



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

Report to Arts, Culture, Leisure
and Recreation SPC

29th June 2020
Item No. 5

'Pollinating Play' Dublin City Play Strategy 2020 - 2025

Realising the vision for Dublin as a child-friendly, playful city



Introduction - The Dublin City Play Strategy

The new Dublin City Play Strategy; 'Pollinating Play' (2020 – 2025) is a key guiding document for Dublin City Council and its partners as a sound basis for fully implementing a comprehensive play strategy for the city and to realise the vision for Dublin as a 'Child Friendly and Playful City'.

This strategy follows on from the Dublin City Play Plan (DCPP); Play here, Play there, Play Everywhere' (2012 – 2017) and will be implemented in support of the plan as a continued local authority response in promoting and supporting 'play' for children and young people.

Purpose & Scope

The scope of the new play strategy will embrace children and young people within the 0 – 18 age group and also be guided by the further extended age group identified in 'The National Children's' Strategy; 'Better Outcomes Brighter Futures '(2014) 0 – 24 age group

Strategy Principles & Values

The Dublin City Play Strategy is underpinned by the Article 31; *the child's right to play*

The strategy vision, mission, principles, themes and actions are informed by the definition of play set out within United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and General Comment 17 on Article 31; which defines the child's right to play:

“Children's play is any behaviour, activity or process initiated, controlled and structured by children themselves; it takes place whenever and wherever opportunities arise”.

The principle of 'Play Sufficiency' is adopted from the **2010 Wales 'Play Sufficiency Duty'** in order to develop a comprehensive action plan.

Our Vision; *Dublin Will be a child-friendly and playful city where all children and young people can enjoy and fully exercise their right to play*

Our Mission; *We will adopt a city-wide coordinated approach to provide high quality play opportunities for children and young people.*

Context: Influential Policies and Strategies

- **1992:** Ireland's ratification of UNCRC
- **2000:** National Children's Strategy
- **2003 - 2008:** Ireland's first National Play Strategy 'Ready, Steady Play!' was launched in 2003
- **2012:** 'Your City Your Space' Dublin City Council Public Realm Strategy
- **2014:** Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) launched 'Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures' (BOBF) (2014 – 2020), a new policy framework for children and young people
- **Present;** The Dublin City Parks Strategy (2019 – 2022)

Using the Play Strategy

The strategy and action plan will be used as a guiding document for developing actions to improve children and young people's play experiences within the context of their specific service or setting such as:

- Organisations and individuals with a responsibility for children's play.
- Parents, carers, service providers,
- Decision makers, planners etc. can adopt the action plan included within the strategy as a guide for best practice in planning for play.

Developing the Strategy.

The consultation process to date has used a wide range of consultative methods. Parents/carers, children and young people gave their views by participating

- Approx 600 completed online surveys '**Have your say about play**',
- Pop-up play consultations in a number of the city's main parks
- Organisations/ youth workshops in recreation centres
- National Playday - large number of children participated in short interviews and playful and creative workshops
- Dublin City's Comhairle na nÓg -
 - completed the online survey,
 - participated in 'play strategy' workshops

- Formed a sub-group to review the strategy draft.
- Ongoing; 'Children's views on COVID 19 Restrictions' - DCU

A Strategy and action plan to future proof 'play' for Dublin's Young Citizens

Dublin City Play Strategy includes an action plan based themes with specific focus on adopting 'play sufficiency' as a key principle in assessing quality in play provision and environments. This presents a holistic approach to supporting play in terms of the overall health and well-being of children and young people as active citizens who can participate in their city and communities through *positive childhood experiences in which they can **play now, play more and play better!***

Dublin City Play Strategy Themes

THEME 1: Develop and awareness of play and its value and importance in creating a child friendly and playful city

Theme 2: Adopt the principle of 'play sufficiency' as a framework for ongoing monitoring, review, evaluation and research regarding progress, effectiveness and overall impact of the play strategy.

Theme 3: Create an effective city play infrastructure for children and young people that supports their everyday freedoms and improve the design of our play spaces.

Theme 4: Place a key focus on accessible and inclusive opportunities for play by supporting children and young people requiring particular attention to fully exercise their right to play.

Theme 5: Support and encourage the development of play-friendly communities to provide time and spaces in local neighbourhoods for 'everyday street play' opportunities and experiences.

Theme 6: Highlight the benefits and importance of 'risk' and 'challenge' in play for children and young people by supporting them to assess and take risks

Theme 7: Highlight the creative, social, physical and emotional benefits of play for older children/teenagers that includes opportunities for risk, challenge and social interaction.

Theme 8: Support Children and young people to fully exercise their right to play by providing ease of access to engage in cultural life and the arts.

Theme 9: Work in partnership to support schools to facilitate play as a 'right' for children and young people by increasing and improving opportunities for play that places particular emphasis on outdoor, self-directed 'play'.

Theme 10: Promote and support the value and importance of facilitating outdoor, child-led play in early childhood and education settings.

THEME 11: Adopt the theory and concept of 'Playwork Practice' as a play led approach to providing play services and managing facilities in other contexts e.g. neighbourhood play schemes, hospitals, direct provision etc.

Next Steps

July 2020: Complete narrative and distribute draft document for approval/agreement

- Dublin City Council Departments
- Dublin City Play Strategy Partners

September 2020:

- Endorsement and approval of Dublin City Play Strategy
- Launch and distribution of Dublin City Play Strategy
- Ongoing promotion and implementation of Play Strategy

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29TH June 2020