



Cherie Morgan

Play Scotland

Championing play for all

The importance of inclusion to enable all children to have the best play opportunities to support their health and wellbeing

Play Scotland

Play Scotland is the national

- expert in play for parents, providers, the play workforce and policy makers
- custodian and voice for children and the play sector
- leader and campaigner for the importance of quality, accessible free play
- expert in developing and delivering strategic planning for play and play sufficiency assessments





Policy Framework for Play in Scotland 2025

Planning (Scotland) Act 2019: The Town and Country
Planning (Play Sufficiency Assessment) (Scotland)
Regulations and Guidance 2023

National Planning Framework NPF4 2023
Policy 21 opportunities for PLAY and sport
Policy 20 good quality, accessible greenspaces, nature networks
Policy 13 active travel: walking, cycling, providing health benefits

UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 –
legal Right to Play - Full incorporation 16th July 2024

Play Vision Statement and Action Plan 2025 - 2030 and versions for children
informed by
Children and Young People's Views of Play: a literature review 2024



Research shows play supports wellbeing

- Children who spend more time playing outdoors and adventurously have:
  - fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression
  - more positive mood during lockdown.
- Children who say that they regularly play out on their street have more positive emotion.
- Adults who said they regularly played out on the street when they were children had significantly lower psychological distress scores as adults. (State of Play, 2023)



What do children want?



- Local places to play
  - Includes allowing (and even encouraging!) play in places close to where children live
  - Children want to be able to play with disabled and non-disabled peers
  - Opportunity for freedom
- Diversity of places
  - Age and ability range
  - Opportunity for challenge

(State of Play, 2023)

Making the case for Play
Play and Place-making contribute to Positive Outcomes

Reducing
Child Poverty

Raising Educational Attainment

Improving Health
and Wellbeing

Time, permission,
resources and space to PLAY

Children's voices
in planning

Co production
and co design

CHILD'S RIGHT TO PLAY

Best start in life

Healthier
more active, independent lives

Successful
learners,
confident individuals, responsible
citizens, effective contributors

What is an Accessible Play Space?



Children's Play Policy Forum and UK Play Safety Forum

An **Accessible Play Space** is a space which is barrier-free, allows users access to move around the space and offers participation opportunities for a range of differing abilities.

Not every child of every ability will be able to actively use everything within an accessible play space.

What is an Inclusive Play Space?



Children's Play Policy Forum and UK Play Safety Forum

An **Inclusive Play Space** provides a barrier-free environment, with supporting infrastructure, which meets the wide and varying play needs of every child.

Disabled children and non-disabled children will enjoy high levels of participation opportunities, equally rich in play value.

UK Play Safety Forum and the Children's Play Policy Forum Statement:

Including Disabled Children in Play Provision

Play Sufficiency Assessments

The Town and Country Planning (Play Sufficiency Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2023

- came into force on 19 May 2023
- planning authorities to assess the sufficiency of play opportunities for children when preparing an evidence report to inform the making of local development plan

Planning authorities must:

- identify and map formal play spaces
- assess and provide statements as regards the overall (a) quality, (b) quantity, and (c) accessibility of formal and informal play spaces
- consult children, their parents and carers during the assessment
- publish

