

# YBont

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Clybiau  
Plant  
Cymru



KIDS' CLUBS

[www.clybiauplantcymru.org](http://www.clybiauplantcymru.org)

Autumn 2021



## In this issue...

- \* Regional News
- \* Grow Your Own Feast
- \* Autumn Activities
- \* New Term, New Ideas

...and *much more!*

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## Dear Out of School Childcare Club Member...

As we look towards the Autumn, with slightly bated breath, we wonder:

- will all of our clubs be able to reopen?
- will they have survived to the end of the CRJS (Furlough) scheme?
- are the staff still available to work?
- will Headteachers agree to let them back on site?
- will there be any more restrictions reintroduced throughout the winter?

The team here at Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs remain focused on supporting the resilience of our clubs, their staff and management, and we are also working on our own resilience too. I feel that the staff here, along with our colleagues in Childcare settings, CWLWM, Government, Local Authorities, have been working tirelessly throughout this pandemic; and as restrictions have lifted and we have returned to our offices, we have also struggled to remain as positive and upbeat and there has been a shift in our own resilience.

We recognise that in order to build our own wellbeing we need to work on it, it is not something that will necessarily come on its own. Our resilience reserves have been depleted over the pandemic and we have as a team been collaborating and supporting each other with ideas on how to keep building them so we do not run out.

To me, there is nothing more important than a team who have all the tools in their belt to help them survive and continue to do their very best in their roles. To this end we have implemented a number of things to help them; perhaps as your club returns in the autumn you might like to think about implementing some yourselves.

Firstly we asked for staff with an interest to set up a wellbeing group who now meet monthly and look at activities that will support wellbeing across the organisation. We set up a channel on teams, called **"Well now in a Minute"** where staff can post ideas on how they have worked on their own resilience, be it online classes they have attended, podcasts they have listened to, books or articles they have read or sharing things that they have found helpful in order to help their colleagues.

During May we #WalkedthisMay, as a team we set ourselves a goal of walking a distance the length of the Welsh Coastline, 870 miles; we smashed this target and raised money for Young Minds. In July we set up an online activity tracker and set a monthly target across the organisation to ensure we are all getting our weekly activity requirements, whilst we did not achieve our 15,000 minutes of activity in July we are all up for smashing it in August being accountable to reach a team goal certainly makes it more compelling to get out (or in) and exercising for our own benefit. August also saw us have great fun on Playday with #Showusyourplay trending on Social



media, highlighting the benefits of Play and its importance within the Out of School Childcare sector

July also saw us join **The Happiness Programme with Jon Bockelmann-Evans** where we laughed and laughed and laughed some more. The programme is designed to complement everything else we have been doing as an organisation to support wellbeing and resilience, but touches on the role that emotional health plays in ensuring people can preserve and maintain good mental health during the current challenging climate.

There are many ideas that go into our **Well now in a minute** programme, not everything suits everybody, but I find by supporting each other as a whole team, we are able to find something for all. The next stage of our wellbeing group will see us recruit wellbeing champions, who will support staff across the organisation.

Our Autumn edition of Y Bont focusses on Resilience and sustainability for you our clubs, with a wealth of ideas on how you cannot only support your staff but the children who attend your settings, to be the most resilient they can be. We focus on some key items on the new Programme for Government and support you to revive in the new school year.

Remember our monthly **Club Hub** where you can meet up with other clubs and network with your peers.

Wishing you a safe and fun-filled Autumn,

Jane O'Toole  
Chief Executive Officer

## Can you help us?

You will soon receive (if you haven't already) an invitation to represent your area of Wales on our Board of Trustees.

Without support and guidance from you, the people we represent, we cannot do our best to be your voice at local and national level, fighting the corner of Out of School Childcare Clubs to get the best outcomes for children and families across Wales.

If you can spare some time (normally a couple of hours 4 or 5 times a year) and have an interest in supporting our Sector to revive and thrive, please contact us on 029 20741000, [info@clybiauplantcymru.org](mailto:info@clybiauplantcymru.org) or respond to the email invitation over the next few weeks.

Here's something from one of our existing



## 21st March 2022 – Ending Physical Punishment

21 March 2022 is a historic moment for children's rights. From this day on, all types of physical punishment will be illegal in Wales. Welsh Government will be spreading the word across the country to raise awareness - keep an eye out for the ad van!

See the website for more information  
<https://gov.wales/ending-physical-punishment-children>



Trustees to tell you what it means to be on the Board.

My name is Amy, and I am the current chair for the Board of Trustees at Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs. I have 17 years' experience of working in early years and have been the manager of a private nursery for the past 11 years. I was previously a Board member for 3 years before taking a break and I have been part of our current board for 3 years.

I first joined the board to help further my own CPD and I thought my experience of working

firsthand in an early years setting would be useful in providing opinions, ideas and also an understanding to the organization about the type of support a setting needed from Clybiau.

What I didn't expect was the number of new skills I would gain as a trustee such as learning how charity finances work, understanding different funding streams, and how to develop strategic goals that would benefit not just the organization but also the childcare sector.

So, if you are looking for a new challenge and feel you could help play a fundamental role in the development of the organization and the out of school childcare sector, whilst developing your own knowledge and new skills then you should consider joining our board of trustees.

## HR Updates

30 June 2021	EU Settlement Scheme closes to applicants. New right to work checks will be introduced
30 September 2021	The Job Retention Scheme will close.
5 October 2021	The EHRC will start enforcing the publication of gender pay gaps for public and private companies in 2021
To be confirmed (TBC)	New law prohibiting confidentiality clauses in contracts or settlement agreements from preventing disclosures to the police, regulated health and care or legal professionals to be introduced
TBC	New law requiring confidentiality clauses to set out their limitations to be introduced
TBC	Laws on criminal record disclosures to be amended, reducing the disclosure period for sentences lasting four years or less
TBC	Redundancy protection for new parents to be extended
TBC	New law introducing right for all workers to request a more predictable and stable contract after 26 weeks' service to be introduced
TBC	New law to increase break in continuous employment from one week to four weeks to be introduced
TBC	New law preventing deductions from 'tips' to be introduced
TBC	New legislation to clarify employment status tests to be introduced
TBC	New law introducing tribunal sanctions where organisations commit repeated breaches to be introduced
TBC	Extension of shared parental leave to grandparents



# West Wales

## Settings in West Wales building business resilience by registering as Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIO) and with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

This year has seen the beginning of registration for a number of settings across West Wales.

More and more business owners/committees are becoming incorporated to limit their personal financial liability. We have supported Settings such as Clwb Iâr in Ceredigion with amending their governing documents, understanding the legislation, and preparing for registration/re-registration with the CIW. This has been a worrying time for all businesses and insurance companies have not always paid out. In addition, some funders will only award grants to Settings that are incorporated (recognised as a legal corporation). Now is a good time to review your governance with our support and ensure owners/committee members are adequately protected.

Our tailored guidance can be offered at a time that suits you and is supported with a wealth of editable templates for your business to adapt and utilise for its own purpose. Some of the most popular templates we have available for clubs considering a move to incorporation include the Model Articles of Association, and Trustee Role Descriptions and Recruitment Guidance, and a wealth of other obligatory and recommended policies.

Some of our popular editable documents for CIW registration include Safeguarding, Arrivals/ Collections, Risk Assessments, and more. All adaptable policies and procedures are free for member settings, please download your documents from our Stepping Out resource here - <https://bit.ly/SteppingOut-2020>

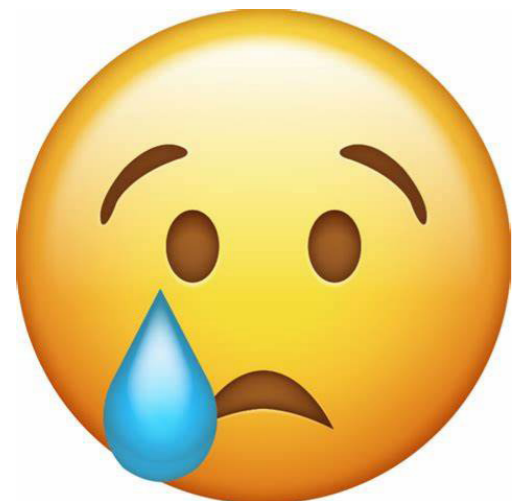
Feedback from settings in West Wales which have received support with registration and incorporation this year –

*'Thank you so much'*  
– Club in Pembrokeshire  
*'Diolch yn fawr am yr holl gyngor. Cofion'*  
– Club in Ceredigion  
*'Many thanks again!'*  
– Club in Carmarthenshire  
*'Diolch am hyn!'* Club in Ceredigion

If your setting has any queries regarding incorporation as a sole trader or an unincorporated voluntary managed committee please don't hesitate to get in touch via your local Childcare Business Development Officer, or <https://www.clybiauplantcymru.org/>

## We'll Miss You .....

## New settings opening



- premises/ protective measures guidance
- Staffing challenges with Playwork qualified staff leaving the sector
- Adherence to the NMS

Having worked closely with these Settings over the years, it cannot be underestimated how disappointing it is to see these much-loved provisions disappearing from their communities, and we would urge that any setting having challenges of any kind comes to us in the first instance so that we can support you with any challenges faced, and report these challenges to Government and local officials in order to facilitate better support for businesses going forward.

After pursuing all available avenues for support, if you do decide to close your setting there are a number of factors that you will need to consider including:

- Closing down your business as per your constitution/memorandum/ Articles of Association
- Completing final reports and paying any outstanding debts
- Notifying statutory organisations (i.e CIW, HMRC)

Further guidance can be found in our comprehensive Stepping Out guide, Page 153 – <https://bit.ly/SteppingOut-2020>



This year has unfortunately seen the continued closure of a number of prominent and long serving clubs across West Wales due to the Pandemic. Some businesses and community enterprises have found that challenges exacerbated by the Pandemic have made them unviable. Challenges reported have included –

- Sustainability due to long periods of enforced closure by schools/other

### Need to contact us?

You can contact the West Wales team by phone on 01269 831010, by email: [info-ww@clybiauplantcymru.org](mailto:info-ww@clybiauplantcymru.org) by post: Unit 2 Clos Gelliwerdd, Cross Hands, Carmarthenshire. SA14 6RX.

# Funding Support in Swansea

CIW registered Settings in Swansea have been continuing to access funding from the various pots of money Swansea Council has available for sustainability, new provision and more recently the 'Summer of Fun' grant. These funding opportunities have been a lifeline for many Settings, for over the last few months Out of School Clubs in Swansea have been reflecting on their services, both current and future and assessing what the impact of Covid-19 has had and continues to have, on their provision.

One of the biggest challenges Settings have been facing more recently, is around self-isolating and the impact that has not only on morale within the Setting and their community, but on having enough staff available to cover the ratios needed. One Setting was very close to the line of needing to close until Staff were able to return to work safely. Other providers

have been faced with whole class groups self-isolating and therefore numbers for their Setting were so low it wasn't viable to open. Being able to access these grants, or simply knowing that they are available if and when they are needed allows Settings to move through these uncertain times.

If you are a CIW registered Setting in Swansea, or would like to become CIW registered then please get in touch with your Swansea Childcare Business Development Officer Sian Jewell for more information on how to access the funding and support to complete your application.



## Good luck to all our West Wales Learners!

Good luck to all of our West Wales Learners who have recently started or are about to embark on their journey to complete their Playwork qualification with us. Don't forget to get in touch with us if staff at your Setting require a Playwork qualification! We are able to offer Playwork Apprenticeships and shorter Level 3 Award in Transition in Playwork (from Early Years) for those with existing childcare qualifications.

## How your Quality of Care Review can help your setting support ongoing well-being

Your Quality of Care Review provides you with the benefits of reflection over the past year as well as your considerations for the year ahead. Whilst this knowledge is fresh in your mind it is the perfect opportunity for you to reflect on these goals and plan ahead for your business' development.

