

Fife Play Practice Development Team

Annual Service Report 2024-25 & Workstream Priorities 2025-26





Fife Play Practice Development Team

The Play Practice Development Team is based within the Early Years Team, Education Directorate. Established in 2012, our primary focus is to support play development across Fife to improve children's outcomes through play. This recognises the role play has in child development and in the development of physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Scotland's National Play Strategy (2013) acknowledges that children's play is crucial to Scotland's wellbeing and that play is an essential part of a happy, healthy childhood and fundamental to children and young people's quality of life.

Contributing to this by supporting play development across Fife, we promote and develop play opportunities based on Playwork practice that is focussed on free play, outdoor play, and the play process, underpinned by the Playwork Principles and the child's right to play, enshrined in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child.

Fife Play Practice Development Team web page:
[Fife Play Practice Development Team | Fife Council](#)

Vision

To enhance children's health & wellbeing and quality of life through play

Values

- Valuing child-led free play
- Inspiring outdoor play in nature
- Belief in and promotion of the Playwork Principles
- Promoting rights-based practice
- Providing nurturing and inclusive play
- Supporting and appreciating families
- Imparting knowledge and developing skills

Aims

- Promoting high quality care, play and learning opportunities to children and families in Fife through joint working and creative collaboration across public, voluntary, and independent sectors
- Promoting and supporting good practice, training, and development opportunities by empowering others, increasing knowledge, and understanding, to embed a play ethos throughout settings
- Creating high quality play experiences and stimulating environments for children, that are fun, free, and flexible, where children are valued as individuals, respected and in which they are involved
- Raising the profile and celebrating the value of play through engaging with the public and families, increasing knowledge and understanding around play throughout Fife
- Providing high quality information services to families in relation to Early Learning and Childcare, play and learning opportunities, including news, events, and information led by the needs of children, their families, and carers throughout Fife, utilising social and digital media platforms

Play Practice Development Team Workstream Overview

Free Range Project

The Free Range Project is a targeted, referral based outdoor play project based at Falkland Estate. The aim of the project is to improve children's quality of life through outdoor play. It is an entirely outdoor free play experience for children aged 4-10 years and aims to increase children's confidence and resilience by providing challenge and adventurous play for vulnerable children from identified areas of Fife during school holiday periods. Over 1800 children have attended the project since 2012.

For more information about the Free Range Project:

Link: [Free Range Project | Fife Council](#)

Promoting and Celebrating Play

50 Things to do before you're 5

50 Things to do before you're 5 in Fife is a local offer featuring a menu of 50 exciting activities for families in Fife with young children, giving them great suggestions for how to have fun and learn at the same time, which will support the improvement of children's development, skills, and knowledge. All activities are presented and packaged through a website and mobile app:

Link: [50 Things to do before you're 5 | Fife](#)

Playday Roadshow Week

Playday is a national campaign that celebrates the child's right to play across the UK each year. Fife's National Play Day event has been celebrated in various parks across Fife since 2013. We celebrate Fife's National Playday with a roadshow week in partnership with other Fife Council teams and external partners.

Link: [Promoting & Celebrating Play | Fife Council](#)

Fife Play Resource Facebook Page

We raise awareness and promote the value and benefits of play by engaging with practitioners and organisations through our Facebook page Fife Play Resource, sharing good practice and highlighting playful ideas for the wider play sector.

Fife Play Resource Facebook page:

Link: [Fife Play Resource | Facebook](#)

Play in the Community

Play Ranger Sessions take place after school and holiday periods in a local park or greenspace and are free play sessions for children of all ages and their families. This supports communities' understanding of the importance of play for children's wellbeing and supporting family bonds.

Link: [Play in the Community | Fife Council](#)

Play Training & Development Support

The Play Practice Development Team offer training and play development support to nurseries, schools, out of school clubs and community groups and the wider play sector to enrich learning experiences, support creativity and active learning based on free play and outdoor play. Examples of training courses; Nature Kindergarten, Inspiring Outdoor Play, and Loose Parts Play and Fire Training. Play development support is available on request.

Link: [Training & Development Support | Fife Council](#)

Link: [Fife Council Early Years | Training Sway](#)

Fife Families

Fife Families Information Service is a free and impartial service providing online information on a full range of services led by the needs of children, their families, and carers. We provide news, events and information for parents, families, and children throughout Fife. The 50 things to do Fife website and App is promoted via the Fife Families Facebook and Twitter pages.

