

**Quality in Play is a quality assurance system developed by playwork practitioners for staffed, school-age play and childcare provision.**

It is suitable for any type of provider, whether starting out or well-established; from a small project in a rural village hall through to a large adventure playground in an urban area; extended-service and out-of-school projects; mobile and outreach projects working across an area; and those with a specific focus or user group, such as hospital play.



### Costs

- Costs of the manual, mentor and assessor training programmes and assessment are detailed in the enclosed insert.
- Tailored package costs are by arrangement according to individual needs.
- The cost of mentoring is by arrangement between the provider and the individual mentor (or their employer) and will largely depend on how much work is needed to achieve the standards. We encourage local authorities and children's services to make mentor training available for their support and development staff, and provide mentoring as part of their on-going development work.

### For more information

#### Quality in Play

8 Wakley Street

London

EC1V 7QE

Tel: 020 7833 6838

Email: [qip@ncb.org.uk](mailto:qip@ncb.org.uk)

Web: [www.playengland.org.uk/quality](http://www.playengland.org.uk/quality)



**Play  
England**  
Making space for play



LOTTERY FUNDED

Play England is part of NCB and is supported by the Big Lottery Fund. NCB Registered Charity No. 258825



**Supporting  
children's play**

### The assessment and accreditation process

Typical length of process is 13 months.

- Order manual, support materials and mentor details
- Start the portfolio – collect key evidence using the guidance provided
- Self-assess against the quality indicators; identify gaps and record action needed/taken
- Use the portfolio as a working tool for quality at all relevant meetings
- Complete the pre-assessment checklist and apply for accreditation
- Assessor visits and writes recommendation report
- Sign and return the report to Quality in Play, agreeing or contesting the recommendation
- Accreditation panel decides, and gives conditions of accreditation if successful
- Display the certificate prominently, maintain the quality standards, and work on any development suggestions before re-accreditation
- After 22 months, apply for re-accreditation



[www.playengland.org.uk/quality](http://www.playengland.org.uk/quality)

**The Quality in Play manual reflects current play policy and practice, backed up by continuously updated support materials.**

The standards incorporate the Playwork Principles and have been mapped against the Quality Improvement Principles framework.

There is a single level of achievement with an additional excellence award for providers showing significant and sustainable good practice in supporting children’s play.

Quality in Play includes 11 quality areas grouped in three sections that support the playing child:

- 1 The play environment**
- 2 The organisational framework**
- 3 The wider context**

There is a focus on processes and outcomes rather than on documentation as evidence of quality. The manual sets out standards for each quality area and provides a clear and systematic self-assessment structure for planning, action and review, with external assessment and accreditation leading to a national quality award.

**Mentors**

Support from a mentor helps providers through the quality process. The mentor acts as a critical friend and works with the provider to develop a portfolio of evidence and ensure they are ready to apply for accreditation.

Play England holds a register of trained mentors – contact us for details of mentors working in your area.

**Resources**

Support materials will be regularly updated to help providers meet the standards. These will include pointers to sources of information, such as Play England briefings and other materials on policy and practice; tools and frameworks on specific areas like inclusion and workforce development created by partner and other organisations; and examples of good practice.

**Training and events**

Play England delivers regular mentor training programmes, and where there is sufficient demand, we can also deliver tailored packages for groups. Quality in Play staff are also available to provide information and seminars at regional play and other events to introduce the system and familiarise the sector with how it works. Contact us for details of training programmes, or to register your interest in becoming a mentor.

**External assessment and accreditation**

A trained and experienced Quality in Play assessor will arrange an assessment visit to go through the portfolio, talk to staff and management and observe practice. They then either submit a recommendation to an independent accreditation panel or advise the provider on further action needed.

Once the panel makes the award, the provider displays the Quality in Play certificate along with a summary of the standards achieved. There is an appeal process if the provider wishes to contest the assessor or panel decision. Accreditation lasts for two years.



**Quality in Play Standards, assessment indicators and evidence – a manual**

**order form**

**Please complete and return this form to:**

Quality in Play  
Play England  
8 Wakley Street  
London EC1V 7QE

Alternatively, email your order details to [qip@ncb.org.uk](mailto:qip@ncb.org.uk)

**Please make cheques payable to National Children’s Bureau.**

If you require an invoice, add the name and signature of person responsible for paying the invoice, or enclose an official order.

**Name** .....

**Organisation** .....

**Address** .....

.....

**Postcode** .....

**Telephone** .....

**Email** .....

**Type of organisation:** Voluntary/ Statutory/ Private (delete as appropriate)

**Play England member:** Yes / No (delete as appropriate)  
If yes, membership number: .....

**Name** .....

**Job Title** .....

**Number of manuals required** .....

**Price per manual (see insert for details)** .....

Less 10% if ordering 10 manuals or more .....

**Add p & p (see insert)** .....

**Total** .....