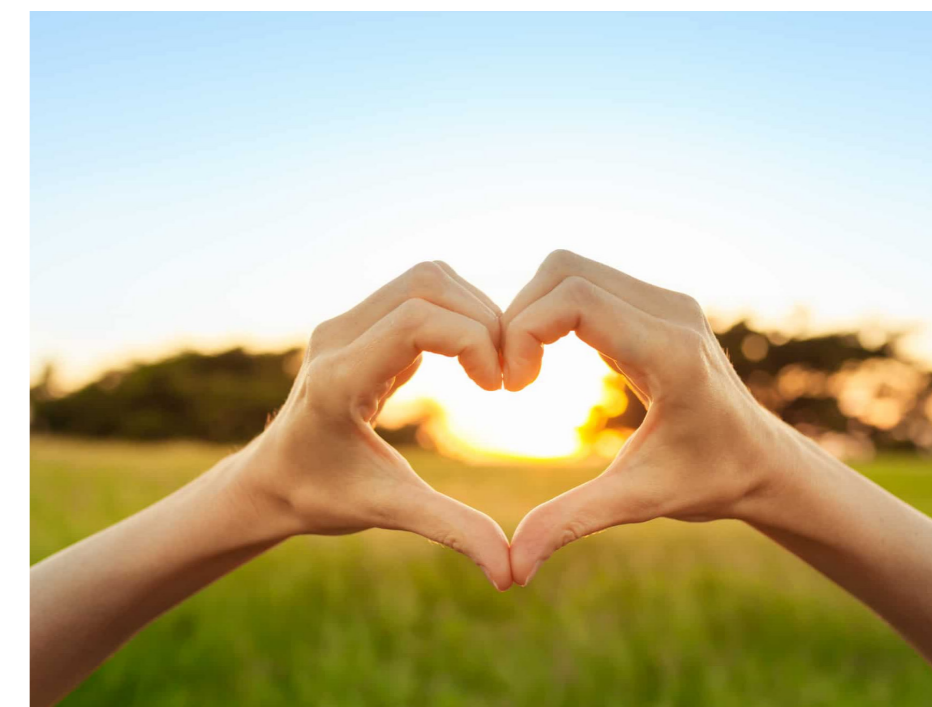
For this purpose, we have the Out of School Club Assessment (OSCA), and subsequent Action Plan template to guide your settings through the next stages of your business' development.

For more information, please get in touch with your Childcare Business Development Officer.

## Supporting the well-being of settings in West Wales

Our monthly networking evenings have proven popular with Settings, enabling you to come together to support and guide each other through often similar challenges. Topics covered to date have included sustainability, SASS, Play Day 2021 and fundraising.

The sessions are approximately 1 hour long, completely FREE to attend, and are entirely directed by what our Settings want. They also complement our more structured informative webinars on e.g. Quality of Care Review and financial systems. To register your interest and book on any future networks please follow this link - <https://www.clybiauplantcymru.org/training-events.asp>





# North Wales

## Childcare project hits the ground running in Flintshire

Hannah Blythyn MS, Deputy Minister for Social Partnership has praised the work of "All About Kids" a new childcare provider based at the Rural North Flintshire Family Centre, in Gronant, following a visit there earlier this month.

The Childcare project includes a playgroup, after-school club and even a holiday club to support children and families in the local area, and works closely with both Ysgol Gronant and Ysgol Trelogan as part of the Point of Ayr Federation. This is reflective of their commitment to supporting children to develop educationally and socially whilst at the Centre.

Ms Blythyn recently visited All About Kids to hear more about how the Welsh Government's Childcare Offer is supporting families in the area, and to see first-hand the difference the project is making to children and families, following its opening in early May.

Following the visit, the Delyn MS said:

*"It was great to chat to the team at All About Kids and be shown around the Centre, including the outdoor activity area which is used to encourage the children to explore nature in a safe way. Supporting and enabling our children to have the best possible opportunities and outcomes is important to all of us; it was also great to see how the Childcare Offer is allowing more working parents to access good quality childcare."*

The Welsh Government introduced the Childcare Offer to support working parents of 3-4 year old's, by helping with childcare costs. The most recent statistics, released in March,



showed that over 1000 children in Flintshire had benefitted from the Childcare Offer between September 2019 and March 2020.

Speaking on behalf of All About Kids, Jo Gilmore said:

*"We were really pleased to have Hannah here so we could showcase everything we have on offer here to support children with their development. Here at All About Kids we have*

*a nurturing, fully qualified staff team, who are committed to giving children the best possible opportunities whilst they are with us. It's also great to be working with the Point of Ayr Federation, to take a holistic approach to child development."*

Anyone who wants to know more about All About Kids should contact: [allaboutkidsgronant@gmail.com](mailto:allaboutkidsgronant@gmail.com) or call 07990760302

### New staff member

The North Wales team would like to welcome Nia Roberts, our new Childcare Business Development Officer. Nia has a background in Childcare and will be supporting the Out of School Childcare Clubs in Gwynedd and across the North.

Croeso, Nia!

### Need to contact us?

You can contact the North Wales team by phone on 01492 536318, by email: [info-nw@clybiauplantcymru.org](mailto:info-nw@clybiauplantcymru.org) by post: 19, Princes Drive, Colwyn Bay LL29 8HT

## Parents' initiative

Following the closure of the non-registered childcare provision in Ysgol Felinheli, Gwynedd the local parents have found that the lack of a provision in the area to be a huge void. So, the parents took it upon themselves to reach out to the local Cylch Meithrin to discuss the possibility of extending their registration to include an Out of School provision. They have overcome huge barriers and with the hours of support from Cath, Childcare Business Development Officer; they have now put in place a 16-person subcommittee to run the Out of School provision alongside the Cylch's existing committee. They have secured additional premises and are working collaboratively with the Cylch's committee as well as Cath and Mudiad Meithrin to complete CIO paperwork and paperwork to re-register the provision with CIW. It has been lovely to see the passion that this group of parents have felt for the Out of School sector and the importance it has on their community.

We wish them the best of luck with their venture and hope it is a huge success.

## Meet the Team!



Jacqui

**Name:** Jacqui John

**Job Title:** Training Officer

**How long have you worked for Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs?** 3 weeks

**What is your favourite childhood memory?** Going on holiday with family to Cornwall

**What do you like to do in your spare time?** Spend time with family, friends, dogs, holidays and days out.

**What is your favourite TV programme?** Crime series

**If you could have a superpower, what would it be and why?** Stop time so I can spend more time with my son

**If you were stuck on a desert island with one luxury item (not mobile phone) what would it be and why?** A fishing rod – to catch my food

**What would people be surprised to find out about you?** I'm a qualified dog groomer

**What is your favourite film and why?** Beeches – It shows how friends are always there for each other

**Do you have any phobias? What are they?** I don't have a phobia, just don't like wasps.

**Name:** Emma Salter

**Job Title:** Training Officer

**How long have you worked for Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs?** 3 weeks

**What is your favourite childhood memory?** Having a birthday party for my 5th birthday and getting a bike

**What do you like to do in your spare time?** Spending time with my friends and my daughter

**What is your favourite TV programme?** Gavin and Stacey

**If you could have a superpower, what would it be and why?** To be invisible

**If you were stuck on a desert island with one luxury item (not mobile phone) what would it be and why?** A boat so I could leave the desert island

**What would people be surprised to find out about you?** When I was younger my favourite film was Hello Dolly

**What is your favourite film and why?** The Greatest Showman, as even though they are all different it doesn't make a difference to them

**Do you have any phobias? What are they?** Yes I don't like heights

**Name:** Niccy Ling

**Job Title:** Administrator

**How long have you worked for Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs?** 3 months

**What is your favourite childhood memory?** Going to Poland to help run a holiday club for Polish disabled children

**What do you like to do in your spare time?** Travelling, going to the theatre, spending time with family and friends and building Lego.

**What is your favourite TV programme?** Death in Paradise

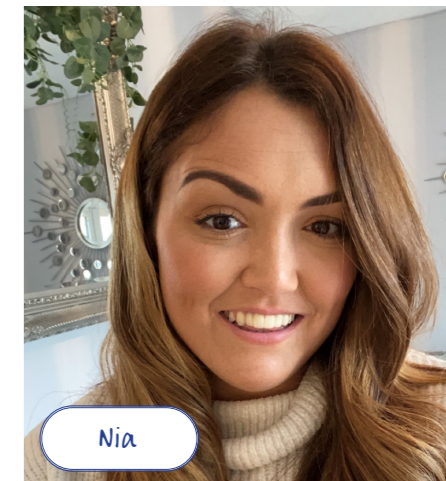
**If you could have a superpower, what would it be and why?** The ability to get from one place to another in an instant.

**If you were stuck on a desert island with one luxury item (not mobile phone) what would it be and why?** A telescope – to look out for help

**What would people be surprised to find out about you?** I came third in the relay team at the National disabled championships as a teenager, with Paralympian, David Roberts

**What is your favourite film and why?** The Wizard of Oz – I like the music and always wanted a pair of ruby slippers!

**Do you have any phobias? What are they?** I have a fear of lifts and the possibility of being locked in a public toilet and not getting out!



Nia

**Name:** Nia Roberts

**Job Title:** Childcare Business Development Officer

**How long have you worked for Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs?** 1 week

**What is your favourite childhood memory?** Family holidays and spending time at my grandparents' house

**What do you like to do in your spare time?** shopping, getting away and seeing parts of the world (now the UK) spending time with family and friends

**What is your favourite TV programme?** Love Island

**If you could have a superpower, what would it be and why?** To become invisible - Just to make the food shop a lot quicker not having to speak to everyone I know in Tesco!

**If you were stuck on a desert island with one luxury item (not mobile phone) what would it be and why?** Chocolate or Prosecco

**What would people be surprised to find out about you?** I'm 6ft tall!

**What is your favourite film and why?** Hot Fuzz, it makes me laugh even after watching it so many times.

**Do you have any phobias? What are they?** SPIDERS!



Niccy



# South East Wales

## CIW inspection after Covid Pandemic

This is the first inspection since becoming Yellow Bunnies. The Setting has been working tirelessly during the Pandemic, providing families with the childcare needed to carry out key worker roles and also supporting with short notice respite care during the holidays. The inspection was unannounced and following the owner constantly updating Care Inspectorate Wales with regular updates within the Pandemic in line with her role as Responsible Person.

The Inspector arrived at the main entrance of the Setting and was greeted by Natalie the Person In Charge. They explained that they were carrying out a full inspection. During this conversation the Inspector explained that due to the Covid 19 restrictions they would be visiting the site for a period of up to 2.5 hours, they would then be requiring further information to be sent to the Inspector following their visit. They were advised that even though the inspection met the usual inspection framework, they were not going to be providing a grading on this occasion due to the changes in provisions practices due to the Covid 19 Pandemic. It was explained that to be grading the Setting would be unfair if the changes were different to how the Setting way typically run prior to March 2020.

The Inspector entered the Setting and followed all the updated policies and procedures. Hands sanitise, was signed in and then went into the Setting and greeted the morning children.

The Inspector then spent some time explaining what information they needed to look at and review. The information would be required to be forwarded by email. The Inspector then set about observing within the environment. The children's toilets were observed, as were the kitchen and meal preparation areas, and all areas that the children have access to within the Setting. The Inspector then reviewed registers, signing in and out information and other requested folders in the hallway.

At meal time, the Inspector witnessed how

morning snack was prepared, how the children washed hands and ate. They watched how activities were carried out. The Inspector then spoke to a few of the children whilst they were playing before going back to doing work on the laptop in regards to inspecting the work folders.

The Inspector also explained that they would need permission to speak with three parents from the Setting and three staff members and scheduled phone interviews for the following morning.

As the Inspector left the Setting, they explained again what work needed to be sent via email and explained in the next 2 days they would call the Manager to report back their notes taken and discuss any changes or give advice before informing that the report would be analysed by a peer inspector and the report would then go live on the site of CIW in 6 weeks' time.

As a new deputy Manager during the inspection "I feel the only difference about the inspection was the length of time that the Inspector was on site and how relaxed it felt due to the Inspector looking through everything independently whereas in previous inspections the Manager of the Setting could be with the Inspector and would be having a discussion throughout the process".

