



PlayBoard NI Member Session

Draft Programme for Government

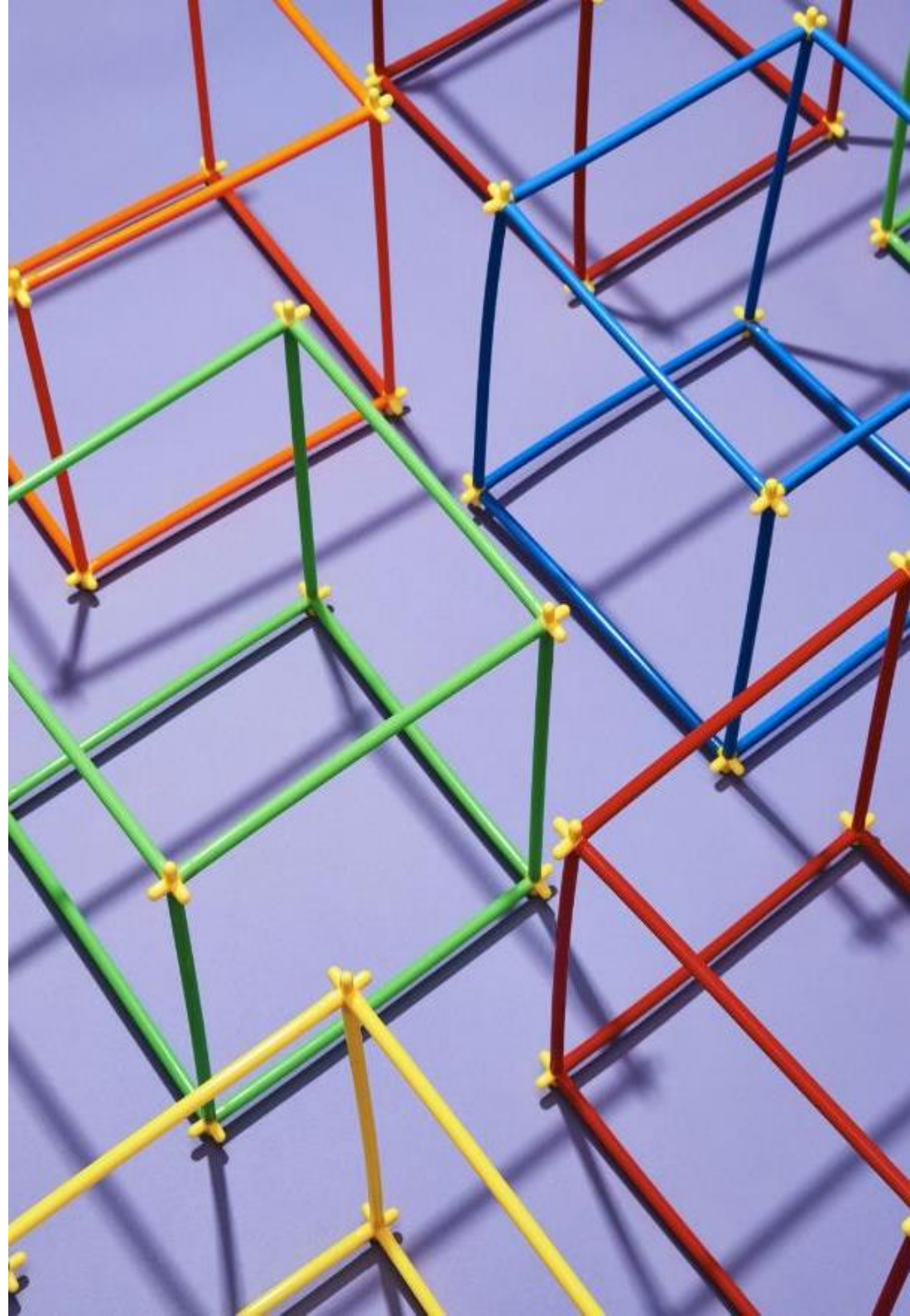
23rd October 2024



Overview of Session

1. Welcome & Housekeeping
2. Overview of Draft Programme for Government
3. Key areas (Priority 2 and 5)
4. Next Steps

Close



What is the Programme for Government?



Overarching Strategic Framework for NI (2024 to 2027)

Establishes an overall vision for the Executive

Confirms a set of high-level objectives

Based on Outcome Based Accountability approach

All-of-Government workplan

Aims to align cross-government activity behind key priorities

Provide a roadmap for improving quality of life

Cross-community, reflecting the needs of all in society

Key Document

Key influencer of budget allocations and departmental prioritisation

Monitors and measures progress whilst determining future policy and resource focus

Aligns to broader UK and Global priorities e.g. UN Sustainable Development Goals, Climate Change etc.

PfG: At a Glance

The programme's priorities and commitments are divided into three core sections:

1: Doing What Matters Most

The Executive's immediate priorities aimed at taking care of you, supporting our businesses, and improving the lives of our workers, families and communities.



Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy



Deliver More Affordable Childcare



Cut Health Waiting Times



Ending Violence Against Women and Girls



Better Support for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs



Provide More Social, Affordable and Sustainable Housing



Safer Communities



Protecting Lough Neagh and the Environment



Reform and Transformation of Public Services

PfG: At a Glance

The programme's priorities and commitments are divided into three core sections:

2. Building New Foundations

Upgrade infrastructure and improve services to better connect communities, meet today's needs and deliver high-quality public services.

Boost Housing Funds

Improve the Planning System

Deliver Better Public Services

Support Our Net Zero Future

Manage Our Water

Upgrade Stadia & Support Local Sports

Retrofit Homes

Improve our Transport Infrastructure



PfG: At a Glance

The programme's priorities and commitments are divided into three core sections:

3. Shaping a Better Tomorrow

Focuses on 3 key missions to improve life for all – Planet, People and Prosperity rooted with a commitment to Peace.



Doing What Matters Most: Cross-Cutting Priorities



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Ending Violence Against Women and Girls



Reform and Transformation of Public Services



Better Support for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs



Priority 2: Deliver More Affordable Childcare



The Issue

- Childcare costs are very high.
- Affordable childcare key to supporting working families

Action to Date

- Childcare subsidy: Additional support for eligible pre-school children.
- Support for range of programmes (Sure Start, Pathway, and Toy Box).
- Free pre-school hours: Providing 22.5 free hours of pre-school education weekly.

Proposed Action

- Ensuring every child gets the best start.
- Helping families afford childcare so parents can work.
- Collaboration with parents, providers, and experts to design a strategy tailored to families' needs and support the childcare sector.
- Comprehensive data gathering to inform effective policies.



Priority 2: Deliver More Affordable Childcare



Childcare is key political priority area across the Executive parties

At core is establishment of Early Learning & Childcare Strategy

Target is to have strategy in draft form by mid-2025

Parental affordability is key driver

Actions to Date

£25 million initial investment aimed primarily at improving affordability for parents

HOWEVER solely focused on pre-school and Early Years – No provision for SAC made to date