Fife Families Information Service Facebook page:

Link: [Fife Families Information Service | Facebook](#)

Fife Families Information Service Twitter page:

Link: [Fife families Information Service \(@FifeFamilies\) | Twitter](#)



Free Range Project

Work Undertaken

- Delivered 7 weeks with children attending from all 7 committee areas in Fife
- Summer 2024 – Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline, Cowdenbeath, Glenrothes and Levenmouth
- October 2024 - North East Fife
- Easter 2025 – South West Fife



October 2024

- Redesigned Free Range Children's Booklet
- Free Range referral information on Early Learning in Fife website

Impact

Referrals – 140

- Education – **91**
- Social Work – **29**
- Other – **8**

Places allocated – 128

- Boys – **90**
- Girls – **38**
- Pre-school – **29**
- Age 5-8 – **79**
- Age 9-10 – **20**

Overall attendance rate **90%**

Parent/Carer Questionnaire:

45% completed the questionnaire

Child experience – Excellent **92%** Very Good **6%** Good **2%**

Parent/Carer feedback on what the children gained:

Developed new friendships with other children, having fun and developing new skills by taking part in new outdoor play activities and experiences.

Referrer Questionnaire:

27% completed the questionnaire

Child experience – Excellent **93%** Very Good **7%**

Child outcomes met – Excellent **80%** Very good **20%**

Referrer Feedback on what the child gained:

Developed positive relationships and social skills, engaged in fun outdoor play experiences and developed skills.

Aid children's transition from nursery and school settings to holiday provision

Link: [Free Range Children's Booklet](#)

Link: [Free Range Project](#)

What the children said...

Summer 2024



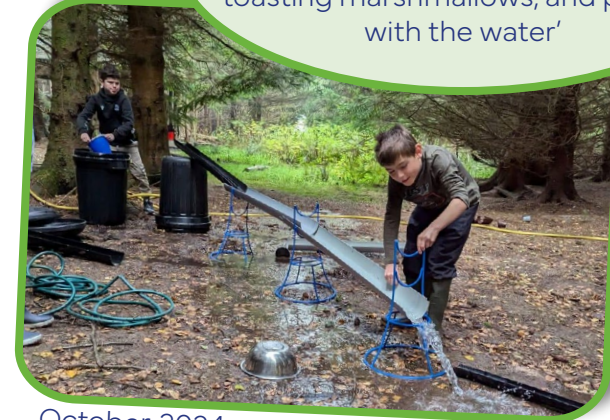
'My smore was dynamite and I have made brand new friends'

Summer 2024



'I am having the best day and made new friends. I look forward to coming each day'

'I'm feeling sad because I don't want it to end, wish I could stay longer each day as I don't like leaving, I have loved toasting marshmallows, and playing with the water'



October 2024

'My favourite things to do have been making fires, eating smores, building dens, mushroom hunting and everything'



Summer 2024

Summer 2024



'My favourite things are building dens, playing with the mud kitchen, playing games with people and helping people up when they fall'

Easter 2025



'I have met new people and have new friends'

What the parent/carers said...

'I just want to say how grateful I am that my child was able to attend this amazing project and she loved every minute of it. Thankyou for providing such a great experience'

'We thought it was all awesome such a fantastic opportunity for our son. It was amazing to have the pick up and drop off which our son also loved. It was above and beyond'

'Both children had a fantastic time. They absolutely loved learning new things, meeting new people and having responsibility they haven't had before to do new tasks and discover things about nature they didn't know. I am so grateful they had the chance to attend and wouldn't hesitate to recommend to everyone'

'He loved his time at free range. He always struggled when I leave him at nursery but other than the first day he happily got on the bus to begin another day of adventures. I think he enjoyed the freedom to explore and also do new things'

'Thank you so much for the experience. Things have been very challenging at home and the free range project offered opportunity for everyone to have some breathing space and respite from the stresses'

'My child gained new friendships, increased confidence and social skills. She has never been happier coming home and being so excited to tell us about every little part of her day. Thankyou for giving her such an amazing experience and we really hope that experiences like this continue to allow not just our child but other children the chance to explore such wonderful things the Free Range Project offers'

'My son had the best time - what an amazing and well organised experience for the children. Thank you all so much'

'The private Facebook page was brilliant as our son is not able to fully explain things so great for us to see the activities that served as a great prompt to ask our son questions about his day and get feedback from him. Thank you to everyone involved for giving our son the opportunity to have this great experience and for looking after him so well'

What the referrers said...



