

YBont

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Clybiau
Plant
Cymru



KIDS' CLUBS

www.clybiauplantcymru.org

Spring 2021

Breaking News

FREE Playwork Training

The wait is over, it's time to get **excited!**

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Dear Out of School Childcare Club Member



over the last months of lockdown I have seen the signs of friends, family and work colleagues struggling with a lockdown in the cold winter months it seems much more difficult this time round. Having said that I can see signs of spring in my almost daily walks, along with new growth and a light at the end of this seemingly endless tunnel.

Our focus within this quarterly newsletter, is on those new shoots and signs of growth, as an organisation we have an action-packed programme of events and projects planned, with many things to support the ongoing revival of the Out of School Childcare sector. We are here to support the new shoots emerging from the "ground", the sector reviving and by engaging with our spring activities getting outdoors, they will continue supporting the wellbeing of the children that they care for.

We start the spring with our exciting free membership offer, we hope this will help to stimulate the growth of the sector ensuring that you are able to access all the resources, training and project and activity ideas that we have. On the theme of growth, I hope that you will engage with our Grow your own Feast project, funded by Tesco Centenary, which will see us developing activities for you to introduce a growing space in your club and start growing your own produce with your Children hopefully allowing them to cook a big celebration with their families in the summer.

Our National Lottery funded Connecting and Supporting Out of School Childcare Clubs and Communities project will continue to assist clubs to grow by improving their governance and registration, and develop their connections with their peer clubs through the introduction of online network events where we will facilitate conversations around the support that you have told us you need.

Our most exciting new growth is that we will be able to offer, through Welsh Government Progress for Success funding, the Award in Transition to Playwork (from Early Years) qualification across most of Wales (see advert on next page). Submit your expression of interest and join the 97.3% current learners

I start this introduction to our newsletter whilst we are still in lockdown, but with news of reducing levels of infection and deaths, which is greatly welcomed. All around me

that rate Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs as an organisation that they would recommend to others for their learning.

Throughout this edition you will see staff members' reflections on the past year and what they look forward to springing in to in 2021. Having led the organisation through this past year, I found it interesting to really understand how individuals have struggled, survived and are looking positively to the future. Having worked closely with my whole team and trying to ensure that they are supported with both their wellbeing and workloads, I find myself also reflecting on some of the questions they have answered:

Reflecting on the last 12 months, what was the biggest challenge for you, and how did you overcome it?

There were for me, as for others, so many challenges, to pick just one is difficult; at the beginning of lockdown I moved up to Brecon to support my partner who is blind and my father 83 who was shielding, to ensure that they had what they needed and I was close. Not being able to see my children, who were both Critical Workers, one in London one in Cardiff was a struggle but I suppose my biggest challenge was how I could, from the spare bedroom, try to maintain the organisation's priorities for the sector, whilst ensuring the wellbeing of my staff. My desire to try to keep everyone safe, well and supporting themselves to remain so, was my overarching challenge. Without my intrinsically motivated staff looking after themselves, how could they do their best for the sector that we are all so passionate about?

I could see members of staff struggling with their own personal battles, the same battles that many of us fought: loneliness, isolation, overwhelm, volume of work (the task in hand) and changing situations and priorities almost daily. I could see them trying to support the staff from the sector, who were also experiencing the same feelings; they were acting as a shoulder to cry on.

To overcome this challenge I listened and learned and supported staff in a way and to an extent that I probably had not before. I encouraged them to take time for themselves, to switch off, to engage in new activities like I had myself; appreciating my daily exercise, using the time to enjoy my walks in the countryside whilst listening to podcasts to learn something new on a daily basis, something I had never done before. Through these podcasts I learned new strategies to be able to support myself and my team, to encourage them to support themselves.

I think the most effective way of overcoming this challenge was to make sure the organisation was as flexible as it could be. Understanding

that in order for individuals to adapt and cope with the new norm, they needed to do so in the time that was right for them, taking in to account their various individual circumstances, from young children and family responsibilities to taking time for themselves. Giving them the permission to take time off when it was right for them, working A-typical hours to meet their own needs. Giving this flexibility has, I feel, reaped its own rewards, with staff doing all they can to achieve their goals, both personally and professionally.

If you could have changed anything, what would it have been and why?

I suppose the obvious answer here is the pandemic; changed it so it wasn't so bad or even didn't come at all. What might I have done differently: I suppose I think as an individual and as an organisation we have grown from our experiences of the last year and seen that we can achieve even in difficult circumstances

Looking forward, what opportunities excite you for the start of 2021?

Personally, being part of the Pilotlight programme and having the opportunity to develop my skills as a leader for not only my benefit, but that of the organisation and the sector. Also, to learn more from the many and varied podcasts I have accessed, whilst continuing to hit daily goals for activity.

Organisationally, the prospect of helping the Out of School Childcare Sector revive and grow new shoots, to support quality play opportunities for the children of Wales, helping them to recover from this horrible year.

The prospect of giving my son and daughter the biggest cwtch and hopefully being able to spend much more time with them this year.

What plans do you have for the year, and how are you going to achieve them?

Over and above the prospects that excite me above and achieving those, my plans are to keep fit and healthy, continue to learn but ensure that I do more of what I say, and listen to myself when I tell my staff to ensure they take time for themselves?!?!? How I will achieve that who knows :)

What would you like to say to future you (i.e. you in 12 months' time)?

Don't be so hard on yourself, you always try your best, sometimes that has to be enough. Put yourself first or at least a little way up the list of things to do more often!

How would you answer these questions? Taking time to reflect on what has been and apply the lessons learnt to our future goals can be a very cathartic and worthwhile exercise - give it a go and, if you like, share your experiences / realisations / hopes for the future with us (info@clybiauplantcymru.org). Who knows, you may find your inspirational thoughts and ideas in our next newsletter!

Wishing you a happy and healthy Spring,

Jane O'Toole

Jane O'Toole,
Chief Executive Officer

Breaking News

FREE Playwork Training

The wait is over, it's time to get excited!

Fully funded spaces on the Cache Level 3 Award in Transition to Playwork (from Early Years) - Available Now!

If you need a Playwork Qualification, work in the Childcare sector and have an existing Level 3 Childcare Qualification, we have the course for you.

A Playwork qualification can help you meet Welsh Government requirements to comply with the National Minimum Standards for regulated Childcare workers to hold a relevant qualification by September 2022.

<https://www.clybiauplantcymru.org/news-more.asp?nid=598>

97.3% of Learners rate our training "good" or "excellent"

Learners tell us: *"I have gained a greater knowledge of Playwork and have found the sessions very informative and enjoyed meeting new people and socialising within group work. Thank you."*

You could achieve the qualification you need in **as little as 12 weeks**, without skimping on **quality** learning experiences

Register your interest now: [Expression of Interest](#)





West Wales

Clubs in West Wales making the change to becoming Charitable Incorporated Organisations

We have now come to the end of our 'Becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation' webinars, delivered to Settings across Wales.

Topics covered included what was required to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), the benefits and a step-by-step guide of each stage of the registration process. Feedback from Settings was incredibly positive and as promised we have continued to offer support to those that required it throughout their own registration process.

We have met with Schools, Clubs, Playworkers, Trustees, Teachers and Governors to discuss their governance options and what they entailed. We have also supported Clubs with their governing documents (constitutions) and made ourselves available via Teams, email, and phone to guide when required. Feedback across West Wales from Settings who have received this support included:

'Thank you so much for all your support!' – (Club in Carmarthenshire)

'Just wanted to say 'thank you' for dialling in this evening. Much appreciated. Having a professional present who was able to answer all questions and queries was fantastic' – (Club in Pembrokeshire)

'Brilliant help, thank you so much for all your support' (Club in Pembrokeshire)

Please don't forget that our 'Becoming a Charitable Organisation' webinars are now available pre-recorded, and fully bilingual, for those of you which weren't able to join us for the live webinars. These can be accessed on request from; webinar@clybiauplantcymru.org

Need to contact us?

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

Swansea Clubs Supporting Working Families

For many Clubs across Wales, January was looking to be the chance for a fresh start after a tough year, but following the announcement that Schools would move to remote learning, Childcare and Play providers were back to thinking of how to make things work and keep their provision open.

Many School based Settings in Swansea felt that with the School's Emergency Childcare provision being offered within their School to key worker children, there would be no need for them to open and they would have to close. After some careful consideration, Settings recognised that whilst the Schools were offering Emergency Childcare for key worker parents, this was only until 3pm and may not be enough to support working parents. With this in mind, Settings approached the Headteachers of their Schools and discussed how best to support working parents during this period and suggested they be able to offer their normal After School Club session as an extension to the free Childcare provided by the School.

Whilst numbers were expected to be lower than usual, with some financial support through Swansea Council's Children and Young People Fund, they were able to reopen after the Christmas break and provide their usual after

school provision. Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) registered Settings that were signed up to the Childcare Offer were able to invite eligible families to use their term time funded hours for the After School Club.

Similarly, full day care providers based within Schools also found themselves in the position of thinking whether remaining open was a possibility, but with Welsh Government's guidance that childcare was to remain open, they were keen to support those families unable to access their School's Emergency Childcare. Again, following discussions with Headteachers of their Schools they were able to remain open and offer a service to all families that needed support not just key worker families. Settings had to carefully consider the financial restraints they would be under – potentially fewer children, covering full staff costs, utilising the Job Retention Scheme and premises costs and so careful planning and regular monitoring of their income and expenditure was vital to ensure they did not find themselves in difficulty at any point. CIW registered Settings were also able to apply for funding through Swansea Council to support with sustainability and any loss of earnings from needing to close temporarily due to a confirmed Covid case, which has been a big support to Clubs.

Funding Support for Swansea Clubs

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) CIW registered Settings in Swansea have been successfully applying for funding over the last few months through Swansea Council's Children and Young People Fund. For many years CIW registered Settings have been able to apply to this annual pot of money to support with sustainability but the last year has brought about a host of differing needs and challenges for Settings and was needed more than ever.

The need for financial support hasn't changed, the instability of the last 12 months often meant that Settings were finding it extremely difficult to plan ahead with imminent lockdowns, temporary closures, fewer families requiring childcare as working from home became the norm and often unavoidably, the need to close as a result of a positive Covid case. The Children and Young People Fund was able to support Settings through this period with the hope that by remaining sustainable during the difficult times they would ultimately be able to remain consistent and reliable for the families that use them and continue to be around when things finally return to normal.



Vegetable Plotting in Swansea!

Staff and children of Swansea's Hendrefoilan Wraparound and Holiday Club are always looking at ways to utilise and develop their outdoor space and make it an appealing and exciting place for children to be in all weather conditions.

After seeing Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs competition 'Grow Your Own Feast' they got to thinking about how they could create a 'grow your own' patch. In order to enter, the Club needed to tell us about the space they had to do this and what they would like to grow. The staff knew that the best type of vegetable patch would be one designed by the children and so asked them what they would like to grow and why. Using a spider diagram, the children gathered round and gave all of their suggestions ranging from 'I love to eat them', 'We can pick our own food' and 'To try and taste more vegetables!'. Staff were surprised how much the children enjoyed discussing this but knew that should they win, the children would thoroughly enjoy being involved in developing their outdoor space.

We are happy to announce that the Setting were one of our lucky winners of the Tesco Grow Your Own Feast competition and we eagerly await to see the final result of their hard work!

