



Dod yn ôl at Fy Nghoed



EMBERS

The Power of Play

National FSA Conference 2026
25-27th September
Walesby Forest
Nottingham







CYNGOR
Sir y Fflint
Flintshire
COUNTY COUNCIL











Our vision is to be a collective voice for playwork, supporting playworkers.

*Our mission is to promote playwork and its guiding principles.
We provide opportunities for playworkers to come together,
nurture dialogue, empower each other and take collective
action in support of every child's right to play.*



playwork.foundation/join



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Dod yn ôl at Fy Nghoed





The Playwork Primer

Penny Wilson

2010 EDITION

ALLIANCE FOR CHILDHOOD

The Playwork Primer

Penny Wilson

PLAYWORK is the art of supporting children's play without directing or controlling it. Playworkers create play-rich environments in which their presence is nearly invisible. They assess risk, not to create risk-free play but to offer just as much risk as children can handle.



Photo courtesy of Play Association of Tower Hamlets

Playwork is a well established profession in the United Kingdom, where Penny Wilson has worked at adventure playgrounds for 25 years. *The Playwork Primer* is her introduction to playwork for those who want to restore free play to children's lives.

"Wilson has produced an engaging guide for all those responsible for enhancing children's play. This book illustrates the universal powers of play and the role of playworkers in the development of competent, healthy human beings."

—Joe L. Frost, Parker Centennial Professor, University of Texas, Austin

Alliance for Childhood
P.O. Box 444
College Park, MD 20741
www.allianceforchildhood.org

THE ALLIANCE FOR CHILDHOOD is a nonprofit partnership of educators, health professionals, and other advocates for children who are concerned about the decline in children's health and well-being.





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The days of children being sent off in the morning and told not to come home til the street lights came on are long gone. All of those unsupervised unorganised hours of meandering round with your mates? They have disappeared too. Child mental ill heath, obesity and loneliness have increased.

Play Works takes a look at the role of play in childhood and why it is important throughout our lives. This book shares some of the remarkable theory and practice of Playwork so that you can begin to make childhood play filled again.



Copyrighted Material

Marwolaeth a threthi
Death & taxes









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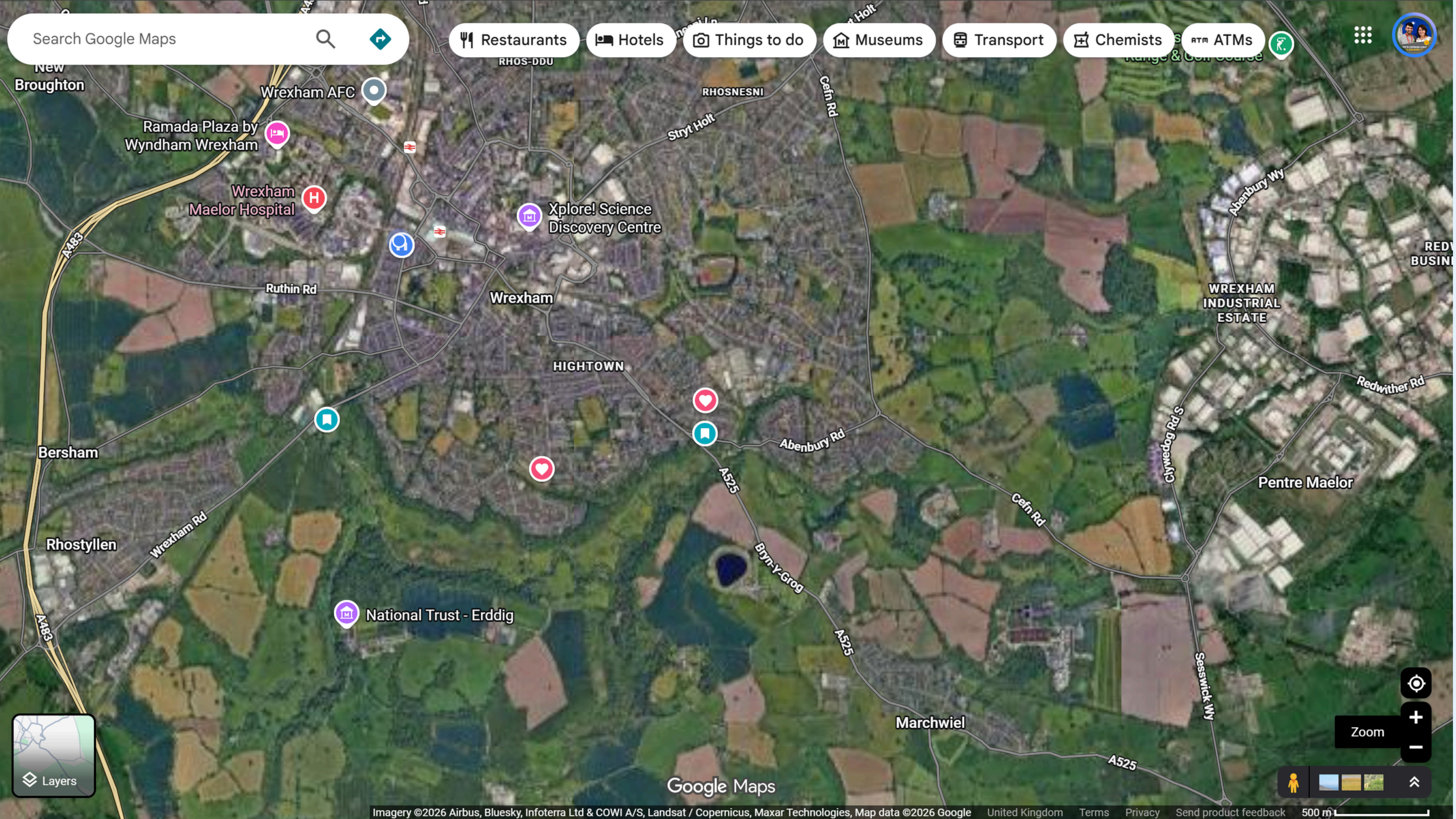
Things to do

