

**A PLAY
STRATEGY
FOR
HARTLEPOOL**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Acknowledgments -----	3
Executive Summary -----	4
Vision -----	5
Key Principles -----	5
Purpose and Scope -----	6
Introduction -----	7
Definition of Play -----	8
The Case for Play -----	10
Context -----	12
Quality -----	14
Risk Management -----	16
Review of Community Engagement -----	18
Audit of Local Provision -----	21
Objectives -----	24
Appendices –	
Appendix 1 – Play Partnership Membership	
Appendix 2 – Play Partnership Terms of Reference	
Appendix 3 – Links to Strategies & Local Plans	
Appendix 4 – Consultation Information Source	
Appendix 5 – Children and Young People Consultation Findings	
Appendix 6 – Audit Of Provision	
Appendix 7 – Graphs, Local Nature Reserves & Beach Patrolled Areas, Parks & Recreation Grounds & Play Areas within Hartlepool	
Appendix 8 - References to produce the Strategy	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Hartlepool Borough Council, Children's Services Department, Sure Start, Extended Services and Early Years Team gratefully acknowledges the following people who have supported and provided input into the development of the Play Strategy and Action plan for Hartlepool.

The Play Partnership
The Play Champion
The Independent Grants Panel
Voluntary & Community Sector
Children & Young People from schools in Hartlepool
Parents and Local Residents
Play Workers

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Play Strategy for Hartlepool 2006 – 2011 has been developed to provide a framework for increasing Hartlepool's capacity to provide good quality play opportunities for all children and young people.

The strategy is founded on the principle of Children's Right to Play as stated in Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children.

The strategy recognises the importance of play for all children and its fundamental role in children's development. It also recognises that every child needs a variety of play opportunities for their development.

The strategy has been developed in consultation with service providers in the statutory, voluntary and private sectors, parents, children and young people. An audit of provision was carried out to ascertain current levels of provision and identify gaps.

A wide range of strategies and plans have also been taken into consideration to ensure that links are made with reference to accessible play opportunities.

Children's play is affected by and can affect a wide range of provision, such as transport, health, parks and leisure, childcare and early years provision. These wide ranging aspects are reflected in the action plan.

A Play Partnership has been developed to include a diverse membership. The Partnership will monitor the progress of the action plan to ensure that play opportunities are accessible to all children in Hartlepool.

The Action Plan covers seven objectives, which reflect the Every Child Matters Outcomes, and Hartlepool's Children and Young People's Plan and incorporates feedback from consultation undertaken with children, young people, parents, groups and other agencies. The seven objectives featured in the strategy are:

- Develop a coordinated approach to play
- Increase play space and opportunities
- Develop the quality of play opportunities
- Further develop processes that facilitate the participation of children, young people and local communities
- Offer all children and young people the opportunity to experience acceptable risks in play
- Improve safe accessibility within formal and informal play settings
- Sustainability of play provision

VISION

'The right to play is a child's first claim on the community.'

David Lloyd George 1925

Our vision is to enhance and increase quality and accessible inclusive play opportunities for children and young people living in Hartlepool. Every Hartlepool child (0 – 19 years of age) should be able to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives, enhanced by accessing good quality play.

KEY PRINCIPLES

The overarching principles of the Play Strategy reflect the Every Child Matters Outcomes and principles within the Hartlepool's Children and Young People Plan and further include the following:

- Every child and young person regardless of where they live have the opportunity to accessible and freely chosen play opportunities
- Every child and young person regardless of their ability has the right to high quality, safe play opportunities that meet their need
- Improve opportunities for play and informal recreation
- Promote enjoyment for children and young people
- Promote equality and social inclusion, by ensuring that play is attractive, welcoming and accessible to every child and young person regardless of age, gender, background, ethnic origin or disability
- Promote community use of schools
- Engage in partnerships with the voluntary sector, town and parish councils

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

It is recognised that children and young people do not need a play strategy to engage in free imaginative play. However a play strategy will ensure play is valued across all sectors and the benefits of play are appreciated by all members of the community. It will also support the reduction of barriers to play and ensure inclusive play opportunities are offered to all children.

The strategy will:

- Be the vehicle to enhance and ensure the right of every child and young person to engage in a play opportunity be it formal or informal
- Ensure all children and young people have the right to play as defined by the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified by the UK in 1991.
- Inform other Departments within the Council of their responsibilities towards children and young people when developing, delivering and planning services that may impact on play opportunities.
- Act as a lever to influence play policies and good practice of partner organisations and agencies

For the purpose of this strategy, play is defined to cover the activities of children and young people from 0 – 19 years, how they occupy themselves and how they engage in both structured and unstructured activities.