For the Setting staff the difference in having the phone conversations was more of an anxious feeling as one member of staff was not on site so did not meet the Inspector and did not feel comfortable on the phone. However, the other two staff felt comfortable speaking over the phone and stated it was a quick phone call and covered the areas for discussion.

It was different for the children to have a visitor into the Setting as the inspector was the first since March 2020. Although it was the first time children had seen another adult coming into the Setting, it was as though it made no difference for them as they were engrossed in playing with the activities.

"As this was the first inspection of being in the role of a Deputy Manager, it was personally my first experience of having being present for a CIW inspection and being the person in first contact to be asked questions until the Manager arrived in the Setting. I felt calm throughout the process as I was aware of the questions being asked of me, and felt that if I needed to ask a question or was unaware of information the inspector was asking of, I was comfortable to ask for a breakdown of what they were asking to see and then what to get in order for them to inspect. From this experience, it made me aware of just how important it is to keep on top of paperwork, to ensure staff always sign in and out and sign children in and out also. I realised how important it was to ensure staff fulfil their job roles and duties when in the Setting with the children and how to engage in conversations with them whilst having an inspector in the room. Also how important it was to ensure that the Welsh language was always encouraged in the Setting, and to ensure that toys to stimulate development and free play were displayed for the children.

It helped me understand how an inspection is carried out. Although this was different to how an inspection is typically carried out, it gave me an insight of what to expect and how to gather all information that is needed to be seen in an efficient way. As some work needed to be sent over via email, I was made especially aware that if, in certain circumstances the Manager may not be in the Setting, that I have the same information saved or know where important documents are saved so that I could take on the role of passing on this information if the Manager was unable to do so". Feedback was provided to the manager via phone call and any recommendations will be reflected upon and implemented into an action plan in order to make any required improvements and ensure the Setting is reviewing the Quality of Care annually."

Natalie, Deputy Manager

## Congratulations Clwb Allysogol Cornelli Sger!

Clwb Allysogol Cornelli Sger have provided Breakfast, After School and Holiday Club for children within the Cornelli area of Bridgend since 2005, and have always prided themselves on providing affordable quality care for families in need. They provide a full enriching programme of activities throughout

the holidays and their plans for this year are nothing short of amazing. The Club previously benefited from the Holiday Hunger programme where they provided places at their Club to low-income families which was free at the point of contact. As with many Out of School Childcare Clubs, Clwb Allysogol Cornelli Sger has struggled throughout the Pandemic. They have remained open for much of the Pandemic, but at a loss. They have never needed to apply for sustainability funding through the Local Authority previously, utilising charitable funding for projects and the aforementioned Holiday Hunger programme but this year they needed to find further funds to enable them to continue offering their service to those who needed it.

### Need to contact us?

You can contact the South East Wales team by phone on 029 2074 1000, by email: [info@clybiauplantcymru.org](mailto:info@clybiauplantcymru.org) by post: Bridge House, Station Road, Llanishen, Cardiff. CF14 5UW

# Meet the Club!

**Club:** Name Stay & Play Mount Pleasant

**County:** Newport

**In what ways do you support the wellbeing of the children in your care?** This is a new Club being set up in Mount Pleasant Primary School. Opening in September 2021. Stay & Play have 3 other settings across Newport and they have been recruiting team members over the Summer 2021 in order to ensure the children have fun and engaging experiences. The new team have a range of experiences within Out of School Childcare and they are eager to support the children who are returning to the Club within the school. They are going to be supporting the children through a range of activity sessions that enable the children to have their individual voices heard. There will be activities that will provide the team with an understanding of the likes and dislikes of each child, in order for staff and children to get to know one another. This will support the wellbeing of each child as their individual voices will be heard.

**How do you include children in decisions about wellbeing activities/promotion?**

When the children start attending the Club, the Playwork team will work with the children to ensure there is a collaborative set of rules for the Club. The children will take ownership of the rules if they are involved in establishing them. The Club will then display the rules and refer to them within the sessions. These will be formed from carrying out risk assessments with the children and developing a culture of what is safe to do in the Club, following risk-benefit analysis. An understanding of how the children develop socially with one another and the impact their actions have on others. Activities carried out in the Club will be evaluated by the children. If games are provided, they will have opportunities to express if they enjoyed the game, if they didn't enjoy the game or how they would like to adapt the game.

**In what ways do you support the wellbeing of your staff and yourselves?** The teams will be supported by the owner. Regular individual

supervisions will be carried out with the staff team and this will support their wellbeing. The Club will be developing a culture of open communication with ensuring staff feel confident and happy in their roles.

**Has the Pandemic introduced any additional challenges in terms of supporting wellbeing of children/staff? How have you tried to address these?** The other Stay & Play Clubs have been open during the Pandemic and all policies, procedures and resources have been adapted to ensure the highest level of control measures are in place. This has supported the children and staff with health and wellbeing. These policies will be in place for the new Club as it opens. Staff will receive training to ensure they fully understand the Covid 19 regulations.

**What would be your top wellbeing tip?** Ensuring the staff and children are communicating, being listened to and ensuring that individuals are able to express feelings and their views.

# Meet the Team!

**Name:** Sian James

**Job Title:** Childcare Business Development Officer, Welsh Language

**How long have you worked for Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs?** 3 months

**What is your favourite childhood memory?** Playing outdoors all day with friends in the village and only going home for food and when the street lights came on.

**What do you like to do in your spare time?** Spending time with the family and friends, long walks and adventures.

**What is your favourite TV programme?** Any thrillers/documentaries. Loved Line of Duty.

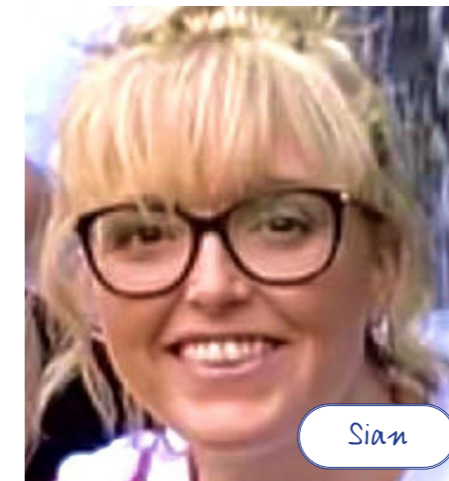
**If you could have a superpower, what would it be and why?** Super speed. As I'm always late.

**If you were stuck on a desert island with one luxury item (not mobile phone) what would it be and why?** My pillow. I can sleep anywhere if I have my pillow.

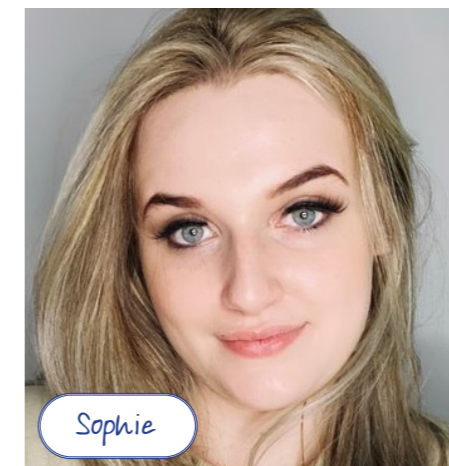
**What would people be surprised to find out about you?** I used to be an avid golfer.

**What is your favourite film and why?** Grease. I know the songs word for word and it instantly puts me in a good mood.

**Do you have any phobias? What are they?** Swimming in the sea and not being able to see my feet and sharks. I blame 'Jaws'.



Sian



Sophie

**Name:** Sophie Peppin

**Job Title:** Marketing and Communications Officer

**How long have you worked for Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs?** 1 week!

**What is your favourite childhood memory?** My seventh birthday party – driving around the city in a replica "Scooby-Doo" van. I was very cool.

**What do you like to do in your spare time?** If I'm not spending time with my family, boyfriend or German Shepherd then I'm usually doing something crafty! I particularly enjoy working with vinyl and sublimation. I frequently personalise t-shirts, mugs/bottles, books and more for family and friends!

**What is your favourite TV programme?** I enjoy shows like Supernatural and Stranger Things, but I'm also guilty for loving EastEnders and Love Island!

**If you could have a superpower, what would it be and why?** Time travel – to revisit special moments.

**If you were stuck on a desert island with one luxury item (not mobile phone) what would it be and why?** My German Shepherd – for company and protection

**What would people be surprised to find out about you?** I have had two spinal surgeries and now have titanium in my back!

**What is your favourite film and why?** Lion King – I'm still a child at heart

**Do you have any phobias? What are they?** Yes - Trypophobia

# What's Coming Up this Quarter?

## September

### National Read a Book Day

6 September  
Explore and encourage a love of reading. Find out more at <https://nationaltoday.com/national-read-book-day/>

### Youth Mental Health Day

7 September  
Youth Mental Health Day (YMHD) is an awareness day founded by leading young persons mental health charity stem4. Find out more at <https://stem4.org.uk/youthmentalhealthday/>

### Roald Dahl Story Day

Join in the global celebration of Roald Dahl stories this September with Roald Dahl Story Day. Get involved at <https://www.roadddahl.com/create-and-learn/join-in/roald-dahl-day>

### National Coding Week

14-20 September  
In 2021 National Coding Week will be happening from September 14th - 20th. Get involved at <https://codingweek.org/>

### Great British Beach Clean

17-26 September  
On every clean we ask people to run a litter survey: recording all the items of rubbish they find in a 100m stretch. We use this data to campaign for real change. Join in at <https://www.mcsuk.org/what-you-can-do/join-a-beach-clean/the-great-british-beach-clean/>

### Recycling Week

20-26 September  
Recycle Week is Recycle Now's flagship annual event which is a celebration of recycling across the nation. Visit <https://www.recyclenow.com/recycling-knowledge/recycle-week-campaign> for more details

### International Week of Happiness at Work

20-26 September  
Encourages workplaces to cultivate a culture of positivity. Find out more at <https://internationalweekofhappinessatwork.com/>

### World Car Free Day

22 September  
World Car Free Day aims to encourage motorists to give up their cars for 24 hours and rid cities of vehicles. Find out more at <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/about-us/our-work-in-action/world-car-free-day>

### International Heart Day

29 September  
A campaign to draw people's attention to cardiovascular diseases. Find out more at <https://world-heart-federation.org/world-heart-day/>

### Migraine Awareness Week

5-11 September  
An annual campaign to draw attention to migraine, educate the public and reduce stigma. More details at <https://migrainetrust.org/campaigns/migraine-awareness-week-2021/>

### National Eye Health Week

20-26 September  
An event to promote good eye health and



improve the nation's eyesight. More details at <http://www.visionmatters.org.uk/>

### Seed Gathering Season

23 September – 23 October  
Since 1998, The Tree Council has been organising Seed Gathering Season, the autumn campaign to inspire everyone to gather seeds, fruits and get involved. More details at <https://treecouncil.org.uk/take-action/seasonal-campaigns/seed-gathering-season/>

### World Alzheimer's Month

Throughout September  
An international campaign to raise awareness and challenge the stigma surrounding Alzheimer's Disease. Get involved at <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-involved/world-alzheimers-month>

## October

### World Vegetarian Day

1 October  
Founded in 1977, World Vegetarian Day brings attention to the benefits of a vegetarian diet. Find out more at <https://worldvegetarianday.navs-online.org/>

### World Mental Health Day

10 October  
World Mental Health Day shines a light on mental health issues and advocates against social stigma. Get involved at <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/world-mental-health-day>



### National Braille Week

11-17 October  
National Braille Week aims to raise awareness of the importance of Braille and other alternative formats that open up the written world to people with visual impairments. More details at <https://www.royalblind.org/national-braille-week>

### National Work Life Week

11-15 October  
An initiative to encourage both employers and employees to focus on work life balance. More details at <https://workingfamilies.org.uk/campaigns/national-work-life-week/>

### World Menopause Day

18 October  
A global event that helps raise awareness of the impact menopause can have on women's lives. More details at <https://www.imsociety.org/education/world-menopause-day/#:~:text=World%20Menopause%20Day%20is%20held,for%20improving%20health%20and%20wellbeing.>

### Breast Cancer Now's wear it pink day

23 October  
On 23 October we will wear pink, raise money and make life-saving research happen. We will be wearing it pink in October. Will you join us? Get involved at <https://www.wearitpink.org/about>

### Unblocktober 2021

Throughout October  
Unblocktober is the world's first month-long campaign and awareness month to improve the health of our drains, sewers, watercourses and seas – driven completely by the public. Find out more at <http://www.unblocktober.org>

### National Cholesterol Month

Throughout October  
National Cholesterol Month aims to highlight the health implications of high cholesterol levels. Find out more at <https://www.heartuk.org.uk/national-cholesterol-month/2020>

**Date to note: 31st October (Halloween)**

## November

### World Vegan Day

1 November  
Celebrated annually on 1 November, World Vegan Day calls on Brits to go vegan for 24 hours. See <https://www.vegansociety.com/take-action/campaigns/world-vegan-day-month> for more details

### International Stress Awareness Week

1-5 November  
An initiative to highlight the importance of identifying and managing stress. More information at <https://isma.org.uk/isma-international-stress-awareness-week>

### National Stress Awareness Day

3 November  
Taking place the first Wednesday in November each year, National Stress Awareness Day encourages people to take a moment to identify and reduce the stress factors in their lives.

