

# Ceredigion Play Sufficiency Assessment & Action Plan

---



Cyngor Sir  
**CEREDIGION**  
County Council

Executive Summary

March 2019

## Summary of Ceredigion Play Sufficiency Assessment 2019 and Play Action Plan 2019-2022.

An assessment toolkit is provided by Welsh Government to support the process, this is split into 9 sections (as set out below). There is a requirement to consult widely with partners within the council, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector, the community and with children, young people and parents to make sure we have a broad evidence base on which to base the Play Action Plan.

Relevant sections of the toolkit were sent to the following partners within the Council to complete, in the form of a self-assessment:

- Economy & Regeneration
- Ecology/Biodiversity
- Research & Analysis
- Sport and Leisure
- Traffic and Transport
- Health and Safety
- Family Support
- Human Resources
- Childcare
- Porth y Gymuned
- Planning
- Public Service Board support team
- Youth Service
- Financial services - Insurance
- Disabled Childrens Team
- Schools Service
- Theatr Felinfach
- Ceredigion Museum
- Flying Start
- Team around the Family
- Cered

Relevant sections of the toolkit were sent to 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector partners to complete, in the form of a critique of the Council:

HomeStart Sustrans DASH Ceredigion RAY Ceredigion CAVO	Dyfed Powys Police – ACE’s team Mudiad Meithrin British Red Cross – Refugee support Ceredigion Family Centres Action for Children – Young Carers
--	--

Questionnaires were sent to all Primary Schools in Ceredigion, and Year 5 pupils (aged 8 or 9) were asked to respond about their opportunities for play in Ceredigion. 14% have replies so far, this is what they said:

- 49% go out to play or hang out with their friends most days
- 90% said they had loads of time, or just about enough time, for playing
- 47% said the places they play are great, “I can do all the things I like”
- 95% said they always, or usually, feel safe when playing or hanging out
- 93% said that grownups are great and happy, or ok and alright, about children playing out
- 71% are allowed to play out on their own or with friends
- 52% usually walk or ride on their own or with friends to get to the places they play

They were asked, “Overall how good are your opportunities for playing and hanging out?”

It’s great, couldn’t be much better	It’s good, but could be even better	It’s OK, but needs to be bit better	It’s not good, it needs to be better	It’s rubbish, it needs to be much better
47%	38%	9%	3%	2%

## **Matter A: Population**

Since the last Play Sufficiency Assessment in 2016 we have seen a slight downward trend in Ceredigion's total population, from 73,700 in the 2016 Mid-Year Estimate to 73,100 in the 2017 MYE. Most of this change has been in the higher education student age groups, with a very small increase (+75) in children and young people aged 0-19.

Since our population is fairly steady we have not made changes in terms of planning for play provision. We tend to focus on Flying Start areas and our main towns and rely on feedback from stakeholders to address issues that arise in rural areas. This means that we can drill down to relatively small areas of need but that we tend to work reactively rather than proactively.

We have good communication with our stakeholders and planning for play happens in partnership with childcare and play providers, family support services, town & community councils and parents/children/young people.

## **Matter B: Providing for Diverse Needs**

Welsh Government's assessment toolkit lists diverse needs as:

- Children living in isolated rural areas
- Welsh language speaking children
- Children from different cultural backgrounds
- Disabled children
- Children from gypsy traveller communities
- Young Carers
- Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual children

There are a range of services, groups and clubs that offer play and recreation for children and young people with these diverse needs. We are aware that in some rural locations there is less, or no, play provision. Transport is also an issue for parents in rural areas, particularly for those with more vulnerabilities (e.g. disabled children and their siblings).

Funding for services is becoming increasingly tighter and we need to find ways of delivering services differently. It is important that we maintain the limited funding which supports play in rural areas as well as accessible play provision and specialist play schemes. Although there is a lot of Welsh language provision, we want to do more to ensure that Welsh speaking children are confident to play in the medium of Welsh rather than switching to English.

