

WIRRAL COUNCIL

YOUTH & PLAY SERVICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

28 OCTOBER 2014

SUBJECT:	WIRRAL SUMMER HOLIDAY PLAYSCHMES 2014
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	JULIA HASSALL
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Cllr TONY SMITH
KEY DECISION	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the summer play opportunities provided through Wirral Play Council Summer Holiday Play Scheme Programme and the Targeted Youth Support Service's play schemes in 2014.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

2.1 Committee is asked to note the report.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

3.1 The report is for information.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Wirral Play Council has been providing free (at the point of delivery) open access play for children in Wirral since 1974, and receives a grant from Wirral Children and Young People's Department to provide summer play schemes, in the school summer holidays throughout Wirral. Children and young people aged 6 to 14 are welcome to attend the play schemes. The Wirral Play Council Executive Committee manages the summer playschemes, with the day to day running organised by the Play Development Officer, supported by administration staff.
- 4.2 To enhance existing provision, Wirral Play Council applied for funds to provide additional summer play schemes. An application to the Lottery Fund supported by the Magenta Umbrella Residents group enabled summer playschemes to run in Prenton and Eastham. Grants from the West Wirral constituency and Public Health Outcomes Fund also supported schemes in West Kirby and Livingstone Street, Birkenhead.
- 4.3 In 2014 Wirral Play Council conducted an operational review in order to maintain an effective service without compromising standards set each year. Therefore, schemes operated four day weeks, to retain a level of geographical coverage. A large percentage of the budget is allocated to playworkers staffing costs and this figure is increasing each year to keep in line with the minimum wage set by the government. The remaining grant is spent on play equipment, transport,

administration and providing the Play Day. Wirral Play Council also received funding of £500 from “Love Wirral”. This supplied each playscheme with tomato and strawberry plants which children grew and sampled for the duration of the schemes.

- 4.4 Recruitment for the summer playworkers started early in the year with posts advertised in February and March. This allowed adequate time to put workers through the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Scheme) process and complete other checks, such as references. The interviews occurred during the Easter break. Every year a number of play workers return. This year, there were 34 returning play workers making up 60% of the overall total of play workers recruited. The returning play workers previous experience is invaluable, as they can offer support and guidance to new play workers.
- 4.5 All new play workers complete a programme of pre summer training that takes place at Wirral Play Council. During their time at the Play Council they undertake a nationally recognised play work qualification, Take 5 for Play, which is delivered in-house. This is a comprehensive introduction to playwork and accredited by the University of Gloucester (Playwork Partnership). In order, for them to complete the course they must complete practical work and a reflective diary, to support their play work practice. Further in-house training provided at Wirral Play Council equips the play workers with working knowledge of legislation, policies and procedures plus practical play skills such as arts and craft, sports and games. Paediatric First Aid was delivered by Coniston, as it is a requirement that each play scheme has at least one qualified First Aider. This year, 11 play workers gained this qualification which enabled every scheme to provide two qualified First aiders.
- 4.6 This year 15 play schemes were run by Wirral Play Council, throughout the Wirral, and number of new venues were utilised, details of all summer play schemes can be found in Appendix 1. The schemes were promoted through the local libraries, schools, community groups, local supermarkets, the Wirral Play Council website and a Facebook page. (In addition, leaflets were distributed to each elected member).

A highlight of the summer was the Play Day. Over 3,000 children and their families came from all over the Wirral to enjoy the free play activities in Birkenhead Park (see Appendix 1). Once again, Wirral Play Day proved to be a major summer attraction in Birkenhead Park.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 Not applicable

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 Not applicable

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The majority of play activities involve children, young people, parents/carers and the wider community as active participants in the consultation processes when planning new and existing summer play schemes.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 Young people from voluntary, community and faith organisations are directly involved in a number of play initiatives.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

9.1 This year 12 play schemes were funded primarily by a grant of £30,000 from Wirral Borough Council.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are none.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The summer holiday programme reflects inclusiveness and promotes equal opportunities and access. Play schemes endeavour to ensure children have equal access to play and are able to participate in local play opportunities. Play schemes are open access and are provided free of charge for all children, with a high density of play provision in areas of identified need.

