

# A sizzling summer of sport and play



The Vale of Glamorgan Council's Sports and Play Development team would like to say a huge THANKS to all of the children, young people, parents, volunteers and staff who made summer 2011 such a record-busting success for the council's 'Get out and Play' schemes, 'Play Ranger' schemes and family events.

During the school holidays, hundreds of local children aged from five up to 14 got involved in the free summer programme of activities which gave them a chance to take part in a range of sports as well as arts and crafts, den building, outdoor games, cooking and more. So whether kids were budding artists or up and coming footballers they were all invited to get out and play. All of the stats have now been collected and here is an analysis of the summer programme...



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## 'Get out and Play' Olympic day

The season kicked off with an Olympic Family Fun Day on Saturday 23 July at King Square & Central Park in Barry. The event was used to launch and promote the summer programme and also had an Olympic theme as it coincided with the Olympic Open Weekend - a celebration marking the one year countdown to the London 2012 Games.

Families took part in a whole host of play activities and had a go at the Olympic sports of fencing, volleyball, wheelchair basketball, tennis and rowing. Two rowing machines, borrowed from Barry Leisure Centre, were used for a competition and Olympic themed medals were awarded to those who rowed the furthest distance in one minute.

Medals were also handed out to over 20 participants who were singled out for their hard work and enthusiasm in taking part in the other sports on offer.

The Sports and Play team also introduced the idea of handing out stickers to the children when they took part in a sports or play activity and once they had amassed five stickers they could exchange these for an Olympic certificate and choose between a sports bottle or a sports bag.

This idea proved to be really popular, with the majority of children trying their hand at every activity, many for the first time.

## 'Get Out and Play' Schemes

The 'Get Out and Play' schemes then began on 1 August at Palmerston School in Barry, before moving on to three other primary schools in the Vale. The schemes were run on an open access basis, which means that the children could come and go as they please - the schemes aren't a care service for working parents.

Staff were on site to make sure that the children were safe, and suggested some activities, but ultimately the choice of what to do was left up to the children themselves. While being open to all, the inclusion of disabled children and young people was a focus area. A total of 544 children were registered as attending, with the breakdown as follows...

Play Scheme venue	Number of children registered
Barry Island Primary	120
Gladstone Primary	126
Llanilltud Fawr Primary	147
Palmerston Primary	161

Risk assessments were carried out at all schemes. Although Play Schemes and Play Ranger schemes are not currently registered with the Care Standards Inspectorate of Wales, they are all compliant with the regulations linked to this organisation, ensuring the quality of provision delivered.



## Feedback from parents...

"My daughter has special needs and without the Play Scheme there would be nothing for her to attend through the summer holidays. She benefits greatly by interacting with other children, and all the staff are wonderful with her - they do so much with her and we are very thankful for this. We hope she will be able to attend next year, as she loves it so much."

"My daughter has thoroughly enjoyed her time at the Play Scheme. She has grown in confidence, enjoyed many new activities and developed new skills. The Play Scheme team were fantastic. For a child with autism, accepting new people can be difficult, but my daughter embraced this opportunity with the help of the team. This is an invaluable service for the community. Thank you."

## Opportunities for all

Play is the perfect medium through which to provide inclusive opportunities for all children to take part, regardless of any disabilities. During the summer, the Play Development team worked in conjunction with the Child Health & Disability Team and health visitors to ensure that disabled children and young people were able to access Play Schemes.

The completion of Helpful Books by the parents / carers of all disabled children and young people attending the schemes ensured that the play staff had a full picture of the individual needs of each child so was able to ensure that the appropriate equipment and resources were made available. The play team have invested in a range of specialist equipment including a large range of sensory equipment and dark dens.

During the summer, 28 disabled children and young people were linked into Play Schemes, accounting for 763 registrations over 339 sessions (which equates to 678 hours). Of these children and young people:

- 2 required 2:1 support
- 20 required 1:1 support
- 6 required a buddy
- 9 required personal care support
- 3 required a nurse
- 2 were provided with transportation

There were also a large number of children attending who had additional needs such as ADHD. Sensory sessions were also offered by trained staff to offer consistency and support for the children requiring this service who receive it during school time. These staff members already work alongside a number of the disabled children within school time, and this proved to be invaluable to the children who sometimes find it fretful in new surroundings. The service ensured that they settled quickly into the Play Scheme environment and enabled a smooth transition from school to Play Scheme.

## National Play Day

More than 500 people made Victoria Park in Barry a frenzy of fun for this year's National Play Day on Wednesday 3 August.

Hundreds of families enjoyed a day packed full of activities at the event which was organised by the play Development Team in partnership with Victoria Park manager Jon Greatrex and Community Music Wales. DJ Stirling (pictured below) also entertained the crowds.



## Play Rangers

While the Play Schemes took place in schools, Play Ranger schemes were held in parks and open spaces in Barry and the rural Vale. A total of 181 children were registered at the schemes which ran at:

- Alexandra Gardens, Barry
- Bassett Park, Barry
- Coastlands Church, Barry
- Stratford Green, Barry
- Victoria Park, Barry
- Celtic Way, Rhoose
- Dyfrig Court, Llantwit
- Glyndwr Avenue, St Athan





The Vale's Play Aloud team

## Play is definitely 'Aloud'

A £1m project to create sustainable community-based play opportunities for children in the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff got off to a sensational start this summer.

