Supporting playwork staff in Wales to improve their literacy and numeracy
Working together collaboratively, we can play a vital role in helping companies focus on the future and make sure their staff are highly skilled and flexibly skilled, so they’re better placed to take advantage of opportunities.’

John Griffiths AM, Deputy Minister for Skills, Welsh Assembly Government
The Alliance of Sector Skills Councils action plan for Wales launch
11th February 2009
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Introduction

SkillsActive, in partnership with Basic Skills Cymru and Play Wales, has produced this toolkit, which is funded through the Welsh Assembly Government’s Basic Skills Employer Pledge Grants Programme. The toolkit is aimed at employers in the playwork sector, to encourage them to think about how they can support their staff to develop their basic skills within the workplace.

Practical literacy and numeracy skills are used in everyday life – at work, home and for study – and there are government initiatives supporting adults to brush up their literacy and numeracy skills across the UK. Within Wales, literacy, language and numeracy are referred to as basic skills, and ‘Words Talk – Number Count’ is the name of the Welsh Assembly Government’s National Basic Skills Strategy.

Many people would benefit from brushing up their literacy and numeracy skills. About 440,000 working age adults in Wales do not have Level 1 literacy skills and nearly a million do not have Level 1 numeracy skills. Most of these adults have many skills at Level 1 (and above), but they have skills gaps that reduce the overall level achieved. Nearly 50% of adults in Wales needing additional literacy and numeracy skills are in the workforce.

When staff are given the opportunity to develop their literacy and numeracy skills, there are many benefits, not only for them as individuals but for employers as well. These include:

- meeting health and safety requirements
- improvement in the quality of services
- increase in, and quicker achievement of, other qualifications such as National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)
- reduced absenteeism
- reduced staff turnover
- improved relationships with children, young people, their parents and carers
- reduced errors
- increased productivity.

Other positive outcomes of staff improving their skills include:

- a confident, flexible and skilled workforce, which is responsive to change
- an opportunity to modernise and consolidate skills and acquire new qualifications
- employees who have the confidence to access other training and promotion opportunities within the workplace.

‘Basic skills are essential for social inclusion and the platform for further learning. People who lack these skills are at serious risk of being marginalised in a changing economy.

‘Arguably, the greatest challenge is to address the basic skills deficit: basic skills in Wales are poorer than in any English region.’

Welsh Assembly Government, Skills That Work for Wales, 2008
‘Adult literacy, language and numeracy (LLN) is a key area of SkillsActive’s work. Twenty-nine per cent of employees in our sector are below NVQ Level 2 or equivalent.’

Stephen Studd
Chief Executive, SkillsActive

Who benefits?

Everyone benefits from improving their skills, including:

- supervisors and senior workers who might have been promoted and need to brush up literacy and numeracy to meet the requirements of their new role
- staff looking for promotion or career progression
- non-qualified staff who want to have their skills recognised
- qualified staff who want to progress to higher-level qualifications
- assessors and trainers who are supporting colleagues to achieve qualifications
- volunteers who want to progress into paid employment
- managers who might be a bit rusty in particular skills
- existing playwork staff who want to improve their current skills and become better at their jobs
- children, parents and young people with whom the playworkers have contact.

‘Literacy and numeracy underpin virtually all the other skills we need in our daily lives – be that at work, in the family or in leisure and other activities.’

‘Words Talk – Numbers Count’, the Welsh Assembly Government’s strategy to improve literacy and numeracy in Wales, 2005

‘Making learning relevant and fun motivates staff to come along, take part and realise the benefits.’

Elaine Clowes, Chair, SkillsActive

About SkillsActive

SkillsActive is the sector skills council for the active leisure and learning sector. Working in partnership with employers and key stakeholders, SkillsActive leads and supports the industry’s drive to succeed, by ensuring the supply of skills to meet the industry’s needs.

Active leisure and learning is made up of five sub-sectors:

- sport and recreation
- health and fitness
- playwork
- the outdoors
- caravans
The SkillsActive playwork unit works alongside playwork employers, training providers, policy makers and individuals to ensure that playworkers are trained to the highest standards, and that their training is recognised across the industry.

As well as supporting the development of vocational skills, SkillsActive recognises and promotes the importance of developing underpinning skills such as literacy, language and numeracy to support entry to, and career progression within, the sector.

The playwork sector comprises people who work/volunteer with children and young people in their out-of-school hours, providing environments for play and facilitating play opportunities. They might work in adventure playgrounds, play centres, out-of-school clubs or holiday play schemes, and may be employed by/volunteer within a local authority or the private or voluntary sectors.

