

Kids Inclusion Framework for Local Authorities

Policy into practice to include disabled children
and young people in play and childcare services

- ★ Key areas for local authorities to address in promoting and supporting inclusive settings
- ★ Guidance on establishing policies, structures, systems and staffing that promote inclusion
- ★ A framework allowing local solutions in local circumstances
- ★ Opportunities to find out how other authorities have addressed elements of the framework



'Inclusive provision is open and accessible to all, and takes positive action in removing disabling barriers so that disabled and non-disabled children can participate.'
(Alison John)

'Inclusion is access plus respectful relationships'
(Pippa Murray)

This Framework reflects **Kids'** belief that disabled children and young people should have the right to be part of any local play environment they choose. Local authorities can use this leaflet to help meet their responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act and the Ten Year Strategy for Childcare, promoting equal access to play for disabled children and equal access to childcare for their parents/carers.



'The focus is always on the child as an individual - their likes and dislikes, their needs and wants... there is only a group of individual children with individual needs.'
(Kids playgrounds)

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The following are all important factors. The more of them are in place, the better the chances of inclusion being developed successfully.

1. **An audit of who wants services and what services are currently available**

If plans are to be well-founded it is important to know the existing position in terms of the numbers of disabled children, their needs, and the range of services genuinely available to them.

2. **Consistent consultation and liaison with disabled children and their parents**

Parents and children (both disabled and non-disabled) need to influence, understand and have the chance to contribute to the development and monitoring of inclusive services. Listening to and speaking with parents and children is essential in building trust and getting services right.

3. **An authority play policy incorporating a shared understanding of inclusion**

The play policy should by definition be an inclusive play policy. It may involve voluntary agencies, leisure, housing, parks, planning and transport as well as education, social services and health - and will be fundamentally informed by the consultation referred to above.

The process of engaging many different people/departments/services/organisations in exploring the meaning and implications of an inclusive policy is as important as the end product.

4. **Budget usage**

- ★ Re-consideration of all Children's Trust/department/agency budgets in line with the policy to promote inclusion: e.g. Carers Grant; respite/short term breaks; Sure Start (EYDCP) monies; disabled children's services in social services and health; voluntary and charitable income; also Direct Payments to families to access the individual assistance children may need.
- ★ Linking of funding for settings to a requirement that they undertake inclusion training.
- ★ Policy decision in favour of supporting inclusion in mainstream in preference to funding segregated schemes.

5. Awareness of change process

Mainstream services, specialist services and families with older disabled children may be used to segregation and may have come to expect/prefer it. It may be difficult/inappropriate to expect all children to access inclusive services. But properly funded inclusion should become a normal choice for younger children and remain the norm as those children become older.

All mainstream services should be encouraged to be pro-active in inviting disabled children.

6. Inclusive play training

(a) Based on disability equality and attitudinal change - for all levels of staff

- ☆ senior officers
- ☆ managers of settings and development/advisory staff
- ☆ permanent face to face staff
- ☆ temporary staff
- ☆ ideally for whole staff teams at individual settings; inclusion involves everyone.

It may be useful to offer training first to those settings that parents are actually expressing interest in their children attending and to settings that are enthusiastic about inclusion.

(b) Followed, if required, by training for settings (e.g. risk management, challenging behaviour) - and/or advice given in the setting by a specialist in relation to a specific child's needs, such as lifting/medical procedures/communication with that child.

7. 'Bridges'

People need to be in place who have both an understanding of inclusion and experience with disabled children, who can act as bridges between potentially inclusive settings and segregated services or families with a disabled child. The service they provide needs to be pro-active in order to help change people's expectations.

- ☆ Settings and families may need a 'go-between' employed by the authority or by a voluntary agency to provide this service.
- ☆ Larger settings or groups of settings may do this themselves by allocating staff time.

8. Support and advice on the end of a phone

Settings need one phone number to call for support or advice, from where other expertise can be coordinated if needed (e.g. health and safety advice, educational psychologist, impairment-specific expert, speech therapist, voluntary agency staff*). Where a 'bridge' person exists, it may be the same person. This is similar to some of the Area SENCO roles that support early years settings, but is better described as an Inclusion Officer.

* This also requires statutory departments/agencies to agree that expert staff will be available to support voluntary and private providers as well as statutory providers. This may mean an increase in the number of such postholder hours or a re-prioritising of roles.

9. Money available for a variety of extra assistance if necessary

- ★ Extra money is often not necessary. Disabled child does not equal 'extra adult required'.
- ★ Not usually extra 1:1 staff - unless a child has a very high level of dependency or specific specialist knowledge is essential, it may be better for an existing staff member who knows the setting to help include them; if an additional staff member is necessary, that extra person may be better employed with a more generic role.
- ★ Assistance schemes, placing an adult with a child who really requires additional assistance, can work well as long as the aim is to help the setting adapt to include the child; the danger is that the setting sees the child as a problem whose needs are solved by their personal assistant. Short term, time limited support can be a way of ensuring the whole setting welcomes the child and learns what may be required. Such support can always be extended if it needs to be.
- ★ Money could also be set aside for 'whatever else will make it easier to include a particular child' (e.g. equipment, transport, or to buy in expert advice if a service is not available free to settings). Try to frame eligibility criteria flexibly so that money can be used effectively.

10. A variety of standard paperwork available to settings

Guidance on issues around intimate care, lifting, safety, risk and insurance should be made available to settings - see 'The Dignity of Risk' in our Resources list.

Paperwork should not need to be re-invented by each setting to help them ask children and parents appropriate questions that ensure each child is safe and included. It is helpful to provide frameworks but not to spoon-feed completely, as thinking together is part of a setting's inclusive development.

11. Networks of support

The key players in inclusive services will benefit from continuing contact and idea sharing with others in similar roles. Keeping inclusion high on providers' agendas is crucial - e.g. through the offer of regular chances to meet and the provision of supportive paperwork (such as the **Kids** regional inclusive play and childcare network meetings and the **All of Us - Inclusion Checklist for Settings**).

12. A written, costed, time-specific strategy for inclusion - together with a commitment from senior figures

- ★ to fund it
- ★ to staff it
- ★ to implement it
- ★ to monitor it
- ★ to amend and develop it

Resources to support the Framework

Kids is preparing a series of briefing papers expanding on some of the twelve elements of the Framework. For up to date information on availability, contact: rachel.scott@kids.org.uk

Guide to Preparing Play Strategies (Greater London Authority - www.london.gov.uk)

A wide ranging background to all issues involved in developing a local authority play strategy, including reference to key national documents and examples of various authorities' plans. Includes information on audits, policy, consultation and partnership. Features consistent references to the rights of disabled children to be part of the play process.

The Dignity of Risk (Council for Disabled Children - www.ncb.org.uk/resources)

The key document addressing questions of insurance and good practice in relation to the balance of safety and risk when planning to include children with complex impairments. Includes lots of sample forms for photocopying or adapting.

Making Connections: developing inclusive leisure in policy and practice

(Pippa Murray, Joseph Rowntree Foundation - www.jrf.org.uk)

An exploration of ways in which disabled young people can be consulted in order to contribute to the planning of services which truly include them.

All Together: How to create inclusive services for disabled children and their families

(Mary Dickins and Judy Denziloe - www.ncb.org.uk/resources)

The second edition of this practical handbook aims to assist both staff and managers to develop policies and practice that promote inclusion.

Inclusive Play – practical strategies for working with children aged 3 to 8

(Theresa Casey – www.paulchapmanpublishing.co.uk)

This book covers a range of topics including how to improve and develop outdoor play, examples of activities to use in your setting and how to plan and write a play policy. This book will appeal to all practitioners wanting to improve and develop opportunities for inclusive play.

Accessing information about how other authorities are addressing elements of the Framework

The **Kids Playwork Inclusion Project** is developing a record of case studies and guidance from our contact with local authorities around the country. We are happy to share this information with others by forwarding materials of our own and/or directing enquirers to other people we know who have put elements of the Framework into place in their own local authority.

If you would like to access this information - and if you have examples of your own which we can add to our records for the benefit of others - please contact Alyson Christy, our National Development Manager for the Playwork Inclusion Project, via 01904 764469 or at alyson.christy@kids.org.uk. You can also access some of the case studies via our NIP Network E-group. For details of how to join see back page.

About the Framework

- ★ This Framework has been drawn up as a result of **Kids'** wide experience working with individuals and local authorities committed to the inclusion of disabled children and young people in mainstream play, childcare and leisure settings. Its publication is one element of the **Kids Playwork Inclusion Project (PIP)**, delivered under contract with the DfES Sure Start Unit.
- ★ Please feel free to draw on the Framework as a basis for producing paperwork for your own local use. We would be grateful if you would acknowledge the **Kids Inclusion Framework** as your source.

If you wish to encourage providers and those who support them to develop inclusion in their own settings, we recommend the use of our complementary leaflet - the **All of Us – Inclusion Checklist for Settings**. This (as well as further copies of the Framework) can be obtained by emailing: pip@kids.org.uk.

Kids Inclusion Framework Seminars

The government's 10 year Childcare Strategy states that local authorities will have a new duty to ensure that local childcare needs are met: 'In delivering this offer, local authorities must ...fully reflect the circumstances of families with disabled children who can be poorly served by the present system.' It further states: 'It is particularly important that all children's centres and extended schools provide services which are accessible to disabled children and their families. Therefore local authorities should ensure that all planning for children's centres and extended schools includes measures to make these services fully inclusive.' **Kids National Development Division** offers a single day seminar to individual local authorities to enable them to meet these needs. It enables senior staff from a cross-section of departments and local partners to explore the Inclusion Framework as it relates to their own local circumstances.

About Kids

Kids works in close partnership with parents, carers and disabled children across England, providing a wide variety of different services. Our PIP project has supported local authorities throughout the country, trained several hundred play and childcare workers, set up the **National Inclusive Play (NIP) Network**, and established regional network meetings.

For information on any of the following, ring 020 7359 3073 or e-mail: pip@kids.org.uk.

- ★ A range of accredited training days and longer courses on inclusive play
- ★ Consultancies to help you explore any elements of inclusion you choose
- ★ Publications
- ★ Regional network meetings

You can also become a member of the NIP Network. Members receive regular email bulletins and can subscribe to the NIP Network E group for on-line discussion and support. To join the network go to: www.kids.org.uk/ndd/nipnetwork .