

# Lincolnshire Play Strategy and Policy

2014-2016

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## **Summary**

Content to be added

Director of Children's Services and Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

First Draft

## What is our vision for play in Lincolnshire?

Underpinning the strategy is Lincolnshire County Council's recognition that play is the single most important factor in a child's development. It is also a basic human right as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The right for children and young people to play is proclaimed in Article 12 and 31 of the Convention to which the United Kingdom is a signatory.

On 1 February 2013 the UNCRC announced the adoption of a 'General Comment' which reaffirms its commitment to children's play, emphasising the importance of Article 31 and clearly defining the responsibilities of governments. It also puts an emphasis on the role of unstructured or 'free' play which is facing increasing challenges.

Article 31 recognises;

- The right of children to rest and leisure, to play and recreational activities.
- To respect and promote the right of children to fully participate in cultural and artistic life.
- To provide appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

Children's right to play is further supported by Article 12 (right to be consulted), Article 13 (right to freedom of expression) and Article 15 (right to freedom of association and assembly)

### Aims of the strategy

The Lincolnshire play strategy aim is that

**Every child and young person in Lincolnshire has the right to safe, accessible and exciting places to play that reflect the needs of the local community and empowers them for life.**

Lincolnshire County Council's commitment to play in this strategy ensures that they and all agencies and organisations are working together under shared principles to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people in the County.

The strategy draws together lots of services in the County under common aims for play, will encourage them to adopt the strategy and recognise the contribution that quality play experiences can make to the broader aims of the Children and Young Peoples' Plan and its linked policies and strategies.

## **Barriers to play - challenges**

Survey evidence undertaken for the strategy in 2010 from the districts and the public nationally through the National Playday survey in 2013 is that there are still barriers to play for children;

- Concerns about traffic, stranger danger and bullying
- Intolerant neighbours
- Parents fear they will be judged if they let their children out to play unsupervised
- Lack of time to play for children because of other commitments such as clubs and activities
- Parents don't value open access unsupervised play
- The increasingly formal school day places pressure on free play
- Lack of inclusive play spaces
- Lack of dedicated community spaces
- Increasingly play provision has a cost such as holiday activities, child care

## **What are benefits of a Strategy for Play to Lincolnshire**

- To have a clear vision and understanding of why play matters and what good play provision looks like.
- Since coalition Lincolnshire is one of the few local authorities to continue to support and advocate for play through its play forum involving 7 districts and partners and the play strategy
- Decisions made that affect children and young people's play opportunities such as transport, planning, parks and open spaces will work to the values and principles of the play strategy facilitating improved partnership working.
- To give children, young people and their families a voice in the kind of play services they would like to see.
- Recognise the important contribution play services make to the wider local agenda for children, young people, families and communities
- Prioritise play needs so as to take maximum advantage of funding opportunities when they become available
- Improve children and young people's opportunities to quality play experiences and opportunities to experience risk

## **The meaning of 'play' and why it is important**

The term 'play' within the Play Strategy describes what children and young people do when they follow their own ideas and interests in their own way and for their own reasons.

Playing is a primary need for children, closely linked to their innate need to express themselves, to explore, learn about and make sense of their world.

Play allows children to move naturally through each stage of their development. It helps them to learn what they cannot be taught.

The benefits of play derive from children choosing and doing it for them. The adult role in play provision is to enable rather than to direct.

The key characteristics of play are fun, uncertainty, challenge, flexibility and non-productivity. Together, these factors contribute to the enjoyment it produces and the consequent incentive to continue to play.

Older children and teenagers tend not to use the terms 'play' or 'playing' about themselves. But they have a similar need for places to go where they can enjoy their own informal recreational time and things to do that reflect their own social and cultural lives.