There is good communication between services and this enables us to discuss and respond to barriers that some children face in accessing play opportunities. However information about the needs of some groups (e.g. Gypsy travellers, Young Carers) could be improved; we need to make sure they have a voice.

## **Matter C: Open Spaces and Outdoor Unstaffed Designated Play Spaces**

### Open Spaces

The upcoming review of the Local Development Plan provides an opportunity for collaboration between our Open Space Assessment, Green Infrastructure Assessment and Play Sufficiency Assessment. This is work in progress and an emerging sub-group to work on this includes Planning, Biodiversity, Play, Active Travel and Rights of Way. However, Welsh Government guidance on the Green Infrastructure Assessment says that the assessment **may** include areas used for playing and so there is no requirement to do so.

Place Plans are being developed as part of the PSB Project group: 'Understanding our Communities' to help deliver the local Wellbeing plan. These are led by local communities and are likely to include green and open spaces.

### Outdoor Unstaffed Designated Play Spaces

The Council has transferred all play areas (apart from one) to community ownership. This means that we have no influence on the quality or accessibility of the play spaces. However, we do offer advice and funding to improve community play spaces and will include a requirement for quality and consultation in future grant application forms.

There is a list of all the equipped community play spaces and playing fields in Ceredigion and we would like to transfer this to a publicly accessible interactive 'play spaces' map. The last play value assessment of play spaces was in 2013 and this needs updating.

**Article 12** of the UNCRC (Respect for the views of the child) says that when adults are making decisions that affect children, children have the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into account. Sometimes planning decisions are taken that affect children's play opportunities and we want to develop a process that enables children and young people to give their view on these decisions.

## **Matter D: Supervised play provision**

### Playwork provision

The Council funds external organisations to deliver play provision. This is generally for the purpose of parenting support, family engagement, or childcare, rather than 'play for the sake of play'. Ideally we would fund 'play for the sake of play' but there is no identified budget for this type of provision. It is important however that all relevant services understand the importance of providing a rich play environment for children. We will use conditions of funding, training and contractual obligations as a lever to ensure that good quality play opportunities are offered by well qualified staff.

A rich play environment is one which is flexible, adaptable, varied and interesting. It maximises the potential for socialising, creativity, resourcefulness, challenge, and choice.

### Structured recreational activities for children

Ceredigion Actif runs programmes to improve physical skills, confidence and motivation. Increasing free play activities for children is not their prime motivator but they are keen to diversify their programmes to encourage children who don't like sport or don't think it's for them to get involved. Budget cuts mean that sport, physical and active recreation plans involve working out ways to maintain current provision, rather than increasing activities.

Ceredigion Youth clubs offer structured recreational activities for young people e.g. pottery, sewing, football, archery and activity days. They regularly consult with young people regarding the type of provision they want. Although not strictly play opportunities, these activities do offer opportunities for leisure, recreation and socialising.

### **Matter E: Charges for play provision**

We try and ensure that children who need it have access to free or low-cost provision. A lot, but not all, of our services are delivered in Flying Start areas. Flying Start recently went through a review to ensure the programme is delivered in the correct areas locally. It would be useful to review other services to ensure they are delivered in the correct areas.

It is difficult to know exactly where all children living in low income families are however. Our data is linked to WIMD which uses LSOA data and these areas are too large to allow us to pinpoint individual families in low populated rural areas. We tend to rely on feedback from key workers and Team around the Family Coordinators who provide targeted support for individual families.

Transport is provided for groups that are vulnerable (e.g. Young Carers, disabled children, Looked after Children) to help them get to play and recreational opportunities. This transport is often dependent on grant funding however and therefore vulnerable.

There are good links between play providers and Council services that offer grants or subsidies for play provision. Ceredigion community grant is available to play providers and information about this grant is available on the council website. Council officers also signpost those looking for grants to CAVO who are able to carry out funding searches.