Easter 2025

'All the children raved about their experiences and really enjoyed this. All children were asking when they could come again'

'Both children referred in have experienced and continue to experience difficulties within home environments and also with additional support needs. Consistency, routine and structure is something that is essential to their wellbeing and the Free Range Project was able to provide this and so much more for both them and their families. They have thoroughly enjoyed their time there, so much that I think they would happily come along full time!'

October 2024



Summer 2024



'Both children really enjoyed being part of the Free Range Project. They had an opportunity to meet new friends and play with them. They learnt a lot of various skills and gained a lot of confidence. They loved the experience.'

'Gained an experience to attend an outdoor play experience. For the children that attended we believe this gave them the opportunity to thrive in a safe, nurturing and natural learning environment. Relationships were built with peers and adults too. It provided a fun opportunities for the children to play outdoors'

Summer 2024



'Not only did they have the chance to experience activities/sessions they otherwise wouldn't, they were also able to develop important skills in this setting too. I also think this was of huge help to parents as it took the pressure of summer holidays away from them'



Summer 2024

Promoting & Celebrating Play

National Playday Roadshow Week



Work Undertaken

- National Playday Roadshow Week took place in various destination parks across Fife between 5th August - 9th August at Lochore Meadows, Pittencrieff Park, Letham Glen, Beveridge Park and Riverside Park
- Wide range of partners involved included Active Fife, Fife Active Schools, Scottish Government's PlayTalkRead bus, Smart Play Network, Greener Kirkcaldy, Early Years, Play Practice Development Team and Fife Council Out Of School Clubs
- Event shared via Fife Families Facebook and Twitter pages



Impact

Playday 2024

Great attendance and family involvement in activities at each park approximately 2000 people attended over the week.

Event Evaluation

Positive feedback received, children and families had lots of fun, enjoyed the wide range and variety of free activities and ideas for play for all ages and events were well organised.

Positive feedback received from partners

Event rating - **91** responses, Excellent **90%** Very Good **10%**

National Playday Roadshow 2024

Fife Families FB page

Increased by **209** new followers

70,423 Facebook page reach on Fife Families

Fife Families Twitter reach **3,311**

National Playday Roadshow Week 2024

Letham Glen



'Brilliant, very well organised. Kids (4 of them) loved it'

'Amazing opportunity to get outside and moving, meet up with friends and family, bond with the kids. Free too – amazing!'

Pittencrieff Park



'Great way to show families how to do cheap/easy ways to play with the kids. Fabulous ideas'

Riverside Park



Beveridge Park



'Well organised, plenty of activities for the kids. Had fun in the Play Talk Read bus'

Lochore Meadows



'Lots of activities for all ages building a variety of skills through play'

Promoting & Celebrating Play

Fife Play Resource

Work Undertaken

- Fife Play Resource social media page – increase in promotion of play related information for the wider play sector
- Used Canva to enhance visuals and online content to promote play practice development examples on social media

