

Date: 24/01/07
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No Cost Advisory Service for Primary Schools Play and Outdoor Development

Dear Primary Heads

I am looking for ten primary schools who to work with over the next year. I am able to offer expertise in the process of developing a play policy for your school and a wealth of practical ideas to maximise use of your school grounds and resources. The advisory service is paid for by standards funds and so no costs are past on to schools.

In order to qualify for the play development service the schools must be committed to developing a greater understanding of the role and delivery of play for all primary age children. I am asking that all participating schools:

- Have development of play opportunities as a priority within their action plans
- Undertake to send a regular representative to the Best Practice Forum on play, which will comprise of the ten schools and support the process of play development.
- Agree to allocate appropriate resources to enable the development of a planned approach to play, which would include a school play policy and an action plan of improvements.

I have a background working in play, teaching and special needs. In my previous post in Bath and North East I worked with over eighty percent of primary schools. In addition to working for the Council I have also helped write the guidance for the National Lottery Play Fund and assisted with the development of play policies for Somerset, Wiltshire Cornwall and Gloucestershire. My experiences have consistently been, that schools which address the play needs of children experience a wide range of benefits both in the play-ground and in the classroom. I have currently been in post in South Gloucestershire for a year developing a Play Policy and Strategy for the Council, which was agreed by Cabinet on December 4th 2006.

**Therese Gillespie, Director for Children and Young People,
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The policy represents a significant shift in the Council's approach to providing stimulating challenging environments in which children may encounter risk in play and has the backing of the Health and Safety Manager and the Council's Insurance Manager.

If you would like your school to be included as one of the ten schools eligible for the play development support please write a letter of application no more than one side of A4, outlining your current level of development, who would be nominated as the lead person on play development and the commitment the school could give to play development.

I look forward to hearing from you and working with you in the near future.

Michael Follett
Play Development Advisor