*"We don't say we are playing but I suppose any time we are just doing stuff we like is playing, hanging about with mates, kicking a ball about – anything really where we can do what we want."*

## **Why play matters for children and young people - what they think**

*"Play is what I do when everyone else has stopped telling me what to do"*

*"Play is fun. Play is making a mess and being with my friends. When it's playtime I can run and be noisy instead of being quiet. I like messing about with my mates and no one telling me what to do."*

*"Play makes me happy."*

*"I get to play with awesome things and it takes the stress away if you are mardy after school"*

(Children in Lincolnshire attending play ranger sessions)

The scope of the Lincolnshire Play Strategy and this guidance document encompasses the informal, freely chosen leisure and recreational activities of all children and young people and does not prescribe age ranges on the understanding that all children need and like to play and benefit from doing so.

## **Definition of playwork - how can adults make Play better**

Playwork is the provision by adults of an environment and opportunities that enable children and young people to engage in play. These opportunities support and enhance social, physical, intellectual, cultural, creative and emotional development.

A common misconception is that playwork is easy, unskilled work. Playwork is a complex discipline requiring highly skilled workers who need to be trained.

Playworkers choose an intervention style that enables children and young people to extend their play. They need to balance risk with the developmental benefit and well being of children.

## **The values and principles that inform Lincolnshire's decisions about play**

Children and young people must be central to the process and their needs, opinions and reactions taken into account.

There must be consultation and development at all stages and children and young people must see the connection between our policies and what is actually going to happen in practice.

Children and young people's control of their own play activity is a crucial factor in enriching their experience and enhancing their development. Play provision will be based on the principle of empowering children and increasing their choices.

Play empowers children and young people; it affirms and supports their right to make choices, allowing them to discover their own solutions and to develop at their own pace.

All children and young people have a right to be able to have access to play environments that are challenging but safe.

Play should offer children and young people opportunities to extend their exploration and understanding of the wider world and therefore physical, social and cultural settings beyond their immediate experience.

Adults and children involved in play should always promote equality of opportunity and access for all children and young people and seek the development of anti-discriminatory practice and positive attitudes to those who are disadvantaged.

Play opportunities should always be provided within the current legislative framework relevant to children and young people's rights, their health, safety and well being.



## **Free play**

There are many types of Play Provision both supervised and unsupervised. The focus of this Strategy is “Free” play. The Play Partnership believes that the best Play opportunities are free to access, free of charge and most important of all freely chosen

## **Where does play take place?**

Play does not just occur in designated play areas and specific clubs or schemes. Play can and does happen almost anywhere that children and young people have the free time to choose their own activities. Play happens on street corners, school playing fields, homes, gardens, grass verges, afterschool clubs, youth clubs, parks, woods, town centres and in fact almost anywhere children and young people have space and freedom to Play. Play takes place on journeys between locations and is not just restricted to designated areas.

## **Why play is vital to our children and young people – the case for Play**

### **What do we mean by all children?**

We believe that all children have the same fundamental right to quality play opportunities regardless of culture, ethnic background, disability, learning difficulties, gender and social/economic circumstances. We also recognise the rights of children who are looked after and young carers, children who may be fulfilling the role of a carer in their family. When we talk about all children we mean that all children will be listened to and involved in the planning of play opportunities that meet their individual needs.

### **Diversity**

Increasing diversity in the County makes it essential that the Play Strategy meets the needs of all children. By making sure that key agencies are part of the partnership we constantly strive to address the needs of all children, including those who may be hard to reach. Equality of Play for all children is a core belief of the Play Partnership. The Play Strategy strives at all time to adhere to the Social Model of Disability which means that disabled children and young people do not have a disability; rather they are disabled by society's failure to provide for their individual needs.

### **The value and significance of play for children and young people**

The Children Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities and their 'relevant partners' to cooperate in the making of arrangements to improve well-being for local children. The *Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes framework* is still relevant, and the five outcomes set out by the framework reflect areas where children can be supported to achieve more.

Play is fundamental to these areas and contributes to development in complex and comprehensive ways.

- Being Healthy
- Staying Safe
- Enjoying and Achieving
- Making a Positive Contribution
- Economic Well-being

## **Being Healthy**

Walking and playing provide children with more physical activity than most other events. And encouraging children to be out of the house will increase their physical activity<sup>1</sup> Play is recognised in a number of DOH reports<sup>2</sup> for the contribution it makes to improving children's fitness, health and emotional well being. It also develops essential life skills such as teamwork and co-ordination, providing a basis for participation in sport and a diversionary activity for young people from alcohol and drugs.