Visit <https://www.rethink.org/get-involved/awareness-days-and-events/stress-awareness-day/> for more information

### National Fertility Week

2-5 November  
A national awareness week that helps shine a spotlight on infertility. <https://fertilitynetworkuk.org/fertility-week/> for more details

### Alcohol Awareness Week

15-21 November  
This week encourages people to take a look at their drinking habits and to make a change. Get involved at <https://alcoholchange.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/alcohol-awareness-week-1>

### Road Safety Week 2021

16-21 November  
The week is an annual event and the biggest road safety awareness event in the UK. Find out more at <http://www.roadsafetyweek.org.uk/>

**November**  
throughout November  
November involves the growing of moustaches throughout the month to raise awareness around men's health issues. Visit <https://uk.movember.com/> for more details



**Dates to note:**  
**4th November (Divali)**  
**5th November (Bonfire Night)**  
**14th November (Remembrance Sunday)**  
**29th November – 6th December (HANUKAH)**

## December

### Tree Dressing Day

1 December  
Tree dressing day celebrates the importance of trees and encourages to value and care for them. Find out more at <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/event/tree-dressing-day-2021>

### National Grief Awareness Week

2-8 December  
An initiative to normalise grief and get people talking. Find out more at <http://nationalgriefawarenessweek.org/>

### Christmas Jumper Day

10 December  
Christmas Jumper Day is a national campaign to raise money for Save the Children. This day is an opportunity to bring employees together and promote social wellbeing in the workplace. Get involved at <https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/christmas-jumper-day>

### Decembeard 2021

Throughout December  
All across the country men will be putting away the razors and growing beards for December to raise awareness and money to support our vital research and lifesaving work to stop bowel cancer. Get involved at <https://www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk/news-and-blogs/news/men-join-together-this-decembeard-and-raise-money-for-bowel-cancer-uk/>

**Date to note: 25 December (Christmas Day)**



## History of Halloween

As the nights draw in and the days become shorter, thoughts begin to turn towards the festivals that are held at this time of year.

Halloween is one of those celebrations, but do you know its origins? Samhain, Calan Gaeaf, All Saints Day, All Hallows Eve and Halloween are all names that this celebration has taken over the years.

The earliest origins are the Celtic festival of Samhain (Ireland) Calan Gaeaf (Wales) 2,000 years ago and it was a celebration much like New Year's Eve, with dressing up, bonfires and food. The date marked the end of summer and harvest and the beginning of winter. Much like it is today it was believed that the boundary between the living and the passed became blurred. Communities would share their harvest ensuring the resilience of the community to survive the winter months.

In 609 AD, All Saints Day (All-hallowmas) was held November 1st but this was changed in the 9th Century and became All Souls Day. All Souls Day was a time to remember all those that had passed with the night before becoming All-Hallows Eve (and eventually Halloween). This was celebrated much the same as Samhain and Calan Gaeaf with dressing up in costumes to look like saints, angels and devils, parades and bonfires.

Trick or treating used to be called 'going a-souling' where those in poverty would beg for food and would be given 'soul cakes' in return for prayers.

How will you be celebrating this year?

## Bonfire Night

Remember, remember, the fifth of November  
Gunpowder treason and plot  
We see no reason  
Why Gunpowder treason  
Should ever be forgot....

November 5th is the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot (1605); a failed attempt to blow up the Houses of Parliament in London

Giudo (Guy) Fawkes was an explosives expert and along with Robert Catesby, Thomas Wintour and 10 others plotted to blow up the Houses of Parliament by placing 36 barrels of gunpowder under the House of Lords.

An anonymous letter was sent with a warning to avoid the State Opening of Parliament stating, "they shall receive a terrible blow." The letter had soon reached the King who ordered a search of the Houses of Parliament. It was just after midnight when Fawkes, who was guarding the vault and the stockpile of gunpowder were discovered.

As news spread of the plot, Londoners began lighting bonfires in celebration of the fact James I was still alive and in 1606 the Observance of 5th November Act was passed, enforcing an annual public day of thanksgiving for the plot's failure. It became known as Gunpowder Treason Day but 1859 the Observance of 5th November Act was repealed, although we still celebrate Bonfire Night.

Do you want support to help you increase the use of Welsh Language within your Childcare Setting?

For those of you who are learning Welsh, or would like to, having the confidence to use what you know can be a great barrier. Do not worry, help is at hand! Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs will support you with the terminology that you use every day with the children attending your setting, or with their parents, by encouraging you to try some of them in Welsh.

## How will we help you?

The key is just to give Welsh a go – there is no need to worry about being perfect, using mutations, tenses or anything technical, just use what you have and have fun trying.

Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs, as Cwlwm partners, are part of the **Work Welsh Project**. Our Work Welsh Language Co-ordinator is on hand to offer you and your staff support and mentoring, encourage the use of incidental Welsh helping you to grow in confidence and skill.

We are also working in partnership with the National Centre for Learning Welsh and their CAMAU project (<https://bit.ly/2QOPPPQ>). The project aim is to train Childcare and Playwork practitioners, who wish to learn, with an entry level Welsh language course specially designed for those Sectors. We will help to enrol you or your staff on a course and support them throughout their learning.



If you require any further information, or wish to register your interest please contact our Welsh Language Coordinator, Sian James, 01269 831010 / 07971967288 [sianej@clybiauplantcymru.org](mailto:sianej@clybiauplantcymru.org)

## Caffi Clebran

If you sign up for the CAMAU course you will have an opportunity to attend Caffi Clebran.

Caffi Clebran is relaxed, drop-in sessions held by Welsh Language Co-ordinators, whereby practitioners can join via Teams or Zoom for a cuppa and a chat at a time that suits you.

Caffi Clebran gives practitioners an opportunity to practice what they have learnt in a relaxed, informal place. It also gives practitioners an opportunity to raise any queries, to have support and guidance with a specific unit or help with pronunciations of Welsh words.

The concept behind Caffi Clebran emphasises the importance of giving practitioners a chance to acquire support and to be able to practice in a casual, safe place.

This delightful idea of a casual place for individuals to practice what they had in Welsh was so appealing to Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs we have decided to offer our own Caffi Clebran within the organisation. These drop-in sessions are suitable for all abilities to learn some incidental Welsh, to improve their Welsh and is an opportunity to just give Welsh a go without judgement.

When learning a language, it's important to keep in mind that it's ok to get things wrong, it's ok if a mutation is missed, it's ok if the pronunciation isn't a 100%, what matters is giving it a go and giving yourself opportunities to practice confidently. Caffi Clebran will give you this opportunity.

For further information on joining Caffi Clebran please contact your umbrella organisation

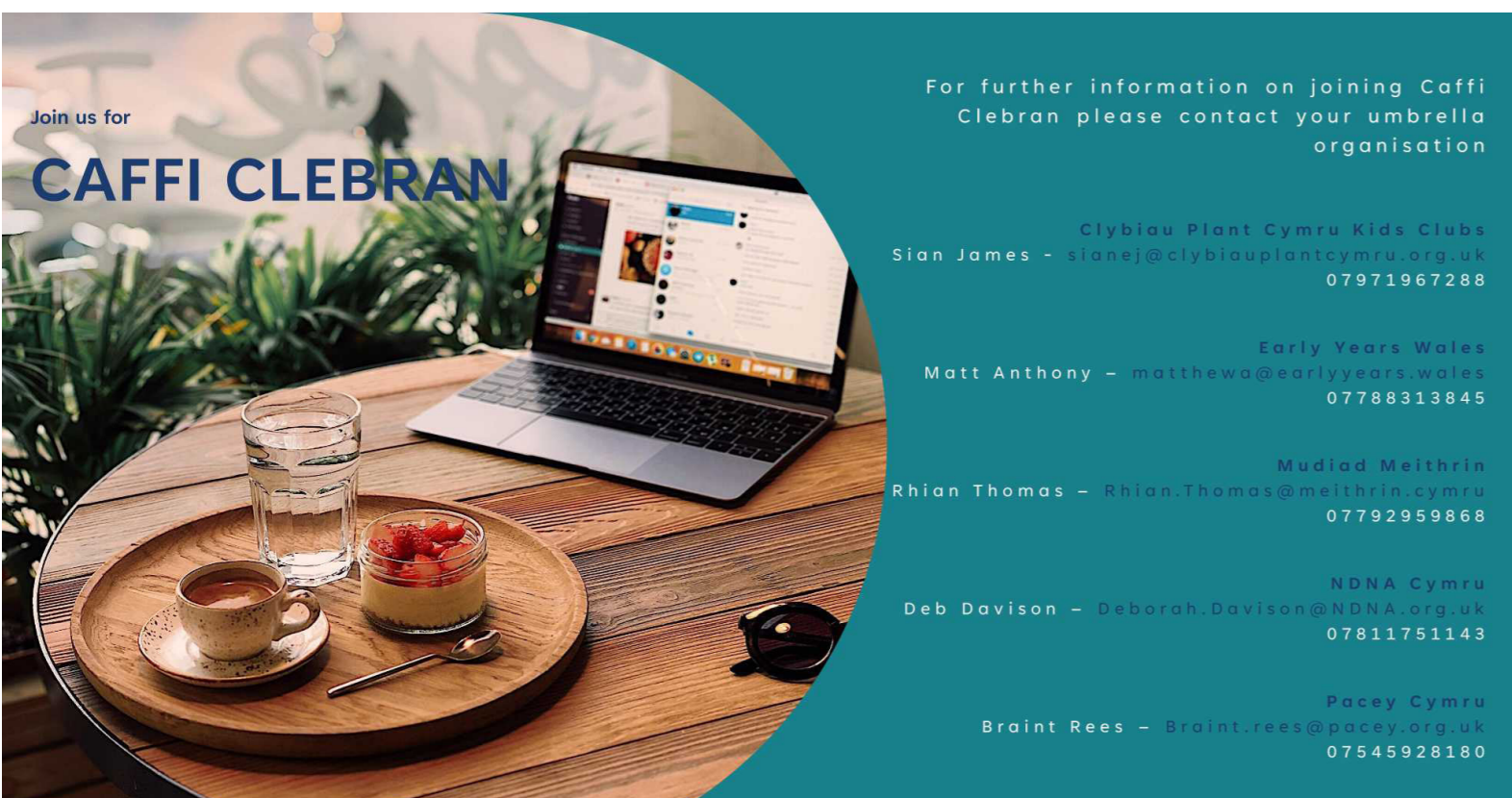
**Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Clubs**  
Sian James - [sianej@clybiauplantcymru.org](mailto:sianej@clybiauplantcymru.org)  
07971967288

**Early Years Wales**  
Matt Anthony - [matthewa@earlyyears.wales](mailto:matthewa@earlyyears.wales)  
07788313845

**Mudiad Meithrin**  
Rhian Thomas - [Rhian.Thomas@meithrin.cymru](mailto:Rhian.Thomas@meithrin.cymru)  
07792959868

**NDNA Cymru**  
Deb Davison - [Deborah.Davison@NDNA.org.uk](mailto:Deborah.Davison@NDNA.org.uk)  
07811751143

**Pacey Cymru**  
Braint Rees - [Braint.rees@pacey.org.uk](mailto:Braint.rees@pacey.org.uk)  
07545928180



## Kicking the new school year off with good habits

All Childcare Provisions, while aiming to be community focused and offer affordable, quality services within local communities, should also be run in a 'business like' way. Having effective financial management systems and planning in place is critical to the effective running of a Childcare business, and to ensuring long term success.