The strategy will also provide a framework within which future funding decisions are made in relation to play and provide a clear commitment to the play agenda as is the Big Lottery allocation of £296,457.46.

Play covers a wide agenda and this strategy will focus on those areas identified within the action plan as being potential gaps in provision across Hartlepool and the needs and wants identified within the various consultations with children and young people.

INTRODUCTION

The Play Development Team within the Children's Services Department, Hartlepool Borough Council provides information and support to play providers across the town. The Play Development team also deliver a play service to children of Hartlepool.

A Play Partnership has been formed to develop, implement and review the strategy and review play provision in Hartlepool for the future. The Play Partnership will feed into Hartlepool's Children & Young People's Partnership to ensure that the action plan is monitored and reviewed.

The membership covers a wide range of partners, including Local Authority Departments, Voluntary, Community, Private and Health Sectors. The membership and terms of reference of the partnership are detailed in Appendix 1.

The Local Authority has lead in the development of the Play Strategy to ensure that partners consider the issues related to accessible play in service planning. The Play Strategy sets out a number of objectives which have been based on the views of children and young people in consultation (details of the consultation can be found in Appendix 5).

The Play Strategy is part of Hartlepool Borough Council's commitment to partnership working, to ensure that good quality and inclusive play opportunities are available to children and young people in local areas to help them to fulfil their own potential in life.

DEFINITION OF PLAY

What is Play?

‘Parties recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and arts.’

‘Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural artistic, recreational and leisure activities.’

‘The term play refers to the free time activities of children and young people of all ages when they are choosing what to do, usually with their friends and without direction from adults’.

Article 31 of UN Convention

‘Play is freely chosen, personally directed, intrinsically motivated behaviour that actively engages the child.’

‘Play is a way children explore the world around them and develop and practise skills.’

‘Play is not the destination, but the journey.’

‘Play is one of the fundamental processes which enhances life and is a right.’

‘Play can be fun or serious. Through play children explore social, material and imaginary worlds and their relation with them.’

‘Taking risks, exploring, pushing boundaries, flying the nest.’

*Children’s Play Council – Planning for Play
March 2004*

‘Play is of fundamental importance for children and young people’s health and well-being’.

Planning for play 2006

‘Play is an essential part of children’s development. As they grow older, sport and other forms of physical recreation can set healthy patterns of exercise lasting into adulthood. Participation in and appreciation of music, visual arts and literature can all add to understanding the world. But, more importantly, these activities bring joy and richness to life. They should be offered as an entitlement to all children and young people.’

Children and Young People A Framework for Partnership – consultation document

‘Play is a child’s first claim on the community. No community can infringe that right without doing deep and enduring harm to the minds and bodies of its citizens’

Lloyd George, 1962

What do we mean by play?

The definition used in the play review, “Getting Serious about Play”, published in 2004, states:

‘Play means what children and young people do when they follow their own ideas and interests, in their own way and for their own reasons.’

Play provision is also defined within this publication as:

‘A space, some facilities or equipment or a set of activities intended to give children the opportunity to play as defined above. At its most successful, it offers children and young people as much choice, control and freedom as possible within reasonable boundaries. This is often best achieved with adult support, guidance or supervision. The children and young people may themselves choose play involving certain rules or, in some cases, informal sport.’

THE CASE FOR PLAY

In August 2006 the Department for Culture, Media and Sport produced a document, – “Time for Play”, encouraging greater play opportunities for children and young people. The focus of this document is on Government action to encourage the promotion of greater play opportunities for children and young people. It concentrates on the importance of play, as well as some of the key issues relating to it.

The document states that play provides children and young people with an important opportunity to develop their values, beliefs and traditions and understand how they impact on their environment.

The benefits of play for the child:

- Play provides valuable life skills and is vital to their development
- Play is integral to learning, but cannot be taught through formal education
- Play keeps children and young people healthy and active
- Play promotes independence, resilience, fosters self esteem and self awareness
- Play stimulates five key areas of development in a child, social, physical, intellectual, creative and emotional
- Play is fun
- Play raises the awareness of different cultures and traditions
- Disabled children will benefit from being able to play with other children in a safe and accessible environment

The added benefits of play for parents, carers and the community are:

- Improved family relations
- Social contact with other families, including those from marginalised groups
- Healthy and resilient children
- Happier and more confident children
- Involvement of children in creative and positive activities
- Anti-social behaviour is reduced and children are less at risk of crime
- Facilities are a focal point for the community
- Families are supported
- Young people are helped to prepare for working life – Every Child Matters (Outcomes Framework)
- Improved cultural and learning activities through informal setting

INCLUSION

‘Inclusive provision is open and accessible to all and takes positive action in removing disabling barriers, so that disabled and non- disabled children can participate’

Alison John

‘All children have the right to rest and play.’

