# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Ministerial Review of Play - Response to the Steering Group recommendations** |
| **DATE**  | **23 October 2023** |
| **BY** | **Julie Morgan MS, Deputy Minister for Social Services** |

In February this year, I was pleased to welcome the [report of the Ministerial Review of Play Steering Group](https://www.gov.wales/written-statement-ministerial-review-play-publication-steering-group-report). The report was the culmination of collaboration by a wide range of stakeholders to identify issues, options and implications for my consideration. I am formally responding to the Steering Group’s report to advise on progress to date and how we intend to proceed.

I remain rightly proud that Wales was the first country to legislate in support of children’s play, guaranteeing children’s right to play by ensuring local authorities secure sufficient opportunities, via the Play Sufficiency Duty. As part of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010, the Welsh Government legislated in support of children’s play. ['Wales - a Play Friendly Country'](https://www.gov.wales/wales-play-friendly-country) is the statutory guidance which supports local authorities in assessing and, as far as is reasonably practicable, securing sufficient opportunities for children to play in their areas.

The recommendations of the review are wide ranging and will require cross-government policy consideration and continued collaboration with the sector. I have set out in my response to each recommendation, the steps the Welsh Government intends to take against them. Some of these recommendations can be implemented quickly, others will take time. Where I have accepted a recommendation in principle, we will begin undertaking activities linked to these recommendations as soon as possible so that their full implementation can be explored.

One of our early actions will be to work with the sector to review the statutory guidance for local authorities, along with the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) Toolkit and supporting guidance. We will continue to protect and champion playfulness and continue to build on the progress made in Wales, being a play friendly country giving children and young people the opportunity and freedom to play.

Recent times have shown us just how vital play opportunities are to children and young people’s wellbeing, their future development and life potential. I look forward to the continuing collaboration between the Welsh Government and the playwork and other related sectors, as we drive forward together, to ensure our play policy fits the current and future needs of our children and young people.