When thinking about Financial Systems, you can split the process into planning (forecasting anticipated income and expenditure and using this to set a budget), recording (actual spend and income) and reviewing/action (reflecting on your original plan, the actual data and deciding what action is required to support sustainability or growth).

A cashflow forecast is an essential business tool to enable you to review how your business is going to progress if a specific situation remains static, or within certain given scenarios. It can also be useful to demonstrate to funders that you have comprehensive financial planning in place, and to demonstrate your long-term sustainability (and/or short term need for financial support whilst new strategies to support sustainability are put into place).

You should be keeping management accounts on a monthly basis, detailing all income and expenditure, and this is important whether or not you have a paid accountant. Taking ownership over this information, and having a handle on your income and expenditure, puts you in a far stronger position to manage your business and identify issues or growth potential in a timely

manner. Ideally, distinctions should be made within your record keeping/accounts between each service you offer (e.g. Nursery and Out of School Provision, and ideally between types of Out of School Provision) as this provides clearer insight into how each service is running, and enables targeted action to be taken where there might be a problem (e.g. if one element of your business is under-performing). Knowledge is power!

We have a pre-recorded webinar to support your development of your financial systems and processes, along with a separate pre-recorded

webinar focusing on developing a cashflow forecast – email [webinar@clybiauplantcymru.org](mailto:webinar@clybiauplantcymru.org) to request a copy (available in English and Welsh).

Through effectively recording, reviewing and planning your finances, you increase your ability to notice trends, and react in a timely manner to issues that may arise, seeking out additional help and support if needed (e.g. through applying for funding). Don't forget about our fundraising support and resources that are available via our website!



## People's Postcode Lottery.....

Registered charities are able to apply for between £500-20,000 through the People's Postcode Lottery, or up to £2,000 for not-for-profit organisations that are not registered charities. Applications open at the start of each month, and close on the 15th of each month, every month until October 2021, and can be for core costs or project costs.

The Trust is interested in the following themes:

- Improving mental wellbeing
- Enabling community participation in the arts
- Preventing/reducing the impact of poverty

Top tips:

- Read the funding guide available online
- Make it clear how your project/service meets at least one of the themes of interest

- Supporting marginalised groups and promoting equality
- Improving biodiversity and green spaces
- Enabling participation in physical activity
- Responding to the climate emergency and promoting sustainability
- Increasing community access to outdoor space

- Explain what you will do and what impact that will have
- Break down your costs, and use simple language



## Support us while we support you!

Online shopping through [www.easyfundraising.org.uk/clybiauplantcymrukidsclubs](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/clybiauplantcymrukidsclubs) doesn't cost you any extra, but allows us to receive up to 15% of all purchases made from the 400+ stores listed, meaning we have more funds available to continue supporting clubs like yours.

## e-news

As a member club you can access past editions of our e-news funding bulletins in the members' area of our website at [www.clybiauplantcymru.org](http://www.clybiauplantcymru.org) and, if we have an email address for you, future editions will be sent to you directly. Send your email details to [membership@clybiauplantcymru.org](mailto:membership@clybiauplantcymru.org) to ensure you receive your electronic copy.



# Training

## Let our children be Superheroes



Remarkably, Out of School Clubs are banning superhero outfits as they are making them aggressive, this attempt of calming Children and young people doesn't stop there though, the majority of Out of school clubs won't allow any weapon, whether they are plastic pirate swords or harmless play guns.

When I was a child playing with my friends on the school yard or messing about in the woods or the streets pretending to be Superwoman, Charlie's Angels or playing cops and robbers, replaying what I had seen in films and series on the TV, this did not make me aggressive; these games teach you vital lessons that will take you into adulthood. I learned right and wrong, how to interact with others, respect others and value others' differences, problem solving and teamwork to name a few. When I went out to play with my friends, playing out the above, it didn't make me think: "I want to join the forces or be a detective and kill everyone. Every child plays these games and some become Bank Managers or Training Officers like myself. Or what about Steve Jobs? Watching Star Wars inspired him to bring the iPad and iPhone into the world; it doesn't make them killers.

I certainly allowed my boys to play fight and there is no evidence such activities would make them more violent. When children play with their toy swords or bows there is fun and laughter. This is about the normal competitive urge that is innate in all children. Whether it's sport, wishing to be the best at school or watching The Voice, there is a desire to win. It is wrong to pretend otherwise, when children enter the real world or work, they will need to be resilient, and have self-worth. We need people within our society with different talents and attitudes.

There is a clear hostility towards the armed services as a career and when Out of School Club ban pretend weapons the UK is struggling to find new recruits; the last thing we need is children growing up believing that being a soldier, sailor or to belong to the RAF is a bad choice. My Nephew is in the Navy and is currently doing a word tour, visiting numerous countries – what an opportunity!

There is also the idea that these games are just for boys; girls want to be involved too. Back in medieval times children played with wooden swords and once children reached the age of 14 they had to practice the bow and arrow. We are trying to stop the gameplay that has been going on for hundreds and thousands of years, that has supported the development of children to adulthood, that makes them the person they have grown into.

I feel that banning such gameplay is taking the easy route; what we as Playworkers should be doing is carrying out risk-benefit assessments. We shouldn't be taking the easy option by giving the children the iPad or putting on the TV, or giving them some colouring pencils and paper. Do we want the next generation to be one where the children sit quietly? Do we want children to read William Shakespeare without prior knowledge of conflict?

Any storyteller or writer will tell you a great story has to have drama, and to have drama you need conflict. Allowing the children to play out "Cops and Robbers", "Cowboys and Indians", "pirates" or "superheroes" will support their development in story telling which is vital in their education. Also, we have enough problems with obesity in the world; letting the

children play superheroes etc. where they will be playing more physically will support healthy lifestyles, and there is always a positive moral to superhero films, where the "baddies" always have their comeuppance.

Playworkers shouldn't be bringing their political views into the club, play should not be adult led; it should be child centred, where play is freely chosen and self-directed by the child. It's not about providing the children with guns and weapons; it's about providing them with the tools and resources to be creative.

**Tracey Bargh**  
Training Officer, North Wales



Huge congratulations to our very own Clare Dare, Childcare Business Development Officer for achieving her Level 3 Award in Transition to Playwork and Rebecca Hall, Childcare Business Development Officer for achieving her Level 5 Diploma in Advanced Playwork (Wales). The Training Officers have loved working with you and supporting you through your qualifications.

## Modern Play Deprivation

Well, what a year, 2020 and now 2021 has been. Who would have thought, going into 2020 that we would be dealing with a global pandemic and that over 18 months later we are still dealing with the impact that this is having on our day-to-day lives.

No doubt that this has impacted on everyone one way or another, but little thought has been given to the impact that restricting children's play and engagement with their friends has had on children, the focus throughout has been about them missing out on schooling. With parks closed, schools closed, sleepovers stopped, no play dates and hanging out with friends stopped, children, who naturally engage with others through their play and interact directly with others have had these opportunities for their development, emotional responses, challenges, stopped and in many cases their play or interactions were taken online or focused on screentime.

18 years is all children have to **be a child**, 18 years to play, have fun, take risks, make memories, make friends, 18 years of childhood and they have had 18 months taken from them that a they can never have back.

Over the last 18 months, there has also been a phenomenal rise in the number of children diagnosed with depression and/or anxiety, this isn't a coincidence. Throughout the pandemic there has not been a balanced or proportional approach for the need of children to play and we have now produced a generation that will be feeling the effects of modern play deprivation for many years to come if steps aren't taken to overcome it. And what children need, is the opportunity of time, space and permissions to play. To play in their local communities, to play with others and friends, to explore their identity, to problem solve, deal with conflicts, take risks, push boundaries and to simply be a child.

The Play Safety Forum explore Children's Play and Covid 19 further in their statement published online at: <https://playsafetyforum.wordpress.com/covid-19-and-childrens-play/>

## Play in the shadows

At the start of most Playwork qualifications we ask the question what is play? Inevitably most people always answer with the word FUN and whilst this isn't wrong and that 95% of the time play tends to be fun there is that other 5% where play isn't fun and is incorrectly viewed as naughty or challenging behaviour.

As Playworkers, it is imperative that we support the play process from start to finish and everything either side and in between. In order to do this, we need to understand the play process, and that play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. Children need to be able to control, lead and take charge of their play, there is no end goal, the simple yet complex 'act' of playing is what matters.

Consider for a moment brain development in humans. If we look in particular, the pre-frontal cortex (where decision making occurs as well as moderating of social behaviour) doesn't fully develop until the age of around 25/26. This means that before the pre-frontal cortex matures most responses to situations, events, transitions, are all dealt with through the lower brain functions such as the amygdala. This means that responses will be led more through emotions and how children are feeling rather than any objectivity.

So, what does this mean to play and for us as Playworkers? Very simply put, we need to learn to understand that the behaviours that children display through their play - some which aren't fun, or which may be seen as challenging - are an emotional response. We must remember that some children may need support and patience when dealing with these emotions so

## New Module Handbooks to support Learners

With the massive changes to the way we deliver our Playwork qualifications over the past 18 months, especially the transition from more traditional, face to face teaching sessions to delivering in an online environment, our Training Officers have been working to develop a series of 'Module Handbooks' to support learning.

These handbooks will act as a supplementary resource for learners, covering topics including The Playwork Principles, Play Needs and Preferences, Safeguarding, Reflective Practice, Health & Safety and Inclusion.

These bilingual resources will be mainly to support learners on the Level 2 and Level 3 Diploma in Playwork qualifications, however they will also provide information and continuous professional development (CPD) reading to support all Playworkers, regardless of qualification level or experience.

that we are able to effectively support the child and in turn the child's brain to develop.

This means recognising that children are not naughty, and that certain behaviours are a child's way of showing that they need help, that they don't feel safe, that they are scared, that they feel shame, that they feel that they aren't good enough, that they've had a bad day, and that we as playworkers need to support them to use play as a therapeutic outlet for the child to overcome and work through these huge emotions. Whether this means time in and one on one time with a child rather than time outs, providing space to go and escape and promoting acceptance, inclusion and understanding with all within your setting, we need to start a dialogue so that we and the next generation can learn to be more accepting and understanding of people's differences and to judge less.

## Challenging opinions

**They say**

*Children shouldn't climb trees it's too risky.*

**We say**

Children should be absolutely allowed to climb trees. In fact, the risk involved in tree climbing and other outdoor play activities is part of the benefit for children! If children are encouraged to take age/ability- appropriate risks they can develop the ability to assess risk for themselves. Climbing a tree gives a child

a new perspective of the world along with strengthening their muscles, improving balance/coordination and their physical development.

**They say**

*Children should not play fight; they could get hurt*

**We say**

In fact, studies have shown that play fighting forms of playing, are an important source of learning and development for young children. It allows them to:

- develop self-control over their impulses and learn to set boundaries (e.g. control how hard they hit or push)
- learn the difference between acceptable and non-acceptable behaviours amongst their peers and friendship groups.
- learn to create rules and play by the rules
- decrease the use of hurtful physical aggressions later in life

**They say**

*Children should not play with toy guns or pretend to play war*

**We say**

Imaginary play of this type is a natural instinct for a child. Energetic and aggressive play can support a child's self-control which can help them build their resilience. Studies have shown there is no direct link between playing guns and children developing negative developmental outcomes as a result. In fact, these studies have shown, that toy guns/object play to represent guns, may actually reduce the

chances of children becoming violent as they get older. When a child is playing a game and the good guys are trying to catch the bad guys, it allows children to develop a form of tenacity that is beneficial for children's emotional health and wellbeing. Boys in particular use this aggressive play as a means to interact with other boys and work through feelings of anxiety or stress in their lives.