Article 31

‘Disabled children must be able to take a full and active part in everyday life.’

Article 23

Disabled children and young people should have the right to be part of any local play environment they choose.

The Play Strategy will ensure that the play and leisure requirements of disabled children and young people are respected and promoted.

Inclusive play is clearly highlighted within the Action Plan in objective 2 and should be seen as an integral part of providing play opportunities for all children, regardless of their abilities and not as a separate issue.

Hartlepool Council and its partners will work in partnership with vulnerable groups to increase access to play opportunities and reduce barriers to play as identified in the action plan, objective 2.

CONTEXT

National Context

The importance of play and the importance of ensuring there is adequate space for play have been the subject of campaigning and awareness raising at a national level for a number of years.

The Children's Play Council, the national organisation for children's play in England, has produced a number of significant documents in recent years, including "Best Play".

Every Child Matters (ECM) is a shared national programme to ensure that children's services work better together with parents, carers and organisations to help give children and young people more opportunities and better support. Play contributes to all the ECM outcomes;

- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a Positive Contribution
- Achieve Economic Well – Being

The Dobson Review 'Getting Serious about Play', was a government commissioned document to advocate and raise the profile of play across government departments. The report prompted a funding scheme for play from the Big Lottery Fund in England and Wales of £155 million for 2006 – 2009. This has been allocated to each unitary and district according to a formula based on the number of children and the indices of multiple deprivation. One of the key criteria for gaining access to the allocation is that the projects put forward for funding must have a basis in a Play Strategy.

The allocation determined for Hartlepool will enable Hartlepool to fund more activities that are:

- Free to access
- Free to come and go
- Freely chosen by children and young people

Local Context

Play contributes to the ECM five outcomes and Hartlepool's Children and Young People's Plan.

Hartlepool has an excellent reputation of working well with partner agencies and listening and taking action from community consultation and views. A key message from Hartlepool's recent Joint Area Review from inspectors was:

“The level of commitment, enthusiasm and pride in staff at all levels in delivering quality services to Hartlepool is outstanding.”

Hartlepool is a compact and densely populated town, located on the North East coast of England at the North Eastern end of the Tees Valley. The population is largely concentrated in the urban area, although the Borough as a whole (9,386 hectares) is predominantly rural, with some district villages and attractive countryside. Overall the population of 90,161 (2003) is projected to decline slightly over the next ten years, with older age groups increasing and younger age groups reducing. The 0 – 19 age group represents 27% (24,269) of the population, which is above the national, average (23%), although this is projected to fall by over 12% over the next 13 years. The ethnic minority population is low (1.9%), but significant.

According to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), eight out of Hartlepool's sixteen wards are among the top 10% most deprived in England, with five of these wards being in the top 3%. Unemployment in January 2006 stood at 4.4% compared to 2.6% nationally. The 2001 census indicated that 60.1% of households (22,684) had a car, 8.7% (3,234) were single parents and 21.4% (7,986) were households with dependent children. Based on figures from The Office for National Statistics, using the mortality rate for England and Wales as 100, the mortality rate for Hartlepool is 125, which indicates that it is higher than the National average and that people die younger. The National average obesity rate is 22.1% and Hartlepool is 23.9%. The cancer rates in Hartlepool are significantly higher than the national average.

In Hartlepool, in 2006, there were:

- 3,314 children with Special Educational Needs, 372 of these had statements
- 76 children in need of protection, including 2 unborn (0.5%)
- 118 looked after children (0.7%)
- 56 children first time offenders (0.4%)
- 4 children subject to an anti social behaviour order (0.03%)
- 10 children aged 0 – 15 years in road traffic accidents (killed or seriously injured) (0.06%)
- 126 teenage pregnancies (64.1 per 1000 females aged 15 – 17 in 2004) in comparison to the national average (42.1 per 1000)

There are six secondary schools, 30 primary schools, 1 nursery school and 2 special schools in Hartlepool catering for 1,278 nursery children, 7,962 primary pupils, 6,224 secondary pupils, 129 special school pupils and 71 pupils within the Access 2 Learning Centre.

