

# GO PLAY SANDWELL

Impact Report 2017- 2018



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## Play Services Manager

Much has happened in the Local Authority landscape since the heady days of the Play Pathfinder and Big Lottery Projects; services have been scrutinised, reduced or cut both locally and nationally. Sandwell MBC made a commitment in 2008 to champion play and invest in children's childhoods through the "Play is Making a Difference Programme" and despite the lack of play strategy today their commitment to resourcing a local authority play service is testament to a continued investment in the importance of play for all our children and young people with these principles still underpinning Sandwell's 20/30 vision.

*Play has long been established as being instrumental to the health and wellbeing of children and young people. There is no more important right, than the right for children to enjoy the freedom and enjoyment of play. It is essential we guarantee the availability of places that are safe and freely available, for children to play, now and in years to come.*

*Play is vital for children's development. It benefits their health, their ability to make friends and understand themselves and others. It can contribute significantly to their emotional, physical and cognitive development. It also has a role in tackling poverty, offering life experience and helping children to develop resilience during difficult times. Play is good for our children but also benefits their families and the whole community.*

*(4 Nations Play Policy Symposium: Playing the Long Game – 2012)*

Acknowledging the contribution play and play affordances can offer both instrumentally and institutionally to education, neighbourhoods, public health and planning will enable us to think differently about how we can provide opportunities for a healthier; human centred Sandwell.

The following report reflects on the past years work and offers some new ideas on how Sandwell can continue to advocate for play for future generations.

In the words of Play Wales Chair Dr  
Mike Shooter

*"Play is intrinsic and fun, but making sure it happens is serious stuff."*



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*“Wow! Just Wow! We were privileged to spend today at this amazing venue for a school trip. The leader came to our school to talk through the details, met us of the coach, stayed with us throughout the day and every single member of the team went above and beyond all day for us. We had the most amazing and magical day filled to the brim with fun, purposeful activities. The smiles on the faces of the children and adults said it all!! Highly recommended “*

*Local Primary school teacher 2017*





# 2017-2018 at a glance



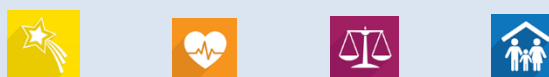
**1025 followers with 996 likes and 16.1k reach on peak posts**



## About Go Play Sandwell

Implementing a “rights based approach” we work to raise awareness of children and young people’s need and right to play enshrined in Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Article 12 a right to be heard. We are.....

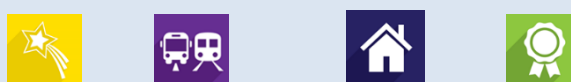
**Play Facilitators** Delivering FREE play provision for children across Sandwell.



**Play Activators** Supporting creative and interesting opportunities and affordances for play across Sandwell spaces and communities.



**Play Champions** Advocating for and on behalf of Sandwell children’s right to play and have their voices heard.



**Play Educators** Sharing knowledge and ideas with children; partners; parents and carers; communities and those with an interest in children’s rights.



**Play Drivers** Working both internally and externally to shape policy and promote good practice at every level of decision making.



Sandwell’s vision for 2030 focuses on 10 ambitions for the borough. Our child friendly approach has the potential to unite a range of progressive agendas including health and wellbeing, school readiness, sustainability, resilience and safety and act as a catalyst for urban regeneration and innovation.



## Achievements 2017 -2018

Play doesn't happen without partnerships and at Go Play Sandwell we pride ourselves on proactive positive partnerships both internally and externally to support those who find it harder to play freely for whatever reason.

- During 2017-2018 Go Play Sandwell team reached 11,440 children across the borough.
- The Go Play Sandwell Grant funded programme was rejuvenated in 2017-2018 to offer a bespoke approach to organisations to support the offer of free play provision across the borough. The rationale behind the approach was a new way of thinking which considered the complexities of working in the different towns offering a financial award taking into consideration demographics; population density and SOA of deprivation. Our grant funded Go Play Partners below reached 12,574 children across Sandwell and delivered 1,181 free play opportunities in each town.