**They say**

*Children should be discouraged from play with themes about death/dying*

**We say**

Some people may worry or feel uncomfortable when they see a child role playing scenes from hospitals, crashes, funerals, and other types of "death scenes". This type of play may have adults worry that the child has a fascination with death, does not understand it, or is even traumatized by it in some way. Many types of play around the themes of death, dying, and grief are quite normal. It is best known as 'death play'. For many children, playing out scenes or role playing in this way, helps them to understand the world around them and even replay some situations where they may feel confused or upset.

# Staff Resilience

What makes a good member of your team in your Out of School Childcare Club? When posed this question, you are likely to think of key traits like being reliable, friendly, a team-player, enthusiastic, playful, responsible, creative. Or key experience such as Playwork training, knowledge of Safeguarding and First Aid, understanding of policies and procedures, experience working within registered Settings or business/financial skills.

Something that Covid-19 has emphasised however, is the need for resilient staff. When faced with temporary closures, rapidly changing guidance, worry, grant deadlines, the need to remain competitive as a business and the threat of redundancies or permanent closure, personal and organisational success relies on an individual's ability to cope and even thrive under stressful conditions, and to be capable of supporting children through their own stressors. Workplace stress is correlated with depression, anxiety and burnout. Resilience, on the other hand, is associated with optimism, curiosity, energy, creativity and innovation.

Many researchers and psychologists have come to the, fortunate, conclusion that, whilst some individuals are born with a natural predisposition towards resilience, resilience is also a skill that can be learned and refined.

Positive Psychology has developed a resource pack with 3 free resilience exercises as tools to improve the resilience of your team (<https://tools.positivepsychology.com/3-resilience-exercises-pack>)

Employees that are resilient are typically characterised by their ability to build strong connections and relationships with others, with colleagues (who can provide guidance and support) and with people outside of work (who can provide advice/a sounding board when it is not possible to discuss things with work colleagues). Resilient employees have been found to be good at building trust with others, but also introduce an element of 'play' to the workplace which increases positive emotions amongst colleagues, particularly when working in a Playwork field!

How can personal resilience at work be encouraged?

1. Positivity – a positive stance makes employees better able to adapt to adversity and provides a sense of control over one's environment. Encourage a positive mindset within staff members and remember to lead by example!
2. Emotional insight – developing and strengthening emotional insight means employees are more aware of their full range of emotions (positive and negative), and that they consider the ramifications of their own actions and behaviour and the effects of these on others. Practising mindfulness can be a good way of giving yourself the time and peace to learn to be more in tune with your emotions.
3. Prepare – as much of a handful that the 'here and now' can be, make sure as a team you are taking time to look ahead at potential stressors/activity on the horizon.

Knowing what may be coming, you can then plan and prepare a variety of potential solutions (plan B's, C's and even D's). Over time, this process of looking-forward and strategizing will become more second nature, helping to develop a resilient team. Balance – for resilience, employees need to have sufficient energy and this can easily be depleted if a healthy work-life balance is not in place. Support your team to work towards this work-life balance; and try to ensure that you as Managers are doing this too.

4. Balance – for resilience, employees need to have sufficient energy and this can easily be depleted if a healthy work-life balance is not in place. Support your team to work towards this work-life balance; and try to ensure that you as Managers are doing this too.
5. Purpose – finding meaning in work (a sense of purpose) and feeling that this work is contributing to a greater good, can buffer against the effect of stress.
6. Reflection – being in tune with one's own emotions, reactions and triggers can provide individuals with the opportunity to prepare and gather resources/support so they can strengthen their resilience. Reflection is an essential team activity as part of providing a service, but encourage staff members to reflect on a personal level too. There are some great examples of stationery (notepads etc) online that can support you to do this on an individual basis.
7. Self-care – you will struggle to effectively look after the children in your care, and cope with ongoing stressors, if you are not taking time to look after yourself. Try to ensure you are doing something positive for yourself each day, and share what you are doing with your team to support each other to keep on track

When providing care for adolescents (typically classed as age 10 and above), there can be additional considerations involved in supporting their health and wellbeing and those around them. Some of these considerations could potentially also have relevance for children under the age of 10.

Adolescence is a critical period for young people's health and wellbeing, and is a time of rapid change including:

- Cognitive development (e.g. increased understanding/awareness of personal, local and global issues which may increase impact of stressors)
- Social development (e.g. peer influences, sexual identity)
- Emotional development (e.g. identity including gender, self-esteem, resilience)
- Behavioural development (e.g. risk taking)
- Physical development (e.g. growth, sexual maturation)
- Life events (e.g. increased awareness of family dynamics/breakdowns, exams, school transitions and educational pressures)

Appropriate and timely support for children and young people on their progression to adulthood is essential to ensure future health and wellbeing. Some considerations are included below, and further information can be found in our template 'Supporting Adolescents' Policy in Stepping Out.

### Sexual Maturation and Menstruation

Adolescents sexually mature at different ages, and typically girls begin menstruating between age 10 and 15. There can be mixed emotions involved in starting periods: girls may be scared, confused, embarrassed or they may be happy to be considered 'more grown up'. If a young person starts their period whilst in your care or is still learning to manage their periods, it is important to have things in place to help you to support them. You can find some ideas within our template 'Supporting Adolescents' Policy in Stepping Out.

### Identity

Adolescence can be a complex time in terms of social and emotional development, and this can be a time where children and young people question their identity, or develop a better understanding of their identity. This can put additional strain on mental health and wellbeing, and creating a safe and supportive environment is essential to enable resilience.

A person's gender describes their internal sense of identity, and you might identify as a girl, boy, neither or a variation. For some people, gender is a spectrum, with some identifying themselves as being in the middle of this spectrum (non-binary). A transgender person self-identifies their gender as being different to the sex they were assigned at birth.

Sexual identity and attraction can also become something that is internally questioned more as children reach adolescence. Sometimes, sexual orientation changes over time and these changes can bring with them stress, fear over being rejected/laughed at/bullied and confusion.

Young people experiencing identity issues, particularly those identifying as (or possibly identifying as) LGBTQIA+, can experience stigma, bullying, isolation and even violence from others which can lead to mental health issues or even self-harm/suicide.

It is essential that as a Club you create a

# Supporting Resilient Adolescents

safe, welcoming environment for all children, take steps to address any prejudice, bullying behaviours or use of derogatory language by other children (or staff), and take time to really listen to what your children/young people are telling you – it might be that you are the only individual they have trusted with this information to date.

Be respectful of boundaries, allow the young person to lead conversations, and always be alert for signs of withdrawal, depression, self-harm and suicidal thoughts. Any concerns should be raised with parents/carers (disclosures about the child/young persons identity should only be shared with parents/carers if they provide permission for this information to be shared). If necessary, you should follow your Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and if there is an immediate safety concern, 999 should be called.

### Mental Health and Self Harming Behaviours

Mental health is a growing concern for all children, but particularly for adolescents where rates of self-harm and suicide also increase. Particular groups of children/young people are at greater risk of mental health issues, including young carers, LGBTQIA+, children from families of a lower socioeconomic status, children from ethnic minorities, children with disabilities, children who have had an adverse childhood experience and those that are looked after/in the youth justice system.

### Sources of Further Information and Support

It is important to recognise and be aware of the limits of our own expertise, and to reach out to sources of support (/signpost) when this is most appropriate.

Resources and Support for Mental Health via the Mental Health UK website	<a href="https://mentalhealth-uk.org/">https://mentalhealth-uk.org/</a>
Samaritans – phone line is open 24 hours per day	Phone 116123
NHS Direct	Phone 0845 46 47
Mind Infoline – provides signposting to local sources of support and information	0300 123 3393, Text: 86463 Email: <a href="mailto:info@mind.org.uk">info@mind.org.uk</a> There are also online resources at <a href="https://www.mind.org.uk/">https://www.mind.org.uk/</a>
Anxiety UK have specific resources and support for Anxiety	<a href="https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/coronanxiety-support-resources/">https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/coronanxiety-support-resources/</a> Helpline: 03444 775 774 Text Service: 07537 416 905
Barnados – Support for children and young people, including those identifying as LGBTQIA+	<a href="https://www.barnados.org.uk/what-we-do/supporting-young-people/LGBTQ">https://www.barnados.org.uk/what-we-do/supporting-young-people/LGBTQ</a>
Information and links to sources of support for the LGBTQIA+ community	<a href="https://thebeyouproject.co.uk/resources/">https://thebeyouproject.co.uk/resources/</a>
Information and support relating to self-harming	<a href="http://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/feelings-and-symptoms/self-harm">youngminds.org.uk/find-help/feelings-and-symptoms/self-harm</a>
Childline	Call 0800 11 11 at any time of the day or night to speak to a counsellor
Information and support about periods	<a href="https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/you-your-body/puberty/periods/">https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/you-your-body/puberty/periods/</a>
Information for young people to support suicide prevention	<a href="http://www.papyrus-uk.org">www.papyrus-uk.org</a>
In an Emergency, you should contact 999 for urgent medical attention	

Your Mental Health Policy should be inclusive of all children and outline your priority to support the mental health and wellbeing of all children in your care.

### Risk Taking

Whilst as a Club and as Playworkers, we believe in risk-benefit analysis and in the benefits of certain risk taking in terms of children's development (physical, cognitive, emotional), as children mature there may be exposure to certain risky behaviours that are not appropriate or safe or supportive of healthy development. These include, but are not limited to, alcohol consumption, smoking and drug use. Adolescents may be exposed to these risky behaviours through peers, family members or the media.

As a Club, you could incorporate messages of how to support healthy lifestyles and the potential impact of risky behaviours, at an age appropriate level. Our 'Play, Learn and Grow Healthy Pack' provides some ideas as a starting point.

If a child/young person discloses information that leads a staff member to have concern for their health and wellbeing, your Safeguarding Policy and Procedure will be followed if relevant, and you should communicate with parents/carers and any relevant professionals in a clear, timely and sensitive manner.



# Projects



## Connecting and Supporting Out of School Childcare Clubs and Communities, funded by The National Lottery Community Fund

Building resilience is the theme of this Autumn's newsletter and our professional Childcare Business Development Officers across Wales are here to help you manage the challenges the Pandemic still presents as well as help you build the business resilience and governance of your childcare setting.

### Refresh business skills

We have self-health check tools such as the Out of School Club Assessment (OSCA) along with business and management skills' resources and webinars. Visit the resource area of our website for packages of support on governance, financial management and marketing. And for those of you opening your doors for the first time in September there is a package of re-opening support.

### Support one another

We warmly welcome you to our regular online network events and love to see new faces.

- We hold monthly online 'Club Hubs' for Playworkers and Managers to discuss pertinent issues that they have raised, as well as more structured training webinars <https://www.clybiauplantcymru.org/training-events.asp>. Expect themes such as children's participation and staff recruitment/retention in the Autumn.
- We also have a series of pre-recorded webinars you may access by emailing [webinar@clybiauplantcymru.org](mailto:webinar@clybiauplantcymru.org) on: cashflow forecasts; social media marketing; becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and financial management

### Limit your financial liability

More and more of our Settings are now turning to incorporation which offers greater protection to owners/committee members as they limit their personal liability for any debts of the Club and offers other benefits such as reduced business rates, tax relief and access to more grants. Sixteen voluntary managed clubs have become incorporated as Charitable Incorporated Organisations over the last couple of years, with lots more in progress. The Childcare Business Development Officers are here to break the process down into manageable steps.

### Improve affordability

Improving the affordability of your Childcare Setting will boost attendance, income and sustainability. Being registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) will allow you to register with HMRC for: Tax Free Childcare (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/tax-free-childcare-top-things-childcare-providers-should-know>), enabling eligible working parents to access a government contribution of 20% towards fees and; with Local Authorities for The Childcare Offer enabling working parents/carers of 3-4 year olds to access 30 hours per week of fully funded early years education and childcare. CIW registration also provides reassurance of quality to parents, which you can use in the promotion of your setting. CIW's application to register has moved to a shorter and simpler online method, with which Childcare Business Development Officers can help. Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs also has templates you can customise to promote

CIW registration as an indicator of quality and affordability.