11.2 No Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for this report.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are none.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are none.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Play schemes by District and Play Day 2014

Appendix 2 - Attendance and Registration Statistics 2014

Playschemes by District and Play Day 2014

Wallasey District

Seacombe Community Centre, Seacombe – 49 registrations

Seacombe Community Centre has now moved through the Asset Transfer process and is managed by the community. The Play Council were unable to use this facility last year, so were delighted to return this year. Local children who attended the scheme consistently returned. The building is a focus within the community, and the play scheme provides much needed provision in the area. Overall, this was a successful playscheme attended by local children who enjoyed a variety of crafts activities and outdoor play which included jewellery making, group games, dressing up and lots of free play using their imagination with the support of enthusiastic playworkers.

Moreton Youth Club, Moreton - 76 registrations

This centre is an ideal space for a playscheme, incorporating a sports hall for sports and a large activity 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. This venue is always well attended and the children produced colourful posters asking for the playscheme to return next year. The children enjoyed dodge ball, bingo, icing cakes and an extensive range of arts and crafts, sports activities, planting and growing plants which they could sample and take home.

The Belvidere Centre, Liscard – 73 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 fully accessible, meets the needs of the children and has a large outdoor space. There is a high level of involvement from both parents and volunteers, which proves invaluable. Overall the children enjoyed themselves and had the opportunity to socially interact with their peers. The total number of registered children remains high year after year. The children attended Wirral Play Day and enjoyed joining in the celebrations.

Harrison Hall, Wallasey Village - 63 registrations

This venue has a great atmosphere. The playworkers have formed good relationships with the children and their parents, along with good support from the committee and the Reverend. The children participated in activities including bracelet making, collage, planting and growing, games and sports, dance and drama, free play, den making, dodge ball, arts and craft and creative challenges. The parents expressed the view and showed interest in running the scheme at half term.

Birkenhead District

Ridgeway Community Centre, Noctorum – 48 registrations

The Ridgeway Community Centre had been fully refurbished and includes a large hall, recreation room and fully equipped kitchen area. Due to the refurbishments ball games could not be played in the large hall, but the children enjoyed table tennis, badminton, pool and a range of parachute games and arts and craft activities, planting and growing strawberries, den making and slack lining. This venue needs a banner style advert outside of the building to promote the playscheme as it is not very visible from the road.

Prenton Rugby Club, Prenton - 95 registrations

This is the third year at the Rugby Club and is becoming an established venue. The registration figures increased and it was well supported by the local community, who value the importance of a play provision in the area. A large banner was displayed at the entrance to the long drive promoting the playscheme. This provided parent and children with times of operation, target age and the open access policy. The scheme was supported by Magenta Housing and the Resident's Umbrella Group, who secured funding for the venue. The children participated in dodge ball, prisoner, cricket, football, rounders, tag-rugby, treasure hunt, den building, creative painting, clay model making, loom bands, face painting, jewellery making, dressing up, planting and growing their own tomatoes and strawberries. The children particularly enjoyed the talent show and parents valued importance of the scheme as a community resource.

Livingstone Community Centre, Birkenhead - 68 registrations

Building on the success of the play scheme delivered in the Whit holidays, a five week scheme was provided for the local community. This is an established venue in the heart of Birkenhead consisting of a large hall, coffee bar area, outside playground and caged sports area. The scheme was regularly attended and the children participated in creative arts and crafts, painting, collage, loom bands, hama beads, sand pictures, clay modelling, producing some interesting sculptures and forms which they could paint the next day. The children showcased their creativity at Play Day by winning first prize for their colourful and imaginative 3D poster "Play is". The indoor sports hall was utilised for dodgeball, prisoner, tennis, footy and parachute games. The children participated in talent shows on the outdoor stage, football, basketball, quick cricket, and used the outdoor space for physical free play. The next scheme is planned for the October half term break.

