

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines to the committee the summer play opportunities provided through Wirral Play Council Summer Holiday Playscheme Programme and Youth & Play Service's playschemes 2010. The Committee is asked to note this report

1.0. BACKGROUND

1.1. Wirral Play Council receives a grant from Wirral's Children's and Young Peoples Department to provide Open Access summer playschemes through the school summer holidays throughout Wirral. Children and young people aged 6 to 14 are welcome to attend the playschemes. Wirral Play Council fundraises within the organisation and is successfully awarded financial grants from other organisations to support the summer playschemes. Wirral Play Council has been providing free open access play for children in Wirral since 1974. The Executive Committee manages the summer playschemes and the day to day running is organised by the Play Development Officer, supported by administration staff.

1.2. Recruitment and Staffing

Recruitment for the playworkers starts early in the year and the post is advertised in February/March. This enables us adequate time to put workers through the Criminal Record Bureau process and complete other checks such as references. We received a very positive response to the advert in 2010 and were able to shortlist easily for interview. The interviews take place just after the Easter break and take the form of a group interview. This enables us to assess the workers within groups, watch how they interact and communicate with each other. This is a more insightful process than a face-to-face interview where we can see individuals' playworker potential. Every year there are a certain number of playworkers who return to work for us. This year we had 42 returning playworkers making 53% of the overall total of playworkers recruited. The returning playworkers previous experience is very valuable, they are able to support and guide new playworkers as they find their feet at the beginning of the summer.

1.3. Pre-summer Training

All new playworkers complete a programme of pre summer training that takes place at Wirral Metropolitan College, Twelve Quays and at Wirral Play Council. During their time at the college they undertake a nationally recognised playwork qualification, Take Five for Play. In order for them to complete the course they must complete 12 hours practical work and a reflective diary supporting what they do. All the playworkers who took the course completed it successfully. Wirral Sure Start Support Team provides 80% funding for this playwork course. This year we were able to put on an additional course to cater for several volunteers working at various playschemes across Wirral and for some volunteers who are involved with Play Pods. In house training provided at Wirral Play Council equips the playworkers with working knowledge of legislation, policies and procedures plus practical play skills such as arts and craft, sports and games. Paediatric First Aid is also offered and 28 playworkers gained this qualification. The playschemes were publicised in early July to all primary school aged children in Wirral, through schools via the Let's Go magazine.

2.0. BUDGET

2.1. A very high percentage of the budget is spent on playworkers wages and this figure is increasing each year to keep in line with the minimum wage set by the government. Each playscheme has a Lead Playworker who takes on more responsibility for paperwork etc and is paid a slightly higher

hourly rate. This year we were fortunate to get additional funding from Sure Start Support Team to meet the additional cost of wages for Lead Playworkers. The remaining money is spent on play equipment, transport, administration and Play Day.

3.0 **PLAYSCHEMES**

3.1. **Wallasey District**

3.2. **Seacombe Community Centre – 70 Registrations**

A successful playscheme attended by very local children who enjoyed a variety of crafts, activities and outdoor play.

3.3. **Moreton Youth Club - 119 Registrations**

The centre is a great venue for a playscheme with a hall for sports and games and a good-sized room alongside the hall for quieter activities and crafts. There is a lack of outdoor space but the playworkers utilised Lingham Park on occasions throughout the summer. The playscheme was quieter this year than previous summers however the playworkers created lots of opportunities for games and craft activities. In the final week they went on a trip to Camelot theme park, which was enjoyed by all.

3.4. **Vale Park – 84 Registrations**

The playscheme uses Vale House, which has been having problems with dry rot in the floor so this year the scheme moved upstairs. The room is still small but the children and playworkers coped well and tried to utilise the outdoor space in the park as much as possible.

3.5. **Belvidere - 38 Registrations**

This playscheme is closed access and provides activities for children with a wide variety of abilities and additional needs. The playscheme is integrated and siblings are encouraged to attend. The facility is very suitable and has a good outdoor space. There is a high level of involvement from both parents and volunteers, which proves invaluable. Overall the children enjoyed themselves very much and had fun.