- The “Play is Making a Difference” holiday play grant funded 15 voluntary organisations to deliver free holiday activities reaching 1095 children across the year in local play opportunities.
- Go Play Sandwell aspired to making play more accessible and inclusive our Pop up Play programme brings play to communities utilising existing parks and open spaces to enable children to play locally 994 children accessed Pop up Play across Sandwell.
- We annually celebrate National Playday by organising a free Playday event in Lightwoods Park, encouraging intergenerational play for all age groups.
- Scrap pack enabled authentic play in school grounds in the shape of playworkers modelling play practices for staff and loose parts for children to foster creativity and independence; 14 schools engaged reaching 5768 children; a further 5 schools engaged with the sustainable scrap pack pilot and now use scrap pack everyday as part of their commitment to loose parts play.
- The Let's do Lunch pilot supported community groups across the borough to deliver play provision whilst offering hot lunches across the summer holidays to combat holiday hunger; supporting 94 lunch sessions for 314 children and serving 2748 meals.
- The Big Play Warehouse offered loan resources to play organisations who might not have the space or budgets to purchase, store larger items 55 organisations benefited from the warehouse which supported 3748 children and 344 professionals to extend the play opportunities they already provided.



## GO PLAY SANDWELL IMPACT REPORT 2017-2018

- Our Childrens Trust funded Go Play Saturdays and Go Play Holidays supports children with complex and profound disabilities to access positive play opportunities that meet their needs and provides parents with the peace of mind that their children can play freely and express themselves in a safe playable environment. Supporting 48 children to take part and be involved in play experiences and the Go Play Brokerage service enabled 28 children to access play provision in their own communities.
- The Big Welcome programme enabled one learning community to proactively support 24 of their newly arrived children to make sense of their surroundings; build relationships and empower themselves to be a part of the school community.
- As part of the Teamworx programme Go Play Sandwell led on the forest play offer and worked with 5 Teamworx camps across the borough supporting 60 children to overcome hurdles and difficulties that were hindering their self-esteem and confidence within school and everyday life.
- We worked alongside schools to deliver Forest School programmes in curriculum and through offering Forest School trips and excursions reaching 434 children enabling a wider engagement with school communities and supporting sustainable alternative curriculum models.
- Go Play Sandwell delivered consultancy and training packages to 451 practitioners across Sandwell including Early Years; school support staff; foster carers and parents across many disciplines. Topics included The Forest School Approach; Developing Playable Spaces; Outdoor Learning across the Curriculum; Enabling Environments; Cooking in the Early Years and Beyond and Loose Parts Play.
- We launched our Facebook page and reached 16.1k on peak posts, had 1025 followers and 996 likes.
- Go Play Sandwell worked closely with the SHAPE our Future Team to provide provision for schools and children in Sandwell when understanding and highlighting Children's Rights involved as part of the project team for the Shape Primary Conference and the Shape Festival.



*“The presence of children in public spaces reclaims them for everyone. When public areas are busy with children and families enjoying cultural activities, there is less drug dealing and littering. Public space becomes cleaner and more secure.”*

Nayana Brettas, founder of CriaCidade



## Goal Setting 2018 -2019

Highlighted in the Cambridge Education Review, against national trends the local authority has retained a play service and whilst not directly within the statutory duty there are clear routes identifying the role they play in supporting this duty; reaching families that would not traditionally engage with services; raising standards in school and the training of practitioners.

Similarly the contribution the play service makes to section six of the report is of greater importance particularly in relation to our statutory obligation in respect of children under the Children Acts 1989 and 2004.

In response to the recommendations made within the report the play service have made significant step changes in how they not only promote their offer but more so in relation to how we shape services for the future that are more effective and have a greater impact within the communities that we work.

An internal service review was undertaken to strengthen the work of the play service and align it with national drivers relating to play and the wider “child centered rights based approach” with a focus now on our new five key principles that underpin the work of the service to date and are integral to the Vision20/30’s success.