Key Messaging for PfG Response

Inequity of support through EL&C investment to date

Need to prioritise SAC sector – sustainability, affordability, quality, growth

Critical Role and Impact of SAC Sector

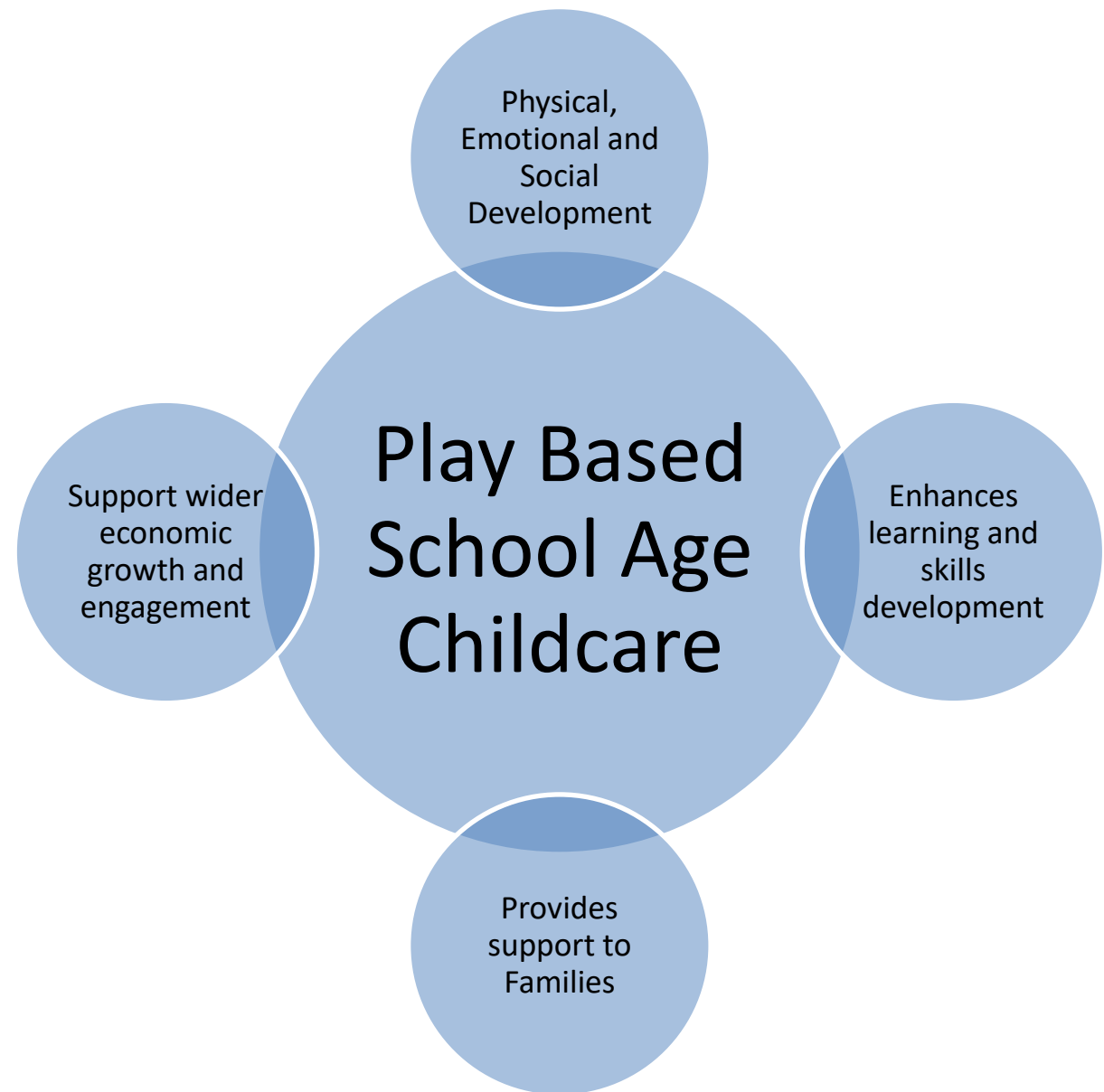


Play-based School-Age Childcare

The value and benefits of play-based School-Age Childcare within the Early Learning and Childcare Strategy

The banner features a purple header with the Playboard Northern Ireland logo and the title 'Play-based School-Age Childcare'. Below the header is a photograph of two children, a girl and a boy, playing in a sandpit. The girl is wearing a colorful patterned dress and the boy is wearing a dark blue jacket and boots. They are both focused on their play with various toys in the sand. The background shows a grassy area with a wooden fence and some plants.

(Link to Document in Chat)



Key Challenges for SAC Providers

Sustainability
Concerns

Parents
opting for
unregulated
childcare due
to cost

Schools
offering low
cost
alternative
(not under
minimum
standards)

Increasing
demand for
SEN places

Recruitment
and retention
of staff

Inequity of
support to
date

Commitment to EL&C Strategy and £25 million investment is welcomed HOWEVER:

- Parents/Carers of children in SAC excluded from affordability support (15% contribution to fees)
- Business Support Scheme (£2 million) not accessible placing settings at risk
- SAC further excluded from additional support of £100 per child under Non-Consolidated Stabilisation Fund (targeted at Pre-Schools)



Priority 5: Better Support for C&YP with Special Educational Needs



The Issue

- Almost one in five children need extra support with their education.
- The current system is struggling to keep up with demand.

Proposed Action

- The Executive is overhauling how it supports children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) to ensure they receive the best possible help.
- **Right Support:** Improving SEN plans and streamlining access to support for schools and families.
- **Right People:** Funding Learning Support Coordinators in every school and providing training that benefits all teachers.
- **Right Time:** Developing an early intervention programme, with a focus on speech and language development from a young age.
- **Right Place:** Ensuring adequate SEN provision and offering respite support where needed



Priority 5: Better Support for C&YP with Special Educational Needs



Key Messaging for PfG Response

SAC Sector has seen growth in demand for SEN support and needs assistance to meet growing demand from parents looking to remain economically active

Significant challenges to meeting level of need including recruitment of skilled staff, resourcing for 1-to-1 support, need for capital adaptations

Need for enhanced sharing of resources e.g. EA funded transport unable to drop-off at SAC settings

Explore feasibility of classroom assistants who work with children on a 1:1 basis in schools extending hours to work in SAC to provide continuity.

Beyond Education and SAC – lack of inclusive capital fixed play provision across NI (Expansion of ADAPT Framework developed by PlayBoard & Mae Murray Foundation)

Broader Priorities

Acknowledgement & recognition of the Central role of SAC within the EL&C Strategy

Full incorporation of the UN Convention on Rights of the Child in NI Law (as per Scotland)

Development of a resourced Play Strategy for NI to drive fulfillment of Article 31 (the Right to Play)

Review and updating of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement to incorporate greater recognition for Play

Establishment of a Play Sufficiency approach in line with developments in Wales and Scotland

Need for focused prioritisation of early intervention for improvement of mental health and wellbeing





Discussion

Draft Programme for Government 2024 – 2027 Consultation 'Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most'

Consultation Open 9th September – 4th November 2024



Link to survey is on the website

Takes 15 minutes to complete

Allows you to feedback on priorities

Space to tell us your priorities

Please tell your friends

<https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/teo/pfg-2024/>



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Draft impact assessments for equality, rural needs and children's rights have been prepared alongside the draft Programme (Deadline of 2nd December)

Contact Details



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