

Welsh Assembly Government's Responses to the Recommendations made in the "Review of the Capacity and Delivery of Play Training in Wales", Melyn Consulting, 2010.

## **Recommendations made in the Review**

### **Play Provision**

#### **Recommendation 1**

Guidance on the new duty within the Children & Families Measure needs to present an unambiguous definition of play sufficiency and stress the importance not only of play being appropriately recognised and supported within local authorities, but the role that local authorities must take in supporting the play workforce – across the public, private and voluntary sectors.

#### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

The Welsh Assembly Government aims to set out the duties on Local Authorities to assess for and secure sufficient play opportunities for children in their areas, as covered by the Children & Families (Wales) Measure 2010. These will be set out in standards that will be underpinned by regulations and detailed in guidance to enable Local Authorities to fulfil the new duties. It is envisaged that sections of the Standards and Guidance will relate to the development of the Play workforce and to partnership working.

Engagement with stakeholders on the development of these documents is taking place during 2010 and early 2011 and a full consultation will take place in 2011 prior to the commencement of the duties.

#### **Recommendation 2**

The WLGA Partnership Support Unit should have a role in changing attitudes towards play within local authorities in preparation for the new duties.

#### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

Children and Young People's Partnerships have now had time to establish themselves and have matured considerably during this period, with the support of the Partnership Support Unit. The Welsh Assembly Government have therefore decided not to provide further funding for the work of the Unit from April 2011.

#### **Recommendation 3**

The diversity of the play workforce requires a range of training routes and qualifications. On-going support from WAG is needed to develop qualifications and training that is going to meet the needs of an expanding sector. This should include support for the further development of P3 – in particular the development of training infrastructure (vocationally competent trainers). This may require short-term input of resources until the qualifications are mainstreamed and delivered through colleges and by work-based learning providers.

#### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

The Welsh Assembly Government is in regular contact with Play Wales, Clybiau Plant Cymru, Kids Clubs Wales, SkillsActive (the Sector Skills Council for Play) and other stakeholders and training providers to support the development of the Play

sector in Wales. We have provided support for the development of play training over a number of years. This has including funding for the development and delivery of the Playwork Principles into Practice (P3) qualification and also the development of the play training infrastructure including the training of vocationally competent trainers, through the funding of the National Centre for Playwork Education and Training. It provides funding for 16 – 18 year olds who are in training and for Further Education and work – based learning provision. The Assembly Government has also invested in training within the Foundation phase and for early years and childcare provision which has contributed to play within these areas.

#### **Recommendation 4**

The Assembly Government should work with partners - including Skills Active to publish a comprehensive qualifications framework that can support workforce development and link with developing integrated qualifications frameworks for the children & young people's workforce.

#### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

Welsh Assembly officials are working with partners including SkillsActive, CCSIW and the Care Council on the use of qualifications lists that can be used within the early years, child care and play sectors. The Welsh Assembly is also working with partners across all the related professional areas in taking forward children and young people's workforce development.

#### **Recommendation 5**

The Welsh Assembly Government should investigate ways in which the local infrastructure projects can be continued to provide a basis for meeting the development needs of the play workforce at a regional level. These projects are ideal to bring together local authorities, employers, colleges and work-based learning providers to coordinate local delivery of play training.

#### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

The Infrastructure Projects are funded by the BIG Lottery Fund through their Child's Play programme and not through Welsh Assembly Government funding. We will work closely with the BIG Lottery fund to ensure that their investment in this area can be sustainable in the longer term. We cannot, however, be involved in any decision by the BIG Lottery Fund as to where their funding is distributed across the projects.

### **Current and Future needs of the Workforce**

#### **Recommendation 6**

The Assembly Government should advise CSSIW that appropriate qualifications for regulation under the National Minimum Standards for practitioners working with children in out of school settings and open access play settings are primarily those set out in the Skills Active *List of Accepted Qualifications*, and secondarily, those set out by Care Council for Wales for *Childcare and Early Years*.

#### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

Welsh Assembly officials are working with partners including SkillsActive, CCSIW and the Care Council for Wales on the use of qualifications lists that can be used within the early years, child care and play sectors. The Welsh Assembly is also

working with partners across all the related professional areas in taking forward children and young people's workforce development, especially related to the Common Core.

#### **Recommendation 7**

Government should set out a longer term goal to require all those working with children over the age of 5 years in regulated settings to hold an appropriate playwork qualification or a play transition award.

#### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

Welsh Assembly officials are working with partners including SkillsActive, CCSIW and the Care Council on the use of qualifications lists that can be used within the early years, child care and play sectors. The Welsh Assembly is also working with partners across all the related professional areas in taking forward children and young people's workforce development especially related to the Common Core.

#### **Recommendation 8**

Skills Active should be supported in developing a voluntary Register of Playwork Professionals in Wales. A register could help to ensure the quality of playwork is maintained as the workforce expands. It would also encourage employers to recruit staff who provide the best possible play opportunities.

#### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

Welsh Assembly officials attend the SkillsActive, Play Education and Training Committee Wales meetings and other related meetings, which have included discussion of the development of a voluntary Register of Playwork Professionals in Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government supports effective measures which will enhance the quantity and quality of play opportunities for children in Wales, including the employment of qualified playworkers.

#### **Recommendation 9**

The National Centre for Playwork Education and Training should be supported in its work with Careers Wales to raise the profile of playwork as a career.

#### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

Welsh Assembly officials have had discussions with officers from Careers Wales; SkillsActive and the National Training Centre on issues related to raising the profile of playwork as a career. Work in this area is ongoing with future meetings of stakeholders arranged.

#### **Recommendation 10**

The inconsistency of funding for Playwork should be addressed strategically by Government. This is needed on two levels; firstly funding to enable access to existing training for practitioners; and secondly, funding to enable the development of new qualifications and training that are needed to meet the challenges of community and cross-sector learning that will be created by the Measure.

#### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

The Welsh Assembly Government has provided funding for the National Centre for Playwork Education and Training for the past 3 years, and funding for the development and delivery of playwork qualifications. It has also provided funding for

Play Wales and Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Club Wales under the Children and Families Organisations grant, to provide ongoing support to the play sector.

Significant funding has also been available to local authorities through the Cymorth: programme to support projects for children's play, leisure and enrichment.

The Welsh Assembly provides funding for 16 – 18 year olds who are in training and for Further Education and work – based learning provision. It has also invested in training within the Foundation phase and for early years and childcare provision which has contributed to play within these areas.

### **Recommendation 11**

The capacity of the sector to fund training is very limited with most employers having no funding for workforce development. Given the new duty set out in the Children & Families Measure, there is a strong case for core funding for workforce development. The availability of ring-fenced funding to the playwork sector would significantly enhance its ability to take control of workforce development, training and qualification programmes.

### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

The Welsh Assembly Government is in regular contact with Play Wales; Clybiau Plant Cymru, Kids Clubs Wales; SkillsActive (the Sector Skills Council for Play) and other stakeholders and training providers to support the development of the Play workforce in Wales. It has provided support for the development of play training over a number of years. This has including funding for the development and delivery of the Playwork Principles into Practice (P3) qualification and also the development of the play training infrastructure through the funding of the National Centre for Playwork Education and Training.

### **Recommendation 12**

Were central funding to be made available, Education and Training Standards Committee Wales (ETS) may be seen as ideally placed for an extended role as a potential host. It is an established cross sector committee within playwork, youthwork and community development, that could appropriately distribute grants to the sector. Linking its current role (one of setting standards and quality assurance) with funding, makes it particularly well placed to deliver quality outcomes.

### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

At the present time there are no Welsh Assembly Government plans for central, core funding for workforce development with the Play sector. The Education and Training Standards Committee Wales is a committee of the Welsh Local Government Association funded via a Welsh Assembly Government grant. It contributes to Welsh Assembly policy through the delivery of the National Youth Service Strategy via quality assurance of workforce development. It has no grant distribution function as this would be in conflict with its main purpose, so could not have a role in administering Welsh Assembly Government funding.

## **Current Models of Play Training**

### **Recommendation 13**

The diversity of the play workforce requires a range of training routes and qualifications. On-going support from WAG is needed to develop qualifications and training that is going to meet the needs of an expanding sector. This should include support for the further development of P<sub>3</sub> – in particular the development of training infrastructure (vocationally competent trainers). This may require short-term input of resources until the qualifications are mainstreamed and delivered through colleges and by work-based learning providers.

### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

The Welsh Assembly Government is in regular contact with Play Wales, Clybiau Plant Cymru, Kids Clubs Wales, SkillsActive (the Sector Skills Council for Play) and other stakeholders and training providers to support the development of the Play sector in Wales. It has provided support for the development of play training over a number of years. This has including funding for the development and delivery of the Playwork Principles into Practice (P3) qualification and also the development of the play training infrastructure including the training of vocationally competent trainers, through the funding of the National Training Centre for Playwork Education and Training. It provides funding for 16 – 18 year olds who are in training and for Further Education and work – based learning provision. The Assembly Government has also invested in training within the Foundation phase and for early years and childcare provision which has contributed to play within these areas.

### **Recommendation 14**

Investment is needed to develop cross-sector training packages that will embed good play principles across the wider workforce in response to the play duty set out in the Children & Families Measure.

### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

The Welsh Assembly Government is working across its policy areas to develop policy and implementation methods which promote play opportunities for children and young people. Officials are also working with SkillsActive and the Play sector in consideration of cross-sector awareness raising and training related to play. The issue of cross departmental and partnership working, with any training that this requires, will form part of the Guidance to Local Authorities in relation to duties related to Play Opportunities within the Measure.

### **Recommendation 15**

Guidance to local authorities regarding the Measure should set out clearly the need for good quality CPD for the Play workforce and how this should be delivered and funded.

### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

Workforce development and training for the Play workforce will form a section of the Standards and Guidance that are being developed to achieve the implementation of the Measure. The full range of stakeholders including all concerned with professional training and CPD in playwork is being engaged with and will be consulted on the content of this section.

### **Recommendation 16**

The out of school sector is in danger of becoming de-skilled in playwork with almost no opportunities for practitioners to access training towards play qualifications. This is particularly acute at Level 3. Government should work with CSSIW to provide better guidance that encourages practitioners to access playwork training rather than early years and childcare – thereby increasing demand to which training providers should respond.

### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

Welsh Assembly officials are working with partners including SkillsActive, CCSIW and the Care Council on the use of qualifications lists that can be used within the early years, child care and play sectors. The Welsh Assembly is also working with partners across all the related professional areas in taking forward children and young people's workforce development, especially related to the Common Core.

### **Recommendation 17**

Packages of CPD aimed at the wider children & young people's workforce need to be developed at a number of levels to support implementation of the Measure.

### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

Welsh Assembly officials are working with partners including SkillsActive, CCSIW and the Care Council on the use of qualifications lists that can be used within the early years, child care and play sectors. The Welsh Assembly is also working with partners across all the related professional areas in taking forward children and young people's workforce development especially related to the Common Core.

The Welsh Assembly Government is working across its policy areas to develop policy and implementation methods which promote play opportunities for children and young people. For instance at present the Health Improvement Division is commissioning the development of an activity pack and delivery of training for food and active play in early years settings.

### **Recommendation 18**

The sustainability of programmes developed under the BIG Lottery programme will require new community-based play training opportunities that require central support for their development.

### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

The Welsh Assembly Government is in regular contact with SkillsActive; Play Wales; officials from the BIG Lottery Child's Play programme; and officers from the infrastructure projects to consider the sustainability of play programmes and training opportunities within the sector.

## **Availability and accessibility of Play Training & Qualifications**

### **Recommendation 19**

In the long term, Playwork training should be mainstreamed, with funding for playwork coming through the normal DCELLS routes and delivered by Further Education and Work Based Learning providers. In the short-term however, intervention is needed to stimulate demand while supporting a basic level of supply.

### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

The Welsh Assembly Government is in regular contact with Play Wales, Clybiau Plant Cymru, Kids Clubs Wales, SkillsActive (the Sector Skills Council for Play) and other stakeholders and training providers to support the development of the Play sector in Wales. It has provided support for the development of play training over a number of years. This has included funding for the development and delivery of the Playwork Principles into Practice (P3) qualification and also the development of the play training infrastructure including the training of vocationally competent trainers, through the funding of the National Training Centre for Playwork Education and Training. It provides funding for 16 – 18 year olds who are in training and for Further Education and work – based learning provision. The Assembly Government has also invested in training within the Foundation phase and for early years and childcare provision which has contributed to play within these areas.

Due to the present financial constraints, the Welsh Assembly Government is not in a position to commit to additional financial support for playwork training or development of new qualifications at this time.

### **Recommendation 20**

Demand for play work training needs stimulating through changes in the regulations for Daycare & Childminding that in the short-term recognise playwork qualifications as valid, and in the longer-term require playworkers in regulated settings to hold playwork qualifications.

### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

Welsh Assembly officials are working with partners including SkillsActive, CCSIW and the Care Council on the use of qualifications lists that can be used within the early years, child care and play sectors. The Welsh Assembly is also working with partners across all the related professional areas in taking forward children and young people's workforce development, especially related to the Common Core.

### **Recommendation 21**

Demand for training also needs to come from good guidance to local authorities regarding their role in supporting the play workforce under the Children & Families Measure.

### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

The Welsh Assembly Government will set out the duties on Local Authorities to assess for and secure sufficient play opportunities for children in their areas, as covered by the Children & Families (Wales) Measure 2010. These will be set out in standards that will be underpinned by regulations and detailed in guidance to enable Local Authorities to fulfil the new duties. Sections of the Standards and Guidance will relate to the development of the Play workforce and to partnership working.

Engagement with stakeholders on the development of these documents is taking place during 2010 and a full consultation will take place in 2011 prior to the commencement of the duties. The Melyn Review will be given full consideration and contribute to this process.

### **Recommendation 22**

While a lack of demand has depressed the supply of playwork training, a lack of competent trainers, poor promotion of courses and a shortage of information exacerbates the situation. The Assembly Government should continue to support the

National Centre for Playwork Education and Training during this critical period of change of expansion to address these issues. The National Centre also has a role in over-seeing the re-connection between the supply and demand for playwork training across Wales – taking a coordinating role with the local infrastructure projects, FE and work-based learning, employers, DCELLS and the national organisations.

### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

The Welsh Assembly Government is in regular contact with Play Wales, Clybiau Plant Cymru, Kids Clubs Wales, SkillsActive (the Sector Skills Council for Play) and other stakeholders and training providers to support the development of the Play sector in Wales. It has provided support for the development of play training over a number of years. This has including funding for the development and delivery of the Playwork Principles into Practice (P3) qualification and also the development of the play training infrastructure including the training of vocationally competent trainers, through the funding of the National Training Centre for Playwork Education and Training. It provides funding for 16 – 18 year olds who are in training and for Further Education and work – based learning provision. The Assembly Government has also invested in training within the Foundation phase and for early years and childcare provision which has contributed to play within these areas.

## **A Playwork Qualifications Framework**

### **Recommendation 23**

The Assembly Government should work with partners - including Skills Active to publish a comprehensive qualifications framework that can support workforce development and link with developing integrated qualifications frameworks for the children & young people's workforce.

### **Welsh Assembly Government Response**

Welsh Assembly officials are working with partners including SkillsActive, CCSIW and the Care Council on the use of qualifications lists that can be used within the early years, child care and play sectors. The Welsh Assembly is also working with partners across all the related professional areas in taking forward children and young people's workforce development, particularly related to the Common Core.

The information contained within this Review will be used to inform and contribute to the ongoing work taking place between the Welsh Assembly Government and its partners and stakeholders within the Play sector.