## **Staying Safe**

Play is a key element in children learning to appreciate, assess and take calculated risks, which is fundamental to the development of confidence and abilities in childhood. Children seek out opportunities for risk-taking and it is the responsibility of play provisions to respond with exciting and stimulating environments that balance risks appropriately<sup>3</sup>. Good play provision can reduce anti social behaviour and support safer neighbourhoods.

## **Enjoying and Achieving**

Learning through play contributes to problem solving, language and literacy skills and children develop self-esteem and a positive outlook on life through the enjoyment of play.

Play complements schooling by providing an opportunity for children and young people to review, absorb and give personal meaning to what they learn in formal education settings. All too often the emphasis has been on the achieving aspect of this outcome whereas play focuses on the enjoyment factor with achievement being a secondary benefit. Outcomes based on the enjoyment and quality of experience is almost universally fulfilled by positive play experiences.

## **Making a Positive Contribution**

Play empowers children and young people with community skills and confidence to participate in decision making around play services and delivery and is relevant for school councils, youth forums and youth parliament and peer mentoring schemes in schools.

## **Achieve Economic Well Being**

Play is a primary factor in a child's self esteem which can directly affect their ability to achieve economic well being in later life. Also through play basic social inclusion and economic skills are learnt

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1 Mackett Roger Professor 2004, Making children's lives more active Centre for Transport Studies University College London (publisher) 2004

2 Department of Health Choosing health ; making health choices easier, Stationary Office (publisher) 2004

3 National Playing Fields Association, Children's Play Council, Playlink 2000 Best Play Department For Culture Media and Sport 2000

## Why play matters for families and communities

There is growing awareness by parents of the importance of play and the need for better access to play opportunities particularly outdoors. The National Playday survey 2011 and the rethinking childhood survey evidence growing parental concern about children's health, well being and quality of life.

Work in Lincolnshire with New Linx Housing Association is a good case study example of how play;

- Families benefit from healthier, happier children
- Promotes community cohesion and pride in the community
- Diversionsary and positive activities in the holidays
- Makes children more visible in public spaces and more likely to use them where there is good play provision
- Brings children and parents and community members together to play
- Promotes community safety and supports self reliance
- More opportunities for them to be engaged in conversations about local services such as children's centres and for these providers to access new users to support better health and wellbeing
- Promotes opportunities for volunteering, learning and training
- Brings the community together to access funding for play provision

88% of parents say that children playing out helps families to get to know each other in the community

81% of adults believe that children playing outside helps improve community spirit

(Play England Playful Communities)

***'Every parent understands the importance of a secure environment for their children. Spaces where they can play...where different generations can meet, binding the community together.'***

(Nick Clegg, 2010)

## What has informed this plan?

### The need for a revised strategy

There has been a play strategy for Lincolnshire since 2006 and each of the 7 districts has also had their own play policies and strategic aims and objectives for play.

Play developments across the County were supported through play pathfinder money to build 22 new and exciting play sites and many free local and accessible play opportunities through the Big Lottery Fund through the children's play initiative.

Since the coalition government took office in 2010 the comprehensive spending review and subsequent austerity reforms have dramatically affected the government policy and resourcing of play.

The 10 year Big Lottery play programme strategy led by Play England to make neighborhoods, streets and green spaces safer and more suited for children's healthy outdoor play has been dropped.

Money previously ring-fenced for extended services has been given back to schools.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) has been rebranded as the Department for Education (DfE), emphasis has shifted to educational achievement and the terminology around the Every Child Matters agenda and 'the five outcomes' has changed to "help children achieve more"

This makes for challenging times for children's play and play related services. The need for a revised strategy is therefore necessary to underpin the county's clear commitment to play and its contribution to deliver children, family and community services.