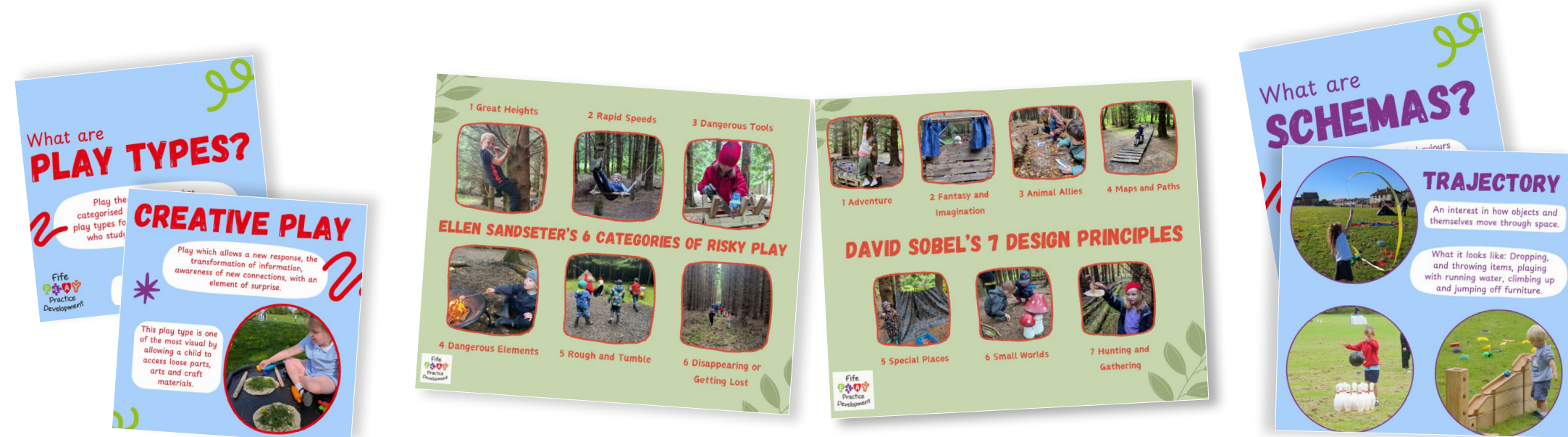
Impact

Fife Play Resource Facebook Page

June 24 - May 25

Facebook page reach - **126,508**

New followers - **253**



Promoting & Celebrating Play

50 Things to do before you're 5 - Data



Work Undertaken

- Sharing of monthly Fife google analytics report by 50 Things national team.
- Increased range of partners promoting the website and app across their areas of work.

Impact

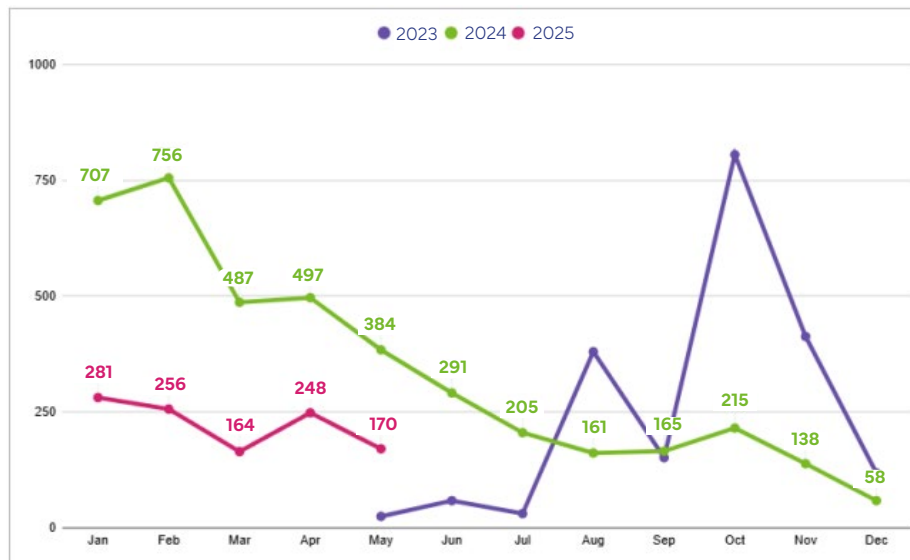
App downloads increased by **536 (27%)**

Total website hits increased by **2,061 (28%)**

Total unique website hits have increased by **1,739 (27%)**

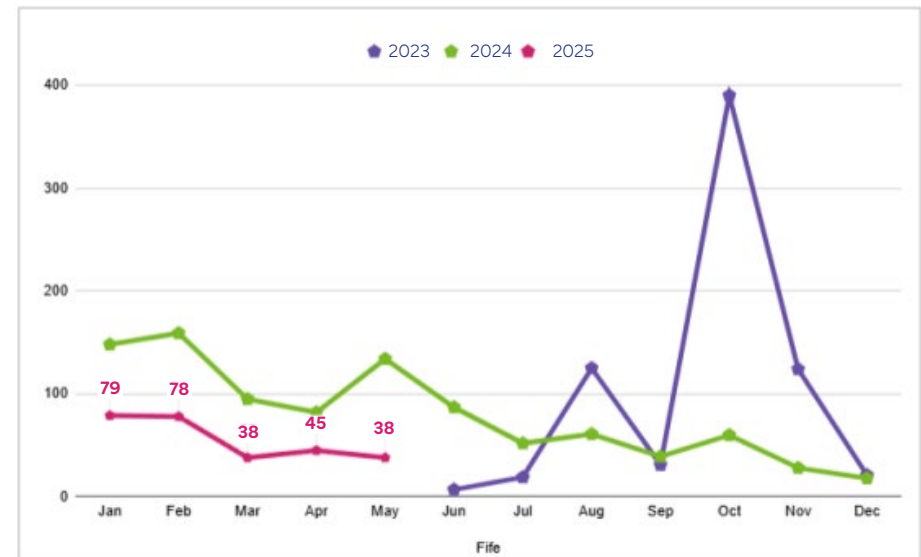
Yearly Website Hits Overview

Total Web Hits – **7,339**
Unique Web Hits – **6,374**



Yearly App Downloads Overview

Partner Joined	Under 5 Population	Total Unique Devices	Unique devices as a % of Under 5 population
June 2023	17,873	1,958	10.96



