



Doc 3.3 GUIDANCE Play charter

What is a play charter?

The UN convention on the Rights of the Child Article 31 makes it a legal obligation for state parties to enact the UN convention.

A charter is your promise to children about how you will meet your legal and moral obligations to respect their rights.

1. Did you know that play is a human right for children? What should adults do to let children know this?

All children and young people have the right to play and need to play; children should be free to choose what they do – lively or relaxed, noisy or quiet – with the chance to stretch and challenge themselves, take risks and enjoy freedom.

The right to play is enshrined in Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

2. Do you have enough time for your play?

Every child needs time and space to play.

All children and young people – disabled and non-disabled, whatever their age, culture, ethnicity or social and economic background – need time and space to play freely and confidently with their peers, free of charge, indoors and outdoors, in places where they feel safe.

3. Can you enjoy lots of different kinds of play? Can you get dirty, feel challenged, be supported or be independent?

Play provision should actively include the widest range of children and seek to engage with those from minority groups. Adults should let children play. Parents, carers and other adults can support children and young peoples' play by: respecting the value and importance of all types of play; playing with their children; and creating opportunities and time for children to play independently with their friends, inside and outside the home.

4. How much freedom do you feel you have? Can you move around lots of spaces in your play? Can you be in nature in your play?

Children should be able to play freely in their local areas. Children have the same right to use and enjoy public space as others. Local streets, estates, green spaces, parks and town centres should be accessible for children and young people to move around in safety and offer places where they can play freely, experience nature, explore their environment and be with their friends.

5. Do adults at playtimes help you make your play as interesting and fun as they can?

Children value and benefit from staffed play provision. Children should have access to a choice of staffed facilities where children's play rights and needs are the first priority, such as adventure playgrounds, play centres, holiday play schemes, after school play clubs, breakfast play clubs, toy libraries, play buses and play ranger services. Children's play is enriched by skilled playworkers. Qualified, skilled playworkers are trained to put children's play needs at the centre of their work in a variety of settings, enhancing the range and quality of play experiences for all children. They are the best people to run staffed play provision for school-aged children. The role of the playworker is as important as that of any skilled professional working with children and should be respected and rewarded accordingly.



6. What would make the school grounds a better place to play?

Children need time and space to play at school. The school day should allow time for children to relax and play freely with their friends. Young children learn best through play and, as they get older, play supports and enriches their learning. Children learn best if teaching is creative and enjoyable. In school, time and space for play and outdoor learning is as important as formal teaching. School grounds should be good places to play.

7. Do you get enough support to have a really good playtime?

Children sometimes need extra support to enjoy their right to play. Children and young people living away from home or visiting unfamiliar or controlled environments such as hospital, prison, immigration centres, and residential homes and schools, sometimes experience fear, anxiety and discomfort. For these children it is especially important to ensure they have good play opportunities, facilitated by trained staff and volunteers.

Our OPAL charter

We have the right to play and enjoy OPAL.

We have the responsibility to make sure everyone enjoys playtime by making sure:

- ✓ everyone chooses what to play
- ✓ we share equipment fairly and kindly
- ✓ we take care of the equipment
- ✓ we treat each other how we like to be treated
- ✓ we keep everybody safe
- ✓ we are kind to others
- ✓ we help people if they need us
- ✓ we allow people to join in games
- ✓ we ask grownups if we need help to sort out our problems
- ✓ we listen to one and another
- ✓ we play safely.

Signed: