## **The Contribution Play Makes Towards National Agendas**

# **Appendix 1**

#### **EVERY CHILD MATTERS**

In 2003 the Government published a green paper entitled Every Child Matters, and following consultation, published an action plan - Every Child Matters: the Next Steps.

Play can make a major contribution to achieving the 5 outcomes set out in the Government's Every Child Matters agenda. These are:

- (i) Being healthy play helps develop healthy minds and bodies, increases stamina and mental resilience
- (ii) Staying safe encouraged calculated risk taking and increased independence, confidence and self-esteem, can help to maintain their own safety.
- (iii) Enjoying and achieving children enjoy play and through their enjoyment often achieve and develop skills sub-consciously
- **(iv) Making a positive contribution** through fostering respect for others, learning about their community and developing skills to make them valued members of society
- **(vi) Achieving economic well-being** through the development of key skills which will aid them in maintaining their own economic and financial independence.

### CLEANER, SAFER, GREENER

The Government set this agenda in 2002 with the commission and publication of 'Living Spaces: Cleaner, Safer, Greener' to improve the quality and quantity of public space which is available to the public and in turn, for play opportunities for children and young people.

## JOINT AREA REVIEW (JAR)

A JAR evaluates how local services work together to contribute to the achievements, progress and wellbeing of children and young people against the five outcomes identified in the Every Child Matters agenda. It incorporates the inspection of youth services, local education authorities, local authorities' social services, Connexions services and the provision for students aged 14-19.

## **PLAY OPPORTUNITIES**

### **CHILDREN'S CENTRES**

Government commitment to setting up Sure Start Children's Centres throughout England can also help to achieve the aims of the play agenda. Children's Centres act as a central resource for parents to obtain information relating to their children, including facilities and resources available, in addition to childcare related information and usually being attached to a pre-school education provider.

#### **CRIME REDUCTION**

"The commitment of the present government to reduce crime and disorder is unquestioned" ("Calling Time On Crime" - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary). The government has put into place a number of measures to try and reduce the amount of criminal activity, and this, of course, also affects crime committed by young people. A well-constructed play strategy can help to achieve this goal by occupying young people in more structured activity and reducing boredom which can lead to crime.

#### CHILDREN'S FUND

The Children's Fund was launched in Nov 2000 to help tackle problems with social exclusion. As inclusion is a stated aim in this policy, working with the Children's Fund towards common goals and utilising their acknowledged expertise in consulting with children and young people will be an important partnership in terms of this Strategy.

#### YOUTH MATTERS

In 2005 the government published a green paper entitled 'Youth Matters', which aims to improve outcomes for 13-19 year olds. It proposed that young people have more things to do and places to go, and people to talk to, which can obviously dove-tail well with a strategy aimed at improved the quality and quantity of play available to children and young people.

#### OBESITY

There are rising levels of obesity in children and young people in the UK, as demonstrated by the commissioning of 'Tackling Child Obesity - First Steps' and the inclusion of reducing child obesity in the Public Sector Agreements of 2004. Active play is quite clearly a way in which children and young people achieve better levels of health and fitness and can help to lower obesity levels. Government aims to increase the levels of fitness in our communities by boosting participation levels to 50% of the population being regularly active by 2020 - a target which requires an increase of 1% year on year

### **NURSERY EDUCATION GRANT**

The Government has shown dedication to improving the provision and accessibility of nursery education with the introduction and ongoing support for the Nursery Education Grant, administered by the County Council. This encourages parents and carers to utilise provision where play is a major feature of learning.

#### **EXTENDED SCHOOLS**

'Choice for Parents, the Best Start for Children' is the Government's ten-year strategy to improve the provision and quality of childcare and will be implemented through the Every Child Matters framework. This strategy includes the provision of 'wrap-around care' on school sites, including breakfast clubs, after-school clubs and holiday clubs/schemes. These clubs can be an important way in which free play can be achieved and innovative and creative play can be encouraged.