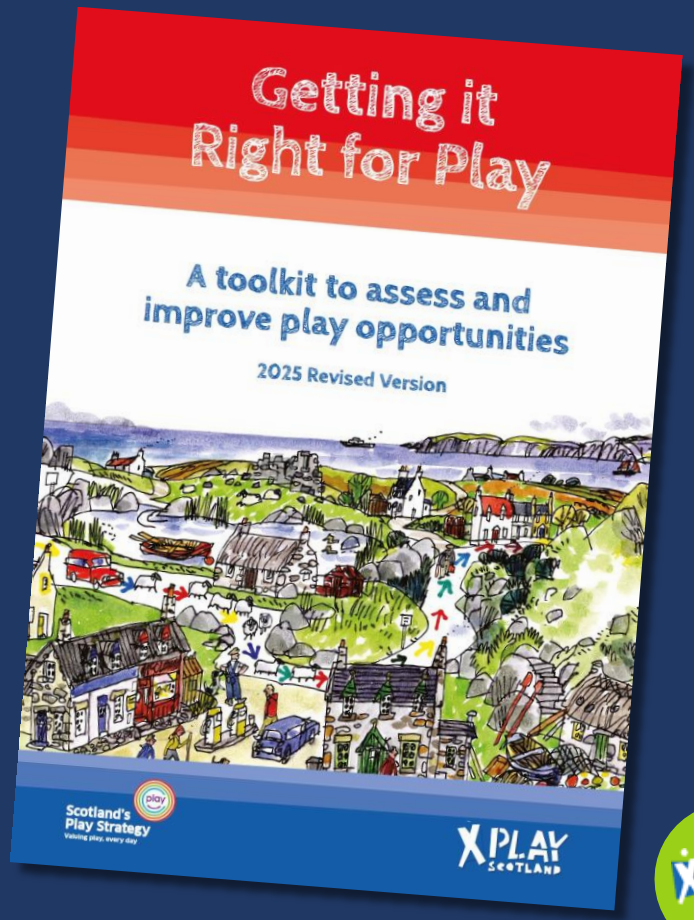


THE 5 EVALUATION TOOLS		AIM	THE 10 INDICATORS
Play Needs Assessment		To identify children and young people's general outdoor space needs for playing or hanging out.	1. How often children play outdoors 2. Children's satisfaction with their outdoor play opportunities and experiences 3. Children's independent mobility within their neighbourhood
Site Visit Assessments	**Play Space Quality Assessment**	To assess quality and environmental factors of all formal and recognised outdoor play spaces within the local authority area.	4. The quality of local spaces for outdoor play
	Play Opportunities Assessment	To assess the range of play opportunities provided within a selection of play spaces within the local authority area	5. Children's opportunities to experience excitement and challenging play 6. The range of play opportunities available
	Play Space Accessibility and Inclusivity Assessment	To assess accessibility and inclusivity of all formal and recognised outdoor play spaces within the local authority area.	7. How accessible the play spaces are 8. How inclusive the play spaces are 9. Children's involvement in planning and delivery
Play Space Mapping		To assess the quantity of play spaces available to children and young people	10. The sufficiency of play spaces within a reasonable distance of children's homes, both formal and informal

Children play everywhere: mapping/assessing informal play space

In our revised toolkit we encourage hearing from children and young people about the places where they regularly play. We refer to these places as "recognised play spaces".

They may not include formal play equipment but will have some affordances that children are attracted to for their play. These places can be mapped and assessed using the same assessment criteria, noting that they are an informal recognised space that children are choosing to play in.