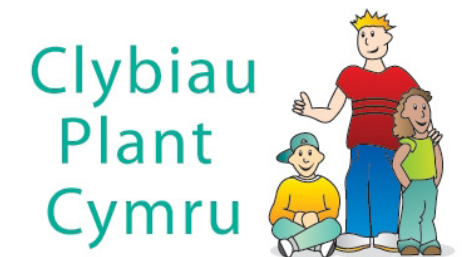
Membership

By now, you should have received an email to renew your membership (or joined).

This year membership to Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs is **free of charge for Out of School Childcare Clubs**. This means that between 1st April 2021 and 31st March 2022, Out of School Childcare Clubs can access our support, resources and training without the worry of having to pay a membership fee.

If you are an Out of School Childcare Club, all you need to do is apply for your membership online at <https://www.clybiauplantcymru.org/members.asp> by 31st March 2021. If you are already a member, please login, check through your details and renew.

If you need any help with login details our friendly Administrator Becci is available on 029 2074 1000 or by email to membership@clybiauplantcymru.org. If you have any issue with the online form, or if you have any questions, she can point you in the right direction.



KIDS' CLUBS

Why become a member?

Your membership to 31.03.2022 will save you:

- **£20.00** per person booking onto Training courses (there is a £20.00pp fee for non-members)
- **£50.00** if you buy an in-club workshop
- Up to **5% discount** on your DBS Checks (processing fees) with U-Check
- **10% off toys** and equipment from Stepping Stones
- **10% off toys** and equipment with EYP Direct

YOU will also have access to:

- Free advertising on www.clybiauplantcymru.org for your Club – so that parents/carers can find your setting
- Free recruitment advertising on www.clybiauplantcymru.org and social media
- Free monthly Funding E-News
- Free quarterly newsletter with activity and fundraising ideas
- Free publications, including Stepping Out (full of sample policies procedures to help you meet National Minimum Standards) - updated in 2020 to include Covid-19 specific policies and templates.
- Free expert guidance from a team of Childcare Business Development Officers on business planning, expansion, registration, quality assurance and all other aspects of Out of School Childcare Club provision.
- Support from your regional office, which provides guidance on childcare & business issues.
- Opportunity to be part of our Board of Trustees and shape the future for Out of School Childcare in Wales.

If you haven't already, pop across to our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/clybiau and hit the like button; we regularly share useful information and updates there too!

Please remember to join/rejoin online before 31st March. We want to support you, but need you to keep us up to date with your contact details and consent to us contacting you through our membership offer. If you are already a member, you need to sign into the website prior to 31st March to update your details and renew.

www.clybiauplantcymru.org





North Wales

New Club in Gwynedd

A warm welcome to Cylch Meithrin Tywyn, in Tywyn Gwynedd. They are currently a Cylch Meithrin who are looking to extend their provision to be able to offer breakfast, after school and holiday club. They have become members of Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs to be able to utilise our expertise and are working with our Gwynedd Childcare Development Officer to extend their provision. Welcome aboard and we look forward to working with you.

Registration Success!

Congratulations to Clwb y Berwyn in Bala, Gwynedd on successfully completing their registration with CIW. Since their registration, they have been able to support keyworker parents through being able to offer full day care provision to their children. "We are thrilled with the feedback from parents for our high-quality standard of service. We look forward to developing our Club further in 2021"

New Club in Denbighshire

We would like to welcome Little Lambs Emmanuel Out of School Club who are based in Ysgol Emmanuel in Rhyl. Little Lambs are a chain of Out of School Childcare Settings who also have a Fun Club at Ysgol Faenol, Bodelwyddan, Denbighshire and a Day Nursery in Kinmel Bay, Conwy. We are really excited to see how the Club develops and working with you in the future!

Playwork Training for Conwy, Gwynedd and Anglesey Clubs

We have been lucky enough to provide Playwork training to those working in Out of School Childcare Clubs in Conwy, Gwynedd and Anglesey Counties. Our Level 3 Award in Transition to Playwork (from Early Years) has been very successful in the run up to the Qualification deadline, so we are really happy to be working with and training learners helping them to develop new skills and gain their Playwork qualification.

Need to contact us?

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

Tiny Tots Day Nursery and Big Ben's Adventure Club welcome new friend



The latest member of the Tiny Tots Day Nursery and Big Ben's Adventure Club family is the extremely cute and adorable 'Speedy' the guinea pig. After hearing the sad story from one of our parents about Speedy now being alone due to the passing of her friend, it seemed like the perfect opportunity for our very own 'Squeak' to finally have a new friend for company since she too has been left alone for almost 6 months now since we lost our beloved 'Bubble'.

We decided to give them a trial together and to our delight 'Speedy' and 'Squeak' hit it off immediately and are already like best friends enjoying each other's company. Also, the children have instantly fallen in love with 'Speedy' too and can't wait to handle her and look after her daily needs.

'Speedy' and 'Squeak' are bringing immense benefits to our children they don't even know about. Another heart-warming story of happiness and success at Tiny Tots Day Nursery, Prestatyn, Denbighshire.

Level 3 Apprenticeship in Playwork - Progress for Success

A massive well done to Jessica Galvin for completing her Level 3 Apprenticeship in Playwork. We were fortunate to receive funding from Progress for Success to be able to recruit apprentices that work under 16 hours. The funding allowed the workers to gain a qualification that would otherwise be a barrier to access due to the hours they are contracted.

Jessica Galvin, from Club Enfys Conwy, completed this qualification in a record time, well before her end date. Apprenticeships are learner led and gives the opportunity for the learners to complete at a pace that suits them.

If you are interested in completing a Playwork qualification please do not hesitate to get in contact; we can have chat and answer any questions or concerns you may have, or you could complete an Expression of Interest form: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf6kqVoRxc_svSEV3PGvF7eiDjfwYegL-AEwz2guc7X0NWlg/viewfor.



SUPPORTING OUR FAMILIES.....

A new way of working together...

We at Clwb Ffrindie Bach are a Welsh medium registered childcare provision offering wrap around and Out of School care for 24 children, based at Ysgol Pen Barras, Ruthin, Denbighshire. Following several meetings with our Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs Childcare Business Development Officer North Wales (Sandra) our Trustees made the decision to apply to the Charity Commission to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). During the process the Covid-19 pandemic and our Summer break delayed our developments. September, 2020 soon came, contact with Sandra and meetings continued via Teams. As we are registered with the Care Inspectorate Wales for full day care, but have 2 separate committees. We also made the decision to amalgamate both our wrap around care and our Out of School Childcare Club to be under

one constitution as Clwb Ffrindie Bach. This will be a new way of working for us, however the benefits of our new joint approach will mean a seamless childcare service for the benefit of our families, children and staff. Our application for becoming a CIO is currently with the Charity Commission, we hope this will be successful and thank Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs for their continued support.

Helping our families

Helping our families has always been a passion of mine, therefore when I heard that as we deliver high quality childcare at Ysgol Pen Barras, which is registered with the Care Inspectorate Wales our families could benefit from Tax Free Childcare, making the childcare more affordable, then of course I wanted to help them to be able to access this. I'd tried many times to find out about Tax Free Childcare, I had

parents asking me about it, I wrote many emails and received letters, without any success.

Following one of my first meetings with Sandra, our Childcare Business Development Officer, Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs I asked about registration for Tax Free Childcare. As soon as Sandra returned to her office, I received a link to the correct site to register with Tax Free Childcare, it was simple and easy to do. We are now registered for Tax Free Childcare, our parents can now check whether they're eligible, if so, this supports them in paying for the cost of childcare.

My advice is if you're a registered childcare provider go on to the Government website and find out more about Tax Free Childcare. www.gov.uk/guidance/sign-up-to-tax-free-childcare-if-youre-a-childcare-provider



Big Plans for Little Lambs Day Nursery

Little Lambs Day Nursery, Kinmel Bay, Conwy are in the process of extending the upstairs of the nursery to create a brand-new Out of School Club room. The builders have been to remove the existing roof and the scaffolding has been erected so that the work can get started. Sam Maitland-Price, Proprietor and all the team are really excited for the new space. We look forward to visiting soon to see what amazing new space you have created for the Out of School Club.

Good Luck, guys!



South East Wales

Oak Hill ASD Newport follow up from October half term 2020 - Running the pilot

We updated you in our previous Y Bont about the progress made with Oak Hill ASD Holiday Club based in Newport and their story so far. The Club and its committee have been through an incredible journey during the global pandemic and managed to set up as an Incorporated Charity Committee, apply for grant funding and then in October half term 2020 they were able to run for 1 week's pilot.

The Club Manager Natalie contacted all parents in advance of their session to understand the child's needs and all staff hit the ground running, working fantastically with the children throughout the week. The sessions ran from 8am – 6pm and the children had lots of fun engaging in the variety of experiences and activities on offer.

Recognising the value of continuously reviewing their service to ensure it met the needs of the local community, the committee asked parents/carers for feedback following the pilot week. Parents were extremely happy with the service provided:

- 100% said they would book their child in again
- 100% said they felt their child was safe at the Club
- 100% said their child enjoyed their time at the Club (87% very much enjoyed it, 13% somewhat enjoyed it)
- 100% said their child was adequately supported at the Club

Parents/carers also provided some additional feedback, which clearly demonstrates the impact that the development of this provision has had (and will continue to have, subject to continued funding opportunities) on local families:

"Incredible attentive caring staff providing such a welcoming environment with their own

experiences of autism through a range of means. My son was happy for the first half term in 5 years and looked forward to going on the days we were booked. In fact, the only time there were tears was when I said he couldn't go on the Friday (I hadn't booked). I would book again in a heartbeat. It's incredible seeing something like this set up especially during the pandemic. Thank you to you all and please please let me know if it's successful. I already stated on the forms I would book again in half term but would book extra days for sure. Thank you Oak Hill, you're all truly wonderful"

"Really great childcare facility for children with ASD in Newport. The staff were very well prepared and made my son and me feel very welcome. They made a real effort to get to know him and his specific and individual needs. I felt he was very well supported and he really enjoyed going every day. Variety of different children there so he got to make new friendships and experience different things. A childcare facility like this is so important for our son, as there is nothing like it anywhere in Newport and our children with ASD need the routine and structure throughout the holidays"

"The care our son received was exceptional. He looked forward to attending Oak Hill each day and Natalie took great care in understanding our son's needs. We look forward to our son attending Oak Hill in the future"

Since the pilot, the committee has been busy working towards registering with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in order to continue providing the service for ongoing holiday periods. We will continue to keep you updated with their progress. If you are interested in supporting this Club as a member of the staff team or committee, then please do not hesitate to get in touch via email oakhillasdchildcare@gmail.com

Funding Success for SMASH After of School Club, Monmouthshire

Congratulations to Kim and her team at SMASH for securing sustainability funding from the Local Authority. During initial lockdown the school needed to make some changes within the building and this meant SMASH had to lose all of their storage. With nowhere to store all of the equipment, the Club was left with no option but to keep everything under a gazebo. This was possible in the dry weather but was going to be an issue when the weather changed. With the Setting being closed due to restrictions and with no income, the ability to purchase a shed

was out of the question. Becky, the Childcare Business Development Officer, reached out to the Local Authority who very kindly provided Kim with the option of applying for sustainability funds which she was able to use to purchase a shed, with the remaining funds supporting with ongoing costs during the Club's closure. Kim, Becky and the Local Authority worked together to complete the application and all necessary work relating to this, and Kim was able to purchase a shed swiftly, saving all of the Setting's equipment.