### Positive outcomes to date

In 2009 Lincolnshire received £1,136,805 of Playbuilder funding delivering 29 new and significantly improved play sites.<sup>4</sup>

£1,548,421 funding was also received from the Big Lottery's children's play initiative programme to fund free, open access play opportunities for children and young people across the county. Over sources of revenue for play came through WREN, Section 106, community grants, PCT and Youth Capital Fund.

Lincolnshire has a Children and Young People's Plan for 2013–2016. This identifies commitments to enhance aspiration and well-being so that every child in every part of the County should achieve their potential and play can contribute to the outcomes.

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<sup>4</sup> *The Play Strategy World Class Places (HMG, 2009)* set out the former Government's vision for improving quality of place. It emphasised the importance of green infrastructure and advocated the benefits of outdoor play and everyday interaction with nature, setting out expectations on this for public and open space planning and housing developments.

The Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) reflect these commitments within plans for spatial and community development and the infrastructure that supports it.

Backed by £235,000,000 of dedicated investment for local play facilities funding was allocated through the BIG lottery programme to 30 play pathfinder and 122 Playbuilder authorities in England. By 2011 there were 3,000 new or refurbished, free play areas and at least 30 fully staffed adventure playgrounds or play parks.

They enable children and their families to take an active role in the development of local play provision and the design of neighbourhoods is relevant to local councils' duty to cooperate with partners and across services, and the duty to involve and empower communities.

The Lincolnshire Play forum partnership continues to run and all 7 districts are members supporting play and play initiatives across the whole County at district town and village levels and it also include the involvement of voluntary organisations.

### **The Lincolnshire Play Forum**

In order to really make a difference to children and young people's lives, all 7 districts and several organisations in Lincolnshire have joined forces to create the Lincolnshire Play Forum. These organisations share a single common goal of making life better for the children and young people of Lincolnshire. The creation of the Lincolnshire Play Forum has been a positive way of supporting and sharing play information, helping to develop policy in a non-coercive and sustainable way.

The work of the group since coalition continues so whilst the climate is now radically different and play is polarized and isolated, we are encouraged that the forum is still engaged with the Government and the officers who work for Government. Our links through other regional associations and Play England remain pivotal in shaping play policy and direction nationally. The group is also not limited to its current members. Anyone who shares the common goals and agrees to the statements and policies within this document is welcome to join the group and help move Play forward in Lincolnshire

### **List of Play Partnership Organisations**

Active Nation  
Boston Borough Council  
Children's Links  
City of Lincoln Council  
Community Links  
East Lindsey District Council  
Family Places  
Gainsborough Adventure Playground Association  
Hartsholme Cricket Club  
Home Start  
Leisure Connection  
Lincolnshire County Council  
Lincolnshire Sports Partnership  
NHS Lincolnshire  
New Linx Housing Association  
North Kesteven District Council

South Holland District Council  
South Kesteven District Council  
West Lindsey District Council

## **Play policy context - National**

Nick Hurd MP<sup>5</sup> at the Cabinet Office has taken a personal interest in the play sector. He recognizes the cross cutting nature of play and the contribution it could make to the development and resilience of children, he sees the role of play bringing communities together and raising the wellbeing of families and their children.

Play England was part of the Free Time Consortium (FTC), as are Children's Links on behalf of Lincolnshire; a collective of local and specialist organisations working together to increase freedom to play successfully. With Social Action Fund money from the Cabinet Office they have created 1,200,000 million play opportunities, and recruited over 47,000 volunteers.

Projects have seen children and young people who are healthier and more active, families that feel more confident to let their children play out and communities that value play.

## **Children's Act 2004**

This requirement to support children's play and young people's recreation was underpinned by Section 10 of the Children Act 2004, which placed a duty on the local authority and their partners to cooperate to improve outcomes for children and young people through the *Every Child Matters* outcomes framework

The role of Children's Commissioner currently Maggie Atkinson, was created by the Children Act 2004 and is there to promote the views of children and young people.

Initiatives such as National Take Over Day and the comments on article 31 of the UN Convention for Children's Rights ensure that adults listen to children and uphold young people's rights to play and recreation as being essential to children's health and well-being.

