The Access Association

Inclusive Play
AA Special Interest Group (SIG)

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Vaila's Family Experience

Siblings of

- Different ages
- Different abilities



The current situation

In our experience

- Majority of activities in the majority of play spaces are not accessible.
- Even those designed for younger ones and for imaginary play are rarely accessible.
- ‘Interactive boards’ hold minimal interest for either of my two
- ‘Inclusive’ equipment often needs my daughter to be lifted in and out















Shelford Playscape

The challenge of helping to shape my village play space

(Project began in 2016, opened in 2021)

- Little guidance on accessibility & play
- Very limited range of in-wheelchair equipment in the market
- Process very supplier led
- Conflicting advice (teens, girls, under 12s)
- Determined group of parents & grandparents

Shelford Playscape

What we did...

- Landscape led, with sensory planting & seating designed into the whole
- Bespoke design responding to context
- Non prescriptive play elements
- Mix of dynamic, sensory & imaginitive
- Tactile materials
- Several pieces of in-wheelchair equipment
- Bespoke sand play with varied height tables
- Risk & challenge depending on ability

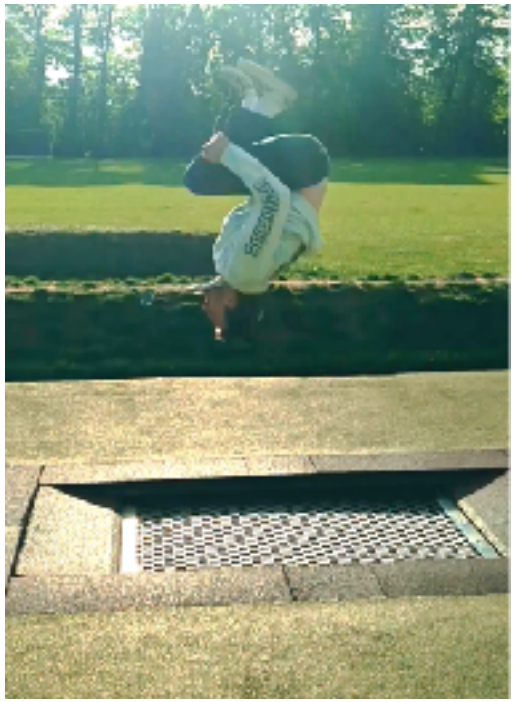






Flexibile Play Opportunities

Elements that could be used by different ages or abilities, sometimes together sometimes at different times











Teens ‘play’ too

We chose a hammock rather than a ‘basket swing’ to allows easier standing transfers
– as well as provide a chill out for teens & pile on for tots!



#LetsPlayFair

- Scope charity's campaign

SCOPE = Equality for disabled people

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Access Association – Inclusive Play Manifesto

- Inclusive Play Special Interest Group (SIG) formed in April 2024
  - SIG initally formed to respond to the Disability Action Plan (published Feb 2024 by the Cabinet Office Disability Unit)
    - Action 16: DU will create an online hub of information for LA
    - Action 17: DU will explore the most effective way of creating guidance on how to develop more inclusive and accessible playgrounds

- **Aim:** SIG aims to influence guidance and enable LAs, developers and others provide inclusive play
  - Help to shape best practice
  - Produce a document setting out principles

Vision: Inclusive Play Manifesto

- Outline the key principles that guide the creation and development of play environments across the UK
- The Manifesto is not meant to be a guide for bespoke inclusive playground but one that will enable even more children to play.
- Urge/Advise legislators, policymakers, and developers of future standards to adopt the key principles as a framework for shaping accessible and inclusive play spaces
- The Access Association calls on all stakeholders to work collaboratively, engaging with communities





Definition – Inclusive Play refers to the creation of environments and experiences where individuals of all abilities, including children and young adults, can engage in a pleasurable, stimulating, and meaningful play experience

- Key Principles
  - Accessibility for all abilities
  - Diverse and Engaging Play Options:
  - Sensory Stimulation and Inclusion:
  - Social Integration and Inclusion
  - Varied Heights and Full Body Engagement:
  - Safety, Comfort, and Emotional Support:
  - Flexible Play Opportunities
  - Visual and Wayfinding Considerations:
  - Community and Caregiver Inclusion
  - Sightlines and visibility



Features of an Inclusive Play Environment

- Variety of Accessible Play Equipment:
- Sensory Play Zones:
- Inclusive Seating:
- Social Integration and Side-by-Side Play:
- Safe and Clearly Defined Spaces:
- Accessible Restrooms/Changing Facilities:
- Transport Links and Parking







Playful public realm

Design for children is a hot topic.

It’s crucial that provision of access for disabled children & parents/carers is embedded in any strategies – not just designated playgrounds.

- Child Friendly Cities
- Playing Out
- Make Space for Girls



What Next:

- Identify Key stakeholders
- Policy makers
- Developers
- Disability Action Plan
- Collaborate with others



Thanks

- The SIG Team
- National Council
  - Input from AA colleagues



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Thank you