Heya Bina Holiday Club - Journey to Registration

Heya Bina Holiday Club is an inclusive Holiday Club which seeks to provide childcare for the families within the Cathays area in Cardiff. The Holiday Club is the vision of Amy Clements who, after experiencing a wide range of play provision for her own children, spotted a gap in the market for one with Islamic themed play activities. She observed that play schemes with this unique selling point were extremely popular, however, due to the need to register with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) they only ever ran for 1-2 hours a day which didn't help working or studying parents. After conducting intensive market research, Amy was reassured there was indeed a need for a provision with longer hours.

Amy had been trying to get the provision set up for some time but was having difficulty accessing a suitable venue. Before meeting with Becky, Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs Childcare Business Development Officer, Amy had found a venue and had got through the application process with CIW but at the building inspection there was too much work needed to allow the venue to be compliant with the National Minimum Standards (NMS). Amy and Becky began work on finding a new venue and this was made all the more difficult as the country was in lockdown. After trying many venues Amy approached the local Mosque and not only were they able to provide a venue they were also very happy to support Amy with the venture.

The next steps involved preparing the policies and completing the application to CIW. Amy did a fantastic job with writing all the policies and Becky supported her by reading through them all and making suggestions for any

amendments to ensure they complied with the NMS. One area that Amy was very keen to pursue was being a paperless business. This meant that all policies and forms would be online using "the cloud". Amy understood the impact this would have on protecting the environment but also the cost saving of not having printing and paper costs.

This was new to both Amy and Becky. Amy spent a lot of time researching how it works, all the security features to ensure the families data was protected. We discussed procedures for how the Club could retrieve information they would need during Club hours with backups if they struggled with internet access. Amy and Becky worked together to amend the data protection policy to include the use of cloud storage.

Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs has begun working on a project through the National Lottery Community fund which supports groups in Wales to take action on Climate Change. As part of this project, we are looking as an organisation as to how we can reduce our carbon footprint with particular focus on cutting down on our amount of paper and printing costs. Homeworking has made us look for innovative solutions to continue to support the sector, as well as our own staff, and to complete the procedures that we have as an organisation. We have added to our online collection of resources to support the sector, and this newsletter is now being sent out digitally.

Like Hey Bina, you could look at reducing your own printing and paper costs by utilising cloud storage. Not only is it an important step in protecting the environment, it could provide

a significant saving to your businesses that could support future sustainability. Please see our article "going paperless" in this edition of Y Bont for further information.

CIW were very happy with Heya Bina's application and policies and were confident that procedures were robust regarding the cloud storage. At her interview with CIW, we were expecting additional questions around the cloud storage but nothing further was asked. Feedback given highlighted that there was little need for lots of questions as her application and policies were so thorough. This demonstrates the importance of ensuring when completing your application with CIW that you endeavour to include plenty of detail and information, something your Childcare Business Development Officer can support you with.

Heya Bina's journey to registration has been relatively smooth, particularly when you consider this was all done during a global pandemic. This was largely to do with how thorough Amy was throughout the process. Following a CIW venue inspection, there were a few things that needed adjusting to the venue. With the support from funding streams through the Local Authority and the ongoing support of the management at the Mosque, we are confident that registration will be up and running in time for the Easter Holidays.

If you would like to talk about registering your Setting with CIW, please contact your Regional Childcare Business Development Officer. As you can see from Amy's journey; registration with CIW is very much achievable, even during a Pandemic, and with our help, we can make that journey all the more manageable for you.

Virtual inspection November 2020

Zoopers, based in Newport, has been through a period of transformation during the past few years waiting for their new room to be built within the church hall. This has been a long process; however during the pandemic they were able to reopen to provide Breakfast and After School Club, moving into a new room in November 2020. The Registered Person contacted Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to inform them of the changes in line with requirements of the National Minimum Standards (NMS), leading to the CIW inspector requesting a video of the new room and its facilities, prior to a virtual inspection of the provision being carried out, as it had been some time since the last inspection.

A telephone interview was carried out between the Inspector and the Registered Person, taking approximately 1.5 hours a week before the virtual inspection took place. During this interview, there was an in-depth discussion regarding documents that had been previously sent to the inspector.

1. Records of attendance for children for specific weeks
2. Risk assessments for the classroom/ Breakfast Club/snack room and the outside space, including photographs of the room set up

3. Covid-19 Risk assessments
4. Safeguarding, child protection and Covid-19 policy and procedures
5. Public Health Wales Infection prevention and control audit document
6. Health and safety policies and procedures, fire drill log and procedure followed since operating fully in the classroom
7. Daily routine and methods for planning activities and resources
8. Setting specific information was also required – building regulation changes, floor plan changes.

Staff members were also interviewed prior to the virtual inspection, with phone calls lasting between 1 hour and 1.5 hours, which was quite a lot longer than during the usual onsite face to face inspection. Staff were asked questions regarding their knowledge of safeguarding and other policies and procedures within the Club.

During the virtual inspection, the Inspector requested to see children having snack, and during their play time. Several children were 'interviewed', via a laptop, and were able to talk directly to the Inspector to provide their feedback from experiences in the Club. Things all went smoothly on the day.

Following the virtual inspection, the Inspector requested phone calls with parents/carers. This aspect was more challenging to coordinate suitable time slots, particularly as most parents/carers were working. Permissions from parents were also needed beforehand to ensure GDPR was followed. Parents gave positive and glowing reports of the care provided by the Club and how the Club had managed the impact of Covid restrictions.

Following receipt of the draft report, the process was organised to enable the Registered Person to discuss any queries they had with the Inspector. The Registered Person also liaised with Clare, the Childcare Business Development Officer for Newport, throughout the process and received support to ensure all policies and procedures were updated where required and that any necessary actions were carried out.

It is likely that virtual inspections will continue for the foreseeable, and may even be retained in some form within the 'new world' that awaits us post Covid. As with any new systems and processes, this may feel daunting at first, but from feedback received to date it seems to be manageable, with plenty of support available.

Need to contact us?

You can contact the South East Wales team by phone on 029 2074 1000,

by email: info@clybiauplantcymru.org
by post: Bridge House, Station Road, Llanishen, Cardiff. CF14 5UW

Training

Playvolution: New shoots

So, what does new shoots mean to our practice as Playworkers? If we consider our practice as being similar to a body of water, then we should aim for it to be like a river rather than a pond. A pond can become stagnant where the water is so still whilst a river, which is ever flowing, ever changing, sometimes overflowing, other times bubbling and calm, similar to that of a play session where the ludocentric behaviour displayed by children can be chaotic and calm, loud and quiet.

In order to be able to cope with the constant changes, Playworkers need to be flexible and adaptable, which if the last year has shown us anything, the Playwork sector has proved that they are extremely capable of doing.

So how can we make sure that we keep our practice up to date, that we remain able to adapt and change with the times, to ensure that we are always meeting the needs of children attending the Setting?

1. Keep training and knowledge up to date. Attending training, book clubs, reading articles or reflecting and sharing practice with others Playworkers all help to keep up to date.
2. Make time to regularly to reflect on and evaluate the environment and resources that you provide for children. Does what you are providing effectively meet the needs of all children who attend your Setting?
3. Consultation with the children, being mindful of their right to play. This can be through questionnaires, discussions over snack, graffiti walls or wish books; take time to listen to and respond to the voice of each child in your Setting.
4. Observations on children's play, consider what areas and resources in the play environment get used the most or don't get used. Be responsive to what you are observing, whether children need more resources.
5. Consultation and reflection with staff. Reflections on events and sessions to support effective planning and facilitation of the play space.
6. Consider using a Quality Assurance Framework to evaluate and review your Setting. And if this is something that you would be interested in undertaking in your Setting then watch this space.

Coming soon: Quality Assurance Framework - Play Wales are developing a new Quality Assurance Framework for Playwork Settings. The development is being supported by an expert group consisting of Playwork employers, Social Care Wales, Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs, Children's Commissioners Office and Playwork experts. The new framework will be piloted in Spring/ Summer 2021 and available for roll out from September 2021. The final Quality Assurance Framework will be externally assessed and be split into two separate Awards - 1) Playwork Practice Award 2) Playwork Organisation Award.

How Play Helps Children Grow

One of the principles of Playwork says 'The role of the Playworker is to support all children and young people in the creation of a space in which they can play'. Children playing are as close to being themselves than at any other time.

So, what is play? Play can be fun or serious. Through play children explore social, material and imaginary world and their relationships with them, elaborating all the while a flexible range of responses to the challenges they encounter. By playing children learn and develop as individuals, and as members of the community (definitions drawn closely from the work of Bob Hughes and Frank King)

Play can be many things it can be challenging, exciting or noisy, quiet, fast or slow. It can be solitary or in groups or pairs. Play can help a child to develop and explore aspects of themselves, and extend their relationships with others and the environment, thereby increasing their understanding of the wider world developing their skills and increasing self-esteem and confidence.

Children are naturally inclined to play, as defined by Friedrich Schiller in the 18th Century (Spieltrieb): play enables children to learn and practice new skills, it enables critical thinking and it can have a therapeutic effect. As Aristotle noted over 200 years ago, children should play in order to practice the skills necessary for 'The serious occupations of later life'. Through their play children will develop language skills through stories, songs, conversations; physical skills including fine and gross motor skill, social skills, debating, sharing, empathising with others, listening and understanding social rules; emotional competence, understanding and exploring feelings through imaginative play, testing of boundaries to raise self-esteem; creative skills through imagination and art and crafts.

We as adults need to remember and tap into our inner child for as George Bernard Shaw said 'we don't stop playing because we grow old...we grow old because we stop playing'

Where are they now? – Questions for Past Students

What's your name and tell us a little bit about you and your Playwork career.

Ben Thomas, currently employed at Y Bont as Senior Play Leader after accepting a new job role to progress my career.

I've been a play worker for over 18 years, I started volunteering at LCDP in 2002 and then got offered a paid role. In the past three years I've worked as a play leader at LCDP coordinating After School Clubs, activity clubs and playschemes.

What Qualification did you complete with Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs and when? Level 3 Advanced Play work in 2019

How did you find out about the qualification? Through a former colleague Phoebe Wilson

What is your stand out memory or favourite part of what you learnt completing your qualification?

I really enjoyed the games



Can you give us an example or explain to us if there is anything you changed about your practice or something in your Setting you changed from completing your qualification?

Since qualifying I've enrolled more staff on a level 3 qualification to ensure the quality of care we offer.

Has your qualification helped you with your career? If so, please tell us how.

I think the qualification has enabled me to progress in my career, I now have multiple level 3 and 4 qualifications that have enabled to apply for better job opportunities.

Would you recommend this qualification?

Yes, I have recommended this to all my colleagues

Meet the Clubs!

Club Name: Y Bont – Nursery, After School Club, Saturday Club & Holiday Club

County: Bridgend

Legal structure: Charity

Childcare services offered:

Nursery (0-5 yrs)
After School Club (4 -12yrs)
Saturday Club & Holiday Club (4-12yrs)

Open since: Y Bont was founded in 1993 by a group of families with disabled children, who identified the need for an accessible and safe provision for children with disabilities. After 4 years of fundraising, the purpose-built centre opened in 1997 providing specialist day-care services to young children.

The Family Fun Zone project opened in 2019 offering an After School Club, Saturday Club and Holiday Club thanks to a 5 year grant from The National Lottery Community Fund - People & Places.

What has been your biggest challenge to date? How did you overcome this challenge?

Funding has always been the biggest challenge for Y Bont, each year we have to raise over £300,000 to be able to continue to provide our vital services. At least 90% of our income is through fundraising activities, applications to trusts and other funders, and donations from supporters and local businesses.