3.6. **Birkenhead – Three Playschemes**

3.7. **Wirral Play Council Special Needs – 89 Registrations**

A successful playscheme ran from Wirral Play Development Centre catering for a large number of children with a wide range of disabilities. This is a closed access playscheme running weekdays from 10.00am until 3.00pm. The playworkers are fully trained and deal with every aspect of welfare for the individual children. The children enjoyed a wide variety of play experiences particularly playing with water, arts and crafts activities, wheelchair dancing, talent shows and group games.

3.8. **Hillside Primary School Noctorum – 70 Registrations**

There has been a playscheme on the Noctorum for many years however the numbers have been decreasing significantly so this year we looked for a new venue. Mr Hollywood the Acting Head Teacher from Hillside Primary School was very keen to open up his gates and let us use the playing fields and the facilities of the out of school club. This playscheme is an out door playscheme but they are lucky to have the use of a toilet and a room to store their equipment in, a large field and a section with park benches to do activities on. They went on a trip to Camelot, which they made shields and swords out of cardboard. They have had an average of 12 children attending daily; they have used a gazebo to keep the session going when the weather was bad, which worked well. The party on the last day was funded by profits from their tuck shop; there were lots of prizes available that had been donated by parents. Even though there was bad weather on this day they continued to have party games such as pass the parcel, musical chairs and cold cookery using ginger bread men.

- 3.9. **Tam O'Shanter Urban Farm – 155 Registrations**
A popular playscheme situated at Tam O'Shanter Urban Farm. Visitors to the farm join in with the daily arts and crafts activities and group games.
- 3.10. **West Wirral – Seven Playschemes**
- 3.11. **Heswall British Legion – 135 Registrations**
The playscheme relocated again this year to a central position in Heswall town centre at the Heswall British Legion. The scheme uses the main function room, which is large and has a stage but is not suitable for ball games. There is a large car park that was used for ball games and coned off so it was a safe area to play in. The playscheme was very popular and lively. The children occupied their time by playing imaginary games and creating talent shows. They enjoyed the interaction with playworkers who created play opportunities through organising group games and craft activities.
- 3.12. **Irby Methodist Church Hall – 106 Registrations**
This is a popular playscheme that benefits from the support of the Methodist Church. Children attended regularly and enjoyed playing in the newly refurbished Irby Park play area. During the final week the Playscheme had a great day out at Manley Mere Adventure Trail.
- 3.13. **Greasby Community Centre – 56 Registrations**
This year the playscheme had lower numbers of registrations. Due to other user groups in the building, the playworkers could only access the community centre for 2.5 days each week. On the other days the scheme moved to Coronation Park. Unfortunately the bad weather over the summer meant numbers were low at the park sessions but the playworkers made the most of these days and played in the play area and used the field for football and group activities.
- 3.14. **West Kirby, Westbourne Community Centre – 142 Registrations**
West Kirby is a popular, well-used, busy scheme. The scheme had regular attendees who enjoyed playing badminton, tick chase, arts and crafts activities.
- 3.15. **West Kirby Children's Centre – 77 Registrations**
This playscheme was funded by Extended Schools and utilised Black Horse Hill Infants School during two of the four weeks. The other weeks were spent on Hilbre High School field and again the weather influenced the numbers of children who attended the sessions.
- 3.16. **Woodchurch Community Centre– 110 Registrations**
The playscheme began very quietly with only a few children registering however during the four weeks it became very popular and well used by the local community. The children enjoyed playing pool in the outside play area and sewing.
- 3.17. **Overton Community Centre – 97 Registrations**
The community really support this playscheme and it has been very popular this year. We could not run one afternoon due to another user group in the building, the playworkers organised trips for two of the days and sign-posted parents and children to other playschemes on the other days.
- 3.18. **South Wirral – Four Playschemes**
- 3.19. **Eastham Youth Hub – 106 Registrations**
The registration numbers at Eastham playscheme increased from 2009. The venue is very suitable for sports and games, quiet activities and has a great outside provision. The team of playworkers worked well together to deliver a comprehensive range of activities. The children were keen to get involved with all the activities on offer and enjoyed playing as a group with the parachute. The playworkers worked hard to include two children with autism and a child with cerebral palsy by ensuring they were included in all the activities and offered support when needed. The parents of the two autistic boys were very pleased they could attend the playscheme and both had gained a lot from the experience.