Average monthly downloads in 2023 – **102**, 2024 – **118**, 2025 – **56**

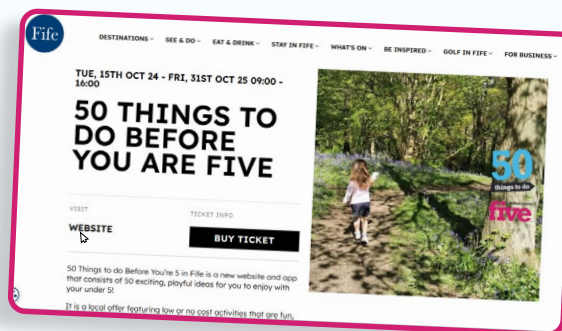
50 Things to do before you're 5

50 Things to do before you're 5 – Partnership Working



Work Undertaken

- Multi-agency steering group meetings take place termly – Active Fife, Community Use, Active Schools, OnFife Libraries & Museums, Early Years, Health Visiting, NHS Fife Health promotion to promote and raise awareness of the App & website and identify partnership working opportunities



Impact

Family Support Service staff development day, raising awareness of 50 Things with **60** practitioners, for use with families

50 Things information added to the Fife Tourism Welcome to Fife Website

Link: [Welcome to Fife - 50 Things to do Before You're 5](#)

50 Things QR code added to NHS Fife Health and Social Care Partnership Family Events Calendar Flyers in Dunfermline, Levenmouth and Glenrothes areas

ELC Poster drop – 6000 children received a 50 Things poster, Improving accessibility for families without digital devices

NHS Fife Speech and Language – Signalong Resources and Facebook page added to 50 Things activities

50 Things added to Scotland's Outdoor Learning Directory
Link: [Outdoor Learning Directory - 50 Things to do Before You're 5](#)

Developed a 50 Things Resource Box and Activity Cards for use in Community Use venue at Dunfermline Learning Campus

50 Things information flyer given out by Health Visitors for families with new babies in Fife

50 Things promotion in the Early Years Voice newsletters for the ELC sector in Fife

50 Things to do before you're 5

50 Things to do before you're 5 - Events and Wider Promotion



Work Undertaken

Raised awareness and promoted the website and App at key events and across a wide range of community groups and organisations within Fife:

- National Playday Roadshow Week 2024
- Scottish Childminding Association's Childminding Week 2025, Teddybears Picnic at Pittencrieff Park, Dunfermline
- Promoting 50 Things in the community for families
- Fife Walking Festival, Lochore Meadows
- The Big Lunch, Lochore Meadows

Impact

Promoting 50 Things to do Before You're 5 in parks across Fife

32 childminders and **73** children attended the Teddybear's Picnic event

Delivered **5** Family Fun sessions:

- Methilhaven Nursery's 50 Things week - October 24
- Parkgate Community Centre - February 25
- Collydean Community Centre - March 25
- Spring at the Lomond Centre - April 25
- Ladybird Family Nurture Centre - April 25

Received positive feedback and engagement

88 adults and **110** children attended and took part in 50 Things activities

39 children and **22** adults attended and took part in 50 Things activities

Networking opportunities and links developed to further promote 50 Things across Fife

Events & Wider Promotion



'Great chance to meet other parents and kids, let my son run about and interact with different ways of playing that he hasn't had before'

'I didn't know there was so many cheap or free things on in the area until I had seen the App'



Fife Walking Festival 2025, Lochore Meadows



'50 Things to do before you're 5 is an excellent initiative that encourages quality family time indoors and outdoors with fun, low/no cost activities. A big thank you to all involved in this exciting and innovative project'

Cllr. Darren Watt



Fife Walking Festival 2025

'Well set up with perfect activities for everyone. We all loved the Teddy Bear's Picnic'