Planning for Playful Communities



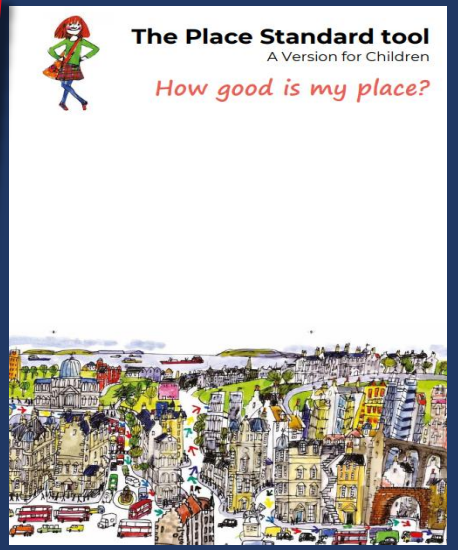














Catherine Street Inclusive Park, Dumfries

PLAY SCOTLAND
Scotland's Play Strategy

Play Vision Statement and Action Plan 2025-2030

Play Opportunities for all children by 2030

Play Theory of Change

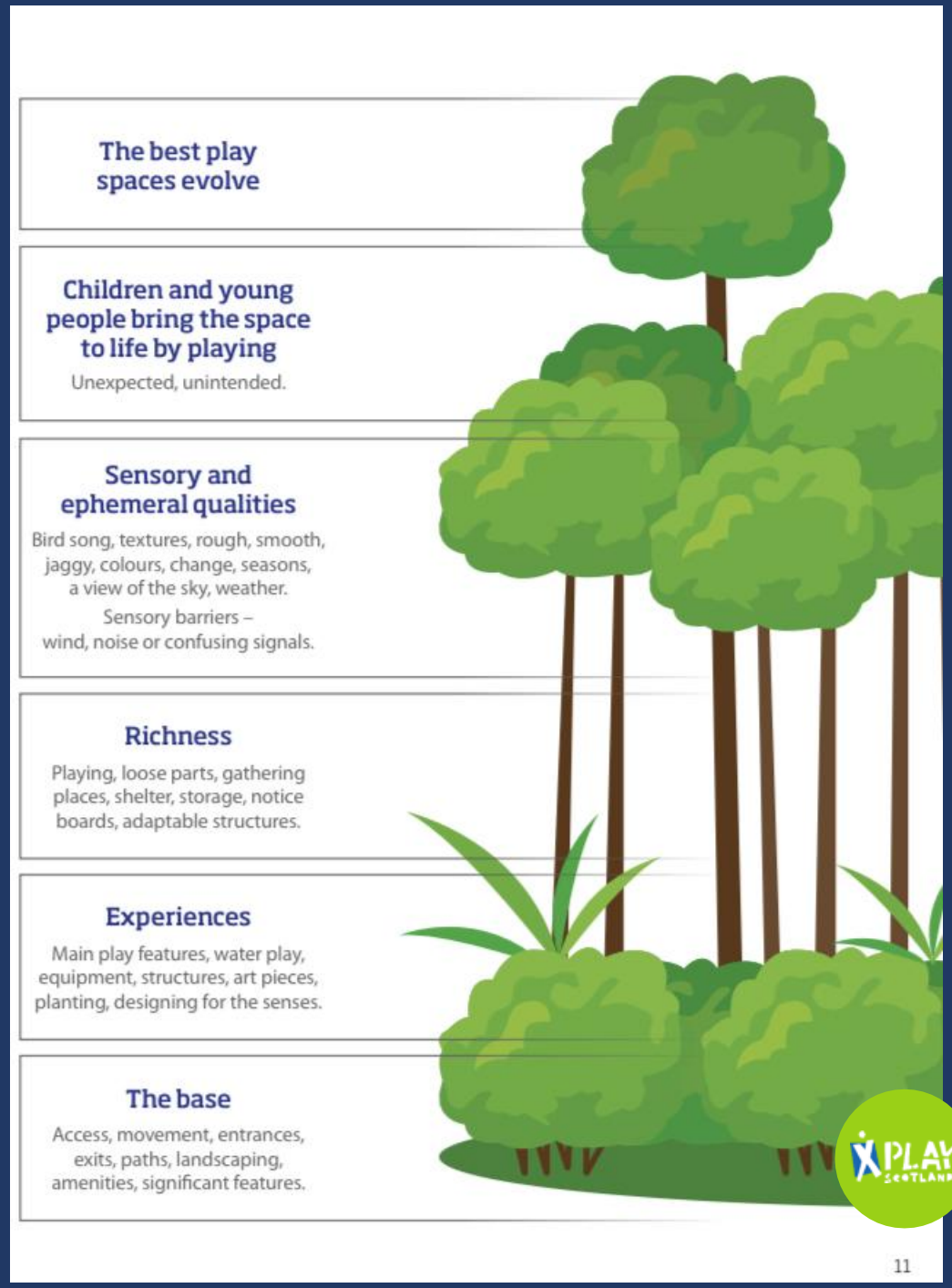
Primary Drivers:

- Places - encourage the development of public places that support children's health and wellbeing through play
- Parents - deliver additional support for parents and carers in accessing play opportunities
- Practitioners- strengthen the delivery of play by practitioners across the health, social care, education and third sector landscape



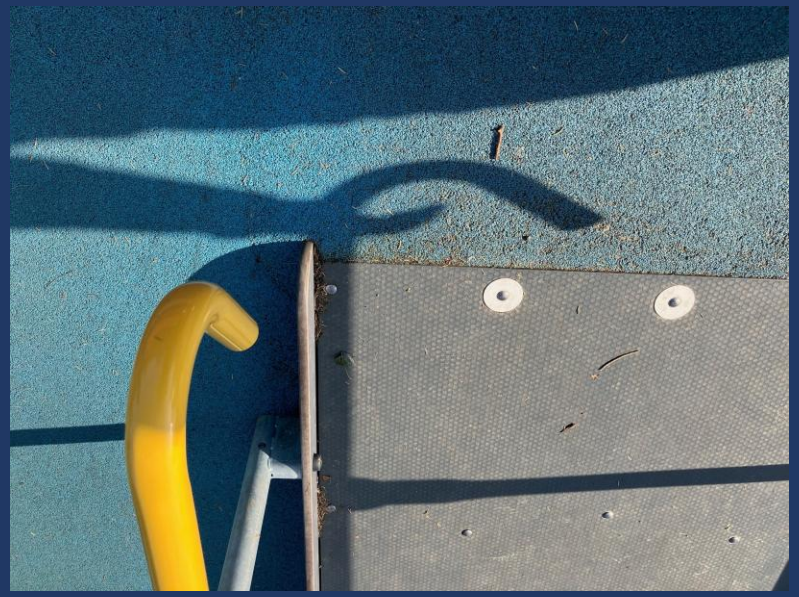
The elements of an inclusive play space – working towards play for all

- All Ages (0-17)
- Spaces for girls and boys
- Disabled children and other protected characteristics
- Deprived/vulnerable communities



- Access
- Movement
- Entrances/exits
- Paths
- Landscaping
- Amenities
- Significant features