3.20. **New Ferry Village Hall – 212 Registrations**

This is one of our most popular and well-used playschemes. It runs from the Village Hall, which is a large space that can be used for games of football and other team games as well as arts and crafts activities. The playworkers and children took advantage of the newly refurbished play area situated opposite the Village Hall.

3.21. **Prenton - 47 Registrations**

The playscheme was initially planned to be taking place at Prenton Primary School however after discussion with the residents association we relocated to the play area in Prenton and the residents association gave us access to the community shop. This proved to be a more popular location with children and families. The playworkers built good relationships with the children as many returned on a regular basis. They have enjoyed themed weeks and making crafts in the run up to a Hollywood theme party they made clay hand prints each with their names underneath, like in the Grauman's Chinese Theatre, where celebrities have had their handprints and footprints displayed, and a red carpet, with cold stars painted on. The children have enjoyed the range of activities organised and creating some themselves such as dance routines.

3.22. **Higher Bebington Christ Church Hall - 210 Registrations**

The playscheme was very popular again this year and on average had 45 children attending each session. There was some major building work going on at the church site, however a safe entrance was secured for the playscheme to use and good communication between the playworkers and contractors meant the playscheme ran very well. The outdoor space continued to be the main attraction at this site and many of the children spent hours den building and playing amongst the trees and bushes.

3.23. In 2010 we were unable to run playschemes in three wards due to a variety of reasons. The very popular and much needed scheme at Seacombe Children's Centre was unable to go ahead this year due to building work being carried out on site. After building good relationships with the centre over recent years and high registration numbers proving the need for the provision in the area, I am confident a summer playscheme will return in 2011. Unfortunately we could not find a suitable venue in the Pensby area. The playscheme has run from Fishers Lane Community Centre in previous years. In 2009 the playscheme continued to run from this venue after it had changed to the Hope Centre. However after extensive refurbishment limiting the types of activities we could organise and the high rental cost it was decided the venue was no longer suitable for an open access summer playscheme. We will continue to look for a suitable venue in the area for summer 2011. The final scheme Wirral Play Council did not run is the Tranmere playscheme based at Albany Hall in Victoria Park. The playscheme has been run from the centre for several years supported by the organisation Involve North West, however they received funding to run a playscheme themselves in 2010 and did not want to work in partnership with Wirral Play Council.

4.0. **PLAY DAY – Wednesday 4 August, Birkenhead Park**

4.1. This year's Playday campaign theme, *Our Place*. The campaign puts children at the heart of our communities and asks everyone, young and old, to help create better places for all of us to live and play. The event in Wirral took place on Wednesday 4 August in Birkenhead Park. The day requires a lot of preparation, planning and early starts but it is worth it to see the hundreds of children attend enjoying the activities. All the full time and summer playschemes are on site by 11.00am and the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress of Wirral Councillor Moira McLaughlin and Ms Anna McLaughlin opened the event with the traditional banner competition. It was difficult to make a decision with so many excellent banners being produced by the playschemes but it was decided Overton's was the winner followed closely by West Kirby. During the rest of the day children could access the activities freely and have fun playing! The activities included a climbing wall, The Big Art Attack, inflatable slide, drum circle, the ever-popular straw bales, Laughology workshops, talent show tent, milk bottle art and craft, and the new addition this year of an inflatable human football game! The day was a great success despite a rainy start to the event with over 500 children and their families getting involved.

5.0. WIRRAL PLAY STRATEGY

The key strands of the Play Strategy are:

- Support the continued development of supervised open access play provision.
- Deliver a comprehensive summer holiday playscheme programme and all year round open access play provision.

These objectives have been met through the planning and delivery of 16 open access summer playschemes and two closed access playschemes for children with special needs.

- Promote the value of free play within the community.
- Celebrate annual Play Day in line with National Play Day.

A successful Play Day event at Birkenhead Park was organised and offered children and families a variety of play experiences they could get involved with for free. All of the summer playschemes are free of charge to every child who attends; this is promoted to parents and professionals in the run up to summer.

- Ensure Play training and qualifications are available for those involved in the delivery of play provision.
- Work with appropriate training agencies to develop opportunities for further education.