Our biggest challenge to date was losing funding for our Afterschool Club and Holiday Club, which left a massive gap in provision for children with additional needs. In 2019 we were fortunate enough to receive a successful 5 year grant from National Lottery Community Fund and our new Family Fun Zone project was re-instated.

We are very fortunate to also receive financial support from Children in Need and AMBU Integrated Care Fund.



What is the best thing about working within an Out of School Childcare Club? It brings great reward when we are able to support a child to overcome challenges, and reach their full potential. The children who attend our provision are very inspiring and it is a very rewarding job. Any child of any age has the right to play and we are very fortunate to have specialist staff and facilities to support our children to develop and learn through play.

What is your favourite memory of club? Outdoor play in summer Open day for new Family Fun Zone project – fire engines, police cars outdoor play etc. 21st birthday – music, circus acts, messy play, animals etc...

What is your favourite memory of club?

Outdoor play in summer Open day for new Family Fun Zone project – fire engines, police cars outdoor play etc. 21st birthday – music, circus acts, messy play, animals etc...

What do children most like to do when they attend your club? The children love to have the freedom to explore in a safe and fun environment. Our service is based on child led play and they enjoy a wide range of toys, games and activities. Messy, sensory and outdoor play are firm favourites for the range of children we support.

They love to make use of the sensory lights room and bespoke outdoor play area. The After School Club has two themed rooms, which the children love!

Club Name: Hendrefoilan Wraparound and Holiday Club

County: Swansea

Legal structure: Sole Trader

Childcare services offered: We currently offer a Wraparound, After School Club and Holiday Club.

Open since: 2017

What is the best thing about working within an Out of School Childcare Club? The best thing about working in an Out of School

Childcare Club is we have lots of fun and we are able to work flexible hours as we have a great team of staff working together!

What is your favourite memory of club? We enjoy seeing the children developing skills and watching them grow as they continue to attend our setting.

What do children most like to do when they attend your club? The children love to be with their friends and being outside. We spend most of our time outdoors and the children love it!



Grow your own Feast



As we step into Spring, we're very excited to be working with our various project partners on our new growing 'Grow Your Own Feast' project. We will be joined by Terry Walton, Adele Nozedar, Clubs across Wales and anyone else who would like to have a go.

Terry Walton started gardening at 4 and has been tending the same allotment for over 50 years since taking it on at 11 years old. He now broadcasts from this very same allotment on Jeremy Vine's BBC Radio 2 show and as an organic gardener grows all his produce using all-natural means of nourishing them. Terry has published several books.

Adele Nozedar has a passion for nature and foraging and is looking forward to taking us on a foraging journey. Also a published author, she runs Brecon Beacons Foraging in the heart of the Brecon Beacons.

Both will be giving us their top tips on growing and harvesting food in our own backyards. We also want to extend a very warm welcome to our 8 competition winners – 8 clubs who will be going on their very own growing journey with support from Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs.

However, this project is about us all having a go – children, parents, local 'green fingers', grandparents, anyone – even if we're growing some herbs and tomatoes in a hanging basket. We will be sharing some ideas and recipes that everyone can try on social media and are hoping you'll join us by sharing your own growing experiences and ideas too using **#growyourownfeast** and tagging **Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Club**. Without further ado, I will let the experts do the talking and introduce themselves as we all start our backyard growing projects and leave you with this lovely quote...

“Spring, a lovely reminder of how beautiful life can be.”



Step into Foraging with Adele Nozedar



HELLO, and a very big welcome to the first newsletter of 2021 from me, Adele Nozedar. I'm very excited to be joining you all on this splendid journey as we work (and play!) together to help our children with nature, find out about easy edible wild plants and how to use them, sow seeds, and, of course, cook up some marvelous meals as part of Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs' Grow Your Own Feast Project!

But first, let me introduce myself. I'm an author, forager and educator. Although I'm, from Yorkshire, I fell in love with Wales and have lived here since 1994. What I really love is seeing children connect with nature via the commonest, tastiest and, of course, safest wild plants in Wales.

Although the weather right now is looking like this here in the Brecon Beacons, there's a lot going on in the woods, fields, meadows and even in city streets and parks as the soil starts to wake up. Although we can't always see it, nature never sleeps. Already, if you know where to look, the slim needle-like young leaves of wild

garlic are pushing their way through the frosty earth. The botanical name for this delicious plant is *Allium ursinum*, or 'bears garlic', as it was believed that the bears used to eat the tangy garlicky leaves immediately after their winter hibernation in order to kick start their digestive systems. Whether or not this is true we may never know but eating fresh certainly works for us too. Another name for this plant is *Ramsons*. This is the first of the plants that we will be playing with, and we are lucky in Wales to have lots of it.

Learning to identify plants is a truly sensory experience; for example, the scent of wild garlic cannot be mistaken for anything else even if you're not yet certain of its appearance.

Although there are several types of wild garlic, the good news is that the whole plant family are all not only edible but very good to keep your immune system healthy, a good thing especially during these months of seasonal changes.

It's also likely that my constant foraging companion, Lis, will want to meet you. I'll introduce you to her next time. In the meantime, spend as much time as you can outdoors.

Happy Foraging!
Adele xxx



Grow Your Own Feast with Terry Walton

It gives me great pleasure to be part of Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs' Tesco Centenary project. I am Terry Walton a gardener that appears on Radio 2 Jeremy Vine show on Fridays afternoons giving updates from my allotment in the Rhondda Valley. I also appear on ITV This Morning show direct from my allotments. I am a regular on BBC Wales Eleri Sion show and also Radio Rhondda, Radio Kent and radio Hereford and Worcester. I have written two books and write for several gardening publications.

I am an organic gardener using only natural materials to improve the soil and use no pesticides to control pests' only barrier and control pests using natural techniques such as barriers or washing off pests using a jet of water.

March to June is the busiest time in the gardening calendar and here are few tips to get you started.

Potatoes

These need well prepared soil with plenty of added compost and well-rotted manure. There are three types of potatoes, first early which harvest in 12 weeks, second earliest which harvest in 14 to 16 weeks and maincrop which take 20 to 22 weeks. Start planting in late March with the earliest then follow on at two week intervals with the second earliest, then the main crop. Plant six inches deep.

Beans

Broad beans can be planted out in March and runner and French beans in May. They also

require high fertility soil to thrive. The runner beans will require sticks to climb up and will grow up to eight feet tall.

Brassicas

This is the title for all things 'cabbagely' like cauliflowers, sprouts and broccoli. These need ground which is manure free but has lots of lime added as the need a high Ph to thrive.

Root crops

This group are the crops that grow below ground such as carrots, parsnips and beetroot. These need manure free soil which has plenty



Image: BBC

of good compost added. They need soil that is stone free to avoid the roots being stop going down.

Salad crops

Lettuce, spring onions and can be grown anywhere and don't need any special preparation. Tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers need the shelter of a greenhouse and can be grown in borders, pots or grow bags. As with all crops they need feeding to bring them to their best and I use seaweed extract, comfrey juice and nettle juice all diluted to give them a boost.



Seed Ball Salad

You could use a mix of salad vegetable seeds (e.g. lettuce, radish, spring onion) making sure they have space to grow. Wildflowers are also a good choice of seeds for seed balls because in nature they are self-planted and their seedlings are hardy, requiring little care. The flowers will attract bees and make wonderful displays for your feast.

What you need

- Clay (available from craft stores)
- Compost or potting soil
- Seeds (easy-to-grow or native varieties)

What you need to do

1. Divide your materials so you have:
 - 5 parts clay
 - 1 part compost/potting soil
 - 1 part seeds
2. Mix the clay and compost. Add a little water if your mixture is dry. The mixture should be moist but not dripping wet; similar to cookie dough.
3. Add the seeds to the clay and compost. Mix together with your hands.
4. Shape the mixture into balls about the size of a golf ball.
5. You can plant the seed balls while they're still moist, or allow them to air dry.
6. Find areas in your garden. Throw or place your seed balls onto bare soil. As long as they are watered (either manually or by rain), the clay will break down and the seeds will grow.

Climate Action Boost

Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs recognises the impact that is has on the local environment. Prior to Covid-19 this impact arose from the way that we provided our services and our processes. While we were aware of this, we have continually sought ways in which this impact can be reduced while influencing the environmental actions of others for example by regulating, motivating and raising environmental awareness.

Since the Covid-19 restrictions came into force in March 2020 Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs has, along with lots of other organisations, reduced the impact that is has had on the local environment and through funding through the National Lottery Community Fund, Climate Action Boost we are now seeking further ways that the reduced impact we are currently having can be sustained post Covid-19 restrictions.

As you will read in the 'Going Paperless' article in this edition of Y Bont, the production and use of paper has a more significant impact on the environment that we may have thought.

Throughout the restrictions as an organisation we have risen to the challenge and we have changed the way we work to continue supporting the Out of School Childcare sector with both business support and qualification training. It is envisaged that through the Climate Action Boost funding we will extend and expand our ability to deliver high quality support and training.

The funding will also be used as the first step in a much larger project which will see organisational processes that will support the reduction of paper usage.



We all have a part to play in reducing our environmental impact, contact your regional office for further support
Cardiff Office:

info@clybiauplantcymru.org

Colwyn Bay Office:

info-nw@clybiauplantcymru.org

Cross Hands Office:

info-ww@clybiauplantcymru.org





Webinars have proven to be a fairly regular occurrence in our pandemic working environment, and this is perhaps most noticeable within our Welsh language development project. Not being able to meet directly with settings led to an opportunity for us all to develop new online skills and avenues for engagement with Clubs in a more environmentally friendly way via Teams/Zoom email and telephone.

As an organisation we see the challenges and advantages of developing all our resources bilingually, ensuring that those who wish to communicate in Welsh are treated no less favourably than those who do so in English. This has not only been beneficial from an organisational perspective but also personal. By communicating bilingually in all newsletters, webinars and correspondence bilingually, we are setting the standard we would like to see

throughout Wales, and as many of us are Welsh learners ourselves we are continuing to develop and adapt our own skills through this new way of working. Our team effort in ensuring that nothing leaves our organisation without translation, led in no small part by our incredible translator Helen, has increased our own Welsh language skills at every level, proving unequivocally for us that 'giving it a go' really does work for Welsh language development. Welsh language skills keep developing and evolving throughout your life, and pushing boundaries brings with it the additional skills and confidence often cited as reasons for not using the language more. As a team we have enjoyed the opportunity to develop these resources, and develop our own Welsh language skills. There is no doubt providing the 'Active offer' is a challenge for us and our settings, but it's of benefit to us all.

Spring into 2021

Your name: Becky Hall

Reflecting on the last 12 months, what was the biggest challenge for you, and how did you overcome it? The biggest challenge was trying to juggle it all. It was important to me that my children were protected emotionally as far as possible and given the opportunity to play as much as possible to support them with the constant changes to their world. Combine that with the mountains of blended learning the school were asking for as well as keeping on top of my workload was challenging and I am not ashamed to say I had many wobbles. The support I got from the organisation and my colleagues was invaluable and really picked me up on the days I felt overwhelmed. I learned that it is impossible to manage it all and to even attempt it all wasn't good for the wellbeing of any of us. So I let the children take the lead on what they felt able to do that day, I managed their workloads around mine; on my quiet days we completed more blended learning, and on the days when there was too much, I accepted it wasn't possible and gave them more opportunities and resources to play independently. I learned to let go of the things I couldn't control and accept that we were all just trying to navigate ourselves through a very difficult situation and that I should cut myself some slack. The children are happy, my work is completed and that's enough.

