

LET ME PLAY

DO WE HAVE INCLUSION IN OUR PLAY PARKS IN NORTHERN IRELAND?

Are we enabling or disabling...

57% are unable to play in play parks as often as they would like

During the Spring of 2019, a study was undertaken by PlayBoard in co-production with a 'lived-experienced' team from Mae Murray Foundation. The work was developed in response to appeals by families suggesting that play parks can be disabling environments which cause social exclusion. Over 500 people contributed, all of whom identify as having a family member with a disability, sensory, undiagnosed, medical, or complex need.

The barriers faced by families, and the solutions proposed, were found to be consistent and repetitive. The **'Let me Play' study** explains why exclusion from play parks can happen and provides information which could be further developed to effect real change.

40% rate their play park experience as poor or very poor

1: GETTING TO THE PLAY PARK

Connectivity to play parks, through accessible public transport and accessible public realm schemes is essential. All stakeholders and departments must work together.



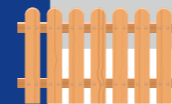
2: PLAY PARK SITE FACILITIES

Site facilities which offer toilets, parking and eateries, should be designed with attention to the detail of everyone's needs - not simply the majority. Create best practice, not common practice!



3: ACCESS TO PLAY

Understanding the complexity of access and the need for equipment and activities to be accessed in a range of differing ways is key. Co-production with the local community brings lived-experience - maximise it!



4: PARTICIPATION IN PLAY

Greater creativity and innovation in design can offer quality experiences and choices, equally rich in play value, allowing active engagement for all. Play equipment is extremely important, but the power of other types of play should not be underestimated.



5: COMMUNICATION

Up to date, accurate information is fundamental to support visit planning, and avoid disappointment or upset. Review of how a play park meets need should be ongoing. Prioritise both review and communication!



6: ATTITUDES

Play parks offer a unique opportunity to celebrate diversity and promote visibility. Practical activity-led programmes, within the play park environment, can contribute significantly to driving attitudinal change across society.