The base





Experiences

- Main play features
- Water play
- Equipment
- Structures/art pieces
- Planting
- Designing for the senses

Richness



- Playing
- Loose parts
- Gathering places
- Shelter
- Storage – bikes?
- Notice boards
- Adaptable structures





Sensory qualities

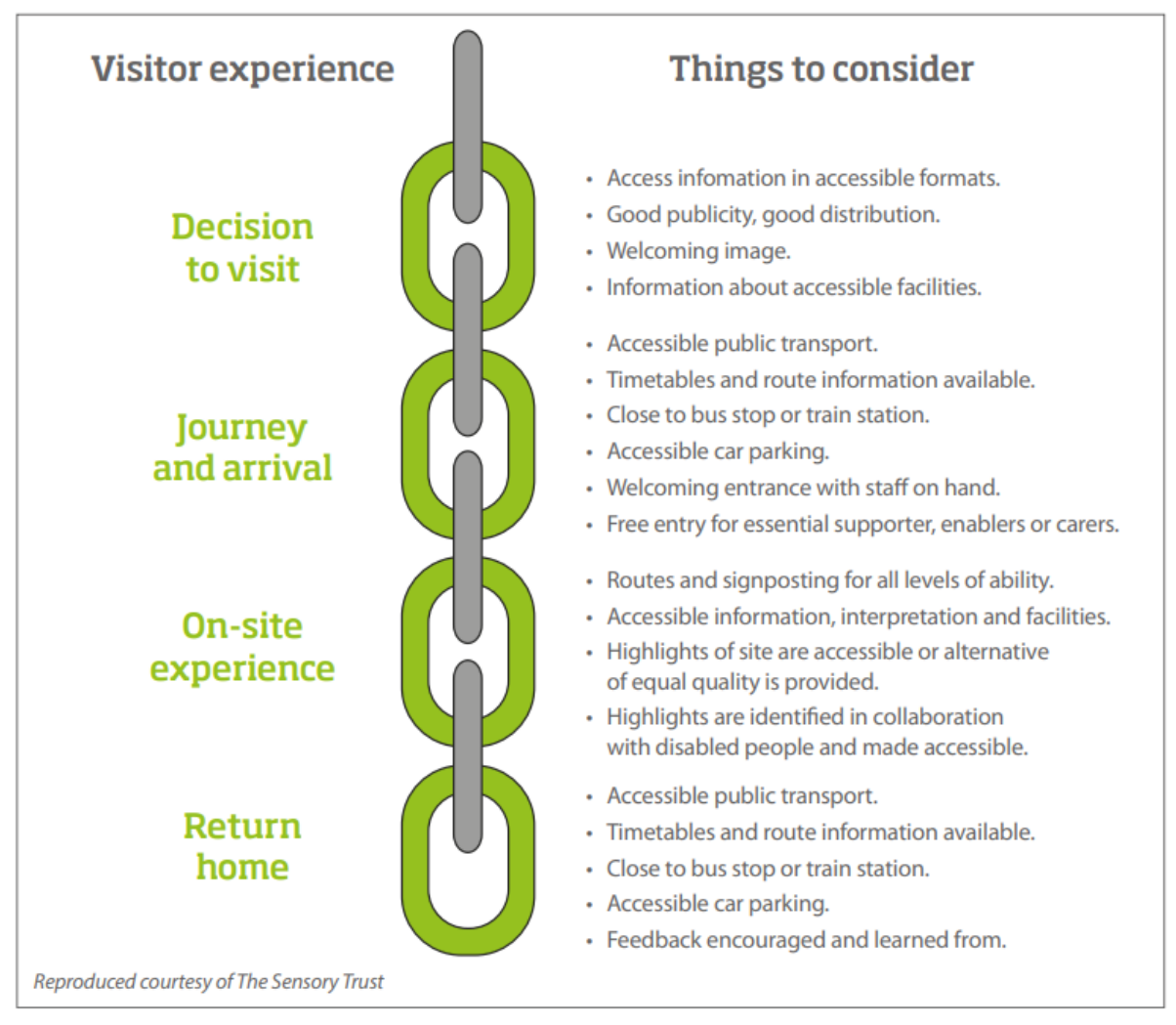


What makes the play space unique

How will it function in different weather

Sensory barriers – wind, noise or confusing signals

If you build it, they will come…. Or will they?



- Be clear about what is on offer
- Ensure equipment is in good repair
- Prioritise repairs on inclusive equipment and access
- Inclusive, clear signage
- Suitable infrastructure in destination parks, Changing Places toilets

Examples of Good Practice

Catherine Street Park, Dumfries







Hazlehead Park, Aberdeen

References

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