## **Matter F: Access to space/provision**

### Traffic and Transport

It is important that children can move around their communities to get safely to opportunities for playing. Periodic speed limit reviews are undertaken and introduction of changes as required – the next review is scheduled for 2019/20. Ongoing monitoring takes place in partnership with 'Go Safe' Wales Safety Camera Partnership, Police, local communities and through the multi-agency Ceredigion Community Safety Partnership - Road Safety Sub-Group.

Under the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013, Aberystwyth, Cardigan and Lampeter were designated as Active Travel locations. Improvements in these towns have concentrated on school locations but also improved access to nearby play/leisure areas e.g. traffic calming to improve connectivity between Cardigan Secondary school and adjacent play area, football and rugby field.

Active Travel and Safe Routes in Community Schemes include the installation of cycle / scooter shelters at schools. A programme of road safety education, training and awareness is provided to primary school children by County Council Road Safety Team. This includes 'Kerbcraft' child pedestrian training and National Standards Cycle Training to equip children with basic skills transferable to everyday journeys. This training is dependent upon year-on-year grant funding allocations from the Welsh Government which are based on a formula that includes population numbers. The amount of grant funding has steadily declined over time.

### Information, publicity and events

For children and families to take part in play opportunities, recreational activities and events it is necessary for them to know what is available in their area.

Childcare (Provision of Information) (Wales) Regulations 2008 puts a duty on Local Authorities to provide information to parents. Broad subject headings include Play, sports and other recreational facilities. Play Sufficiency Assessment (Wales) Regulations 2012 puts a duty on Local Authorities to publish information about play opportunities in their area for children and keep the information published up to date.

In April 2018 the Family Information Service (FIS), with a dedicated team and website, was absorbed into the new, through age, Porth y Gymuned Service (PyG). The FIS continues to be provided by the Council. It is however acknowledged that more play information needs to be available on FIS pages with an interactive search facility, we intend on using DEWIS Cymru's website as the search tool. Community Connectors from the PyG Service continue to encourage groups and organisations to upload their information to DEWIS Cymru.

Ceredigion Families Facebook page also publicises events and opportunities for play. This is maintained by Flying Start but anyone can submit details for them to upload and we need to raise awareness of this facility more widely.

## **Matter G: Securing and developing the play workforce**

Playwork is a highly skilled profession that enriches and enhances play. It takes place where adults support children's play but it is not driven by prescribed education or care outcomes. This includes both open access and out of school childcare settings. Ideally the Local Authority would employ a play workforce as this would really help to develop play and playwork opportunities in Ceredigion but there is no identified budget for this type of provision.

New Care Inspectorate Wales regulations require those who offer Out of School childcare to have a Level 3 Playwork qualification by 2021. Our Childcare Unit is working with local providers and Communities for Work Plus to support local childcare providers to meet this requirement.

Training is a standard item on the multi-agency Early Years, Childcare and Play strategy group. There is a lot of training being offered but it is a bit uncoordinated and there is a need to create an annual training programme that includes mandatory training and additional Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities.

There are a range of other stakeholders whose role has an impact on children playing – those who may either directly facilitate their play, design for play, or those with the power to give permission for children to play, or not. We want to carry out a training needs analysis of these stakeholders and develop a programme of appropriate Play Awareness workshops and presentations to increase their understanding of this topic.

## **Matter H: Community engagement and participation.**

It is important that we consult widely with children, their families and other stakeholders on their views on play provision. We have a range of service user groups with whom we discuss specific services and plans:

- Ceredigion Disability Forum
- Ceredigion Youth Council
- Flying Start Locality groups
- GUS (Give Us Support Group)
- Looked After Children Council
- Young Carers Group

Occasionally new play areas are developed in the county or funding is available for new equipment. The Council encourages partners to consult with children and their families on these new developments and a toolkit has been developed to support this. From April 2019 we will include the need for applicants to show evidence of consultation when they apply for Play funding.

The working capacity of the Children and Young People Participation officer (currently 0.6FTE) is primarily targeted towards youth provision and consequently there is less focus on participation of children aged under 11. We will be looking to address this.