Wirral Play Council (additional needs scheme) - registrations 78

This playscheme is closed access and provides activities for children with a wide variety of abilities and additional needs including autistic, severe and learning difficulties with eight children attending needing 1-1 special care. This is a closed access play scheme running weekdays from 10.00am until 3.00pm and the facility is fully accessible with sensory room, art room, large hall, quiet space and a small well resourced outdoor space. The play workers are fully trained and deal with every aspect of welfare for the individual children. The scheme is a central hub for children with disabilities who are transported to the facility on escorted mini buses or dropped by their parents. The children like to produce lots of creative art work and last year they won first prize in the canvas competition at Play Day, judged by the Mayor of Wirral. They consistently produce creative art work and this year came a close second in the Play Day poster competition. A large group of the children attended Wirral Play Day and joined in the celebrations.

West Wirral District

Coronation Park, Greasby – 44 Registrations

This playscheme operated from the Greasby Pavilion which has a small modern indoor area for arts and crafts, and being ideally situated in the park, immediate access to a large outdoor area along with a caged area and fixed outdoor table tennis. With the fantastic weather this summer, the outdoor area proved to be a big hit with the children. They participated in a myriad of sports activities, such as basket ball, football, cricket, rounders, netball and den building. Children also enjoyed lots of arts and craft model making and designing loom bands. This venue attracts a core group of local children who attend on a regular basis. This year the play scheme operated from the Greasby Pavilion, which being situated in the park provides immediate access to a large outdoor area. A core of children regularly used the scheme, and enjoyed the activities, such as den building, creative arts & crafts, bracelet making and outdoor sports and games

Overchurch Community Shop, Overchurch – 30 registrations

This playscheme was again located at the Community Shop, which has been refurbished. The venue consists of two small rooms which the staff and children utilise well. They were able to participate in dressing up, drama, dance, creative arts and crafts, loom bands, growing and nurturing plants. The outdoor area is excellent for den building, treasure hunts, slack lining, football rounders, cricket, parachute games and lots more besides. The registrations showed a small increase on last year's figures.

Woodchurch Leisure Centre, Woodchurch - 60 registrations

This venue was originally to be held at the Fender Youth Club, but due to health & safety reasons it was moved down stairs to the hall in the leisure centre. The staff and children adapted well and utilised the indoor and outdoor areas fully. The children participated in a variety of activities including face painting, drama, Woody's got Talent, dodgeball, cricket, football, painting, collage, creative free play, planting and growing tomatoes, strawberries and pansies which they could take home at the end of the summer.

West Kirby Youth Hub – 75 Registrations

The play scheme was based at West Kirby Youth Hub in the Concourse. Although, lacking any outdoor space, the facility is well resourced with a spacious indoor area. The playscheme has almost doubled its registration figures from last year, with the children regularly returning on a daily basis. The children enjoyed a myriad of activities including; creative art and crafts, model making, junk modelling, loom bands, threads, talent shows, drama, dance, active sports, pool, table tennis, parachute games, competitions, board games and lots opportunities for large interactive team games. Children also experienced being gardeners for the summer and planted and grew tomatoes and strawberry plants. They watered and nurtured the plants, by the third week they were able to taste what they had grown. Again, children and parents gave positive feedback about play scheme and the impact for the area.