Please contact your Childcare Business Development Officer or Regional Team if you would like to find out more about the support available. Cardiff Office: [info@clybiauplantcymru.org](mailto:info@clybiauplantcymru.org) Colwyn Bay Office: [info-nw@clybiauplantcymru.org](mailto:info-nw@clybiauplantcymru.org) Cross Hands Office: [info-ww@clybiauplantcymru.org](mailto:info-ww@clybiauplantcymru.org)

## Clwb Hwb

Resilience is not about how much you can take but about how well you can bounce back. To support with the resilience of the Out of School Childcare sector, the staff and management of those settings in April 2021 we launched our Network Hubs (Clwb Hwb).

The aim of Clwb Hwb is to enable those who work in clubs to be able to come together in an informal environment to discuss specific challenges they are currently facing and to receive peer support from those who work in the same sector and have faced and overcome those challenges.

Clwb Hwb's are held the 2nd Thursday of every month via Zoom 18:30 – 19:30 please visit the training page of our website to book. Look forward to seeing you there.

# Setting up a wellbeing group or wellbeing champion

A happy workforce is a strong workforce. There are many things you have to consider when you are managing a team and something that should be high on your radar is wellbeing. If you have a workforce who are struggling with their mental health and wellbeing you will experience high staff turnover, an increase in staff sickness and a reduction in productivity. So, what can you do?

Within the Childcare sector there always seems to be a mountain of work and little time to complete it, so adding another task can in itself feel overwhelming but you can utilise your staff to support you with this by allocating a "Wellbeing Champion". You can do this during a staff meeting by asking for a volunteer and explaining what the roles and responsibilities are for this.

A Wellbeing Champion would be responsible for taking ideas forward that would support staff wellbeing. During the pandemic, with all Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs staff working from home, the organisation recognised that staff needed support with wellbeing particularly as home working can feel quite isolating. A wellbeing group was set up whereby volunteers met once a month to discuss ideas about what we can do or provide to support everyone's wellbeing. Ideas have ranged from walking challenges, virtual quizzes, setting up an online staff room and a Teams channel where people can contribute ideas and experiences to support with mental health including meal plans, book recommendations and workout ideas.

These don't take a lot to plan and arrange, and builds upon staff members interests, so it

is certainly something that you could instigate as a business. Your Wellbeing Champion can take these ideas forward to ensure they can be completed. It also doesn't need to come with a high cost. There are so many things that can be done for free.

You need to ensure that you consider a range of things that appeal to everyone's interests and it is important to remember that not everyone will want to partake, but by involving the whole team in elements of the planning you can find a happy medium.

If you have found innovative ways to support your staff's wellbeing, email us with the information, we would love to share your ideas on our social media or in the next edition of Y Bont.



## Race Equality Action Plan

In the early Summer, Welsh Government consulted on their Race Equality Action Plan. The vision of the Action Plan is "A Wales that is anti-racist by 2030". Being anti-racist is about taking action to make sure people are treated fairly; looking at plans, rules, policies and practices to ensure they are fair for ethnic minorities and will have benefits for everyone.

There are goals across Health, Local Government, Leadership, Income and Employment, Housing, Crime, Justice and Fairness, Social Care, Culture, Arts and Sport, to ensure that: the Equality Act (2010) is followed, that the right services are designed and provided to meet everyone's needs, that

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals no longer have to feel anxious about racism, hate crime is stopped and any racist behaviour called out.

Do you have an Equality Policy in place that supports anti-racist practice? Do you consider ethnic minority groups within your service design, service delivery and marketing? Do you consider the diversity within and between Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups and support and encourage anti-racist practice?

Welsh Government aim to publish the final plan in September 2021. Support and resources will be available from Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids'

Clubs to support Out of School Childcare Clubs to work towards the vision outlined in the Action Plan.



KIDS' CLUBS

# Grow Your Own Feast

Free, fun ideas for children to enjoy the outdoors and keep well, growing and cooking their own feast – visit [www.clybiauplantcymru.org/projects.asp](http://www.clybiauplantcymru.org/projects.asp)

Autumn is a season of celebrating nature, Indian Summers, changing leaves, ripening fruits and celebratory, heart-warming feasts with families and friends, all of which help boost our mental resilience and physical health. The magical, calming effect of nature is powerful in

alleviating the pressures of modern, busy lives and too much screen time.

We have a great range of foraging ideas (try our conker soap) and recipes - including those you can cook outside on an open fire – in our Grow Your Own Feast pack, allowing us to enjoy a celebratory feast with others in the great outdoors. It's also a perfect time for gathering fruits, sharing recipes and cooking together with older, experienced family members/

people in your community. In this way, we can share lifelong skills and encourage interaction and cooperation between generations. It encourages healthy attitudes towards one another, improving satisfaction and quality of life for all involved.

Check our projects' page on [www.clybiauplantcymru.org](http://www.clybiauplantcymru.org) for some sample Grow Your Own Feast activity cards and the launch of our final pack!

## A message from our experienced forager Adele Nozedar

How have your Summer holidays been? Great? Brilliant? Fantastic? And there's more to come. This is my favourite time of year as far as foraging goes. Can you guess why? It's because this is the season for berries, nuts and fruit!

You might remember that the Summer edition had a recipe for elderflower cordial made with the blossoms of the Elder tree. This season, we

are going back to this very special tree. Rather than the flowers, though, this time we are looking at the berries. Elderberries have been used by people not only in Wales but throughout the UK, Europe...and beyond. When plants have been used for a long time, it's sensible to suppose it's because they really do work. Not all such plants have been subjected to scientific examination, but the humble little elderberry is an exception.

What does the elderberry do, I hear you ask? Well, the dark purple-black berries, which hang down in glittering clusters exactly where

the flowers used to be, were discovered by scientists to be very rich in substances called anthocyanins. Anthocyanins help to boost your immune system and also keep nasty germs away. This means that the berries will help you stay healthy during the colder weather. Very often we get poorly as the seasons change from warm to cold, and this is the perfect time to gather the berries. You can also freeze them for use later in the year, but always remember to take only what you need, as animals, insects and birds also need elderberries too.

## Grow Your Own Feast

### Celebrate your Feast

### Celebrate your Feast!

It's time for you to enjoy the fruits (and vegetables!) of your labour with friends. Create a special atmosphere to make your feast a real celebration of food and community. The event plan template will help you talk about your ideas and plan them.

### The Event

Decide who to invite and design invitations. You could organise:

- a tour of your growing space
- cooking and tasting demonstrations
- fire cooking circles or a sit down feast
- a video or photograph presentation to showcase your own growing journey
- award ceremony for volunteers and buddies
- plant your own e.g. sunflower for guests to take home or involve them in seed gathering or sharing so more produce can be grown sustainably next year
- music, games, singing and dancing to celebrate.

Think about how you can involve people if they're not able to get to your event by recording/ live streaming your cooking demonstrations or sending them your photo presentations.

If you supply food on an occasional and small-scale basis, it is unlikely you will need to register but you do need to refer to the Food Standards Agency guidance [Providing food at community and charity events](#) | Food Standards Agency. [Accessed 13 04 21]

### Decorate

Decorate your outdoor space/venue with:

- welcome signs
- menu cards and place cards
- bunting
- paper lanterns, tea lights, fairy lights
- flower/vegetable displays
- grow wildflowers to attract bees and create beautiful flower displays for your feast.

### Event Plan Timetable

Name of Event: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
Budget: \_\_\_\_\_

What	Who	When	Tick when done
Guests/special guests			
Invites			
Welcome/welcome signage			
Event activities - tours/ demonstrations and tasting/ seed collection/sharing/ planting video, photos, thank yous.			
Seating/layout (e.g. cooking circles, hay bales, picnic blankets, tables and chairs)			
Cups, plates cutlery			
Food and drinks (demonstrations and tasters or set menus)			
Any special dietary needs			
Decorations			
Celebrate nature/food: music/singing/dancing			
Toilets and toilet signage			
Cleaning before and after event			
Health and safety checks			
Other:			

**Fun fact/top tips**

British Food Fortnight is a national food celebration which takes place in September/October. Visit <https://www.lovebritishfood.co.uk/british-food-fortnight-2020> which includes a Kids Zone.

**TESCO**  
Bags of Help

Clybiau Plant Cymru  
KIDS' CLUBS

## Grow Your Own Feast

### Foraging

### Delicious Elderberry Elixir

Elderberries ripen between August and October, replacing the elderflower clusters seen in earlier in the year in late spring in country hedgerows and city parks/ gardens.

### What you need

- 20 bunches of elderberries, stripped from the stalks
- Juice of one orange
- Juice of one lemon
- 250g sugar of your choice (or honey if preferred)
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 4cm chunk of fresh ginger
- A few cloves
- 1 star anise
- 1 green cardamom pod

### What you need to do

- Put the berries into a heavy pan with a lid. Add the orange and lemon juice then enough water to cover the berries by about 3-4 cms. Add all the rest of the ingredients.
- Bring to a boil. Cover, and let boil for just a couple of minutes. Lower the heat and simmer for 15-20 mins. Then set aside overnight.
- Fish out the larger ingredients, such as the fruits and the cinnamon etc. Strain the liquid through a fine sieve – don't worry if some bits and pieces make it through. The ginger, spices etc. can be used to make a chutney or pickle. Allow the liquid to drip through the
- Using a ladle and a funnel, decant the liquid into 500 ml water bottles, leaving a space for expansion as you can freeze the elixir until needed. You could also store in ice cube trays.
- Not only is this spiced syrup good for you, you can pour it over your porridge or yoghurt or dilute with water or warm milk into a delicious hot drink!

**Health and safety tips**

- Adults should supervise boiling the mixture.
- Take your elderberry cuttings from a variety of trees as they are needed by birds and animals in the autumn.

**Fun fact/top tips**

Elderberries were discovered by scientists to be very rich in substances called anthocyanins which help boost your immune system and also keep nasty germs away. This means that the berries will help you stay healthy during the colder weather.

**TESCO**  
Bags of Help

Clybiau Plant Cymru  
KIDS' CLUBS

# The Healing Magic of Nature

Autumn is a perfect time to celebrate nature. Enjoying long walks, Indian Summers, changing leaves, ripening fruits all help boost our mental resilience and physical health. Many pressures of modern life diminish this resilience and making time for reflection and play in nature – in whatever way you are able – is magical, calming and can put you in a better frame of mind.

Have a look at our Grow Your Own Feast information on the project page of this newsletter and website [www.clybiauplantcymru.org](http://www.clybiauplantcymru.org) for some sample gardening, campfire cooking and foraging ideas (with a full pack to be launched soon). Foraging is a great outdoor activity for this time of year, helping you explore your local environment and enjoy the fruits of nature. Our Elderberry Elixir recipe on the projects' page is rich in substances called anthocyanins which help boost your immune system, helping you stay healthier during the colder weather.

Walking, treasure hunts, nature art, making bird feeders, collecting the changing leaves and fruits are all simple ideas that can easily be part of your Out of School's session. Lots more sensory and seasonal ideas can be found within Nature Zone on the resource area of our [website members area](#) and developed with Wales' National Parks, for children to enjoy the magic of nature. Our resources on den building and playing with the different natural elements: air, fire, earth, water will also be available soon. But just allowing children to play outside, whatever the weather, is enough:

- The unstructured way children tend to play outside builds confidence and promotes creativity. The outdoor space is more varied and flexible allowing for infinite ways children can choose to interact with it. They can think freely, make up their own games, and take innovative approaches to interacting with their surroundings.

- It promotes responsibility - entrusting a child to treat nature and take care of the living parts of their environment allows them to understand what happens when they forget to water a plant, or pull a flower out by its roots.
- It activates a range of senses. Children can see, hear, smell, and touch outdoor environments, expanding the richness of human experience.
- It gets children moving - good for physical health.
- Nature can be magical, invoking curiosity and a sense of wonder for children like no other.
- It creates feelings of pleasure and reduces stress and fatigue.