## **Children and young person's act 2008**

Content to be added

## **Play and health**

Play is one of the most effective ways to keep children active and healthy, and research provides convincing evidence of the benefits of play for mental health. Play is an important part of the children and young people's health strategy, *Healthy lives, brighter futures*.

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<sup>5</sup> Conservative, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Charities, Social Enterprise and Volunteering at the Cabinet Office

Tackling obesity is a national priority in the NHS. The cross-government strategy *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives* and the Department of Health guidance, *Be Active, Be Healthy* promote the importance of play in children's lives.

*Play4Life* training courses in Lincolnshire supports parents, carers and volunteers with children aged 0-5 years on how to play both indoors and outdoors, creating games and resources at home, low cost play and local activities, including advice on healthy eating and nutrition.

## **Play and the environment**

Children being visible in neighborhoods are an indicator for stronger communities and support healthier lifestyles for families.

Statutory guidance through the local authority transport plan promotes the integration of transport with wider corporate priorities at a local level such as encouraging active lifestyles and improving road safety. It gives a high priority to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and users of public spaces and supports more child-friendly travel for safe routes to school and play spaces.

The culture of seeing streets simply as a means of providing for traffic, to one of emphasising their community and place function has been evident through lowering speed limits and street play schemes that close off streets to provide improved play opportunities for children particularly in urban high density areas.

The strategy recognises that children want to play "freely" in all kinds of spaces that are not always designated for play. This includes woods, forest play and natural play and other assets some have been mapped and identified as spaces and opportunities for play or if not mapped looking at ways in which they could be promoted.

## **Planning and housing policy guidance**

National planning guidance explicitly recognises the need for dedicated outdoor space for play and recreation. Local authorities assess the needs and opportunities for different types of open space and recreational facilities, including play space for children. Section 106 interest has been used more judiciously to develop neighborhood play areas rather than very local play areas across Lincolnshire where it can be match funded to benefit the most people.

In Lincolnshire Play forum members are using guidance from Design for Play which sets out the principles for creating imaginative, innovative, and stimulating play spaces. The criteria suggest what good play spaces might look like and how they can be evaluated.

Play provision should provide opportunities for:

### **A varied and interesting physical environment**

Examples: Things at different levels, spaces of different sizes, places to hide, trees and bushes as well as things that have been made, places to inspire mystery and imagination.

### **Challenge in relation to the physical environment**



Examples: activities which test the limits of capabilities, rough and tumble, sports and games, chase.

### **Playing with the natural elements - earth, water, fire, air**

Examples: campfires, digging, playing snowballs, flying kites.

### **Movement - e.g. running, jumping, rolling, climbing, balancing**

Examples: beams and ropes, soft mats, bike riding, juggling equipment, ladders, space

### **Manipulating natural and fabricated materials**

Examples: materials for art, cooking, making and mending of all kinds; building dens; making concoctions; using tools; access to bits and pieces of all kinds.

### **Stimulation of the five senses**

Examples: music making, places where shouting is fine, quiet places, different colours and shapes, dark and bright spaces, cooking on a campfire, rotting leaves, a range of food and drink, objects that are soft, prickly, flexible, large and small.

### **Experiencing change in the natural and built environment**

Examples: experiencing the seasons through access to the outdoor environment; opportunities to take part in building, demolishing, or transforming the environment.

### **Social interactions**

Examples: being able to choose whether and when to play alone or with others, to negotiate, co-operate, compete and resolve conflicts. Being able to interact with individuals and groups of different ages, abilities, interests, gender, ethnicity and culture.

### **Playing with identity**

Examples: dressing up, role play, performing, taking on different kinds of responsibility.

### **Experiencing a range of emotions**

Examples: opportunities to be powerful/powerless, scared/confident, liked/disliked, in/out of control, brave/cowardly.

### **Safe communities and community engagement**

Sustainable play spaces and community action are the way forward since the comprehensive spending review and how communities can be given real control over local decisions and services. The duty on local councils to involve local people in key decisions has encouraged authorities to embed a culture of engagement, including when regenerating or providing new play space. The strategy recognises the support needed by communities from local government and the voluntary sector for advice, training and guidance to provide play opportunities in neighborhoods around fundraising and volunteering.