If you could have changed anything, what would it have been and why? I want to say I would have eaten less and better food choices because it is going to be a mammoth task shifting all the lockdown weight but in the interest of cutting myself some slack sometimes quick and easy and maybe not as diet friendly made the day easier :)

Looking forward, what opportunities excite you for the start of 2021? I am looking forward to the day we get the announcement that we can get back out again, knowing that weekends can involve calling up my cousin and going to the park or on a day trip with our kids! Being able to plan trips or holidays without the worry of whether it will be cancelled. Planning a huge family get together where we can all celebrate the many birthdays that we have missed during restrictions. In the meantime, I am just excited that we can still have the slower pace, not rushing to get everyone to all the places they need to be, lots more cwtching up watching movies.

What plans do you have for the year, and how are you going to achieve them? To complete my Level 5 in Playwork. I am almost there so just needing that last push. I am planning to be strict in keeping 2 hours free at weekends to complete the written work ensuring I have the balance between that, the children and time to relax.

What would you like to say to future you (i.e. you in 12 months' time)? You couldn't have tried any harder than you did and sometimes just good enough is enough.

Your name: Nicole Lovatt

Reflecting on the last 12 months, what was the biggest challenge for you, and how did you overcome it? I think my biggest challenge during the last 12 months was getting lost in everything that was going on. There were times that I could have done with a search party to launch a rescue. I found it difficult during the beginning to find the difference between home and work, they seemed to blend together and it took time to (mentally) separate them.

If you could have changed anything, what would it have been and why? If I could have changed anything it would have been not to be so hard on myself, to recognise that time for me is as important as time for everyone else.

Looking forward, what opportunities excite you for the start of 2021? 2021 is a clean slate; even though the world seems to be the same, for me it is a clean slate and I can look for new opportunities; new things to learn and do.

What plans do you have for the year, and how are you going to achieve them? I plan to finish my Mabiniogion art series; by making sure I take time for me I'm sure I will get it finished.

What would you like to say to future you (i.e. you in 12 months' time)? This too will pass and remember to be kind to yourself. You are strong enough and your success rate so far is 100% - always remember that.

'Fun'draising Ideas

Fundraising during these challenging times may have been the last thing on your mind and yet your setting will still have needed funding in order to be able to survive and therefore in this issue of Y Bont this page will give you tips to think about when writing a funding grant application.

Ten Top Tips for Writing Funding Applications

1. Be clear about what you want and why. Get your committee together to discuss what you need, stay focused on your charitable purposes and plan ahead. Do you know how much money the Club needs to raise, what for and by when? Your Childcare Business Development Officer can support you with this.

2. Is the club constituted properly? Do you have a committee, signed up to pursue a charitable purpose? Does the club have a bank account and a governing document? Your Childcare Business Development Officer can support you and the committee with advice on whether a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) is the right governance for the club.

3. Where to find your grant? It is often best to start with your local knowledge. You can look at our list of funders available to download from our website: www.clybiauplantcymru.org. You can ask your Childcare Business Development Officer, local voluntary services Council, local authority Childcare Officer or Family Information Service, or internet sites such as: www.wcva.org.uk. If your application is Covid 19 related please see the WCVA website: <https://wcva.cymru/views/coronavirus-funding-which-should-i-apply-for/>

4. Check whether you are eligible. Look at the purposes of the grant and see whether this matches the aims of your club. Read the deadlines, aims and priorities before deciding to apply.

5. Share the load. Ask for support from members of the committee or are there any of your parents that might be able to support you? They may have specialist skills in finance/marketing/business planning.

6. Applying for Funding – read the application carefully. So, you're ready to apply. Read the guidance notes and application pack again. Check the deadline. Devise a plan.

7. Allow plenty of time, don't rush. Applying for funding can take time, it is important you allocate enough time to complete the application, you will not be able to apply if it is completed after the submission date.

8. Gather documents and policies. Gather all the information you will need e.g. policies, constitution, costs, end of year accounts etc., If you are a member we have a free detailed Step by Step Guide to Writing Funding Applications where you are able to tick off all the information you may need.

9. Complete a budget or some costs. Your Childcare Business Development Officer can support you with developing a cashflow forecast, financial planning and/or a business plan.

10. Writing the application. Prepare the application carefully, be clear and concise about why the project is needed, sell the benefits of the Club. If you're a member you can use our free resource, especially developed to support Out of School Childcare Clubs. Ask us for our Step by Step Guide to Writing Funding Applications.

For further support please send an email to your regional office
Cardiff Office: info@clybiauplantcymru.org
Colwyn Bay Office: info-nw@clybiauplantcymru.org
Cross Hands Office: info-ww@clybiauplantcymru.org



Support us while we support you!

Online shopping through 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 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 to ensure you receive your electronic copy.



Projects

Connecting and Supporting Out of School Childcare Clubs and Communities

A year into our National Lottery Community funded project and despite Covid, we have worked together with you to meet our project outcomes.

This 3-year project aims to work with you to develop and strengthen Out of School Childcare Clubs with 3 Regional Childcare Business Development Officers supporting in the following ways:

- providing **ongoing childcare business support** to improve governance and business skills;
- delivering termly **Regional Network Events**, with **Clubs developing** the format and content;
- developing **individual action plans** to build on **strengths**;
- helping with registration with Care Inspectorate Wales and with initiatives that improve affordability such as The Childcare Offer and Tax-Free Childcare;
- **collaborating with others** representing and supporting the sector to ensure accurate advice.

These ultimately aim to achieve better quality play and care, improved affordability and more sustainable, well governed childcare that will provide continuity of care for children.

Of course, 2020 brought unforeseen challenges and we are very grateful to The National Lottery Community Fund for additional funding, providing increased capacity enabling us to respond to the evolving critical needs of our out of school community.

Throughout, we continued engaging with you, providing information and reassurance and listening to what you needed from us to address your challenges. In response, we developed over 85 new bilingual resources, guidance and templates to support you through this critical time addressing e.g.: funding and financial systems; marketing; re-opening and Covid specific support; Care Inspectorate Wales registration; governance and temporary closure. We used these new resources to continue providing business mentoring support covering a host of topics including financial planning, business planning, funding, marketing, policy writing and record keeping.

“Thank you. You have been a great support during these troubling times, providing lots of info, shouting our corner & providing us with policies/templates for reopening.”

As the voice of the sector, we also relayed your challenges and needs to help influence decision makers.

Our formal training (Playwork qualifications and safeguarding) business skills sessions and network events quickly switched online. We delivered 12 live network webinars and recorded a series of webinars on pertinent topics that you can request at any time.

Whilst it was not the first year of the project that we planned and expected, we've all learned and achieved a lot (see summary at the end).

New year, new focus for our Lottery Project

Now more than ever, building business resilience within our sector remains a priority and we can help you in the following ways by telephone, email, video-conferencing using Teams/Zoom and hopefully, in the not too far distant future, face to face.

• **We can provide tailored childcare business support** to meet your individual club needs on a range of subject areas including funding, policies, financial planning and others.

• **Join us and other clubs at our network webinars** to stay connected, share solutions and keep abreast of policy changes and good practice. Book a place on our training page at www.clybiauplantcymru.org. You can also request our recorded webinars to watch at your leisure on: Becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO); Financial Planning: Cashflow Forecasts; Registering with CIW Online and; Social Media Marketing by emailing webinar@clybiauplantcymru.org.

• **Let us help you reflect on all aspects of your setting, using the Out of School Childcare Assessment (OSCA).** It will help you identify your own strengths and to work with Childcare Business Development Officers to identify actions for improvement and development through a bespoke action plan as well as form part of your Quality of Care Review for CIW. This can be completed online <https://forms.gle/AYYo6yNX6h8PXRZh7>

• **Improve the affordability** of your Childcare Setting to help boost attendance, income and sustainability. The application to register with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) has moved to a shorter and simpler online method and we can help you register. We can then help you offer



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; 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 allows you to access childcare sustainability grants and provide reassurance of quality to parents, which you can use in the promotion of your setting.

• **Limit your personal financial liability.** This has been a worrying time for all businesses and insurance companies have not always paid out. Some funders will only award grants to Settings that are incorporated (recognised as a legal corporation). Now is a really good time to review your governance with our support and ensure owners/committee members are adequately protected. Whether managed privately or by a voluntary management committee, you can limit personal liability by becoming incorporated (e.g registering as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation). While many settings faced additional pressures and challenges, there has been an increase in interest in improving governance. Over lockdown, 7 Settings have achieved CIO registration to better protect committee members and gain access to more funding. 37 Settings have reached out for further information and remain interested.

Project Achievements of 2020



Did you know?

It is important to consider the difference between **positive discrimination** and **positive action** when asked to 'improve diversity'. Positive action includes expressly saying that applicants are welcome from under-represented groups such as women or those from minority ethnic groups. It includes advertising roles in places where those who are under-represented are likely to see them. But appointing someone into a role just because they have a protected characteristic is positive discrimination. The only time a candidate's protected characteristic should be considered is in a 'tie break' situation when there is no other way of separating two candidates.

New legislation

Some of the key HR updates you need to consider this year:

• **Extension to redundancy protections to prevent pregnancy/maternity discrimination**
There is a popular myth that you cannot make those on maternity leave redundant. This is not correct. While you must not make them redundant because they are on maternity leave, you must treat all employees fairly and equally, which means including those on maternity leave in a pool with colleagues. However, if they are selected for redundancy while on maternity leave then a woman has enhanced rights to be placed into a vacant role for which they have the skills without competitive interview. The government intends to extend that protection for six months after the woman returns from maternity leave.

• **Introducing an entitlement to one week's leave for unpaid carers**
In March 2020, the government issued a consultation paper and asked for responses by 3 August 2020. In this paper they proposed allowing unpaid carers to have an additional one week unpaid leave a year. The response to this consultation has not yet been published.

• **Allowing parents to take extended leave for neonatal care**
Following consultation in 2019, the government published a response in March 2020 confirming that parents of babies that are admitted into hospital as a neonate (28 days old or fewer) will be eligible for neonatal leave and pay if the admission lasts for a continuous period of seven days or more. They will be entitled to this from day one of their employment and up to a maximum of 12 weeks. There have been no further details published, including the level of the neonatal pay.

• **Making flexible working the default unless employers have a good reason not to**
This proposal, introduced in 2019 under the flexible working bill by Conservative MP Helen Whately, failed to complete its passage through

HR Legislation Updates

parliament by the end of the session, which means it will not progress. However, although the Queen announced that legislation would be implemented to give effect to this, it is likely to have been overtaken by the events in recent months. All employers have been forced to look at whether their employees can work from home, with some having to juggle childcare as well as do their jobs, and a lot of myths and preconceived ideas have been firmly put to rest.

• **A new, single enforcement body for employment rights**
Consultation closed in October 2019 and as yet no further details have been published, but the intention is to have one body enforcing

minimum wage, unpaid tribunal awards and the tribunal penalty scheme, regulating statutory sick pay and publicising employment rights.

• **Passing legislation to ensure tips left for workers go to them in full**
Specially referred to in the Queen's speech, this would implement the Employment (Allocation of Tips) Bill.

• **A new right for all workers to request a more 'predictable' contract**
No details have yet been published, but this is to address the perceived imbalance of zero-hours contracts.

2021 looks set to be another busy year for HR!

