Midlothian
Play for All

Project Report (31 March 2017)

Theresa Casey - Play for All Consultant
Stacey Marko - Play for All Project Worker



Aiming to increase participation and to improve quality

Any Questions?

If you would like to access the full report on the Play for All project please visit our website at ..

<http://www.map-midlothian.org.uk/pages/projects>
- the link for the report is at the top right hand corner