Examples of SkillsActive’s work with the playwork sector include the creation of the UK’s first playwork strategy, as well as the development of the first interactive CD-ROM toolkit to help employers identify the skills and training gaps within their organisation. SkillsActive also launched the ActivePassport™ for playwork – a unique web-based facility for recording skills, training, volunteering and qualifications.

For information on SkillsActive’s work with playwork, go to www.skillsactive.com/playwork.

About Play Wales

Play Wales is the national organisation for children’s play. Play Wales is a charity that provides advice, support and guidance for all those in Wales who have a concern or responsibility for any environment where children and young people might play. It upholds children’s right to play. Freely chosen play is critically important in the healthy development of all children and young people. All children are entitled to quality play provision within their communities and Play Wales works strategically to achieve this goal on their behalf.

Play Wales have been closely involved in drafting the national Play Policy (2002) and in providing recommendations for Play in Wales (2006) the Welsh Assembly Play Policy Implementation Plan.

Within Wales, SkillsActive has established an effective working relationship with Play Wales – the national organisation for children’s play and a charity that provides advice, support and guidance for those in Wales. Both organisations have worked collaboratively to develop the first ever UK-wide strategy for playwork and the underpinning implementation plan for Wales; and are also working in partnership to develop the skills of the workforce through the National Centre for Playwork Education and Training.

‘Basic skills are very important for our workforce as playworkers benefit from developing a range of personal learning and thinking skills that provide success for training, work and life in general. This develops confidence in communication skills and working with others, which in turn provides much needed services to children and young people.’

Jane Hawkshaw
Playwork Wales National Centre Manager
About Basic Skills

Within Wales, basic skills are vital to the economy and culture. The Welsh Assembly Government defines basic skills as ‘the ability to read, write and speak in English and/or Welsh and to use mathematics at a level necessary to function at work and in society in general’. Basic skills cover literacy, language and numeracy up to and including Level 1 of the Adult Literacy and Numeracy Standards.

The Assembly Government's Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS), is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Welsh Assembly Strategy ‘Basic Skills in the Workplace’ and will help to address the basic skills agenda outlined in ‘Skills That Work for Wales’ (a skills and employment strategy and action plan). Considerable progress has already been made in reducing the number of children and young people in school who struggle with basic skills. Standards are rising year on year. Fewer children are moving on to secondary school with poor basic skills and fewer young people are leaving school with poor literacy and/or numeracy skills. However, the Welsh Assembly Government recognises that more needs to be done and low-skilled people in the workforce are one of the priority groups identified in the ‘Basic Skills in the Workplace’ delivery plan.

The aim of the Welsh Assembly Government's Basic Skills Department is to have a significant influence on the development of national, regional and local strategies to improve basic skills in both literacy and numeracy. ‘Basic Skills in the Workplace” aims to ensure that:

- all young children should be prepared for learning when they begin school
- the number of children leaving primary school struggling over reading, writing and the use of number should be further reduced
- fewer young people should leave compulsory education still struggling with basic skills
- the number of adults with poor basic skills should be reduced significantly.

How are Basic Skills delivered?

The Welsh Assembly Government is responsible for the supply and quality of literacy and numeracy training. Training is delivered through further education colleges, a network of adult and community learning providers, work-based learning/private training providers and some other community and voluntary organisations. Every adult and young person aged 16 or above (all age funding available), who enrolls on a literacy or numeracy basic skills course, will have a basic skills assessment. This assessment will identify any literacy, language or numeracy gaps that could hinder achievement of the learner’s qualification or goal. A basic skills course duration is for 36 hours and each learner will achieve an Essential Skills in either numeracy, literacy or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

What training is available?

Once the basic skills assessment has been undertaken and the strengths and gaps analysed, the learner should be provided with the necessary literacy, language or numeracy teaching and learning support. This is the case for adult learners on training programmes such as Skill Build, pre-apprenticeship learning and discrete basic skills courses, and should also apply for foundation modern apprenticeships and modern apprenticeships. It is likely that the names of these programmes will change in the next tendering round. For those not on training programmes such as those above, basic skills courses are available across Wales in community venues as well as colleges. Anyone may access and
join these courses. The teaching can be through the context of sport and recreation or any other interest or aim that the learner has, and the training and resources for these courses are often available in both English and Welsh.

Employer Pledge

The Employer Pledge is an important programme within ‘Basic Skills in the Workplace’. Employers who sign the Pledge acknowledge that some staff need additional skills and commit themselves to support improvements. The pledge covers all employees, including those who are not on training programmes or courses identified above. The Pledge is aimed at all companies and organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors, whatever their size. There is no charge to join the scheme. Employers receive free support and advice from the Welsh Assembly Government. It’s supported by Wales Trade Union Congress (TUC), Confederation of British Industry (CBI) Wales, the Sector Skills Councils (SSCs), Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and other partners.