This Strategy aims to raise the profile of play and to promote inclusive play opportunities across the statutory, private and voluntary and community sectors and to ensure that a collaborative approach is taken to enable children and young people access to freely chosen and safe play opportunities.

The Play Strategy will link into the aims and objectives of Hartlepool's Children and Young Peoples Plan. The development and implementation of the strategy is already featured within the Hartlepool's Children and Young People's Plan and although it is highlighted within the Enjoy and Achieve outcome it contributes to all five Every Child Matters outcomes.

The Play Strategy will also links to other policies, plans and strategies (Appendix 2) The recommendations within the action plan clearly define linkages to other strategies and plans across the authority and other agencies, showing a clear responsibility of others to work in partnership to meet the needs of children and young people and the wider community.

QUALITY

The report *Best Play* identifies the benefits of play and sets out criteria for excellence in play provision. Play facilities are excellent when they:

- Extend children's choice and control
- Recognise children's need to test boundaries
- Balance opportunities for risk – taking and prevention of serious harm
- Make many different kinds of play available
- Promote independence and self- esteem
- Promote social interaction and respect for others
- Promote children's creativity, physical, mental and emotional well-being and healthy growth

'Children of all ages play, but a great many children lack adequate or appropriate play opportunities. Children whose play opportunities are restricted or denied, for whatever reason, can suffer developmentally and the communities and families they live in are impoverished as a result.'

The Charter for Children's Play, 1998.

Increased investment in play and a growth of play provision will increase the demand for skilled and trained playworkers who understand the principles of play and playwork. Meeting this demand for qualified and trained people is critical to the success of quality play services.

As well as investing in developing a skilled workforce, it is important to ensure that the physical environment for play is also safe and stimulating.

Hartlepool Play Partnership is committed to ensure that all types of play provision meet relevant quality standards, which include:

- Fixed Play Equipment standards
- National Ofsted Standards
- Recognised Quality Assurance Schemes
- Investors in Children
- Best Play Key Objectives
- Play Workforce Standards

The development of rigorous criteria for the assessment of play opportunities is essential to enable organisations to develop high quality play provision. The Play Partnership will monitor and evaluate the development of the workforce and quality of play provision using the above standards.

Hartlepool Borough Council's Workforce Development Plan, clearly shows commitment to its workforce. The aims of the council are to be:

- An organisation where the citizen is at the centre of everything that we do
- A learning organisation which creates the best environment for our workforce to achieve successful outcomes for the people of Hartlepool
- An organisation that promotes a culture of learning where people value the citizen, the organisation, each other and themselves. Where everyone understands how their work makes a difference and helps commitment to higher standards.

The Play Strategy will support and assist the recruitment of good quality, skilled and experienced playworkers and play rangers by providing comprehensive training programmes in all areas of playwork including recruitment and retention.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Taking the Risk

Children learn about risk through play. It is an essential element of confidence building necessary for personal development and survival. Through their play children choose to encounter risk, learn to assess it and develop skills to manage it. Through trial and error they discover their own limitations and realise their potential for undertaking challenge. Children are inquisitive and curious with an innate and compelling drive to explore the unknown, experiment and test themselves.

Managing the Risk

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, employers must undertake regular Risk Assessments. A Risk Assessment is based on a holistic approach to assessing risk.

Those responsible for the regulation, inspection and implementation of Health and Safety are required to make appropriate judgements to the particular circumstance of the individual play provision.

Factors to be considered will include:

- Age and capability of children and young people using the provision or equipment
- The levels and type of accidents that have occurred in the past
- The level and amount of supervision that is available
- Risk Assessment can be a highly effective tool in supporting the development of quality play environments
- Specific play training is provided to support settings to enable them to conduct an effective risk assessment

The Play Safety Forum, a national body with government funding, was set up to consider issues, and its position statement *Managing Risk in Play* provides a helpful focus for discussion.

Managing Risk in Play

The Play Safety Forum 2002 set out in its document “*Managing Risk in Play Provision*” the key issues in relation to risk and play provision as highlighted below:

“There is growing concern about the how safety is being addressed in children’s play provision. Fear of litigation is leading many play providers to focus on minimising the risk of injury at the expense of other more fundamental objectives. The effect is to stop children from enjoying a healthy range of play opportunities, limiting their enjoyment and causing potentially damaging consequences for their development. This approach ignores clear evidence that playing in play provision is a comparatively low risk activity for children. Of the two million or so childhood accident cases treated by hospital each year, fewer than two percent involve playground equipment. Participation in sports like soccer, widely acknowledged as ‘good’ for a child’s development, involve a greater risk of injury than visiting a playground. Fatalities on playgrounds are very rare – about one per three or four years on average. This compares with, for instance, more than 100 child pedestrian fatalities a year and more than 500 child fatalities from accidents overall.”

