

# Policy Delivery through PlayCare



EU Programme  
for Peace and Reconciliation



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## Foreword

"I offer a crusade to give every child, whatever their background, a good start in life and to give every parent, wherever they live, flexible, affordable, quality childcare".

Charles Clarke, Education & Skills Secretary  
September 04

PlayBoard is committed to providing quality play opportunities through school age childcare services across Northern Ireland. PlayBoard has worked as a Key Sectoral Partner since 1996 to deliver the PlayCare Initiative: working with Government Departments, Childcare Partnerships and the Special European Union Peace Programme.

PlayBoard is publishing this PlayCare Review of the Sector in the absence of a long overdue review of *Children First, The Northern Ireland Childcare Strategy*. The PlayCare sector is in crisis in terms of funding, infrastructure support and the lack of a sustainability strategy.

This audit is based on current statistics and provides a regional analysis based on regionally applied basic assumptions. The shortfall funding required to sustain Out of School PlayCare provision in Northern Ireland for a period of three years once existing sources of funding cease is £13.2 million circa, £4.4 million per year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in July 2004 provided an uplift in the region of £36 million for Northern Ireland over the next three years i.e. £12 million per year for Early Education and Childcare.

Investment in PlayCare is a priority issue for parents and politicians across Northern Ireland. By investing in PlayCare we are investing in our children's future.

***I invite you to join PlayBoard in our crusade for the resources to support PlayCare in Northern Ireland that are being rolled out throughout the rest of the United Kingdom.***

Marguerite Hunter Blair  
Chief Executive  
October 2004

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