Museums

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Ashburn Way

65

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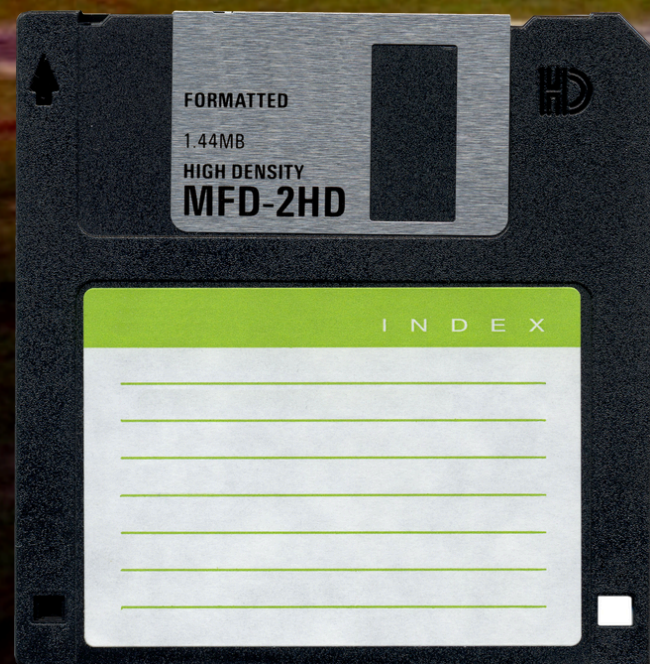
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Space

Physical and mental
freedom to play,
imagine, explore,
and belong.



Time

Protected,
unstructured time
for spontaneous,
self-directed play.



Acceptance

A culture that
recognises and
celebrates play as
a right.



Rights

Legal, policy, and
planning systems that
secure and uphold
children's right.





**CAMPFIRE
CYMRU**





Yr Egwyddorion Gwaith

Mae'r Egwyddorion Gwaith Chwarae yn sefydlu gwaith chwarae ac yn hysbysu beth dylid eu hyrwyddu sy'n unigryw am chwarae a gwaith chwarae gweithio gyda phlant a phobl ifanc. Maen nhw'n a phobl ifanc i ddatblygu'n gadarnhaol eu amgylcheddau a chyfleoedd chwarae.

- 1 Mae pob plentyn a pherson ifanc a chwarae. Mae'r awydd i chwarae'n greddfodol. Mae chwarae'n angenrheidiol, biolegol, seicolegol a chymdeithasol ac mae'n hanfodol i ddatblygiad a lles unigolyn a chymunedau.
- 2 Mae chwarae yn broses a ddechlynir rhydd, a gyfarwyddir yn berswadol gymhellir yn gynhenid. Hynnydd a'r bobl ifanc fydd yn penderfynu cynnwys a bwriad eu chwarae eu greddfau, eu syniadau a'u cymuned eu hunain, yn eu ffordd eu hunain eu rhesymau eu hunain.
- 3 Prif ffocws a hanfod gwaith chwarae cefnogi a hwyluso'r broses chwarae hyn hysbysu datblygiad polisi chwarae strategaeth, hyfforddiant ac addysg.
- 4 I weithwyr chwarae, y broses chwarae fydd flaenaf a bydd gweithwyr chwarae gweithredu fel eiriolwyr dros chwarae pa yn ymwneud ag agendâu gaiff eu harwain gan oedolion.

Nid yw hawlfraint yr Egwyddorion Gwaith Chwarae'n perthyn i Chwarae Cymru. Caiff eu hawlfraint ei ddal mewn ymddiriedolaeth ar gyfer y proffesiwn gwaith chwarae gan Grŵp Craffu'r Egwyddorion Gwaith Chwarae. Dylid tadogi unrhyw gyfeiriad, yn ysgrifenedig neu fel arall, at Grŵp Craffu'r Egwyddorion Gwaith Chwarae, Caerdydd 2005.