It is important that we engage with communities to develop the ethos of play friendly communities. We recognise the role of the elected members who represent the interest of people in their ward. We also have a Play Area Network, a virtual group of stakeholders, mainly community groups, who own or manage community play areas. The Council's community engagement policy and accompanying toolkit is on our internal website for all staff to access; this needs reviewing.

### **Matter I: Play within all relevant policy and implementation agendas**

Welsh Government expects Local Authorities to examine all policy agendas for their potential impact on children's opportunities to play. In Ceredigion this happens more naturally in some policy areas than others and we will develop Play Awareness workshops and presentations to deliver to a range of stakeholders and decision makers to help deliver this expectation.

#### Ceredigion Well-being Plan

Cllr Catrin Miles is the Members Champion for Children & Young People and chair of the Children and Young People's Service Provider Forum. She also sits on two PSB Wellbeing plan project groups (Resilience Training and Social & Green Solutions for Health).

Play was not flagged up as a focus area for action in the Well-being Plan during the consultation with the public and front line workers. The Well-being Assessment does recognise that opportunities for outdoor play are crucial however and it is a theme that is likely to feature in the work of the Project Groups that have been established to deliver the plan.

#### Education & Schools

There is a lot of good practice with regard schools offering rich play environments, both during break times and after school but there is no consistency, "some schools are brilliant and rent their halls out etc. some have lots of resources but don't offer the best." We need to flag up good practice, establish a consistent approach where possible and make sure we understand the barriers that some schools face to providing a positive play environment.

#### Town & Country Planning

Specific policies were included in the Local Development plan to try and address the lack of public open space available in Ceredigion. These have not resulted in a great deal more public open space however. There is an expectation that we can take advantage of S106 agreements to improve local play infrastructure. This is difficult in Ceredigion because there are few big developers in the area and a lack of organisations who would take on a new play area under a S106 agreement.

#### Traffic and Transport

Part of our compliance with the Active Travel (Wales) Act necessitates the introduction of speed reduction measures, provision of safe crossing points and



plans to improve walking and cycle access to parks, outdoor play facilities and local leisure centres from residential areas. Facilities are developed with reference to Welsh Government's Active Travel Design Guidance. Corporate policies and procedures on engagement with service users and groups with protected characteristics are followed throughout scheme development.

### Early Years Plans

Significant investment has been made in play areas for children aged 2-4 in Flying Start childcare settings. Family Fun Days and Engagement group activities encourage play and parent training courses set out the importance of play. Ceredigion has been accepted as an Early Years Integration Pathfinder, this will involve the development of a multi-agency Early Years approach with potential to include Play.

### Family Support policy and Initiatives

Ceredigion does not have a specific Family Support Strategy but all family support providers promote the importance of playing with your child and work is aligned to Welsh Government guidance, 'Parenting in Wales – Guidance on Engagement and Support' which supports the focus on making time for play. There is a need to deliver training on the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences to childcare and play providers and to raise awareness of the role of Play in mitigating the impact of ACE's and building resilience.

### Inter-generational policy and initiatives

Ceredigion does not have a specific inter-generational policy but recent initiatives include Family Centre visits to Day Centres where activities like colouring, jigsaws, threading and singing take place. Family Centre staff said, "if the older people don't want to do things the children pull them in to do it, it's great seeing the three generations (children/parents/older people) all doing stuff together".

### Health and Safety

The Council's Corporate Health & Safety Unit does not have any direct influence on the provision of play within the authority (apart from play in schools). They do however provide assistance and guidance on play, equipment and risk assessments. For example, a local school has a much loved climbing frame within its grounds. A number of children fell off this and suffered broken limbs within a short period of time. The parents and some of the children wanted it to be removed. However, the risk assessment process with regard this piece of equipment was reviewed with assistance from the H&S officer and additional control measures were implemented. It has not been removed and is now open for use again.