Wirral Play Council worked alongside Wirral Metropolitan College and Wirral Sure Start Support Team to provide a programme of training for the summer playworkers, 37 playworkers and six volunteers gained a Level 2 qualification "Take Five For Play" and 28 completed a paediatric First Aid course.

6.0. SUMMARY

- 6.1. Summer 2010 was another successful year for open access playschemes in Wirral, however the total number of registration did decrease from 2009. This is due to several reasons; three of our previously most popular playschemes could not run in Pensby, Tranmere and Seacombe, the weather restricted several playschemes who had to use outdoor spaces and there was a lot of other activities available this year promoted through the Let's Go magazine. The standard of people applying for temporary jobs remained high and there was a significant increase in the numbers of applicants, which is very encouraging. We also had more volunteers working at the playschemes this year that worked hard and got involved with the children and activities. The playworkers worked hard to provide stimulating and exciting play activities to engage children. This showed as I visited the various sites and observed children den building, performing talent shows, dressing up, creating role plays, running about, playing sports and being involved with messy and creative play. A highlight of the summer was Play Day, the attendance numbers suffered a little compared to previous years due to the wet weather, however hundreds of children enjoyed free play activities in Birkenhead Park, challenging themselves on the climbing wall and large inflatable slide, challenging each other on the inflatable football and tug o war and getting messy in the art attack. Thank you to all the people involved with summer playschemes 2010 and ensuring children have access to free play in Wirral.

7.0. Financial and Staffing Implications

This year 17 Playschemes and were funded primarily by a grant of £58,000 from Wirral Borough Council. These included full-time summer schemes, schemes for children with disabilities.

8.0. Equal Opportunities Implications

The summer holiday programme reflects inclusiveness and promotes equal opportunities and access.

9.0. **Human Rights Implications**

There are no specific human rights implications arising from this report.

10.0. **Community Safety Implications**

There are no specific community safety implications none arising from this report.

11.0. **Local Agenda 21 Implications**

There are no specific Local Agenda 21 Implications arising from this report.

12.0. **Planning Implications**

There are none arising from this report.

13.0. **Anti - poverty Implications**

Playschemes are provided free of charge for all children with a high density of play provision in areas of identified need.

14.0. **Social inclusion Implications**

Playschemes endeavour to ensure children have equal access to play and be able to participate in local play opportunities.

Playschemes are open access and very often work with those children and young people who are marginalised.

15.0. **Local Member Support Implications**

Holiday play provision is distributed borough-wide through all wards of Wirral.

16.0. **Background papers**

Summer Holiday Registration Figures (Appendix A)

Full-time Playscheme Registration Figures (Appendix B)

17.0. **Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to note this report.

Howard Cooper
Director of Children's Services

WIRRAL SUMMER HOLIDAY PLAYScheme 2010

Appendix A

Registration Figures- Summer 2010

Scheme	Days	No Of Children Registered	Under 8's Registered	Total Attendance	Daily Average
Eastham	20	106	29	883	44
Greasby	20	56	25	466	23
Heswall	20	135	55	967	48
Higher Bebington	20	210	118	1,814	90
Irby	20	106	24	801	40
Moreton	20	119	15	538	26
New Ferry	20	212	44	1,742	87
Noctorum	20	70	32	431	21
Overton	20	97	20	909	45
Prenton	20	47	9	385	19
Seacombe	20	70	35	955	48
Tam O'Shanter	20	155	N/A	459	22
Vale Park	20	84	23	954	48
West Kirby Westbourne Hall	20	142	40	1,015	50
West Kirby Children's Centre	20	77	N/A	N/A	30
Woodchurch	25	110	31	620	31
Belvidere Centre SN	12	38	N/A	180	15
Wirral Play Council SN	20	89	15	602	30
Total		1,923	515	13,721	717

WIRRAL SUMMER HOLIDAY PLAYScheme 2010

Appendix B

Registration Figures – Summer 2010

Open Access Full-time Playschemes

Centre	No Of Children Registered	Under 8's Registered	Total Attendance
Beechwood	142	N/A	1,657
Charing Cross	163	62	1,368
Gautby Road	102	58	1,554
Leasowe Adventure Playground	N/A	N/A	N/A
Livingstone Street	145	45	841
Woodchurch (summer reg. only)	110	31	360
Total	662	196	5,780