For an organisation to succeed everyone has to perform well. A company’s reputation, its competitiveness and its future depend on its employees. Signing up to the Employer Pledge highlights a company’s commitment to developing the potential of its employees. For additional information about Employer Pledge, telephone 01792 765 919.

How is basic skills training funded?

Any training is an investment in developing both staff and the organisation, so there will be costs involved. Some of these costs may be covered by public funding. Basic skills training up to and including Level 1 should be free to the learner. Employer Pledge grants are available to help employers with the costs of tackling basic skills in the workplace (see above).

ProAct is a pilot scheme, which was announced at the third Economic Summit on 5 December 2008. The scheme seeks to provide training assistance to businesses that are suffering during the economic downturn. The scheme runs on a selective basis, and will provide financial support for employees to undertake training and, as an innovative new measure, will also provide support towards wage costs while training is underway. The scheme will be flexible and designed to meet the needs of individual businesses. Funding could be available to support training. For more information, telephone 01792 765 858.
Employer Pledge procedure

Company applies for the Employer pledge by completing application form and mailing to the Basic Skills for the Workplace Team, Welsh Assembly Government, Ty’r Llyn, Clos Llyn Cwm, Waterside Business Park, Swansea SA6 8AH.

Pledge certificate mailed direct to the employer.

Employer selects a Learning Provider to work with.

Provider & Employer meet and draw up a 2 year Learning plan and send to Basic Skills for the Workplace Manager. Several drafts may be needed before approval.

Learning plan accepted. Organisation sends signed paper copy to office address above.

Employer begins implementation of basic skills Learning plan.

Basic Skills for the Workplace Manager (BSFWM) visits organisation to monitor progress.

BSFWM representative completes visit report and recommends achievement or postponement.

When criteria met, Employer Pledge Award achieved. Employer Pledge plaque presented to employer.
Developing your staff

There are many literacy and numeracy skills involved in everyday work tasks. Supporting staff to improve their literacy and numeracy will bring benefits to your organisation and to individual staff. Benefits to staff include:

• gaining confidence in their current work roles
• going on to further training and gaining qualifications
• gaining the confidence to change roles or to go for promotion
• getting an up-to-date national qualification
• feeling more confident to try out new things and take on different tasks.

‘I went to nightclass to get my English . . . I had got over the fear of failure – in fact that was probably the most empowering thing I ever did. I stopped being scared of asking stupid questions and realised that by asking them you learn. Basic skills not only help develop literacy and numeracy, it can set you free from the shackles of earlier failings that can hold you back forever.’

Ben Tawil, adult learner and programme leader, Glyndwr University

The Welsh Assembly Government have developed a series of leaflets from the ‘Working in . . .’ series, which describe the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills needed in specific occupations, are available to order from Prolog on 0845 603 1108.
How do basic skills impact on your everyday playwork?

Some of the everyday tasks that playworkers carry out, that include literacy and numeracy skills, are listed below:

- Completing a risk assessment.
- Reading and understanding a health and safety notice or playwork policies.
- Reporting clearly to colleagues.
- Reading, understanding and completing work related documents.
- Exchanging an e-mail with a colleague.
- Designing a play structure.
- Writing a set of instructions for a new employee.
- Checking insurance cover.
- Completing an order for arts and crafts materials.
- Recording observations – judging how much to write and what to include, and keeping to fact, not opinion.
- Proofreading own writing and correct grammar, punctuation and spelling errors.
- Writing a letter to parents and carers.
- Making a poster advertising an event at the play scheme.
- Preparing a budget for an outing or activity.
- Following correct procedures for reporting and recording emergencies.
- Adding and subtracting amounts of cash.
- Understanding the importance of accuracy in number calculations.
- Taking accurate notes from a meeting.
- Checking own wage slip and deductions.
- Recording and calculating time accurately in an appointment book or staff rota.
- Comparing costs and discounts for some new play resources.
- Understanding temperature controls on a fridge and storing food at an appropriate temperature.
- Preparing a funding application.
- Preparing, serving and storing food and drink.
- Putting together a portfolio of evidence for an NVQ or other training.
- Completing an equal opportunities monitoring form.
- Ask sensible questions to clarify situations, e.g. from parents or carers handing over children, from children about their ideas and feelings.
- Speak with a clear and pleasant voice when reading or storytelling to individual children or small groups.
- Use a friendly and positive tone of voice and body language to establish and maintain good relationships, e.g. with children arriving, with parents or carers collecting or leaving their children, with children during their activities, when managing behaviour.