Timetable of events

Development	Implementation Date
National minimum wage rises take effect	1 April 2021
Statutory maternity pay and other family-related statutory pay rates increase	4 April 2021
Reform to intermediaries legislation (IR35) extended to private sector	6 April 2021
State pension rates increase	6 April 2021
Statutory sick pay rises	6 April 2021
HMRC given power to recover tax from parties other than employer in off-payroll working arrangements	6 April 2021
Emergency volunteering leave introduced	To be confirmed
Technical amendments to employment law following the UK's exit from the EU take effect	To be confirmed
New legislation to ensure that tips and gratuities go to staff	To be confirmed
Increase to the length of time required for continuity of employment to be broken	To be confirmed
New pensions dashboard service introduced	To be confirmed
New check-off arrangements take effect	To be confirmed
New right for workers to request a more stable contract	To be confirmed
Whistleblowers protected when applying for jobs in children's social care sector	To be confirmed
Income tax personal allowance linked to national minimum wage	To be confirmed

The National Minimum Wage Rates

	Rate from 1 April 2020	Rate from 1 April 2021	Increase
Aged 25 and above (NLW)	£8.72	£8.91	2.2%
21-22 Year Old Rate	£8.20	£8.36	2.0%
18-20 Year Old Rate	£6.45	£6.56	1.7%
16-17 Year Old Rate	£4.55	£4.62	1.5%
Apprentice Rate	£4.15	£4.30	3.6%

(To be confirmed at time of writing) The rates for 2021/22 for statutory maternity, paternity, adoption, parental bereavement and shared parental pay is set to increase from £151.20 to £151.97 per week. Additionally, the rate of statutory sick pay (SSP) is also set to increase from £95.85 to £96.35 per week.

Strong Roots, Firm Foundations

When you look out of your window or take a walk in nature, what do you see? At this time of year nature is waking up and we see new shoots beginning to emerge. In order for those shoots to thrive the plant needs to have strong, healthy roots; firm foundations.

The same can be said for the Out of School Childcare Sector. We know that the last 12 months have not been easy but now is a good opportunity to make sure that your roots are strong so that you can begin to emerge and thrive.

The roots of any Out of School Childcare Club is its legal structure, whether that is a Private Provider or a Voluntary Managed Committee.

Just like the roots of a plant are hidden underground, what the management do is largely hidden and in the background but extremely important. As part of the management structure there are things that you need to check to make sure you are as strong and healthy as possible:

1. Does the management have limited liability? If you are a sole trader or a partnership have you considered the benefits of a Limited Company and how this limits your liability to the assets of the business?

If you are part of a Voluntary Managed Committee, do you have sufficient Committee Members? Have you considered the benefits of becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and how this limits liabilities?

2. Do you regularly review your cashflow? Reviewing your cashflow is more than just checking the bank balance. It is knowing how many children you have booked in and therefore your projected income and what is your projected expenditure. Doing this may highlight those months that you know you will make a loss and you can look to plan to mitigate against this.

Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs are available to support you to ensure you have the strong roots for your Out of School Childcare to flourish.

For further support please send an email to your Regional Office
Cardiff Office: info@clybiauplantcymru.org
Colwyn Bay Office: info-nw@clybiauplantcymru.org
Cross Hands Office: info-ww@clybiauplantcymru.org

Going Paperless

The process of producing paper contributes to pollution of air, water and land and paper waste makes up approximately 25% of landfill. These increasingly large landfills add even further to that pollution. Then there are the effects that producing paper has on the rainforest, with vast areas being destroyed every year to source the pulp needed to create paper products.

Going into spring and a new financial year, maybe now is the time to look at something new: are there changes that you could make as a Setting that would have a positive effect on the environment? With new technologies, moving to more paperless systems have never been simpler and the benefits are vast, not just for the environment but it can also save you money on paper and printing costs, not to mention the space you could save in physical storage. Whilst it is imperative that you still keep all records in an easily accessible manner, in accordance with the National Minimum Standards, it could be worth exploring if there are more environmentally friendly ways of doing so.

Cloud storage is defined as access to computing resources, on demand, via a

network. Digitally storing records in a secure manner frees up storage space for day-to-day Club activities, makes it easier to quickly locate specific information utilising search functions, limits access to data and helps to ensure data confidentiality and security, as well as reducing our carbon footprint.

Most cloud services are free up to a certain limit but these limits still allow you to store thousands of files. All files are encrypted which means that they are protected from unauthorised and unlawful processing. You will need to set up passwords to access your files and these passwords can be given only to employees who need access. These passwords can be changed regularly for extra security and if staff members leave the organisation. It is important that you add the use of cloud storage into your Data Protection Policy and Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs can support you with this.

Parents can complete registration forms using a link which they then return to you via email, from here you can upload the document onto your cloud storage and delete the email. All of your policies can be online without the need to print copies and these policies can then be

Policies, registration forms, medication forms..., the list is endless when you think of all the paperwork that is needed to keep a Setting running effectively. But have you ever thought about the effect all of that has on the environment and on your businesses purse strings?



Going into the New Year, you may be looking to the future and thinking about some positive changes your Setting can make to the environment. Continuing to offer care during Covid-19 has made Childcare provisions need to think about how they can implement Protective Measures and how to do this with as little disruption to the running of the provision as possible. One area that many Settings have changed is their snack routine, with some choosing to implement the use of disposable plates and cups.

Settings have had enormous pressures to get things right, both for being certain they have covered everything within the Protective Measures Guidance but also because they personally want to protect their staff and the children in their care. The Protective Measures state that Settings need to "Prevent the sharing of food, drink, utensils," and Settings, while trying to ensure they are being vigilant in being Covid secure and in efforts to take one task away have resorted to using disposable tableware. However, the increase in this usage can cause negative effects on the environment, and with the impact of Covid 19 lasting far longer than any of us originally anticipated, you may be starting to review things with a longer-term focus.

Reuse - help Save the Planet and the Pounds!

Paper plates cannot be recycled due to the grease from the foods, so landfill is the only option. Paper plates can take up to 5 years to decompose and take up a lot of space in landfill. Landfills contain high levels of methane gas and CO² which are generated by the rotting rubbish in the ground. These are greenhouse gases, which contribute greatly to the process of global warming. Overtime time, landfill will release dangerous gases, resulting in the area having to be managed forever to ensure there is no excessive pollution.

Switching to disposable tableware also puts an added cost pressure for a Setting. Even with reduced numbers attending, the cost can still be high. Based on an average of 8 children a night and looking at the cheapest options of purchase, using disposable tableware can cost a Setting in excess of £250 a year. A lot of Settings are running at a loss at present and this is a cost that could be avoided.

The main thing to consider when providing a snack is that all infection control measures are of a high standard and that there is appropriate recording of all cleaning completed. Settings have stopped children accessing their own snack, which was encouraged before Covid but is for the moment necessary to reduce contacts and the spread of bacteria. Using disposable tableware will reduce the need to wash up and ensure plates and cups are disinfected but as discussed this is not good for the environment or economically effective. There is also no need to do this. There are ways to ensure effective

cleaning that will allow for appropriate infection control. These do not need to be overly time consuming either.

Washing the dishes in soap does not kill all harmful bacteria but is effective for ensuring all grease is removed as this grease, if left, can contain organic matter which is a breeding ground for bacteria. There are two options for following up the washing of the tableware. Either soak items in boiling water or in Milton solution.

Milton solution is one of the most effective ways to manage your infection control without being overly time consuming. Once you have washed items, put them in Milton solution and leave for 15 minutes. Once this time is up, rinse in cold water and then leave to air dry. Air drying is the recommended method, as tea towels can harbour a plethora of bacteria.

Settings have done an incredible job at adapting their environments, routines and resources to allow for social distancing while ensuring children's play is not affected. While switching to disposable tableware has been effective in ensuring that the children can still be provided with snack in a controlled environment, you may feel that it is time to consider the practicalities of continuing the use of disposable tableware long-term. Using these tips on cleaning can support you to effectively manage the switch back to your regular tableware, with the knowledge that it can be done safely and be managed within the timing of your sessions.

Risk v Benefit Assessment

Fire Pit Opportunity

Risks

Burns
Clothes catching fire
Wildlife
Environment
Smoke Inhalation
Ultimate risk of Death

Benefits

Learn New Skill
Knowledge of Fire safety
Knowledge of Building a Fire
Social Development
Physical Development
Emotional Development
How to cope with Real Risks
Confidence
Resilience
Life Skills
Sense of Achievement
Assessing own Risk

Measures to Reduce Risks

*Always explain the safest way to do things to the children and be responsible
*Keep a bucket of water close by
*Keep clear of buildings and wildlife
*Use a Rope or a Chalk line that the children must stand behind
* If you are not comfortable around fire - let someone else who is lead the play opportunity otherwise you will pass on your fears to the children!



Spring into 2021

Your name: Jane Waters

Reflecting on the last 12 months, what was the biggest challenge for you, and how did you overcome it? The biggest challenge for me has been the solitary and sedentary nature of lockdown. I am really an outdoorsy type of person and not having the freedom to exercise and travel was devastating. I think the sudden nature of the first lockdown was traumatic and really unsettling. I was frequently feeling anxious about forgetting tasks.

Weirdly even though there is someone else in the house I have felt very isolated and the days just seemed to consist of work and incarceration. I always moaned about travel to work traffic but now I realise that time was me time, it helped to set the boundary between work and home.

When it became obvious that working from home was going to be more permanent I made changes to accommodate it and to improve my wellbeing. I got my board and files from work sorted printer/scanner re arranged my study feeling more organised made me feel more in control.

I made sure that I physically went outside every day for a walk, a bike ride, even food shopping to break up the day and have some time for me to just think or not, and leaving the room for food and coffee and having a chat. I have really found reading a real comfort again and our family WhatsApp groups have been a real tonic. I have never really thought about Mental Health issues before but I can now understand how easy it would be to become quite ill if not addressed.

Last but not least the organisation's support with wellbeing has been outstanding and I have felt fully supported by colleagues and management who have allowed the flexibility to accommodate my needs.

If you could have changed anything, what would it have been and why? I wish I had recognised sooner that lockdown had eroded my wellbeing, realised that I was having days when I felt stressed, and put steps in sooner to counteract it.

Looking forward, what opportunities excite you for the start of 2021? Excited to perhaps get back to the office and see all my colleagues and check out Bev's lucky drawer. To be able to travel; I will never be home at weekends again, spend hours at the seaside. Just to have a normal barbecue with real people, to catch up with family and catch them all, especially my sister in the USA.

What plans do you have for the year, and how are you going to achieve them? To discover all public footpaths in my area and walk them, to read more books, complete my family history and help other people with theirs, keep a diary and exercise my body and my mind. To take my wellbeing more seriously.

Your name: Shelley Jenkins

Reflecting on the last 12 months, what was the biggest challenge for you, and how did you overcome it? During the last 12 months, I have undergone major changes to my personal life as well as my work life. I have found it a real challenge to juggle all of the balls, and try to keep everyone happy; at times my personal life has suffered, and at times my relationships in work have suffered.

I haven't always dealt with the challenges well, but once you are out of a situation, and can reflect on what happened, and why, it is often easier to think instead about how you would deal with the same challenges in a different way.

For me, the past 12 months have been about learning how to cope differently during challenging times, accepting that I cannot please everyone, and do everything, and understanding that that is ok!

If you could have changed anything, what would it have been and why? If I could have changed anything, it would have been the way in which I have reacted to certain situations, because that has had a lasting effect on me. On the other hand, it is only by reflecting on this that I have been able to grow and change my mindset about the future.

I also wish I had taken more opportunities to get outside in the fresh air, it might have helped me clear my head!