**Action Plan to address the issues / shortcomings recorded in the Play Sufficiency Assessment**

**Proposed actions for the period of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022**

<b>Matter</b>	<b>Priorities</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Service area</b>	<b>Funding source</b>
<b>Matter B: Providing for diverse needs</b>	Improve Youth Service provision for young people living in isolated rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond to the feasibility study into the need for a mobile youth provision in Ceredigion.</li> </ul>	Youth Service, Lifelong Learning & Culture	Existing (but additional funding may be required)
	Develop a pathway to build community capacity to provide play opportunities for children living in rural communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create and deliver an annual communication plan for monthly bulletins to the Play Area Network</li> <li>Offer training for parents and others in the local community to support them in providing play opportunities on the doorstep</li> <li>Support communities to consider the Play Pod model for storing resources for community use</li> </ul>	Play, Schools Services	Existing (but additional funding may be required)
	Ensure Welsh speaking children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the Ceredigion Schools Language Charter: Ceri Siarad - % of Welsh-medium primary schools achieving awards (gold/silver/bronze) under the Ceri Siarad Charter Scheme)</li> </ul>	Cered, Lifelong Learning & Culture	Existing

	feel comfortable playing with their peers through the medium of Welsh.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the childcare sector to meet the Welsh language Active Offer</li> </ul>	Childcare, Schools Services	
	Support activity providers to be aware of, and provide for, the needs of families from different cultural backgrounds and those who don't speak English or Welsh.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ascertain the need for further information to support play and leisure providers to be accessible to families from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, explore examples of good practice in other areas, provide support if required.</li> </ul>	Equalities & Engagement, Policy and Performance Service	Existing
	Improve links between CCC and Gypsy Traveller Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and engage with Gypsy Traveller community members in order to inform the next Gypsy Traveller Accommodation assessment and future Play Sufficiency Assessment</li> </ul>	Research & Analysis, Policy & Performance Service	Existing
	Ensure we understand and meet the needs of Young Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support Young Carers representation on the County Youth Council</li> <li>Promote Young Carer aware e-learning within the Childcare and Play workforce</li> </ul>	Families First, Children Services / Carers Unit, Adult Services	Existing
	Improve our understanding of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake an Open Space Assessment for current rural service centres</li> </ul>	Planning Policy and Research,	Existing

<b>Matter C: Space available for children to play</b>	Open Space and Accessible Greenspaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake a Green Infrastructure Assessment (which may include areas used for playing) as part of the evidence base for the replacement Local Development Plan.</li> <li>Review the Open Space Supplementary Planning Guidance for the new LDP</li> </ul>	Economy and Regeneration (and partners)	
	Ensure records of designated play space are up to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update the list of play spaces on the Land and Property Gazetteer, add the list of playing fields and make both accessible to the public.</li> <li>Review the 2013 Play Spaces Assessment and present to providers of play spaces in order to inform future planning (funding dependent)</li> </ul>	Research & Analysis, Policy & Performance Service Play, Schools Service	No funding available at present
	Improve the way children and young people are able to express their views on planning decisions that affect their play opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an agreed method, in partnership with young people and, participation officer and planning officers, for children and young people to participate in planning decisions that affect them</li> <li>Use AWPOG funding to carry out a consultation activity in Feb ½ term 2020 to consult with young people on the development of the next Local Development Plan</li> </ul>	Play, Schools Service Planning Policy and Research, Economy and Regeneration Youth Service, Lifelong Learning & Culture	Existing  AWPOG funding (if available in 2019/20)
	Improve the accessibility of community play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include the need for a policy/plans regarding providing accessible play space in grant funding made available by the LA to refurbish or develop new playgrounds</li> </ul>	Play, Schools Service	AWPOG funding (if