This can be used as a cue checklist for an employer: e.g. which skills would you like your employee to be confident with? For additional ways to use this checklist refer to Appendix 1: ‘Workplace Skills for Life checklists’ from the Move On web site.

Refer to Appendix 4 for sample checklist that can be photocopied.
Playworkers need to use the following literacy and numeracy skills in order to carry out the tasks:

- **Reading and writing**
  - complete forms
  - summarise information from long documents
  - use reference materials
  - write messages and notes
  - use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation

- **Numeracy**
  - estimate and measure weight
  - work out ratio, proportions and percentages
  - use decimals in measuring and money
  - measure and record time using a stopwatch or timing activities

- **Speaking and listening**
  - talk with children, parents, carers and other staff
  - answer the telephone and pass on messages
  - make requests and ask questions to get information
  - clearly express facts, explanations, opinions and descriptions

'It is important that playworkers have good basic skills, and I have had to use them a lot myself as a playworker. For example, reading consent forms, conducting risk assessments, submitting funding bids, assisting with children’s homework and explaining forms to parents who can’t read themselves.'

Mel Kearsley, Play Development Officer, Wrexham

For more information on the playworker job role linked to LLN skills, please see Appendix 2.
Promoting training and getting staff involved

Everyone in the organisation has a part to play in promoting skills development and training opportunities. Ensure that key staff are trained in how to engage others and embed this within the organisation. Once staff are aware of the positive benefits of improving their skills they are more likely to get involved.

As a senior worker I've seen the increase in motivation in staff that have been on the training course.

As a trainer I always emphasise the importance of improving literacy and numeracy alongside playwork training.

As a regional development manager for SkillsActive I encourage and support playwork employers to include literacy and numeracy as part of staff development planning.

As a manager I encourage my staff to get their literacy and numeracy up to scratch and go for promotion. Staff are more willing to try new things because they feel valued. We are all benefiting.

As a mentor I tell other staff about learning opportunities and how they can benefit from training.

As a Wales Union Learning Fund Project Worker I extend basic skills learning opportunities for individuals by training more union learning representatives in basic skills awareness.

As a playworker I brushed up my skills on line and now I feel more confident when I have to deal with tricky situations with parents.
There are many ways to get everyone involved in learning, such as:

- having a ‘Learning at Work’ day where everyone gets involved in fun activities such as quizzes and games
- using posters, scratchcards and fliers to raise awareness (there are lots of free resources available for your organisation to use. See Appendix 3 for examples of awareness-raising materials from the Move On website
- offering taster or introductory sessions, so that staff can have a try and check their skills before joining a course
- union learning representatives playing a vital role in getting staff involved in learning through organised events and informal one-to-one support
- ensuring that staff attending other training courses know that they can brush up literacy and numeracy to help them to be more successful on their courses
- embedding literacy and numeracy into vocational training courses
- putting information in payslips, newsletters and staff pigeon holes
- introducing the idea of refreshing literacy and numeracy skills at a staff meeting
- offering the opportunity to brush up their literacy and numeracy skills at inductions and appraisal meetings.

‘We need to be looking at ways to offer support for staff to gain and develop their basic skills in a sensitive and appropriate manner. I feel that confidence and self-esteem is the biggest benefit to individual members of staff. Any way in which we can nurture and develop this can only lead to a better workforce of playworkers, who have the confidence to put effective basic skills into practice’.

Lisa Williams, Play Team Coordinator,
Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO), Caerphilly

‘Confidence and communication skills are improved, therefore broadening personal horizons, enabling everyone to reach their true potential.’

Carole Keate, Union Learning Rep,
Public and Commercial Services (PCS), Swansea

Training in the workplace: what’s involved?

1  Working in partnership

a)  Within your own organisation

There are people who can help you with workplace training, like managers and supervisors. In a large organisation there might also be a training manager or union learning representative (ULR) who you can speak to.

b)  With training providers

There are a wide range of providers who can help you with training.
- adult and community learning providers
- further education colleges
- learmdirect
• Ufi Cymru
• work-based learning providers

c) Other potential partners
• SkillsActive representatives, the sector skills council for active learning and leisure
• Basic Skills Cymru
• Employer Pledge workplace team
• Wales TUC (if staff are union members)
• Welsh Assembly Government Human Resource Development advisers, through the workforce development programme
• ContinYou Cymru
• Play Wales
• Awarding bodies
• Early years development and childcare partnerships
• Voluntary Organisations
• Wales Council for Voluntary Organisations (WCVA)
• Local Authorities
• Children and Young People’s Partnership

Other workplace learning programmes have found it very helpful to set up a steering group with representatives from these partners. The steering group can help to coordinate planning, delivery and evaluation of the training.