Underpinning the Play Strategy is a vision of community empowerment whereby local children, young people, families and residents are integral to the shaping, quality and long-term future of play provision. Whenever communities are asked about their levels of satisfaction with their neighborhoods, better play and recreational opportunities for children and young people are a consistently strong priority

## **Workforce development**

Fear of strangers, anti-social behavior and bullying are cited as key reasons for children not playing outside. Staffed play provision and volunteer supervision can allay many of these concerns. The DCSF 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy describes playworkers as an important part of the children's workforce. The Lincolnshire play strategy supports the development of knowledge and skills within the wider workforce such as local planners and highways officers to enable children's play in public space.

## **Health and safety**

*'Children need and want to take risks when they play. Play provision aims to respond to these needs and wishes by offering children stimulating, challenging environments for exploring and developing their abilities. In doing this, play provision aims to manage the level of risk so that children are not exposed to unacceptable risks of death or serious injury.'*

*(Play Safety Forum)*

*Managing Risk in Play Provision 2013* has been revised and was endorsed by the Health and Safety Executive. The guidance sets out a proportionate approach to risk management that articulates the balance between the benefit and the need for children to play against the duty of play providers to provide safe play. The strategy adopts the play safety forums managing risk in play provision guidance.

## **0-5 services**

Play is central to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for all early years providers working with children aged from birth to 5 years. The EYFS acknowledges that young children learn best through play in a safe environment, with encouragement and support from parents and practitioners. Lincolnshire's 48 children's centres have a key role in ensuring local parents and carers know about local play opportunities. As hubs of local services, they are well placed to link with local play providers or to develop additional free play provision themselves. Children's centre services vary according to location and need with all centres offering activities for families and children and carers now up to 18.

## **5-11 services**

The *Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum* by Sir Jim Rose, highlighted the importance of play extending and building upon the active, play-based learning of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) across the transition to primary education, especially into Key Stage 1. Play based learning particularly supports children who find formal learning and testing challenging. The school day should allow time for children to relax and play freely

with their friends which also supports their physical and mental wellbeing. Young children learn best through play and, as they get older, play supports and enriches their learning. Children learn best if teaching is creative and enjoyable. In school, time and space for play and outdoor learning is as important as formal teaching. School grounds should be good places to play.

Opportunities for play are an important feature of after school provision as part of the varied menu of activities and the childcare elements of the core offer of services. The county's schools are using accredited outdoor learning programmes such as Outdoor play and learning (OPAL) and John Muir conservation awards to achieve this.

### **13-19 youth services**

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires local authorities to secure sufficient educational and recreational leisure time activities for young people aged 13 to 19. *Aiming High for Young People 2007 the 10 year strategy* to foster a more positive approach to young people across society and within communities with a focus on those most at risk. The emphasis is on increasing their participation in quality positive activities. Actively engaging children and young people in the design and development of their own play and recreational spaces, alongside local residents, can engender a greater sense of community and intergenerational tolerance and respect. Respecting and incorporating children's views results in more appropriate provision, helps them develop their skills and knowledge, and can help develop motivation and participation in society

### **Play and health**

Play is one of the most effective ways to keep children active and healthy and research provides convincing evidence of the benefits of play for mental health. Play is an important part of the children and young people's health strategy, *Healthy lives, brighter futures*. Tackling obesity is a national priority in the NHS. The cross-government strategy *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives* and the Department of Health guidance, *Be Active, Be Healthy* promote the importance of play in children's lives.

*Play4Life* training courses in Lincolnshire supports parents, carers and volunteers with children aged 0-5 years on how to play both indoors and outdoors, creating games and resources at home, low cost play and local activities including advice on healthy eating and nutrition.

## Local context

### How play links to local priorities and policies

#### Children and Young People's Plan 2013 – 2016

The Lincolnshire Children & Young People's Plan is the single, overarching strategic plan for all services which directly support children and young people in the county.