The three-year 'Play Aloud' project, set up thanks to a Big Lottery grant, is giving kids aged five to 14 a fun alternative to TV and computer games when they get home from school by letting them get out and enjoy a huge range of play activities.

Both the Vale and Cardiff have their respective Play Aloud teams, and in addition to overseeing free fun-packed sessions, the staff are also working to mentor local volunteers who can be trained up with all the skills and knowledge they need to run the play sessions themselves in the future. Being 'sustainable' and making a long-term impact is the key element of the project and several volunteers have already been identified.

Play Aloud was officially launched in an event at the National History Museum of Wales, St Fagans, with additional launch events following in each county. Over 250 children and families got a taste of Play Aloud at the Vale of Glamorgan event, which took place at Central Park and King Square in Barry in July.

After establishing the best venues, days and times to go into different communities in the Vale of Glamorgan, the Play Aloud team set up camp for the summer in playing fields, parks and community centres across Sully, Dinas Powys and Penarth. The area was chosen as the starting point for the project as it was identified as lacking in any open access play opportunities for children, and the response from local youngsters has been excellent with more than 200 children joining the team during the first week of the summer holidays, and attendances growing steadily ever since.

Play Aloud is a partnership project between the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Cardiff Council, Cardiff Voluntary Action, The Parents Federation, Recreate play Association, and the Vale Centre for Voluntary Services. The Vale's Play Aloud team is currently looking into the next areas that they will visit.

### Feedback so far...

"Great idea and a big help in the long holidays. Lots of friendly staff!"

"How fab for a long holiday and access to different resources is lovely."

"This is an amazing idea and we would love to see it continue and would be prepared to pay £3 per child. Please keep in touch if we can help support you."



### Links between sports and play

This year the Vale Council's Play Development team worked closely with the council's Disability Sports Development Officer and Dragon Sport Assistant to provide a range of inclusive sports activities within the Play Schemes. Sessions took place in sports such as dodgeball, cricket, tennis, baseball, golf and rugby.

Coaches from local sports clubs Dinas Powys FC and Llantwit Major Karate Club also came into the schemes to deliver football and karate. This proved to be very beneficial in encouraging children to join community clubs with four disabled children attending community club football sessions following their experience during Play Schemes.

The delivery of sports within Play Schemes proved extremely worthwhile, particularly for the disabled children, as they were able to take part in sports activities that they have not experienced elsewhere. This partnership has also raised awareness amongst staff, volunteers and the children of how to adapt activities to ensure the inclusion of disabled children, and has highlighted the importance of an inclusive approach in both sports and play.

Simon Jones, the Vale Council's Disability Sports Development Officer, said:

"The play programme this summer was truly inclusive. There were a range of disabled children whose needs were all catered for so they could join in with the same activities as every other child. Rarely have I seen an environment where a power wheelchair user will mix with a mainstream child for every activity. Through inclusion the Play Schemes boosted the confidence and knowledge of every child who attended."

For further information about the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Sports and Play team, please call Karen Davies on 01446 704793 or visit [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/sportsandplay](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/sportsandplay)



### Football in the park

The Sports Development Team worked in partnership with volunteers from Friends of Victoria Park (Barry) to run a free open access Football Fun Day for residents from the Cadoxton area. Twenty four children and young people had the opportunity to undertake coaching drills led by Danny Elliott, the Vale's Football Academy Manager. Following a morning of football skills the players then took part in a fun festival.

Jon Greatrex, Parks and Open Spaces Officer for Victoria Park was thrilled with the event and has worked with the Sports Development Team to secure funding to place some volunteers on a Football Leaders course and to purchase some equipment to enable them to continue offering informal football sessions at the park.

The Sports Development Team also facilitated the delivery of football activities at Iolo Park, Pencoedre Park and George Street, Barry in conjunction with the council's Communities First teams. The feedback has been extremely positive with consistently high numbers attending the sessions.

### Staff and Volunteers

The summer Play Schemes and Play Rangers schemes were run by 26 staff and nine volunteers. All staff and volunteers were CRB checked and received a range of training including play training, disability awareness, manual handling, sensory play and first aid. The courses resulted in increased skills levels, confidence and also in them gaining certified awards.

All staff and volunteers also attended an Active Young People Sports Organisers Course at Porthkerry Park, which gave them a basic knowledge of how to set up and deliver safe, fun sporting activities. A disability element was added to the training to promote inclusion.

One personal care member of staff and a nurse was employed for four weeks of the Play Scheme and they were supported by play staff to undertake the care of the children requiring this service.

### Overall feedback

A variety of methods were used to monitor the success of all the schemes that the council ran during the summer. A phenomenal 100% positive feedback was received from the children and young people who attended.

The feedback from parents was very positive with some constructive comments made, including the desire for longer sessions, for the sessions to span the whole day including lunchtimes, and the need for more advertising as some felt that the schemes were not advertised enough. All comments will be taken on board and considered for next summer.