'It’s really important that playwork employers see the benefits to their service of working in partnership, with a whole host of local and national agencies.’

Paul Bonel, Head of Playwork Unit, SkillsActive

The tutor should be aware of basic skills when teaching. It is important to ensure that basic skills support is available for learners. This can happen through help from tutors, employers or peers.

Louisa Addiscott, Play training development officer RCT Play Association

2 The training: where and when?

Staff can take part in training at a time that suits them and the needs of the organisation. Sessions can be at any time and on any day of the week, including weekends. Training could take place in the workplace or off site. Staff could attend training at regular times each week or drop-in workshops could be set up that staff can attend when they choose.

Some employers release staff during work time to attend training. This is not always possible, so some employers pay overtime or pay staff to attend training. In some cases, staff attend training in their own time for part or all of the training course. As this training is an integral part of upskilling the whole workforce and developing individual staff, it’s very important that there is a strong commitment from both the employer and the employee to ensure that the training will be successful.
The National Grid for Learning (NGfL)

The NGfL Cymru is managed by the WJEC (formerly the Welsh Joint Education Committee), on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government, and has a remit to develop its library of interactive resources for teachers and learners at all levels. The library consists of nearly 3,000 high-quality educational resources, which support all key stages of the curriculum, from early years to post-16.

To access the NGfL, visit: www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk.

'I have always felt that it is such a shame to see so many excellent playworkers either struggling with aspects of their work, or held back in their career progression due to a lack of basic skills. It is essential as a profession that we cater for the development of these skills to support retention and progression and give playworkers the self-esteem to undertake their roles with confidence.'

Tillie Mobbs, Policy Officer, Play Wales

3 Training providers

There is a wide range of providers working with employers. It’s a good idea to consider different providers before deciding which ones you want to work with. You could use the checklist for working with providers to help you decide.

a) Checklist for working with providers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Providers that you work with should:</th>
<th>Yes?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>manage the relationship with the employer and staff, from initial contact to evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work with other partner organisations effectively</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use workplace relevant skills checks and initial assessments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plan and deliver a training programme based on the needs of the staff and the organisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>offer flexible training based on the needs of the organisation and the employees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>design, support and participate in an agreed evaluation process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>give guidance on further training and development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>understand and access funding for the training, where available</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>show evidence of quality and experience in this area of work, including holding the Basic Skills Post-16 Quality Mark.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A blank checklist template for your use is included in Appendix 4.

The checklist for working with providers is included as Appendix 5.
‘Playwork employers need staff who can work flexibly and who have effective written and verbal communication skills to be role models for the children and young people that they work with.’

Richard Tobutt, National Manager Wales, SkillsActive

The Post-16 Quality Mark provides a framework for raising standards of English/Welsh language, literacy and numeracy among adults. The Quality Mark focuses on effectiveness, entitlement, development and current provision.

For further information about the Basic Skills Post-16 Quality Mark contact 01792 765 919.

4 Evaluating the training

It is important that all training is monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the participants and the organisation. The evaluation should also provide evidence of impact on the organization and individuals involved.

If you are working with a new training provider or running a new training programme, then it is advisable to run a pilot course. This pilot course should then be reviewed and evaluated before more training is rolled out. Here are some of the success indicators that can be used to evaluate the training:

- Are participants attending training regularly?
- Are you getting feedback from participants that they are enjoying the training and finding it useful?
- Are other staff or clients seeing the benefits of the training, e.g. supervisors and colleagues?
- Is the provider feeding back that the training is going well?

Make sure that time for evaluation of the programme by the participants, the training provider and other staff from the organisation is built into the process from the beginning.

There are some measures that you might want to put in place at the start of the training to help assess impact. These will depend on what you hope to get from the training, but could include:

- reduced levels of absenteeism
- increased levels of staff retention
- improved service user satisfaction
- the willingness of staff to become more flexible and undertake new tasks or roles
- the achievement of other qualifications, such as NVQs, to see if there is an increase or if the time taken to achieve reduces.

‘Playworkers need to have good basic skills in order for them to be able to develop their own learning and take control of their own personal development. It also enables them to enter fully into the children’s play, which often involves numeracy, literacy and problem solving in board games, hopscotch, woodwork, cooking and the complex activities of building a dam or climbing a tree.’

Gill James, Playwork Trainer
‘Individuals develop and learn at different stages and through different learning techniques. Basic skills training contributes to this by ensuring that support is targeted to every individual.’