Looking forward, what opportunities excite you for the start of 2021? I am excited to think about new opportunities in work, changes that we are making to the way we work, which might not be easy, but will help us all to streamline processes and develop our skills (IT in particular).

I am also excited about the prospect of being able to start getting out and about more once

How would you answer these questions? Taking time to reflect on what has been and apply the lessons learnt to our future goals can be a very cathartic and worthwhile exercise - give it a go and, if you like, share your experiences / realisations / hopes for the future with us (info@clybiauplantcymru.org). Who knows, you may find your inspirational thoughts and dreams in our next newsletter!

the threat of Covid-19 reduces as people are vaccinated. I have plans to visit New York this year, and while it is unlikely to be when we hoped, I am confident it will happen and that my family will be able to fulfil one of our 'bucket list' dreams.

What plans do you have for the year, and how are you going to achieve them? This year, I would like to do some more CPD. In the past, I have tended to do training based on what I need to do to fulfil my role. This year, I would like to achieve something that I have always wanted to do, a HR qualification (HR falls under my remit, I'm not looking for another job!).

What would you like to say to future you (i.e. you in 12 months time)? Well done, you did it!

Your name: Naomi Evans

Reflecting on the last 12 months, what was the biggest challenge for you, and how did you overcome it? The biggest challenge for me has possibly been the complete lack of control, as there has been so much completely outside of our control since last March: initial lockdown, school closures, friends losing family/loved ones, not being able to see the people I care about, cancelled holidays, birthdays and plans, frustration about people 'not following the rules'. I have had to shift my focus onto what I could control in terms of supporting my children's health and wellbeing, making the most of contacting friends/family over zoom, focusing on positives as much as possible and creating memorable moments even when it has all become a bit like Groundhog Day.

If you could have changed anything, what would it have been and why? I wouldn't have changed much (unless obviously this includes the ability to go back in time and stop the pandemic!) but I would have spent less time feeling anxious about things outside of my control. I also would have stopped fridge raiding quicker, as the pounds are hard to shift!!

Looking forward, what opportunities excite you for the start of 2021? I am looking forward to when the weather warms up, and when we are able to see people again – even if it is just for walks and time outdoors. I think for a lot of people, me included, Covid has put a lot of things into perspective. I have realised how much time with family and friends is important to me, and I want to savour every moment I have with the people I love. I'm looking forward to beach trips with friends and trips to the park. I also can't wait for my children to be able to have their friends over to play – something so simple that we used to take for granted!

What plans do you have for the year, and how are you going to achieve them? I have just started a Level 7 Leadership and Management Qualification, and am looking forward (albeit a little nervously!) to dedicating some time to my professional development. I want to make sure I am taking some time for me – whether it is reading a book, writing an essay or going for a walk. I want to be kinder to myself and not beat myself up for not getting something done. I plan on having some more adventures with my son and daughter (whether those be inside or outside the house) and hopefully with friends too. I was planning on a holiday too later this summer (rearranged from last year), but not sure if that will happen yet!

What would you like to say to future you (i.e. you in 12 months time)? I hope you lost the Pandemic pounds!! Ha. In all seriousness, I am hoping that in 12 months I will still be prioritising the things that matter, and that we won't have all become reabsorbed into the chaos of 'normal' life – I hope I can take some of what I have learnt this last year with me and remember what really matters.

Your name: Nenie Anetekhai

Reflecting on the last 12 months, what was the biggest challenge for you, and how did you overcome it? Trying to find balance in a whirlwind of activities, so one day I sat down and did a mind map of everything then I put it on paper and tried my best to adhere to it with lots of contingency plans and risk management.

Also, keeping head counts of family members in different parts of a Covid present world on a weekly/bi-weekly basis. We created a family WhatsApp group chatroom and every now and then apportioned time for a family conference video call to catch up on happenings and dropped messages before the video call.

If you could have changed anything, what would it have been and why? Nothing, I wouldn't change anything because even though 2020 seemed like a tough one it brought a.) growth through stretching, learning curves and b.) lots of possibilities through innovative thinking and technology.

Looking forward, what opportunities excite you for the start of 2021? The New Wave of technology metamorphosis

What plans do you have for the year, and how are you going to achieve them?

- To drink more water and do more exercise
- To stop saying I DON'T KNOW
- To consciously switch off when needed, meditate more, be mindful
- And travel home and more if Covid permits.
- To do this I did a vision board and little sticky notes to remind myself.

What would you like to say to future you (i.e. you in 12 months time)? It is ok to tell yourself "I'll figure it out" instead of "I DON'T KNOW"

Sometimes It is ok to tell yourself "When I get to that bridge, I'll figure it out instead of trying to figure it out before the bridge comes out to me" and being unnecessarily worried. For now, live in the Present and tackle each day as it comes

Your name: Becci Jones

Reflecting on the last 12 months, what was the biggest challenge for you, and how did you overcome it? The biggest challenge I faced this year was loneliness. I never realised how needy I am before and how much safer I feel when I have company. I have had to adapt from being surrounded with people all day at work, and with friends and family at weekends and evenings. Before this year I had very little time on my own and always had a house full of people. The first few months of lockdown were really difficult as I would spend 4 out of 7 days a week pretty much completely alone. I felt uneasy, anxious and scared and ended up spending all my free time bingeing on food and tv series, putting on a lot of weight and becoming quite unwell. During the last few months I decided to make a change and have taken on a healthy diet, set myself exercise challenges and have made sure I contact friends/family over the phone every day and zoom call on the weekends. I have started reading more instead of looking at my phone. Taking these steps and forcing myself to stick to them even when I feel like I can't be bothered has made a huge difference in my mood and health. Now I don't feel that I'm just wishing the hours away waiting for my partner to come home from work; I am using my time alone more efficiently with cooking, exercising and calling rather than texting friends.

If you could have changed anything, what would it have been and why? I wish I had taken this approach at the beginning of lockdown and not let myself get so down. I wish I had stayed away from the fridge for the first 6 months!!

Looking forward, what opportunities excite you for the start of 2021? I'm looking forward to the vaccine and a little bit of normality, even if it's meeting friends outside in a park again, going for walks together or being able to visit family in the garden in the summer.

What plans do you have for the year, and how are you going to achieve them? I have started a food blog which I'm hoping will achieve a community of like-minded people to interact with on our healthy food journey and be able to share tips and recipes. I am going to spend more of my free time researching and trying new foods to build on this. I also plan to improve the behaviour of my two dogs; at the moment we are limited on where/when we can walk them as they are reactive and anti-social. When lockdown is lifted, I would like to get a professional trainer to help with these issues. This will mean we can take the dogs out and about more to parks, beaches etc without fear and stress, which will benefit us all as a family.

What would you like to say to future you (i.e. you in 12 months time)? Well done for taking the first steps and having the confidence to go for it! New Becci thanks the old Becci for a better quality of life xx

Fresh start with financial systems

As part of your fresh start this Spring, why not start off the financial year as you mean to go on with robust financial systems in place?

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.

Financial Planning

It is important as a business to set a budget in terms of expenditure items and to ensure that this is below your anticipated income (through fees/grants/fundraising) to bring your business out at a surplus each month, to support you to have sufficient reserves and to support your ongoing sustainability if there are unexpected fluctuations in income.

When our Childcare Business Development Officers are supporting new Out of School Childcare Clubs, particularly in terms of applying for start-up funding, we will often support the development of a cashflow forecast. A cashflow forecast is a useful tool to plan your initial budget when starting up (and to ensure externally determined factors such as rent are not going to render the business unsustainable) but is also an essential business tool to be utilised on an ongoing basis, enabling you to review how your business is going to progress if a specific situation remains static, or within certain given scenarios.

Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs has a tried and tested Cashflow Forecast template available for use by Member Out of School Childcare Clubs. We have also developed a new webinar focused on financial planning, which covers how the cashflow forecast can be utilised. A pre-recorded copy of this webinar is available in both English and Welsh, contact webinar@clybiauplantcymru.org to receive the link to this and the cashflow forecast template.

Account Keeping

As a business, Out of School Childcare Clubs should have up to date accounts, with monthly recording of income and expenditure, and an annual summary. You may outsource your account keeping but regardless of this, it is really essential that all business owners and Managers have a good understanding of the performance of their Childcare business. If your business offers multiple services (e.g. a Day Nursery also offering before school, after school and holiday provision for school aged children) it is also important to have a good

understanding of how each element of your business is performing. Whilst one service may be making a surplus, another may be failing to cover costs.

Knowledge is power: understanding where the issue is can support you to put plans in place to resolving any potential issue e.g. within a revised marketing strategy.

There are many ways of keeping management accounts (e.g. utilising a paper income/expenditure file, excel spreadsheets or other software) and you may choose a specific option based on your preference, experience, IT literacy or whether you are paying an Accountant to prepare accounts on an annual basis.

Regardless of your method, your management accounts should show on a monthly basis:

Income: Funds entering the account (e.g. fees/grants/fundraising) which may be restricted (i.e. funds reserved for a specific purpose e.g. grant funds) or unrestricted (funds not reserved and available to be spent to cover general expenditure)

Expenditure: Funds leaving the account (e.g. rent, professional fees, staff wages, food, utilities, equipment, training, DBS checks)

Surplus/Deficit: Income minus expenditure
Carried forward balance: Balance from previous month less any deficit, or in addition to any surplus from current month

Financial Reviewing

From the data within your management accounts and figures within your original cashflow forecast and budget, you can review how accurately your predicted income and expenditure (cashflow) compares to your actual income and expenditure for a given period (e.g. month/quarter/term). From your 'actual' figures (accounts), you can revise your cashflow

forecast to reflect on how your surplus/deficit and reserves are likely to change according to your current circumstances, and then utilise this knowledge to make any changes that may be necessary.

This could involve finding ways to increase income (through grant applications and marketing strategies to increase place take up) and/or to decrease expenditure (e.g. through reducing spend on food/activities, negotiating changes to rent or potentially looking at making redundancies if necessary).

Your Regional Childcare Business Development Officer can support you to review your current finances through our Business Health Check Tool.

Set aside time on a regular basis to review your accounts and forecast: this should be a dynamic process. Cashflow forecasts should not be a tick box exercise completed at a static moment in time, but a tool that is regularly reflected on and revised to enable action to be taken proactively instead of reactively when things reach a critical point.

Through effectively planning, recording and reviewing 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).

If you need support please contact your Childcare Business Development Officer
Cardiff office: 029 20741000.
Cross Hands office: 01269 831010.
Colwyn Bay office: 01492 536318

Winter 2021



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ending Physical Punishment

Briefing Note

In January 2020 the Senedd passed the Welsh Government's Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Act 2020 ("the Act"). The overarching aim is to help protect children's rights and give all children in Wales the best start in life.

The Act received Royal Assent on 20 March 2020 and there now follows a comprehensive multi-media stakeholder and public awareness campaign before the Act comes into force on 21 March 2022.

The change in law does not create a new offence, rather it removes a 160-year old legal defence which sent the message that it was acceptable for children to be physically punished by their parents or those with parental authority. Over the years legislation has limited the circumstances where the defence could be used and limited the settings where children can be physically punished. Physical punishment has been

outlawed in schools, children's homes, local authority foster care homes and childcare settings.

Physical punishment is when you use physical force to punish a child. While smacking is what usually comes to mind, physical punishment can take many forms including, hitting, slapping and shaking. Attitudes towards physical punishment have changed with fewer parents and guardians of young children in Wales supportive of physical punishment. What was seen as okay 30 years ago is less so now.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is the basis for the Welsh Government's policy on children. Prohibiting the physical punishment of children is in accordance with article 19 of the UNCRC – the right to protection from all forms of violence. Once the law commences Wales will join over 55 nations across the globe who have already outlawed physical punishment towards a child.