The vision is "that every child in every part of the County should achieve their potential". Lincolnshire Council's Principles are:-

- Early Intervention and Prevention
  - Strong universal services, providing early action and intensive support to vulnerable children and young people
- Safeguarding and Best Start in Life
  - Ensuring children are safe in every environment
  - Encouraging community responsibility for safeguarding
- Aspiration and Well Being
  - Ensuring all those working with children champion the importance of aspiration
  - Develop self-esteem, self-belief and resilience in all children, young people and their families
- Learning and Achievement
  - All children being the best that they can be
  - Closing the gap between vulnerable groups and children living in disadvantaged communities
- Best Use of Resources
  - Integrating delivery with a focus on outcomes, life chances and opportunities
  - Effective use of resources to provide better services locally
  - Empower communities, creating opportunities for them to engage

#### Links to other Lincolnshire strategies

Sustainable community's strategy

Local area agreements

District Local strategic partnerships

Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013 – 2018

4<sup>th</sup> Lincolnshire local transport plan

Cultural Strategy 2010 - 2015

Inspiration to participation – sport and physical activity strategy 2013-2017

## **Play developments in Lincolnshire**

Content to be added

## **Issues identified in Lincolnshire relating to play**

Key issues are

- Lack of opportunities for children with disabilities
- If activities are changed the cost of them can be prohibitive for families
- Reduced levels of government funding for play

## **Current provision provided in Lincolnshire by Districts**

### **Play sites**

Currently play site numbers across the county Boston 41, East Lindsey 51, North Kesteven 35, South Holland 30, South Kesteven 68 and 4 formal parks, Lincoln (content to be added), West Lindsey (content to be added).

### **Informal play provision**

National play day is promoted, celebrated and recognised in every district every year With free play activities organised to support families' children and young people in local communities

Boston Borough Council, South Holland, North Kesteven, South Kesteven District Councils run holiday programmes of activities delivered through contractors across their districts that include freeplay opportunities and chances to get outdoors and get physical every year. In Boston children attending in 2012/13 were 5,915 rising to 8,000 in 2013/14.

East Lindsey, New Linx Housing Association (now Waterloo Housing) and Children's Links have worked together since 2012 to deliver free play sessions with 2,000 children attending across 19 sites in communities with high levels of deprivation and ensuring schemes are delivered for more people to access play provision on their doorstep

Open spaces and parks are advertised and promoted by individual parishes and the destination play sites on district websites and Play England mapping for play. Informal spaces for play and woodland play sites are being mapped in Boston

### **Play strategies and forum groups**

The County Play forum group meets quarterly to raise the profile and issues about play. Play strategies for District councils have been refreshed since 2012 for Lincoln, South Holland and Boston. In Lincoln this identified £935,000 of play area improvements and identified community aspiration around play.

Local strategic partnerships will develop action plans for play and recreation that link to the play strategy in North Kesteven.

Revised standards for play have seen priority use for Section 106 money.

Partnership working in Boston and South Holland developed a joint sports provision and open spaces assessment to better inform future planning policy.

Boston Borough Council hosts a play forum group that meets quarterly

## **Play training**

Temporary play ranger posts have been created through the work of summer schemes and holiday activities. In East Lindsey in the last 5 years a total of 49 Play Rangers have been employed, they were provided with relevant training and guidance.

Positive play training is delivered to junior schools for lunchtime supervisors in Boston

Parent volunteers are trained to deliver play schemes in their communities in Lincoln, RAF Scampton in 2014 supported with community funding.

The community initiative team at North Kesteven supports local communities with advice so that they can be more self sufficient in providing for their leisure and play needs.

V card and Lincolnshire volunteer card are supporting volunteering

Play for life programme has engaged 105 parents to play

## **Partnership working**

Partnerships across the districts have been built to meet increasing demand and needs for play services.

Play funding has been a catalyst for community development

Voluntary centre services and local parish councils are crucial partners in the development of play and leisure services.

Since Big Lottery Funding there has been a shift in thought about the criteria used to evaluate play spaces and the provision of play

## **Local partners and other organisation providing play**

Action for Children

Children's Links – children's centre support, volunteer card, Play for Life, play

Waterloo Housing

Community Lincs

Gainsborough Adventure Playground

Freelance play providers

## Our vision and priorities

### Our vision for play in Lincolnshire

Every child and young person in Lincolnshire has the right to safe, accessible and exciting places to play that reflect the needs of the local community and empowers them for life.