Sandra Fergusson, Workforce Development Officer, Cardiff County Council
Contact details for getting started

Employers in Wales can get advice from:

- **SkillsActive**  
  Tel. 020 7632 2000  
  [www.skillsactive.com](http://www.skillsactive.com)

- **SkillsActive Wales**  
  Tel. 029 2064 4526  
  [www.skillsactive.com/aroundsuk/wales](http://www.skillsactive.com/aroundsuk/wales)

- **Basic Skills Cymru**  
  Tel. 01792 765 919  
  [employerpledge@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:employerpledge@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

- **Play Wales**  
  Tel. 029 2048 6050  
  [www.playwales.org.uk](http://www.playwales.org.uk)

- **Investors in People**  
  [www.investorsinpeople.co.uk](http://www.investorsinpeople.co.uk)

- **learndirect (England, Wales, Northern Ireland)**  
  Tel. 0800 101901  
  [www.learndirect.co.uk](http://www.learndirect.co.uk)

- **Wales TUC Learning Services**  
  [www.wtuclearn.org.uk](http://www.wtuclearn.org.uk)

- **Employer Pledge Workplace team**  
  Tel. 01792 765 919

- **BBC Skillswise**  
  [www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/)

- **Move On web site**  
  [www.move-on.org.uk](http://www.move-on.org.uk)

- **BBC RAW campaign**  
  Tel. 0800 150950  
  [www.bbc.co.uk/raw](http://www.bbc.co.uk/raw)

- **National Grid for Learning (NGfL)**  
  Tel. 029 2026 5177  
  [www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk](http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk)

- **Careers Wales**  
  Tel. 0800 100900  
  [www.careerswales.com](http://www.careerswales.com)

- **Ufi Cymru**  
  Tel. 029 2049 4540  
  [www.ufi.com](http://www.ufi.com)
Appendix 1: Workplace Skills for Life checklists

Workplace Skills for Life checklists are a simple, adaptable and effective way to demonstrate the relevance of Skills for Life and identify the specific language, literacy and numeracy skills required in a vocational sector, NVQ, specific workplace or job role.

Checklists can be used:

- to explain the range, scope and relevance of Skills for Life – what Skills for Life includes
- as cue questions or prompts for brokers and business development teams to use when talking to an employer about Skills for Life and linking this to business needs
- directly with employers to show the relevance of Skills for Life to their workplace
- for employers to identify the specific skills and tasks to be included in workplace Skills for Life delivery and the performance outcomes they seek from training
- to gain ‘buy in’ and ownership from managers, supervisors and NVQ teams
- as a tool to support the planning of Skills for Life input – between Skills for Life teams and employers or NVQ assessors
- to show employees, vocational learners and NVQ candidates the vocational relevance and benefits of developing Skills for Life, at an induction or taster session for example
- as a vocationally relevant self-assessment tool alongside a generic initial assessment
- to inform an ILP and to assess progress.

The workplace Skills for Life checklists are presented as a mixture of English and maths skills, and in a random order of importance and difficulty. However they could be separated into different subjects and organised according to importance or curriculum level, where that is more appropriate, or more columns added to allow for graded self-assessment, e.g. from ‘very confident’ to ‘not at all confident’ or from ‘used often’ to ‘never used’.

It is intended that the checklists are adapted and contextualised further as they are used, and blank rows are included for each user to identify additional relevant skills. The headings are suggestions only and the content and language can be changed to match the intended audience.

The checklists can be downloaded from the Get On At Work section of the Move On web site (www.move-on.org.uk).
Appendix 2: The playworker job role linked to literacy, language and numeracy skills

This information is based on observation of a playworker.

Speaking and listening

The playworker needed to speak and listen to children, colleagues and parents. While the type of information exchanged tended to be straightforward, like details about the children and the day’s activities, there were times when the playworker had to discuss detailed information relating to fact, explanations, instructions, accounts and descriptions. Sometimes the playworker had to handle delicate situations and to discuss concerns about children with parents.

Reading

The playworker was required to read policies and regulations in the operating plan, such as the confidentiality and data protection policy, the equality and diversity policy and the child protection policy. Often the playworker had to summarise information from these policies to translate them into action. The policies include the use of extended sentences and paragraphs, a range of punctuation and technical vocabulary.

Writing

The playworker was required to write a range of documents, including daily activity sheets, accident forms, incident forms and risk assessments. The writing may be up to an A4 page in length and include formal and informal language. An incident or accident report may be read by parents or by people from outside the organisation, such as local government officers and inspectors. Use of accurate spelling and punctuation, and the inclusion of words such as assessment, safeguarding and accident are essential.