South Wirral District

Eastham Youth Hub, Eastham - 126 Registrations

A large venue with two indoor halls, coffee bar, plus an outdoor space including purpose built sports pitch. This offered the chance for children to explore and enjoy the outdoors in a safe environment and engage in free play. A well attended scheme, with a number of children moving on to the Youth Hub. This transitional link with the Youth Hub enables a seamless service to be delivered for children and young people in the area. The scheme was funded by the lottery with support of Magenta Housing and the Wirral Residents Umbrella group. The children participated in a wide range of activities including, creative arts and crafts, loom bands, painting competitions, collage, clay model making, paper dresses, drama, dance, dressing up, talent show and competitions. The outdoor space was utilised fully, children and staff joining in the water games, rounders, football, basketball, cricket, den building, slack lines, parachute games, and traditional games, including stuck in the mud, sharks/seaweed and hide and seek. The play workers organised treasure hunts and facilitated loose parts sessions. The children also planted and grew their tomatoes and strawberries. They were also each given a pansy plant, which was their responsibility to water for the duration of the playscheme. After four weeks, they took these home to either re-pot or replant in the garden. The local parents expressed their gratitude by contacting Wirral Play Council to congratulate them on a successful scheme provided by an excellent staff team.

Bebington Youth Club, New Ferry – 45 registrations

This is the fourth year at the Bebington Youth Club and great links have been forged with the staff, children and parents, with many of the children that have attended our

playschemes moving on to the youth club. Bebington Youth Club was operational for two days a week and Courtney Park Community Centre was utilised for the other two days. This was reflected in the lower registration numbers. However this is a special venue where the children and staff feel they belong and can explore and expand their play experiences. They enjoyed sports activities including slack lining, prisoner, dodgeball, the spider web challenge, the cube, football and cricket along with arts and creative crafts including, loom bands, models, collage, threads etc. The link with the youth club was reinforced by a young male volunteer, who has been a great ambassador for the club and the children. The parents and children expressed their wishes that their club should remain open and the summer playscheme should return there next year.

Courtney Park, Rock Ferry – 19 registrations

This venue operated a split week with the Bebington Youth club resulting in a two day week, and again this is reflected in the registrations. The venue has a small indoor space which was utilised for arts and crafts, board games, reading, and quiz games. The outdoor area is fully enclosed by the surrounding houses and is a fantastic space for all sports and large group participation games. Courtney Park Playscheme was organised by a group of volunteers, with qualified support from Wirral Play Council staff.

St Barnabas Village Centre, Bromborough - 59 registrations

This was a new venue located in the centre of Bromborough Village. The previous year the scheme had to re-locate because the venue was not fit for purpose anymore. The centre consisted of a large hall and kitchen area indoors, with a large grassed area that could be accessed by crossing the enclosed car park. The children participated in arts and creative crafts, loom bands, friendship bracelets, drama, dance, role play, dressing up, den building, treasure hunt, parachute games, football, netball, rounders and cricket.

Bebington High Sports College, Bebington - 125 registrations

This was the second year at this venue and it continues to be one of the most attended playschemes. There is access to a large dining hall, a large outside area, which all have great amenities. The children enjoyed activities such as arts and creative crafts model making, poster design, competitions, drama, dance, loom bands, dodgeball, cricket, parachute games, prisoner, rounders, netball and large games. The playworkers and children fully enjoyed this playscheme, and the telephone calls from parents passing on congratulations to the staff, confirmed the playscheme as a valuable local resource.

Play Day – Wednesday 6th August, Birkenhead Park

This year's Play Day took place in Birkenhead Park on Wednesday 6th August. The day requires organisation, planning and preparation, including assembling large marquees, shelters, positioning barriers, setting up activities by a dedicated team of playworkers, as well as ensuring the site operates within health and safety requirements. Extra toilets and refuge bins were supplied to cope with the additional demand. The Mayor of Wirral, Councillor Steve Foulkes officially opened Play Day by judging this year's banners, based on the theme, "What does play mean to me?" The banners were produced by children from each playscheme and were displayed for the public in the Pavilion gallery for the whole week.

During the day, children could access all the free activities on offer. Play Day activities included slack lining, the big art attack, inflatable castles, drum circle, the straw bales experience, talent show tent, art and crafts, face painting, water slide, climbing wall, body zorbs and the large soft play construction in the game zone. Large queues formed throughout the day and were managed well by the staff. The day was a great success and the weather was fantastic, with 3,000 Children and their families in attendance. Other

agencies who provided activities and supported Play Day included Youth Support Service, Park Rangers, Police, Fire Brigade, Sports Development Staff, Barnardo's, Magenta Housing, NHS Live Well camper van, Surestart, Soccer Loco, Tracey's Stories and St. John's Ambulance. It was reported in the Birkenhead Park news that Wirral Play Day was a great success and the most attended activity on the calendar for 2014.