SCMA Teddybear's Picnic, Dunfermline 2025



'Great to have a childminder specific event to bring us all together, thanks for organising'

National Playday Roadshow 2024



'Messy play & the bear hunt was really good. The baby tent was really good for my 10 month old'

50 Things to do before you're 5

50 Things to do before you're 5 - Further Developments



Work Undertaken

- Developed Play Bites video series



- Fife 50 Things Resources page added to the Fife website

- 50 Things National Team app update 2025

Impact

8 videos created to highlight simple activity ideas for parents/ carers to do with their children that compliment the 50 Things to do Before You're 5 initiative

Play Bite Video views on Facebook - **4,218** Video views, **5,334** post reach

Play Bites Video views on YouTube - **114** Video views

Link: [Play Bites Video Playlist](#)

Fife's printable resources added to Fife Website

Link: [50 Things to do Before You're 5 Fife Resources](#)

Focused on making the app more user friendly with more interactive features

Total app downloads **1,958**

Dunfermline: 273 - **14%**

Kirkcaldy: 260 - **13%**

South West Fife: 213 - **11%**

North East Fife: 182 - **9%**

Cowdenbeath: 160 - **8%**

Glenrothes: 136 - **7%**

Levenmouth: 134 - **7%**

Postcodes outwith Fife: 68 - **3%**

Undisclosed postcodes: 532 - **27%**



50 Things to do before you're 5

50 Things to do before you're 5 - Social Media Promotion



Work Undertaken

- Facebook Promotion
Fife Families Information Service

Fife Play Resource
- Early Learning in Fife Facebook Group
- Twitter Promotion

Impact

Daily posts

52,200 Reach, **456** Reactions, **17** Comments, **73** Shares

22,568 Reach, **371** Reactions, **20** Comments, **14** Shares

50 Things Friday Posts

22,852 Reach, **57** Reactions, **2** Comments, **1,151** Photo/Video Previews

Daily posts

7,078 Impressions, **99** Likes, **21** Comments, **40** Retweets



Play Training & Development Support

Training

Work Undertaken

- Delivered a variety of outdoor play based training courses



Balwearie High School, Kirkcaldy

- Loose parts Development session with childcare students at Balwearie High School, Kirkcaldy

Impact

Nature Kindergarten:

4 courses delivered
76 attendees including
22 apprentices

Improved Confidence

Excellent **88%**, Very good **12%**

Developed skills & knowledge

Excellent **93%**, Very good **7%**

Introduction to Fire:

3 courses delivered,
34 attendees

Improved confidence

Excellent **100%**

Developed skills & knowledge

Excellent **100%**

Inspiring Outdoor Play:

1 courses delivered
15 attendees

Improved confidence

Excellent **100%**

Developed skills & knowledge

Excellent **100%**

35 students took part in **S3, S5/6**, in experiential learning to develop an understanding of the value of loose parts play.

Training Feedback

'I feel that I am more confident in all areas relating to the nature kindergarten. I now feel that I would be able to take the lead in a small group situation to further develop the children's interests and knowledge'

Nature Kindergarten Training



'It was an absolutely amazing day! From the moment we arrived I felt at ease with the ladies delivering the course, it was a day that was delivered in a relaxed manner and provided plenty opportunities for discussion'

Nature Kindergarten Training



'I enjoyed being part of the activities and finding out though experiencing the activities myself. I now realise more now how it benefits the children and their wellbeing'

Nature Kindergarten Training



'I found it most useful seeing how forest and beach kindergarten approach naturally supports holistic development through nature based activities'

Nature Kindergarten Training

Training Feedback

'This is
my best day ever
at school'

**Loose Parts Workshop,
Balwearie High School**



'Thanks so much
to you and your team for
coming in today and allowing our
kids to take part in play activities. They
had an absolute ball, really appreciate your
team's enthusiasm and patience'

**Loose Parts Workshop,
Balwearie High School**

'Training experience
was 10/10 loved being outdoors
and active learning. Lots of good ideas
given to provide the children with even better
play opportunities and will look to developing our
loose parts outdoors'

Inspiring Outdoor Play Training



'The course was
very good and being able to
try out and create different outdoor
play types, working with staff from other
settings in a team was also good'

Inspiring Outdoor Play Training



'I really enjoyed
it and am grateful to have
the kelly kettle training also, I have
the confidence to offer our children more
opportunities'

Introduction to Fire Training



Play in the Community

Work Undertaken

- Play sessions took place in the following areas:

Valley Gardens, Kirkcaldy - September 24 to May 25

Caskieberran, Glenrothes - September 24 - May 25

Halbeath, Dunfermline - September 24 - February 25

Toll Park, Buckhaven - May 25

Impact

Increased Play Ranger Programme areas and numbers of people attending

A total of **1539** people attended over **49** Play Ranger Sessions

Valley Gardens, Kirkcaldy

426 attended

19 sessions delivered

70 children aged 0-4

232 children aged 5-12

8 children aged 13+

118 adults

Caskieberran, Glenrothes

659 attended

18 sessions delivered

53 children aged 0-4

412 children aged 5-12

0 children aged 13+

194 adults

Toll Park, Buckhaven

354 attended

5 sessions delivered

46 children aged 0-4

191 children aged 5-12

0 children aged 13+

112 adults

Halbeath, Dunfermline

100 attended

6 sessions delivered

49 children aged 0-4

18 children aged 5-12

0 children aged 13+

27 adults



What the children have said...

Caskieberran, Glenrothes



'I like that you can have a place with your friends and be safe.'

Buckhaven, Levenmouth



'This is fun, I don't want to go home yet!'

Valley Gardens, Kirkcaldy



'It's a chance to make new friends and meet new people.'

Halbeath, Dunfermline



'This is the best after school place ever!'

Valley Gardens, Kirkcaldy



'I am having so much fun, it's my first time doing this. I don't usually do things like this and join in with everyone.'

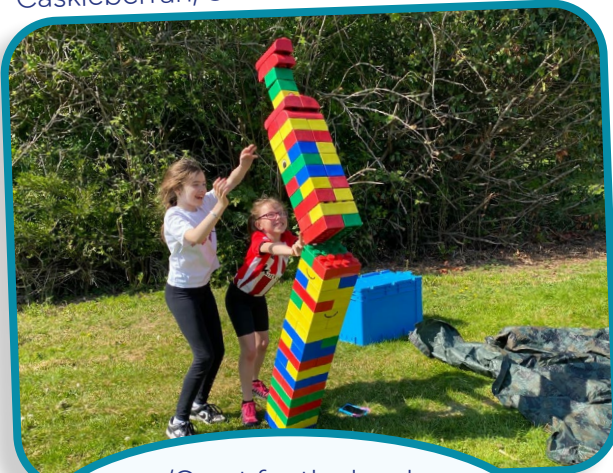
Caskieberran, Glenrothes



'I like everything about it and it's better to get out.'

What parents/carers have said...

Caskieberran, Glenrothes



'Great for the local community, kids and parents love it.'

Valley Gardens, Kirkcaldy



'Excellent play resources and fantastic, helpful staff. Both my children really enjoy the sessions'

'Great opportunity to get outdoors with the kids! Play Rangers are fab!'



Buckhaven, Levenmouth

Valley Gardens, Kirkcaldy



'Great that there is lots of fun things to do for the kids as there isn't a lot for them to do in this area'

Buckhaven, Levenmouth



'Fantastic! The kids love it and look forward to coming, Play Rangers are brilliant.'

'I think it's outstanding, the effort, something for everyone and it's free!'



Caskieberran, Glenrothes

Family Information Service



Work Undertaken

- Improved monitoring of Facebook and Twitter pages to increase followers and reach through evaluating how users engage with each page

Impact

Fife Families Facebook Page

Facebook page reach **391,160**
Increased new followers by **319**

Fife families Twitter:

Reach **41,056**
Followers **1,437**, decreased by **32**

Workstream Priorities 2024-25

Things we will do to improve

How we will measure it

Free Range Project

- Improve and increase referrer feedback following receipt of child reports
- Review and update Free Range Staff Booklet

- Number of completed questionnaires
- Staff feedback

Promoting and Celebrating Play

- Spread 50 Things to do with partners in libraries, museums and galleries across Fife
- Create a 50 Things to do Before You're 5 Fife Celebration Week Campaign on Social Media, to raise awareness and increase wider promotion

- Attendance no's
- No. of sessions and venues
- Engagement no's/views on social media

Play in the Community

- Develop feedback format
- Improve and increase parent/carers and child feedback on Play Ranger Sessions

- Number of responses
- Child feedback
- Parent/Carer feedback

Things we will do to improve

How we will measure it

Play Training & Development Support

- Development of Loose Parts Resource

- Practitioner feedback



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