	spaces in Ceredigion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a 'Disabled Young People as Consultants' group and carry out an audit of accessibility of community play spaces</li> </ul>		available in 2019/20) No funding available at present
<b>Matter D: Supervised provision</b>	Ensure our range of play providers understand the meaning of 'a rich play environment' and are supported to provide it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to support the sustainability of the childcare and play sector and ensure conditions of funding include the need to evidence the provision of a 'rich play environment'</li> <li>• Ensure that provision funded or commissioned by the Council meets regulatory requirements and/or National Minimum Standards</li> <li>• Offer play training to family support providers</li> </ul>	Childcare unit, Schools Service  Flying Start & Families First, Children Services	Existing  Existing
<b>Matter E: Charges for play provision</b>	Ensure children living in areas of deprivation can access free play sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the delivery of play sessions commissioned by the LA to ensure they are delivered in the correct areas.</li> </ul>	Families First, Children Services	Existing
<b>Matter F: Access to space/ provision</b>	Ensure children and families can get to play provision safely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the mechanism in place for ongoing monitoring and review of 20mph zones/school safety zones in residential areas</li> </ul>	Safety and Active Travel, Highways and Environmental Services	Existing

	<p>Improve information available to the public about play provision and events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of groups and organisations that use DEWIS Cymru website to promote play opportunities</li> <li>• Monitor the quality of information about play provision put on Dewis by commissioned projects (as part of contract monitoring)</li> <li>• Develop information about Play on FIS pages (CCC website)</li> </ul>	<p>Porth y Gymuned, ICT and Customer Services <b>add Cathryn</b></p>	<p>Existing (plus AWPOG grant if available in 2019/20)</p>
<p><b>Matter G: Securing and developing the workforce</b></p>	<p>Ensure the Childcare &amp; Play workforce can access a range of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out an audit of settings that need the playwork qualification by Sept 2021 and source suitable training opportunities that meet their needs.</li> <li>• Develop and deliver an annual training programme for childcare/play providers – liaise with stakeholders and coordinate through Childcare, Early Years and Play Strategy group.</li> </ul>	<p>Childcare unit, Schools Service</p>	<p>Existing</p>
	<p>Support the delivery of appropriate training to community groups, parents and volunteers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise at least 1 x Play course for volunteers, community groups and parents when funding is available.</li> <li>• Target 3 more schools for the Skills2Play programme</li> <li>• Target all 5 Family Centres to run the Active Families programme</li> <li>• Work in partnership with the Healthy Pre-Schools team and CCC Education department to deliver training to 30 pre-school / nurseries on Fit in 5 and Physical Literacy</li> </ul>	<p>Play, Schools Service</p> <p>Active Young People, Lifelong Learning &amp; Culture</p>	<p>No funding available at present</p> <p>Existing</p>

<b>Matter H: Community engagement and participation</b>	Improve community engagement and opportunities for participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask for evidence of community consultation in funding opportunities available to community groups for play</li> <li>• Identify Participation training for service providers delivering for children aged under 11.</li> <li>• Review and promote the Council's Community Engagement policy and Toolkit</li> </ul>	Play, Schools Service  Childcare Unit, Schools Service  Equalities & Engagement, Policy and Performance Service	AWPOG grant (if available in 2019/20)  Existing
<b>Matter I: Play within all relevant policy and implementation agendas</b>	Ensure that the importance of play is recognised and understood at strategic level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a rolling programme of workshops/presentations to ensure knowledge and understanding at strategic level - those who design for play or who have power to give permission for children to play</li> </ul>	Play, Schools Service	Existing
	Children enjoy a rich play environment during the school day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all Ceredigion schools have adopted a Play Policy and know how to access support, funding and advice to improve play opportunities if necessary</li> <li>• Establish a task and finish group to review current outdoor play provision in schools (include Schools, Insurance, H&amp;S, Play Development, Healthy Schools and Maintenance).</li> </ul>	Play, Schools Service  Play, Schools Service	Existing

	<p>Ensure Family support services provide up to date information and support for parents to enable them to support their children to play</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver training on impact of ACE's to Childcare and Play providers</li> <li>• Raise awareness of the role of Play in mitigating the impact of ACE's and building resilience.</li> </ul>	<p>Childcare Unit, Schools Service</p> <p>Play, Schools Service</p>	<p>Existing</p>
--	---	---	---	-----------------