When the law comes into force it will:

- Remove the defence of reasonable punishment. This means that adults can't physically punish children in Wales.
- Give children the same legal protection from physical punishment as adults.
- Remove a legal loophole, meaning that the defence of reasonable punishment can no longer be used in unregulated settings. These unregulated settings include some places of learning, worship, play or leisure, in the home or other locations which aren't regulated in the same way as schools or childcare settings for example.
- Bring clarity, making it easier for children, parents, professionals and the public to understand the law. This will improve the ability of professionals working with families to protect children by eliminating the current potential for confusion over what is an acceptable level of physical punishment. It will also enable professionals to provide clear, unambiguous advice to parents and carers that any level of physical punishment will be illegal in Wales.
- Help protect children's rights and send a clear signal that physically punishing children is not tolerated in Wales.

For more information on ending physical punishment in Wales visit:

gov.wales/EndPhysicalPunishment or contact: EndPhysicalPunishment@gov.wales

For positive parenting tips and information go to *Parenting. Give it Time:*

gov.wales/giveittime

Stopio Cosbi
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Ending Physical
Punishment



The Benefits of Loose Parts & Risk Taking in Play and the Benefits to Children & Young People's Holistic Healthy Development

Loose Parts and Risk Taking are important features of play environments to support children's development. You may assume that their relevance is purely for school aged children, however Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs has recently delivered training for Early Years Practitioners in Newport where we looked at how Loose Parts and risky play can (and should) be incorporated into all play provision, including Early Years services as well as Out of School Childcare Clubs.

Loose Parts

Before planning, resourcing and preparing the play environment, Playworkers/Practitioners must consult with ALL the children and young people attending the Setting, in order to identify their play needs and preferences. We can also identify their likes and dislikes from observing them during freely chosen, self-directed play. Note also, that it is a child's fundamental right to be listened to and have their views and opinions taken into consideration when decisions are made that might affect them.

There are a number of inclusive ways to consult with the children and young people to ensure that all their opinions and ideas are heard; including small - whole group discussions, wish lists and suggestion boxes. An effective method to identify the views and interest of the children in your Early Years Settings could be 'dot-voting', where the children stick little dots on different pictures to express their views.

When we have identified all the children and young people's play needs, we consider the resources we are going to need...the best resources for a freely chosen, self-directed play environment are **Loose Parts!**

The Theory of Loose Parts is not a new phenomenon. Architect Simon Nicholson came up with his theory back in 1971. His idea is that Loose Parts create more opportunities for creativeness than static resources and materials in the environment...

'In any environment, both the degree of inventiveness and creativity, and the possibility of discovery, are directly proportional to the number and kind of variables in it.' Simon Nicholson, Architect

...simply meaning that, the more resources and materials that there are in the play environment, the more the children and young people can create, engage and interact - promoting their social, emotional and physical development. Loose Parts create endless possibilities for the children and young people's imagination and creativity during their play.

So, what are Loose Parts? The simple answer is, Absolutely anything! They are items that can be moved around, pulled, pushed, thrown, constructed and deconstructed etc., they can be a wide variety of resources, materials, props and junk; things that can be moved, carried, combined, adapted, mixed, redesigned, swung, thrown, demolished and taken apart and put back together in multiple ways.

Loose Parts can be resourced for free or next to nothing - but they will have very high value and unlimited use in children's play. It is amazing what the children get out of loose parts; they are the foundation for children's inventiveness, their logical thinking, exploration and in satisfying their curiosity.

How can we resource Loose Parts?

If we look at Loose Parts in 3 categories, Small, Large & Natural, it will help us to identify a good range of different, new and exciting resources. Some examples...

Small Loose Parts	Large Loose Parts
Buttons Bottles Corks Pipes Yoghurt Pots Pots and Pans Tubes Rope Boxes Tubs	Pipes Tyres Large Boxes Compost Bins Electrical Wire Reels Pallets Chairs Tables Bed Sheets Wheelbarrow
Natural Loose Parts	Where can Loose Parts be Resourced
Pine Cones Shells Leaves Stones Sticks Flowers Pasta shapes Seeds Wood Cork	Scrap Stores Local Businesses Shops Parents Charity Shops Neighbours The Woods The Beach Recycling Centres Skips

...Not forgetting all the household and electrical items people discard: old computers, keyboards, hoovers, telephones, toasters, kettles, glasses, cooking utensils, clothes etc. (one man's junk - is a Playworkers Treasure!) Children will play out scenarios - they will experiment with their identity and they love taking things apart to see how they work and putting them back together again.

How many times have the children broken expensive resources or toys at your Setting

while playing with them? While toys have their place and value in children's play, they can have limited use and are often costly and usually not replaced when they are broken. For example, a toy car will have limited use to their imagination and creativity - and if a child breaks the wheels on the car, then it will more than likely be thrown out; but when they pick up a cardboard box and start to play, the box can become anything the child wants it to be, a car, a boat, a spaceship, a dolls house, a stage, a plane, a hat, a den... the possibilities are endless! Loose Parts feed their imagination and the beauty of Loose Parts is, it doesn't matter if they get broken, they can be easily replaced - and there will always be loads to go around; reducing arguments and promoting sharing.

When we provide a wide variety of Loose Parts, we are creating an environment that is inclusive and diverse, where children will feel free to engage with and examine the resources, enabling them to use their imaginations and creativity and develop their intuition, problem solving abilities, logical thinking and their holistic life skills.

Loose Parts are easy to store, even with limited storage room - you could use containers such as large baskets, sand buckets, a shed or even the broom cupboard! And they are easy to clear away - there is no need for them to be sorted out - just throw them all in your container!

See this link for a summary of Simon Nicholson's Theory of Loose Parts. This web page also includes a fantastic short video by the Bristol Scrapstore Playpod - which is a perfect example of Loose Parts play in action and will give you a clear understanding of the value of Loose Parts in children's play: <https://creativestartlearning.co.uk/early-years-outdoors/simon-nicholson-and-the-theory-of-loose-parts-1-million-thanks/>



Everything we do in life will have an element of risk attached to it... driving a car, walking down the stairs, crossing the road, making a cup of tea; but we recognise what the risks are and we have learned to take certain steps to reduce or eliminate the risks; e.g. putting on a seat belt when you get in the car and driving within the speed limit. We learned during childhood and through playing, what the best ways are for us to do things and to keep ourselves safe! Thus, it is essential that children experience and learn to assess their own risk, as we did, through trial and error and first-hand experiences, to ensure that they build the skills and confidence to keep themselves safe into adulthood.

A Playworker's role is to support children when engaging in play. We have a positive approach to risk and we recognise the many developmental benefits for children engaging in risky play; we use a risk v benefit approach, where we weigh up the developmental benefits of a play opportunity versus the risks involved and we use our judgement on the best way to intervene.

Think of children managing risk and Playworkers supporting them in this way... A baby's first steps are fraught with risk, they will experience emotional and physical risk; they wobble about, fall over, dust themselves off, get back up and keep trying until they have mastered the art of walking. We as parents and adults support them through this transition by making sure the area is safe, holding their hands until they feel safe enough to let go and encouraging them to keep trying.

Playworkers would use this same principle in facilitating risky play. Take climbing for instance: children climb through curiosity; they want to know what the world looks like from different heights and angles. Climbing is a common Playworker fear and they tend to stop children from climbing, even just a few inches off the floor - 'in case they fall'. By doing this we are not only denying them the opportunity to assess risk, but we are also denying them the opportunity to experience many important developmental benefits, such as learning to balance, building physical skills and muscles, hand-eye coordination, self-confidence and resilience etc.

An example...if a child was climbing on a bench, we would observe him and his immediate environment, ensuring the area is safe. If he is confident and self-assured then we would just keep an eye while he assessed his own play risks. If he needs a little support, then we would support him. But if we felt that the child was in danger of falling off the bench and harming himself, then we would help him down and explain why it was dangerous and encourage him to climb on a smaller bench to build confidence.

When playing, children will naturally push boundaries, try new and different things and take risks. Engaging in Risky Play is essential for the children and young people's development. They need to engage in first hand experiences in order to learn to risk assess certain situations for themselves. If children do not learn to risk assess for themselves at an early age they will not build the skills and confidence needed to try new things and learn their own limits - which could potentially cause them all sorts of problems.

Risky Play

Facilitating risky play can seem scary at first, particularly with younger children and especially if you have your own fears of risk. But we must allow children to develop their risk assessing skills from an early age. Otherwise, we are setting them up to fail in a crucial developmental area. You will already regularly risk assess the play areas to ensure their safety; but by using the risk v benefit approach in a

secure environment we are allowing children to engage in risk that is an acceptable level and beneficial to their development. By taking a step back and observing the children, and not jumping in and taking away their first-hand experiences of assessing risk, you will equip them with the confidence, resilience and skills needed to safely go out into the big wide world.



Activities

Play shouldn't cost the earth, promote sustainable play and try these 'new from old' play activities using recycled materials.

Bottle spinners

What you need:

- empty water bottles
- marker pens
- scissors

What you need to do:

1. Colour your water bottles entirely with the marker pens.
2. Cut off the bottom of the bottle, and then cut the rest of the bottle into a spiral, leaving the shoulders and neck of the bottle intact.
3. Slide the neck of the bottle over the branch of a tree, and watch them bounce and dance in the wind!



Plastic bottle bowling

What you need:

- 10 empty plastic bottles of the same size with tops.
- Poster/acrylic paints
- A ball
- Sand/rice
- Water & jug

What you need to do:

1. Fill each bottle with a small amount of sand/rice, just enough to cover the base of

the bottle.

2. Squeeze approx. 3 tablespoons of paint into each bottle, you can make them as colourful as you like. You can add glitter to make them extra sparkly.

3. Fill the bottles to the top with the water and secure the lids as tight as you can.

4. Give them a shake to mix the paints.

5. Line them up and you are ready to bowl. For older children you could add numbers to the bottles for a fun addition and subtraction game.

Milk carton catcher

What you need:

- Clean, empty milk carton
- Scissors
- Tape
- String
- Pompom / ball with holes that can be tied on.

What you need to do:

1. Cut bottle in half and keep the end with the handle.
2. Cover the ends with tape to protect fingers from sharp edges.
3. Cut a length of string. The longer the string the more challenging the game.
4. Tie string around the bottle top and secure well with tape.
5. Tie the other end of the string to the pompom / ball and secure.
6. You can decorate the carton how you like use stickers, markers etc
7. You are now ready to play. Hold the handle, throw the ball into the air and try to catch it in the carton.

Toy launcher

What you need

- Cardboard box
- Tape
- Elastic bands
- Pencils/pens

What you need to do:

1. Build the launching component:
 - a) Cut out a small rectangle from one end of the cardboard box, fold it in half and poke two holes in each end.
 - b) Wrap tape around your box (This will make the cardboard sturdier)
 - c) Poke 2 holes through the width of the box opposite each other, make sure that you leave some space for your launcher to be pulled back.
 - d) Take an elastic band and cut it. String it through the width holes and slot one end of the small piece of folded card.
 - e) Poke 2 holes in the back of the box
 - f) Cut another elastic band post it through the back of the box and the other end of the small folded card. Tie all ends well.

* See picture for set up.

2. Operate your toy launcher:

To operate the launcher, place your toy on the "x", pull back on the elastic band and then let go! Your toy will fly out and (hopefully) through the opening.