### Play Facilitators      Play Activators Play Educators      Play Champions and Play Drivers

Feedback from users identified that there was confusion between the Go Play funded partners and the work of the play service and to this end mid 2018 we rebranded all the work within the play service remit to Go Play Sandwell making it easier for our audience to engage and value the contribution SMBC makes to championing free play locally.

Go Play Sandwell believe thriving and successful communities are places where children of all ages are active and visible in the public realm. The amount of time children spend playing outdoors, their ability to navigate their communities independently and their level of contact with nature are strong indicators of how successfully a community is performing, not just for children but for everyone. Child centred planning holds the potential for cross departmental working and integrated objectives across directorates.

*“Children are a kind of indicator species. If we can build a successful city for children, we will have a successful city for all people”*

Enrique Penalosa, Mayor of Bogota





## Goal Setting 2018 -2019

### The story so far.....

#### Play Facilitators

We continue to deliver a boroughwide free play offer through pop up play in parks; forest play and forest friends; scrap pack in schools and community based holiday play schemes.

National Play Day 2018 hit a record high with over 3000 children and families picnicking in Lightwoods Park.

We are leading on the schools programme for Christmas at the Valley with partners in parks and countryside.

#### Play Activators

Go Play Grant partners are on track to achieve their annual 20% reach target for 2018.

The annual grant programme for smaller organisations successfully funded 16 organisations this year.

Work is ongoing with Hateley Cross Big Local and Hamstead TRA to support free play affordances on local green spaces.

Links are being made with Town Tasking and area COGS to identify where services need to be directed moving forward.

#### Play Champions

We champion every child's Right to Play by providing specific work for disenfranchised groups including our

most vulnerable children by offering specialist provision and accepting referrals to ensure children receive a play offer brokered or directly through our services that meets their needs.

Targeted work with partners on specific projects include Teamworx, Asirt and BWA.

Partnership work with the SHAPE team raising the profile of the UNCRC has and still is instrumental to the new approach with the Primary and Secondary programmes that are now being worked up.

Campaign work continues in raising the profile of play through Safer 6, SCIPS and the Early Help Partnership Board to advocate for and on behalf of children and their right to a childhood.

#### Play Educators

Our social media platforms share and inform members of current national drivers and offer ideas and activities to participants.

Continue to offer information, advice and training both to schools; community organisations and those interested in creating a playable Sandwell.

*"Fantastic activities and great staff. They do great things for our kids and communities...."*

*Parent comment 2018*



## Play Drivers

Work with highways on a “Playing Out” policy document is ongoing, to support resident led street closures. Reducing community isolation and offering alternative safer play models.

We are part of the Green Space Strategy implementation group.

We are working up a Play Sufficiency model and how we might adopt this approach as part of an “Organising Principle for a Child Friendly Cities Approach.” Which will inform a new Play Strategy for Sandwell.

We would like to work with planning where new neighbourhoods are being occupied to support acceptance of community play and children’s play in the public domain.

Similarly, we are working up a Play in Hospitals model to compliment the therapeutic play offered which contributes to a quicker discharge.

Continued contribution to inform local and national drivers through advocacy, project work and membership of committees and groups.

*“The brokerage helped to look for provision which was appropriate as it can be quite demoralising being told no by childcare because of your child’s needs”*

*Parent comment 2017*



*“Brilliant service for disabled children, brilliant staff cannot thank them enough”*

*Parent comment 2018*



## **Under the microscope – Work with schools!**

Go Play Sandwell recognise that children spend much of their time in schools or educational settings and to this end pledge to support schools alongside the school improvement team and the early years and childcare team to ensure their environments become playable spaces; contributing to children's wellbeing and offering alternative opportunities to develop further skills and expertise to support learning outcomes.

Work through our forest school initiative has been instrumental in the development of a sustainable forest schools programme across Sandwell primaries since 2012. Unlike other authorities who focused on early years our aim was to support schools where disengagement was at its highest, this agenda has been extremely effective and the forest school movement in Sandwell has grown from three schools to more than half of Sandwell primary schools engaging in some form of forest led learning. We have successfully trained 56 practitioners; currently support 41 schools regularly and to date have had 25 service level agreements with schools to deliver forest school programmes which includes 2 specialist provisions and 2 community schools.

Ofsted reports in schools where we have worked developing their forest school provision highlighted the quality and importance of a child centred approach to support children's learning.

*"Teachers create memorable learning experiences which capture pupils' interests and imagination. For example, during one outdoor history lesson, I was met by a 'Stone Age tribe', whittling sticks to make spears in order to hunt woolly mammoth. Another group were preparing a real fire to cook the beasts, once caught. The pupils were fully engaged in this role play and gained significant knowledge and understanding about the lives of Stone Age of hunter-gatherers" All Saints Short inspection 2018*

*"The outdoor area is very well developed and provides a rich stimulus for children's learning." Glebefields Primary Short Inspection 2018*

Our scrap pack initiative which facilitates child initiated loose parts play during lunchtimes has to date supported 56 primary schools to access free play provision increasing children's physical activity; involvement and engagement; creativity and imagination. Benefits that have been observed by school staff include reduction in poor behaviours at lunchtimes; reduction in playground accidents; inclusivity of the equipment and children returning to class more content and ready to work.

*"it was lovely to see them all playing and not arguing, I felt redundant as usually I am sorting out arguments and issues." Moat Farm Infants 2017*

*"The keystage 2 children have really enjoyed the scrap pack and it's been amazing to see how much the older children have played with it and enjoyed it" Annie Lennard 2018*



Children reflections after having scrap pack also illustrates the importance of this type of play during the school day.

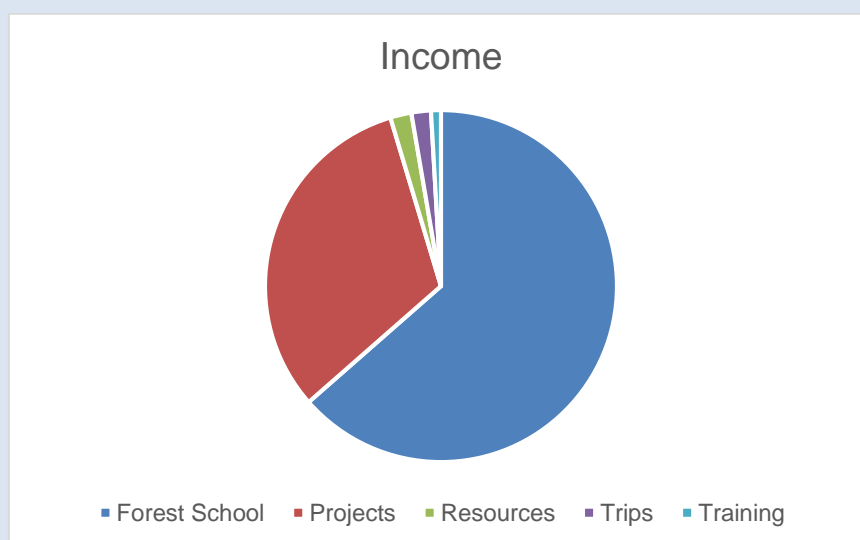
*"I am so happy because this 100% fun" Moat Farm Infants 2017*

*"You can make friends anywhere when scrap pack is here" Devonshire Infants 2018*

*"Makes me feel like I want to come to school" Al-Khair 2018*

The above snapshots offer an insight into the work undertaken in schools by the play service team. These initiatives and others including the "Big Welcome" programme supporting newly arrived children into schools; focused project work; school trips and outdoor learning experiences including the Christmas schools programme we run for Sandwell Valley and our early years and schools training offer enable Go Play Sandwell to put a playful agenda at the heart of learning but it also plays a key role for income generation too.

The table below represents a breakdown of income generation 2012- 2018 from schools which totalled £214,117.