Summary

This year, there were 16 play schemes with 1,038 children registered with attendances totalling 4,751 children. The service endeavours to provide an inclusive service and 58 children with additional needs attended open access provision, as well as 73 on closed access schemes. Play Day was celebrated in conjunction with National Play Day, over 3,000 children and parents attended the event in August at Birkenhead Park.

The standard of applicants applying for temporary summer playworker jobs remained high and there was a significant increase in the number of job applications. A high percentage of summer workers return to work the following summer, and develop careers working with children in the professions of early years, Playwork, child care workers, and teachers.

Comments from Children, Parents and Summer Play Workers

The Play Council asked children, parents and summer workers their opinion of the summer programme and here is a sample of some of their comments:

Children said:

"The playscheme helped me to make friends and learn cool facts and skills that I can use at home and in school. We planted strawberry and tomato plants and we got to look after them by taking turns to water them over the four weeks."

"The four weeks I spent at the scheme helped me to gain confidence making me more confident now that I am back in school. I got to try a lot of new things in the scheme that made me see what I am good at. I have started to play for my school rounder's team and I practice my drawing skills every night after school."

Parents said: *"A visible and practical support for families who operate on a low budget"*

"A safe and friendly environment for young people to relax and play"

"Coordinated and well planned sessions that engage with the young"

"Encourage young people to be creative, interact with others and develop relational skills."

"I believe the playscheme is more than important, it is essential and significant. To lose this vital community programme would, in my opinion, be detrimental to the continued well-being of community life and confidence"

Summer Play Workers said:

"This was my first interview and job in 2012 and it changed my life, I was unsure whether working with children was something I wanted to do! But after working for the Wirral Play Council I have volunteered for community outreach projects and now I am going on to do my PGCE"

“This was the first time I have worked for the Wirral Play Council, I would be more than happy to work every summer. I suffer from anxiety and mild depression, however in my role as a playworker, I regained confidence in myself and I could see the impact this playscheme has on the children’s holistic development”.

“Throughout the summer, I observed children evolve physically, mentally and socially, I saw first hand children interacting with people and activities they may never have had the confidence to do before”.

“Having worked for the Wirral Play Council as a playworker, as well as having worked within a number of local schools, I know the importance of play in a child’s development. The Wirral Play Council ticks all of the boxes and beyond! Allowing all children access to a high quality play in a safe constructive environment in which they can flourish, regardless of problems they face outside”.

Attendance and Registration Statistics 2014

Summer Holiday Play Schemes

Scheme	Days	No of Children Registered	Under 8's Registered	Total Attendance	Daily Average
Bromborough	15	59	16	274	18
Eastham	19	126	28	1325	70
Greasby	15	44	13	268	18
Livingstone Street	16	68	29	511	34
Higher Bebington	15	30	30	709	47
Moreton	15	76	14	626	42
New Ferry	8	45	15	353	44
Noctorum	15	48	18	284	19
Overchurch	15	30	9	247	16
Prenton	19	95	18	707	37
Seacombe Children's Centre	15	49	18	331	22
Rock Ferry	7	19	7	95	14
West Kirby	19	75	24	570	30
Woodchurch	15	60	20	254	17
Wallasey Village	15	63	23	435	29
Belvidere Centre	12	73	32	875	73
Wirral Play Council Special Needs	16	78	N/A	624	32
Total		1038	314	8488	N/A

Open Access Full-time Play schemes

Centre	No of Children Registered	Under 8's Registered	Total Attendance
Beechwood	126	47	2782
Gautby Road	84	33	4252
Leasowe Adventure Playground	153	60	6018
Total	363	140	13052