Numeracy

The playworker was required to count the children and calculate staff / child ratios. The playworker also bought ingredients for cooking meals and had to multiply and divide using simple fractions and decimals.
## Appendix 3: Examples of engagement materials

### Maths Takeaway

**This month’s special**

**Playing with maths**

“We don’t stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing.”

George Bernard Shaw

**Did you know...**

- Numbers working in the active leisure and learning industry, including playwork, have soared over the last five years with a growth rate of four times that of the UK economy as a whole.
- The active leisure and learning sector contributed £3.6 billion to the UK economy in 2004 with growth that has been almost double that of the UK economy over the last five years.

**Starters**

- Can you ...
  - prepare a budget for a summer fair?
  - check your wage slip?
  - complete an order for arts and crafts materials?
  - increase proportions in a recipe to make larger amounts?
  - work out the best buy for play materials?
  - plan how long it will take for a group to travel to the zoo?

**Main course**

- Sue, a playworker, is planning a trip to a city farm.
  
  She has to organise transport, work out the cost of the whole trip and the cost per child.
  
  She has to discuss with colleagues the best route to take to get to the farm and how many staff will be needed to accompany the children; and also plan what to take in the picnic lunch and what time to leave for the city farm and arrive back.

  What maths skills are involved in planning this trip?
  - Comparing costs of different forms of transport.
  - Working out staff to children ratios for the trip.
  - Working out how much the trip will cost, including group rates for large numbers.
  - Planning quantities of food for the picnic lunch.
  - Working out travel times.
Specials

Once I caught a fish alive
One, two, three, four, five,
Once I caught a fish alive,
Six, seven, eight, nine, ten,
Then I let it go again.

Why did you let it go?
Because it bit my finger so.
Which finger did it bite?
This little finger on my right.

This nursery rhyme was written in the 19th century as an educational rhyme, intended to help children learn to count.

Set menu

Test questions
1 A total of 132,730 people are employed in playwork in the UK. What is this to the nearest 100?
   a) 132,800  b) 132,700  c) 132,600  d) 132,000

2 Three in ten playwork employers have identified **skills gaps** in their workforce. What is this as a percentage?
   a) 3%  b) 13%  c) 30%  d) 33%

3 What is the approximate height of a young child?
   a) 1 metre  b) 5 metres  c) 10 metres  d) 0.5 metres

If you would like to try more questions at this level, go to Step 4 of the Move Up Teacher Route on the Move On web site to try out the Move Up test. If you enjoyed these questions and want to try some harder ones, log on to the Learner Route at [www.move-on.org.uk](http://www.move-on.org.uk).

Extras

Grin or Groan?
A man escaped from prison by digging a hole from his jail cell to the outside world. When he finally reached daylight, he emerged in the middle of a playground.

‘I’m free, I’m free!’ he shouted.

‘So what?’ said a little girl. ‘I’m four!’

Resources for tutors

Resources are available to download from [www.move-on.org.uk](http://www.move-on.org.uk). Register on the site to access the Move Up Teacher Route at [www.move-on.org.uk/mu_route.asp](http://www.move-on.org.uk/mu_route.asp).

For more information about the work of SkillsActive, the Sector Skills Council for Active Learning and Leisure, including playwork, visit [www.skillsactive.com](http://www.skillsactive.com) or contact Play Wales:

[www.playwales.org.uk](http://www.playwales.org.uk)

Visit these web sites for outdoor play ideas:
- [www.gameskidsplay.net](http://www.gameskidsplay.net)
- [www.playrangers.net](http://www.playrangers.net)
SkillsActive Playworkers Quiz

Maths

1. One hundred and fifty people pay £1.50 each for tickets to a holiday play scheme charity fun day. Altogether, how much money has been paid for tickets?
   A. £150
   B. £225
   C. £175
   D. £250
   Answer:

2. Two hundred children from ten after school clubs enter a national competition. What is the mean (average) number of children in each club?
   A. 10
   B. 15
   C. 20
   D. 25
   Answer:

3. The children are going on a trip to Dinosaur World. Tickets cost £15.50 per child. How much would four tickets cost?
   A. £62.50
   B. £62.00
   C. £65.50
   D. £60.50
   Answer:

4. An article described the workforce of a large local authority as having a 60:40 male to female employee ratio. The local authority employs 5,000 people. How many employees are female?
   A. 3,000
   B. 2,500
   C. 1,500
   D. 2,000
   Answer:

e-mail info@move-on.org.uk
www.move-on.org.uk  tel. (01223) 478291

The Sector Skills Council for Active Leisure and Learning
Y Corffor Gwasanaethau Difrodol a Gân
SkillsActive
English

5. This extract is taken from Quality Training, Quality Play 2006-2011 (SkillsActive).

`All children are entitled to play. Play is intrinsic to children's quality of life, is critical in its own right for development of the child and is an important part of how they learn and enjoy themselves.'