*"A brilliant day with excellent staff highly recommend this to any school. The children had a fantastic day, as did the grown-ups so well organised Thank you "School trip 2018*

*"On Tuesday 4th December, I took a group of SEN children from Ferndale primary school to the Christmas at the Valley, and it was fantastic! The children had an amazing time and all staff were amazing really going above and beyond to ensure they all had an amazing time. The elves that looked after us really were a credit to you, they were very friendly engaged and interacted fantastically with all children even learning their names. The whole experience was planned and timed perfectly and really did make for a fantastic day out. Usually days out for us can be very stressful especially trying to ensure all of our children's needs are met, and the activities are appropriate to their needs and inclusive. We really did not need to worry this year as it was fantastic. Would highly recommend to all schools!"  
Ferndale 2018*



## **Under the microscope – Commissioning role**

Go Play Sandwell hold the commissioning function for the Voluntary Sector Support Budget which totals £461,198, there are 3 elements to this grant allocation which include “Go Play Sandwell” 3-year programme “Play is Making a Difference” small awards annual programme and two individual grants historically funded by the local authority.

In Spring 2016 Sandwell Play Service implemented through their commissioning role, a 3-year grant programme which supported Voluntary and Community Sector organisations to deliver free play provision across the six towns both term time and holidays broadening the offer already provided by the local authority led play service.

Organisations could apply to deliver in one or more of the 6 towns but to access additional premiums they had to demonstrate how they would target issues including high population density: multiple deprivation and limited access to play provision. Centre based delivery did not take precedence over detached work and applications were encouraged from those organisations that worked peripatetically with no fixed base.

The grant arrangements were based on successful application and selection, assessed and scored against a set of agreed criteria and outcomes. 13 applications were submitted and out of the 13, four organisations were successful and awarded grants:

Alongside the Go Play Programme an annual small awards programme “Play is Making a Difference” is offered to organisations locally that deliver holiday provision but are unable to access the larger grant programmes due to capacity or infrastructure reasons. On average, there are between 12 and 16 organisations funded across Sandwell to support delivery of free provision during the holidays which have included Sandwell Young Carers; SAFS; Sandwell Deaf Association and Warley Woods as examples.

Go Play Sandwell with the support of the voluntary sector support team closely monitor these organisations through regular meetings and updates: requests for information etc and the robust relationship between the commissioning function and the grant recipients that have been formed is illustrated by the number of children reached across the borough which is a positive step change regarding quality and value for money and demonstrates that changing this grant model was the right way forward.



## GO PLAY SANDWELL IMPACT REPORT 2017-2018

Creative Academies	Go Play West Bromwich	<b>£59,337</b>
Groundwork West Midlands	Go Play Wednesbury/ Tipton and Oldbury	<b>£162,391</b>
Murray Hall Community Trust	Go Play Rowley	<b>£50,558</b>
Albion Foundation	Go Play Smethwick	<b>£58,744</b>
Play is Making a Difference	Boroughwide	<b>£39,014</b>
Historical funding allocation	West Bromwich	<b>89,155</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£459,198</b>
+ £2,000 contingency allocation	<b>Total</b>	<b>£461,198</b>

Work is ongoing, as we enter the final year of funding for the Go Play Programme; to identify a sustainable model for play in future years that continues to support the local authority play offer and a localised community led offer that reaches our most vulnerable families. The play sufficiency work and revised play strategy will inform this process, identifying areas with limited play affordances where resources can be directed to enable an equitable offer.



@goplaysandwell @creativeacademies @shapesandwell



## Financial Review 2018-2019

**Core Allocation – £110,0**

### Outgoings

Staffing	£154,300.00
Utilities and infrastructure	£36,006.00
- In year reductions	£8,375
<b>Total Forecast</b>	<b>£169,531</b>

### Income Generation

Go Play Saturdays (Childrens Trust Grant)	£48,164.00
Services to schools and partners	£15,251.00
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£63,415.00</b>

### Overall spend profile

Core Allocation + income generation	<b>£173,415</b>
Total spend forecast	<b>£169,513</b>
Budget variance	<b>£3884</b>

**All our work has contributed to Sandwell children and young people having time, freedom and permission to play.**

### “Creating a Playable Sandwell”





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