And for us adults, [Thriving-With-Nature-compressed.pdf](#) ([mentalhealth.org.uk](http://mentalhealth.org.uk)), produced by WWF-UK and the Mental Health Foundation in collaboration provides seasonal ideas on how nature can support mental health.

# The Dark Side of Play Online

Dialogue around the disadvantages of online game playing and social media is vast in this day and age. There is little doubt that there are negatives to the amount of time that children and young people have with this medium of play and the other disadvantages that come with this such as cyber bullying and disproportionate body images. This article discusses some of those negatives with a few pointers on how to support with those but it is important first to look at some of the advantages.

Playwork Principle Two states that "Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children and young people determine and control the content and intent of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way for their own reasons." Playing online, whether that be through gaming or communicating and interacting through social media is now a prevalent medium of play for children and young people. When considering Playwork Principle Two it would be contradictory to not allow them to engage in this form of play as and when they chose to do so. For all the negative risks that are there in the online world, to not allow them to participate, you instigate the negative results of preventing children of playing in the way they are intrinsically driven.

It is also important to consider the benefits and development opportunities some children experience using online games and social media. Children develop their communication skills, whilst not 'in person'. The use of social media increased during lockdown and became the only means children had to communicate with their friends. As the use of technology increases in the world, the skills the children develop will support them in later life. Also increased are cognitive development, reasoning skills and problem solving, fine motor

skills as well as hand to eye co-ordination.

But there can be a dark side, and it is essential that this dark side is acknowledged and that risks are mitigated and minimised as much as possible. There are risks that children can be exposed to content that may be inappropriate for their age and stage of development. There is little control over the conversations that they have with people in the online gaming world, as well as the potential of grooming.

Cyber bullying is a huge crisis at the moment. Again, it is difficult to monitor this but the biggest risk is the children can never get away from it. Being bullied in person is very difficult, but in pre-internet generations there was some relief from this bullying outside of school/play time hours. Cyber bullying involves lengthy periods of exposure, feelings of 'there's no escape' and potential for serious ramifications for mental health.

The other risk to the children and young people's mental health and wellbeing is the idealised images they see on social media which can make the child feel they need to live up to these idealised images. This can greatly affect their self-esteem and could lead to eating disorders or self-harm.

With all these risks it is unsurprising that Settings may want to remove these opportunities from the Club to avoid those risks. However, even if you don't allow devices or online gaming in Settings, this won't stop the children being exposed to them so it is important that you are vigilant in recognising if these things are happening. Ensure that the children have an environment where they feel safe and secure and are able to trust and open up to the adults that care for them. Look out for signs where there are changes in behaviour, this could be acting out of character, becoming angry or

even withdrawing. If you allow devices, and you notice a child or young person is avoiding their devices to a point that is out of the ordinary, this too could be a sign there is a problem. Give the children the opportunity to speak to you freely without judgement. Keep a record and if it is something you feel needs to be reported you must tell the child that for their safety you need to talk to someone about this. Always follow your Safeguarding Policy.

Consider the language you use when discussing body image. Remember to promote healthy bodies with no language referring to weight. Ensure you provide lots of physical activity and activity that appeals to all children, not all will enjoy team sports. Encourage children to make healthy food choices but never attribute this to image.

If you do allow children to use devices and online gaming in Club, ensure there is a balance where they have down time and try other activities. They can choose alternatives so it can still be freely chosen but it avoids them being on this one medium all session. Ensure you have a Media Policy in place.

For further information the following links could help.

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/children-and-young-adults/advice-for-parents/anxiety-in-children/>

[https://www.in-mind.org/article/selfie-esteem-the-relationship-between-body-dissatisfaction-and-social-media-in-adolescent?gclid=Cj0KCQjwnueFBhChARIsAPu3YkSSwfK6Gmpdd7C0BQuCr8EZFIWj39y5jqfR7pwjk-2Ztjg0sr2PzwaAoXhEALw\\_wcB](https://www.in-mind.org/article/selfie-esteem-the-relationship-between-body-dissatisfaction-and-social-media-in-adolescent?gclid=Cj0KCQjwnueFBhChARIsAPu3YkSSwfK6Gmpdd7C0BQuCr8EZFIWj39y5jqfR7pwjk-2Ztjg0sr2PzwaAoXhEALw_wcB)

<https://www.bullying.co.uk/>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/feelings-and-symptoms/bullying/>



# Activities

## Pumpkin Bird Feeders

### You will need

- A Pumpkin
- Sticks
- Bird Seed
- String to hang

### What to do

1. Firstly cut the pumpkin in half and scoop out the inside so that you are left with 2 bowls.
2. Using a screwdriver, make 3 holes near the top of the pumpkin and tie string through the holes and attach them together at the top to create a hanger.
3. Make three more larger holes at the bottom, large enough to poke a stick through to create a perch for the birds.
4. Poke a few drainage holes at the very bottom of the pumpkin to allow rain water to fall through
5. Fill the pumpkin with bird seed and hang in a suitable place outside.



## A Nature Skeleton

A fun activity to mix nature and the human body, go on a scavenger hunt for the pieces and build your skeleton up.

### What you will need

- a big rock for the skull
- white and black paints
- thin sticks
- small rocks/pebbles

### How do you do it?

Start off with a picture of a skeleton for younger children. Begin by building the skeleton placing the skull (large rock) on a suitable flat surface outside. Which ones come next? Working your way down the skeleton, slowly through the main bones in the body using the collected materials to represent them. Compare the finished skeletons and peer assess. Extend by adding additional body parts.

## Worm Charming

Try this activity when the ground is slightly wet, at either end of the day.

Worms are sensitive to noise vibrations and will come to the surface if subjective to the right kind of sound. Birds tap their feet in grassy areas to attract the worms to the surface so that they can catch them to feed on. So in group tap your feet on the area in the same repetitive movement. It may take a little while but worms should begin to appear at the surface. Be careful not to step on any that appear, count how many you can see.

## Onion Skin dye, fabulous patterns using leaves and eggs!

### You will need:

- Collect small very fine leaves, or use herb leaves
- Eggs
- Onion skins
- Vinegar
- Water
- Knee Highs cut these into pieces
- Cotton to tie the 'knee highs' nylon
- Pan

### What you need to do:

1. Boil the onion skins in boiling water, with a splash of vinegar for about half an hour.
2. Drain the onion skins. It's like dye. Leave to cool.
3. Cook the eggs in a separate pan so they're hard boiled. Leave to cool.
4. Put the leaves on to the egg shell and cover the egg with a piece of 'knee high' nylon, tie it tight with the cotton. Put the eggs on one side.
5. Put the onion skin dye in a pan to simmer.
6. Place the eggs in the pan, being careful as the water might be hot, you can use a spoon to put the eggs in the pan.
7. Let them simmer for 8 minutes.
8. Turn the hob off and take the eggs out, once they're cold take the nylon off the eggs, then lift the leaves off the eggs.



## Natural Camouflage Art

Create beautiful natural camouflage pictures with this great outdoor craft activity.

### How to:

1. Firstly send the children on natural object scavenger hunt around the outdoor area of your club.
2. Once they have collected items such as leaves, sticks, snail shells etc. bring them all back into a circle and discuss the items that were found.
3. Let every child pick an item from the pile and stick the item to a piece of plain paper.
4. Using chalks or pastels the children can try and continue the patterns of the objects using similar colours.
5. Continue to colour around the object so that it begins to be difficult to see where the object actually starts.
6. Voila! A beautiful camouflage natural picture.



## Habitat Fence

Create a habitat that will become home to a micro menagerie!

1. Firstly, choose the site for your fencing which can be any size or length, e.g. as a boundary for Club.
2. Collect some hard wood poles or sticks such as Hazel.
3. Cut them to the height of the fence you want allowing for part of the pole/stick to be placed into the ground.
4. You can sharpen the ends before driving them into the ground in a line, leaving spaces in between.
5. The size of the space will depend on the height and length of your fence.
6. You can make an extra wide fence by making another line parallel to the first, with a space in between, for filling in with brash.



## A Sunflower Experiment

### You will need:

- sunflower seeds
- magnifying glass
- a glass or clear plastic pots

7. Collect some more long, flexible whips and sticks and weave them horizontally and haphazardly between the vertical poles/sticks.
8. Once you have enough structure experiment with brash to fill in the gaps. Small branches, cones, fallen leaves, etc, will provide useful homes and habitats for creatures as they rot down.
9. This fence will rot like a tree stump, enabling and creating biodiversity.

- cotton wool, tissue or soil

### How to plant your seeds

1. To start your experiment, decide what you want to use as your 'soil' and use it to fill a glass or clear plastic pot. - For the best view, you can use cotton wool, scrunched up tissue or kitchen paper. This won't give your little plant sufficient nutrients to develop into a strong plant, but it is a great way to get a good view of a few seeds as they germinate. *If you want to plant your seedlings and grow them on, it's best to use soil or compost.*
2. Whatever you decide to use, dampen it down with a little water, and pop your seeds inside. Place the seeds at the edge of the pot so you can get a good view of them as they begin to grow.
3. Water your seeds regularly.
4. Watch them grow!

## Building a Squirrel Drey

This fun activity explores how red squirrels make their nests. Red Squirrels take around 4 days to create there nests using all sorts of natural materials that can be found in the great outdoors.

### You will need

- Twigs (thin hazel whips are excellent!)
- Leaves
- Moss
- Grass
- Cones

### Method

1. Firstly collect items listed above to be used to create the nest,

2. In small groups or pairs form the structure of the drey by placing twigs in a circle.
3. Some may like to use hazel whips and interweave them to make the structure more substantial.
4. Next place a mixture of leaves and moss inside the twig structure.
5. If you have any Squirrel soft toys, place them in the nest to test them out.



# New Term, New Ideas

There is never a better time than a new term to work on new goals, new ideas, and new ways of working - a positive time to put in to practice the ideas your Setting has had, but never had the time to do. Has your Setting been looking at how to be more inclusive, use more Welsh or do more to help the environment? Have your staff been thinking about consulting the children on what they like and dislike about Club? Does your Setting want to be healthier but not sure where to start? We have been busy developing a series of '10 Ways to' resources, to support your Setting with ideas on how your Setting can be more culturally diverse, increase the use of the Welsh language, be more environmentally friendly and use the children's voice to help shape your Setting, with many more to follow over the next few months. Here are some ways your Setting can start the new term and implement those little changes you have been meaning to do:

1. Talk to the children attending your Setting - ask them what they would like their Out of School Club to look like this term. What do they enjoy or dislike? What snacks would they like? What games and resources would they like to have? Consider creating an ideas

2. Introduce themed weeks where all activities, games, resources and snacks are based on a particular theme, book or film. Ask the children to decide which theme should be next and plan ahead for each term.
3. Save the Planet Superheroes - Consider nominating a child each week to be your Setting's 'Save our Planet Superhero' to help keep things in check - check lights are off when not in use, check taps are turned off and keep an eye on recycling. You never know, you may have the next Greta Thunberg in your care!
4. Use your local library - Always buying new books for your Club? Ask your library if they could offer a selection of books to be collected or delivered on a regular basis. If your Club is

close to a library, arrange a regular visit for the children to save you buying more books. Ask parents to donate any books they no longer need at home. And don't forget to keep an eye out for books that help to teach about the environment too!

5. Ask the children to research and develop a year-round calendar of cultural events and celebrations and plan activities, snacks, games and discussions around each. It is important that Childcare and Play workers use these celebrations to talk about why they are celebrating and what the meaning is behind it.
6. Opt for books, literature, posters and films that include characters representing all children. Where this isn't possible look to create your own. It is important that children can identify themselves and family in all play resources.
7. Encourage and support staff to sign up to a Welsh language course. Try and do it as a team if you can to support one another.
8. Introduce a Welsh frind(friend) in the form of a toy or a puppet that visits your Setting regularly for a 'Welsh only hour' and when placed on the shelf or at the table only Welsh can be spoken.

All of our '10 Ways to...' resources can be found on our news page with more to follow over the next few months so please keep your eye out for them!