### Our fundamental objectives for play

- 1 Raise the profile of good quality play
- 2 Develop partnerships to link play into all agendas
- 3 Create the opportunities for a range of local play for all children and young people

Profile	Partnerships	Product
<b>Objective 1</b>	<b>Objective 2</b>	<b>Objective 3</b>
<p><b>Raise the profile of play</b></p> <p>Play providers and commissioners know the value and benefits of play</p>	<p><b>Develop partnerships to link play into all agendas</b></p> <p>Working to improve quality play provision and promote best practise</p>	<p><b>Create the opportunities for a range of local play for all children and young people</b></p> <p>Working for accessible, challenging play environments and opportunities</p>
<b>Objective 1a</b>	<b>Objective 2a</b>	<b>Objective 3a</b>
We communicate and promote our values and principles about play through the implementation of the strategy	Share resources to make play sustainable and appropriate to local needs	Add risk and challenge to children's play whilst maintaining safety
<b>Objective 1b</b>	<b>Objective 2b</b>	<b>Objective 3b</b>
We map play spaces and promote play services and provision so that we increase awareness of quality and the benefits of play	Promote quality play provision use best play guidance when planning play spaces	Communities children and young people have quality play provision that meets their need in an inclusive way
<b>Objective 1c</b>	<b>Objective 2c</b>	<b>Objective 3c</b>
We consult and listen to children and young people's opinions when planning delivering and evaluating play environments.	We support qualified and trained staff and volunteers to provide quality play	Children's play in undesignated community spaces is recognised and accommodated by other users

**Objective 1 actions**

<b>Profile</b>	
<b>Objective 1 Raise the profile of play</b>	Play providers and commissioners know the value and benefits of play
<b>We communicate and promote our values and principles about play through our values and principles and the implementation of the strategy</b>	Play strategy is implemented through children and young peoples plan Play is integrated into the agendas of Local Strategic Partnerships The county-wide play policy is implemented through local area/district, specific action plans.
<b>We map play spaces and promote play services and provision so that we increase awareness of quality and benefits of play</b>	We keep updated a web page and play information service We support an annual national play day event in all 7 districts of the county We map play spaces that exist as open playable play spaces not just the swings and roundabouts We promote play spaces and services to parents We connect play into walking and cycling to school initiatives
<b>We consult and listen to children young people's opinions when planning delivering and evaluating play environments.</b>	Children and young peoples' views are included in decisions about new play spaces Children have a say in the play services they use



## Objective 2 Actions

<b>Partners</b>	
<b>Objective 2 Develop partnerships to link play into all agendas</b>	Working to improve quality play provision and promote best practise
<b>Share resources to make play sustainable and appropriate to local needs</b>	Sustain the county play infrastructure through the county play forum. Community groups both formal and informal know where to go for funding advice, expertise and training to support new play environments Identify funding streams that develop community led open access play provision
<b>Promote quality play provision use best play guidance when planning play spaces</b>	The impacts on play are considered when planning
<b>We support qualified and trained staff and volunteers to provide quality play</b>	Promote learning about play with parents through play 4 life Support school based play programmes inspire plus, legacy challenge, Opal Playwork training and qualifications are promoted Develop Community led open access play provision

### Objective 3 Actions

<b>Product</b>	
<b>Objective 3 Create the opportunities for a range of local play for all children and young people</b>	Working for accessible, challenging play environments and opportunities
<b>Add risk and challenge to children's play whilst maintaining safety</b>	We evaluate play provision on value for money as well as its opportunity for risk and challenge
<b>Communities children and young people have quality play provision that meets their need in an inclusive way</b>	Promote open access play as a play provision in it own right Use best play provision guidance when planning play provision
<b>Children's play in undesignated community spaces is recognised and accommodated by other users</b>	Make public spaces playful in our planning

## References

Content to be added

First Draft