Which word would be best used instead of 'intrinsic' in the first line?
A. important
B. relevant
C. integral
D. useful

Answer:

6. This extract is taken from the findings of a two-year study, commissioned by television broadcasters and regulators.

**Children get sex lessons from soaps**

What most startled the researchers was the precocity of youngsters and the ease with which they discussed subjects formerly considered taboo for minors. A nine-year-old girl told researchers that exposure to sex and marriage break-ups on television was 'normal', adding: 'They are a part of society even if you don’t agree with them.'

Which word best describes the researchers’ response to their findings?
A. disappointment
B. approval
C. surprise
D. horror

Answer:
7 This question is based on the memo below.

To: All staff

From: Senior Management Team

Re: Data Protection Act

This is to remind staff that personal data covers both facts and opinions about the individual. If you become aware of a misdemeanour (e.g. any unauthorised disclosure of personal data, any unauthorised copying or reproduction, or any misuse of any computer equipment) or any potential security breach, then you should report this to an appropriate manager.

A breach of the Data Protection Act would occur if:
A  incorrect data is recorded by mistake
B  there was an unauthorised disclosure of personal data
C  there was an authorised disclosure of personal data
D  an employee refused to take a coffee break

Answer:

8 Read the extract below taken from management training material and answer the question.

Chilled-out change manager

‘Without sufficient challenges, workers run the risk of rust-out, in which they get bored and start clock-watching. That is stressful in itself. But if the pressure becomes too great, people suffer burn-out.’

What point is the author making?
A  that workers need challenges, but not too many
B  workers go rusty in a damp workplace
C  workers are happiest without challenges
D  no challenge is too great for workers

Answer:

9 Which of the following sentences is not punctuated correctly?
A  The play leader is required to have at least two years’ experience.
B  It is important to share information with the parent about the child and the day’s activities.
C  The play leader completes several document’s including daily activity sheets.
D  Play is children’s culture.

Answer:
Quiz answers

1  B
2  C
3  B
4  D
5  C
6  C
7  B
8  A
9  C
## Appendix 4: Blank checklist template

### Workplace learning for playworkers and Basic Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complete a risk assessment.</th>
<th>Prepare a budget for an outing or activity.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduce or increase quantities in a recipe for making play dough.</td>
<td>Carry out a survey with parents to find the best day for an outing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read and understand a health and safety notice or playwork policies.</td>
<td>Follow correct procedures for reporting and recording emergencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report clearly to colleagues.</td>
<td>Add and subtract amounts of cash.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read, understand and complete work-related documents.</td>
<td>Understand the importance of accuracy in number calculations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange a short e-mail with a colleague</td>
<td>Take accurate notes from a meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow a set of instructions exactly, e.g. for inflating a bouncy castle.</td>
<td>Check own wage slip and deductions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a set of instructions for a new employee.</td>
<td>Record and calculate time accurately in an appointment book, staff rota, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask for, and give, constructive feedback.</td>
<td>Compare costs and discounts for some new play equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete an order for arts and crafts materials.</td>
<td>Understand temperature controls on a fridge and store food at an appropriate temperature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record observations; judge how much to write and what to include and keep to fact not opinion.</td>
<td>Communicate clearly and appropriately in different circumstances and to different people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proofread own writing and correct grammar, punctuation and spelling errors.</td>
<td>Work out number of cars needed to take a group of children to the zoo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a reflective account.</td>
<td>Put together a portfolio of evidence for an NVQ or other training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare a funding application.</td>
<td>Complete an equal opportunities monitoring form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare, serve and store food and drink.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 5: Checklist for working with providers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Providers that you work with should:</th>
<th>Yes?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• manage the relationship with the employer and staff, from initial contact to evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• work with other partner organisations effectively</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• use workplace relevant skills checks and initial assessments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• plan and deliver a training programme based on the needs of the staff and the organisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• offer flexible training based on the needs of the organisation and the employees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• design, support and participate in an agreed evaluation process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• give guidance on further training and development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• understand and access funding for the training, where available</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• show evidence of quality and experience in this area of work, including holding the Basic Skills Post-16 Quality Mark.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SkillsActive would like to thank the following for their valuable input whilst producing this employer toolkit:

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City and County of Swansea
Cardiff County Council.
SkillsActive Wales
Welsh Institute of Sport
Sophia Gardens
Cardiff
CF11 9SW
tel: 029 2064 4526
web: www.skillsactive.com