Summary position statement

‘Children need and want to take risks when they play. Play provision aims to respond to those 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 risk of death or serious injury.’

From Managing Risk in Play Provision, Play Safety Forum, 2002

The Play Partnership recognises the need to support providers in assessing risks and making considered judgements about the level of risk. This issue is addressed in the action plan attached to this document.

REVIEW OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In the consultation for the development of this strategy, the Local Authority, together with voluntary and community groups engaged with children and young people in the following settings:

- Schools, including special schools
- Local Sure Start Programmes
- Voluntary and Community Groups
- New Deal for Communities (Challenge Funded Area)
- Youth Provision
- Children's Fund Participation
- Play Partnership
- National Playday

Information was also gathered from a range of Forums as follows:

- Local Neighbourhood Action Plans
- Children Centres and Extended Schools Strategy consultation
- Every Child Matters – The Big Plan
- Resident Groups
- Tell Us Questions –Joint Area Review
- Youth Matters consultation
- Children and Young People Participation Strategy

In total 870 people were engaged in consultation. The children and young people were aged 3 to 19 years and were from a range of backgrounds, including rural and town, different ethnic and religious backgrounds and disabled children and young people. A number of questions were asked which included:

- Where do you play?
- What do you think are the Barriers to Play?
- Where would you like to play?
- What would you like to see developed in Hartlepool?

The younger children expressed their thoughts through pictures and discussion with the assistance of childcare workers, playworkers and parents.

The Play Partnership have used the findings from the consultation to inform the development of the action plan. The findings from the consultation are set out in **Appendix 3 & 4**

The Play Partnership recognise that there are numerous ways of developing variety in play and recognise the importance of involving children and young people in the design and operation of space. This will ensure that play provision is relevant to the children and young people's needs. Children and young people will also need to be involved in the monitoring and evaluating of play projects to ensure all provision is high quality.

Summary of Findings

A number of common issues were raised during the consultation. These issues were raised by both children and young people and parents. The issues are highlighted below:

Barriers to Play

- 70% of the people consulted had a fear of bullying, gangs, drug addicts and under age drinking in public spaces
- 60% of the people consulted felt there was a lack of safe play areas
- 80% felt that the cost of transport and lack of transport was a barrier to accessing play provision
- 75% felt there was little or no localised activities
- 90% felt that the cost was a barrier to access many activities
- 63% felt there was a lack of supervision of outdoor activities and play areas
- 57% felt there should be access to school grounds outside of school hours, including use of toilet and drinking water facilities

What would you like to see developed in Hartlepool?

- 57% wanted more access to school grounds outside of school hours
- 90% wanted access to more affordable activities
- 67% wanted access to a wide range of activities, including more challenging activities
- 85% would like to access free activities
- 75% wanted more localised provision
- 62% would like free transport to enable them to access activities and play areas outside of their own locality
- 63% stated they would like to have informal supervision in the way of a play ranger in parks and school grounds outside of school hours
- 68% stated they wanted better maintained fixed play facilities and open spaces, free from litter, dog dirt and drug paraphernalia
- 52% stated they would like to see more open access provision to enable them to come and go as they please
- 90% of the children and young people living in the rural areas would like to see play provision in the way of a mobile play service

AUDIT OF LOCAL PROVISION

A comprehensive audit of local provision has been carried out. This has been identified ward by ward to obtain a clear picture of gaps in provision (**appendix 5**)

It appears from the audit that there is a wide range of provision available in Hartlepool, but the audit does not highlight the quality, accessibility or affordability of the provision. In certain areas of the town there is little or no access to play provision to meet the needs of all children.

The audit of provision and consultation with children and young people have identified many areas of potential development and these have been used to inform the priorities set out in the action plan.

Hartlepool Borough Council manages 14 play areas across the town, with a playsite in Elwick Village, which is managed by Elwick Parish Council. While local authorities do not have a statutory duty to provide outdoor play facilities, they have a power to do so under the Local Government Act 1974. This allows for local authorities to provide facilities where it considers appropriate.