Leadership Principle

Long-term Principle

Nature Principle

Forest School

Holistic Learning Principle

Community Principle

Risk Principle

and ethical framework for playwork and as that is unique about play and playwork, and children and young people. They are based on the capacity for positive development will be play opportunities.



of the playworker is to support children and young people in the play of a space in which they can play.

Playworker's response to children and young people playing is based on a sound up-to-date knowledge of the play process, reflective practice.

Playworkers recognise their own impact on the play space and also the impact of children and young people's play on the playworker.

- 8 Playworkers choose an intervention style that enables children and young people to extend their play. All playworker intervention must balance risk with the developmental benefit and wellbeing of children.

Supporting Learning, Play and Development in the Natural Environment

2. Understand theories and value of play
2.1. Summarise play theories

What is Play?

In 2002 the Welsh Government Play Policy defined Play are follows:
play encompasses children's behaviour which is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. It is performed for no external goal or reward, and is a fundamental and integral part of healthy development - not only for individual children, but also for the society in which they live.
Freely chosen means that children themselves choose when, how and what to play. As such it is not part of a set programme and does not have any steps that need to be completed.
Personally directed means children themselves decide the rules and roles they take within their play.
Intrinsically motivated means that play is undertaken for its own sake, and not performed for any reward, certificate or status.
Play is difficult to define - it is many different types of behaviour and interactions with others and/or with environments and objects.

https://www.playwales.org.uk/eng/playworkprinciples

Playwork Theory

Compound Flexibility - Fraser Brown (2003)

- Flexibility refers to the ability to switch between approaches and generate ideas from multiple sources.
- To be flexible children need the freedom to try out different modes of thinking and ways of behaving
- They need the opportunity to control their environment and modify it in numerous ways according to their instincts
- They need the opportunity to engage with a wide range of materials that stimulate the imagination and fuel the emotions

https://www.nurseryworld.co.uk/News/article/free-range-1#:

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2. Understand theories and value of play

2.1 Summarise play theories

- Welsh Government Play Policy
- Compound Flexibility - Fraser Brown(2003)
- Affordances - Gibson (1977), Lester and Maudsley (2006)
- The Play Cycle (Psycholudics) - Sturrock and Else (2000)
[Colorado Paper]
- Playwork Curriculum
- Loose Parts - Simon Nicholson (1971)
- Play Types - Bob Hughes (2002, 2006)

2.2 Explain the benefits and value of play in the natural environment

- Playwork Principles
- UNCRC - Article 31
- Ellen Sandseter's 6 Categories of Risky Play

The Playwork Principles

The Playwork Principles establish the professional and ethical framework for playwork and as such must be regarded as a whole. They describe what is unique about play and playwork, and provide the playwork perspective for working with children and young people. They are based on the recognition that children and young people's capacity for positive development will be enhanced if given access to the broadest range of environments and play opportunities.

- 1** All children and young people need to play. The impulse to play is innate. Play is a biological, psychological and social necessity, and is fundamental to the healthy development and wellbeing of individuals and communities.
 - 2** Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children and young people determine and control the content and intent of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way for their own reasons.
 - 3** The prime focus and essence of playwork is to support and facilitate the play process and this should inform the development of play policy, strategy, training and education.
 - 4** For playworkers, the play process takes precedence and playworkers act as advocates for play when engaging with adult-led agendas.
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- 5** The role of the playworker is to support all children and young people in the creation of a space in which they can play.
 - 6** The playworker's response to children and young people playing is based on a sound up-to-date knowledge of the play process, and reflective practice.
 - 7** Playworkers recognise their own impact on the play space and also the impact of children and young people's play on the playworker.
 - 8** Playworkers choose an intervention style that enables children and young people to extend their play. All playworker intervention must balance risk with the developmental benefit and wellbeing of children.

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- Playwork National Occupational Standards (NOS)
- Play England 10-year Strategy
- National Play Conference, England
- National Play Strategy for England

Play Wales national conference 2027



**22 April 2027
Hilton Hotel, Cardiff**

Booking now open!

Playworkers Forum

1 - 2 July 2026

Willow Globe, Rhayader, Powys



The Playworkers Forum is a two-day, residential playwork training event under canvas that gives playworkers the opportunity to learn from each other and experienced playwork trainers.

Who should attend?

The event is aimed at playworkers, play development workers, playwork managers, forest school practitioners, childcare workers and all those wanting to increase their skills and knowledge in playwork, especially in the outdoors.

'Great opportunity to recharge my playwork batteries, and to connect with like minded professionals!'

'The absolute highlight of our working year, much more preferable to any other gathering of playworkers that we have experienced so far.'

2025 participants

Delegate rate

This year, we are offering an early bird rate for all delegates. Book your place by **30 April** to benefit from the discounted rate.

Early bird rate: £95

Rate from 1 May 2026: £130

Participants are expected to camp and will need to provide their own camping equipment. Hot drinks, lunches, breakfast and an evening meal will be provided.

**To book your place visit:
www.play.wales/events**

• 23rd & 24th June 2027



Annual Playwork Awards

Praising
ourselves

Praising



