

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales
Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and
Education Committee
Y Bil Drafft Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol a'r Tribiwnlys Addysg
(Cymru) | The Draft Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal
(Wales) Bill

ALN 11

Ymateb gan : Chwarae Cymru

Response from : Play Wales

Draft Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal
(Wales) Bill

What are your views on the draft Bill? Please outline below any concerns you have, or areas that you think the Committee should explore further before the Bill is formally introduced.

We are concerned that the Bill currently appears to be written very specifically about formal education. We advise consideration to include recognition of all of the places and settings where learning may happen.

As advised, we have referred to the draft Additional Learning Needs Code. We recommend the draft Code should make reference to Welsh Government's groundbreaking Play Sufficiency Duty. Section 11 of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 places a duty on local authorities to assess and secure sufficient play opportunities for children in their area.

The Welsh Government is taking a global lead on promoting the importance of children's play and for the first time, legislating to place a duty on local authorities to assess the sufficiency of play and recreational opportunities for children in their areas. The Welsh Government believes strongly in the importance of play in children's lives and the benefits it gives to their health, happiness and wellbeing and is taking a global lead on legislating for play opportunities for children.

In terms of children's play, we advise a stronger emphasis on the importance of learning through play is needed with the supporting documents supporting the Bill.

In *Wales- A Play Friendly Country* statutory guidance, Welsh Government states that "schools provide an important opportunity for children to play during the school day and for periods before and after classes. They can also provide valuable play space at weekends and during holiday periods if the school is organised to allow for this.

The Welsh Government recommends that Local Authorities advise schools to provide high quality play space and sufficient time for children to play during the school day and give full consideration to opening this provision during out of teaching hours.

In terms of play during the school day, The Play Sufficiency Assessment should assess the extent to which:

- children are provided with an interesting play environment for breaks during the school day.
- children are provided morning, lunchtime and afternoon play breaks."ⁱ

The school day should allow time and space for children to relax and play freely with their friends. Children spend a reasonable amount of time in school, therefore the space should be designed to be inclusive and flexible.

Children say that playtimes are the most important part of the school day to them and parents say they are against school playtimes being shortened."ⁱⁱ

Please highlight below your main concerns in relation to the Additional Learning Needs system. Let us know whether, in your view, the Bill addresses these concerns or if further work is needed.

The Code would be stronger if it included stronger reference and information about the value partnership working with a wide range of partners in the third sector, especially, in play and youth work via

informal and non formal learning.

Do you have any other comments or issues you wish to raise that have not been covered above?

The Right to Play is enshrined in Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, it should be noted that there are different perspectives on the *use* of play for instrumental purposes, particularly when considered from the perspective of the Article 31 rights of disabled children, for whom play may be largely valued by adults as a vehicle for “therapeutic or rehabilitative activities”ⁱⁱⁱ.

The “emancipation” of play from the domains of assessment and intervention for disabled children should be considered in any supporting documents:

“Disabled children’s play has been characterised as disordered and deficient and, as such, has been valued only as a means by which developmental goals can be achieved. Whereas play for typically developing children has been seen as of intrinsic value, for disabled children play has all too often been seen as instrumental. The recognition of childhood and play as important in their own right is crucial for the emancipation of disabled children’s play.”^{iv}

Children’s learning and development can be supported by supportive and caring adults who create opportunities and places where children and young people can play freely and with confidence. ^v

These places should allow children to encounter a wide range of opportunities and possibilities – where the adults involved understand the nature and importance of all aspects of children's play and work to support it.

ⁱ Welsh Government (2014) *Wales: A Play Friendly Country*. Cardiff: Welsh Government

ⁱⁱ National Playday Research (2009) undertaken by ICM on behalf of the UK Playday Steering group. London: Play England. <http://www.playwales.org.uk/eng/schools>

ⁱⁱⁱ United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (2013), *General comment No. 17 (2013) on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts (art. 31)*
Geneva: Committee on the Rights of the Child

^{iv} Goodley, D., & Runswick-Cole, K. (2010). Emancipating play: dis/abled children, development and deconstruction. *Disability & Society*, 25(4), 499–512.

^v United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (2013), *General comment No. 17 (2013) on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts (art. 31)*
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