

Play Sufficiency Assessment Toolkit - Tool 8

Children as auditors - Information sheet

This tool provides tips for involving children when conducting the Play Sufficiency Assessment and auditing play spaces.

Focus Group Tips

A child at play will naturally and instinctively interpret a space and make changes to it, or else simply move on because the space doesn't offer, or has ceased to offer, what they need. For those responsible for auditing play spaces, the most reliable source of information will be the children.

When auditing a play space, it is important to remember that this is an adult activity and not children's. It is important not to infringe on children's time, but if they are to feel the play space belongs to them, their participation is beneficial in supporting a sense of ownership.

Some children simply enjoy having a role to play. Their natural curiosity will cause them to ask what is being done when they see adults counting resources and they may want to help. Without duress and with some guidance, there are a number of ways children can inform the audit of the play space.

Looking at maps with children can be a good way to look at the geography of an area and begin to understand how children are playing within it.

Methods which can include child participation:

- Drawing pictures of what they like to do
- Interviewing other children about their interests
- Producing and completing questionnaires with their peers
- Taking photos of what's happening in the play space.

It is important to remember that with any children's involvement with auditing, they do not feel they are being promised something that can't be delivered. Asking children a range of questions and encouraging participation will help children see the possibilities. This is a mapping stage that also involves interpretation of the space and what happens within it, to support decision-making processes.

If at any point through the process mixed messages are conveyed over the future development of the setting or resources, children will feel disengaged.

Children across different stages of understanding will interpret things varyingly, so keeping participation developmentally appropriate will help reduce the risk of misunderstandings happening.

Keeping children safe

The Welsh Government expects all individuals, groups and organisations offering activities or services to children and young people in Wales, to follow the advice provided in the [Working together to safeguard people: Code of Safeguarding Practice](#). This code is intended to assist in understanding the safeguarding arrangements that should be in place to operate safely and to safeguard all participants.

The [Social Care Wales Group A online module for safeguarding](#) is a free resource for all those whose roles bring them into contact with children and young people.

When undertaking play sufficiency activities involving children, refer to the [Wales Safeguarding Procedures](#) which help people to understand their responsibilities to safeguard children and young people in Wales.