In terms of planning, there is a commitment to provide safe and convenient play space in the Hartlepool Local Plan 2001. In particular, it identifies a need for new housing developments to provide space for play or contribute towards the provision and maintenance of existing facilities.

The development of play facilities is also consistent with the Hartlepool Community Strategy, in so far as they contribute to wide range of good quality, affordable and accessible leisure and cultural opportunities, and with respect to teenage provision, provide diversionary activities which may reduce anti-social behaviour by young people.

The classification of play areas has been developed by the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA). The classification covers three areas which are detailed in the table below

National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) Classification:

LEAP – Local Area for Play (e.g open space, park)

LAP - Local Equipped Area for Play (e.g fixed play area)

NEAP – Neighbourhood Equipment Area for Play (e.g fixed play area within a neighbourhood)

The borough council have recently engaged consultants to undertake an assessment of its' open and green spaces which include parks, nature reserves, recreation grounds, as well as sports and recreation facilities. The aim of the assessment is for the council to plan positively, creatively and effectively to ensure there is adequate provision of accessible and high quality open and green spaces in Hartlepool. The assessment is currently underway and expected to be completed during 2007. This study will set out clear policy guidance for the authority when considering planning applications which involve the redevelopment of an existing open space or facility.

As part of this assessment all play areas will be assessed for both quality and accessibility in order to determine the need for development of new facilities, refurbishment of existing facilities or rationalisation of existing facilities.

Once this assessment has been undertaken, the information will be linked into the play strategy action plan.

Ward	Play Area (fixed Equipment)	NPFA Classification
Burn Valley	Burn Valley	LEAP
Rifthouse	Oxford Road	LEAP
Greatham	Greatham	LAP
Brus	King Oswy Drive	LEAP
Hart	Clavering	NEAP
Park	Ward Jackson Park	LEAP
Elwick Parish	Elwick (Parish Council)	LAP
Rossmere	Rossmere Park	NEAP
Rossmere	Jutland Road	LAP
St Hilda	Town Moor	LAP
Brus	King George V	LEAP
St Hilda	Block Sands	LAP
Seaton	Seaton Park	LEAP
Throston	Grayfields	LEAP
Park	Summerhill	NEAP

A number of maps can be found in appendix 6. These highlight the position of the following

- Playing fields
- Playgrounds
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Beaches and Nature Reserves

The maps are a useful tool in determining where current fixed play provision, open spaces etc are located to assist in the development of any new provision.

The Local Authority also provides a range of:

- Holiday playschemes
- National playday and events
- Grant funding to enable complementary services to be provided via the voluntary and community sector
- Organised play and sport activities within our own leisure facilities
- Out of school care and holiday playschemes, including breakfast clubs and out of school provision within schools

These services are funded through identified funding within the authority, together with subsidy from charges levied for certain activities.

OBJECTIVES

The strategy will deliver a set of objectives, which supports the five outcomes of Every Child Matters as defined in Hartlepool's Children and Young People's Plan.

The strategy will promote best practice using 'Best Play' Objectives, which is a widely recognised benchmark document describing the outcome objectives for play provision. The objectives that follow are broad statements that are intended to set out how the definition of play and the underpinning values and principles should be put into practice. They form the basis against which play provision can be evaluated.

- **'Extends the choice and control that children have over their play, the freedom they enjoy and the satisfaction they gain from it**
- **Recognises the child's need to test boundaries and respond positively to their need**
- **Manages the balance between the need to offer risk and the need to keep children safe from harm**
- **Maximises the range of play opportunities**
- **Fosters independence and healthy self- esteem**
- **Fosters the child's respect for others and offers opportunities for social integration**
- **Fosters the child's well – being, health, growth and development, knowledge and understanding, creativity and capacity to learn'**

Best Play – What play provision should do for children
NPFA/PLAYLINK/Children's Play Council
(2001)

The 'Best Play' Objectives listed above will be used to enhance the objectives set out in the action plan to ensure that every child has a right to play.

The seven objectives in the action plan are as follows:

Objective 1

Develop a Coordinated Approach to Play

Objective 2

Increasing Play Space/opportunities

Objective 3

Develop the Quality of Play Opportunities

Objective 4

To further Develop Processes that Facilitate the Participation of Children, Young People and Local Communities

Objective 5

Aim to Offer all Children and Young People the Opportunity to Experience Acceptable Risks in Play Environments

Objective 6

To Improve Safe Accessibility within Formal and Informal Play Settings

Objective 7

Funding and Sustainability of Play Provision