



England Wales Northern Ireland

# Newsbrief

International Play Association EWN  
Promoting the Child's Right to Play

## The work of IPA

**Newsbrief is the quarterly briefing from IPA EWN.**

Our members tell us they find it useful and informative. There are important opportunities to contribute to events and the work of IPA, as well as news from members – this edition we feature the Lady Allen Memorial Trust and PlayBoard.

We are pleased to note that membership has increased significantly since our recent reduction in fees; please promote this to your networks.

Thank you for your feedback and offers of help following our members' questionnaire. If you would like to contribute directly to IPA EWN work, please get in touch.

Please send all offers and comments to the Communications Group c/o [mail@ludemos.co.uk](mailto:mail@ludemos.co.uk)

We also welcome articles from our members that promote play for children; please send any contributions to [mail@ludemos.co.uk](mailto:mail@ludemos.co.uk)

### Editorial statement

**IPA EWN aims to inform, invigorate, critique and enhance research, policy and practice relating to play, environments for play and playwork**

The views expressed in Newsbrief and the IPA EWN website are those of the author and may not reflect the policy of IPA EWN, nor should publication be taken or assumed as an endorsement by IPA EWN of those views.

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**Children are by nature thirsty to learn but have rebelled against school for hundreds of years because school is so often antithetical to their human nature, and children say so in every language they possess.**

Jay Griffiths (2013: 212) *Kith*

## IPA's purpose

IPA is an international non-governmental organization founded in 1961. It provides a forum for exchange and action across disciplines and across sectors.

IPA's purpose is to protect, preserve and promote the child's right to play as a fundamental human right – Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

## IPA – CALL FOR EXECUTIVE BOARD NOMINATIONS (2014 – 2017)

### Deadline 21 December 2013

The election of the 2014-2017 Executive Board will be the first wholly under our new constitution which was adopted at the General Meeting 2011 in Cardiff, Wales. The Executive Board is responsible for the management and activities of the organisation, therefore being part of the Board is a serious responsibility which requires the ability to commit time and energy on a frequent basis throughout the year. It also offers a great opportunity to gain insight into children's play rights worldwide and to contribute to IPA's purpose and goals.

Descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of all Board positions have been developed and are available for anyone considering putting themselves forward for election, or nominating someone else.

### EXECUTIVE BOARD OFFICERS

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Communications Officer
- Membership Officer
- Development Officer

The election will be held at the General Meeting in Istanbul, Turkey on 21 May 2014. If there is more than one nomination for any position there will be a postal ballot of those IPA members who are unable to attend the election in person. The ballot will be held during January – April 2014.

Nominations may be made by paid-up IPA members only. Each nomination must also be supported by a second paid-up member. Nominees must: be paid-up members of the association; agree and countersign their nomination; submit a statement of suitability.

Nomination forms, role and responsibility descriptions for Executive Board Officers, and any further information required are all available on request from the IPA Secretary at [Secretary@ipaworld.org](mailto:Secretary@ipaworld.org)

The nomination and election process will be overseen by the Council of Representatives.

### Nomination Instructions

1. Use one form for each nomination.
2. A candidate may only be nominated with his/her consent and he/she must be registered as a paid-up member of IPA.
3. The nominated candidate must have read and agreed to meet the requirements of the office as outlined in the roles and

responsibilities for the post.

4. Persons elected to the Executive Board as Officers are expected to take out individual membership of IPA if their current membership is in the category of Group or Benefactor membership.
5. A brief CV / summary of the candidate's suitability for the office should accompany the nomination (no longer than 2 pages).\*
6. Persons nominating and seconding the nomination, or their organisation, must be registered with the IPA Treasurer as a paid-up individual or group member of IPA on the date given above.
7. A representative of one group membership may be either Nominator or Second. The Nominator and Second may not be from the same group membership.
8. If you are making a nomination on behalf of a Group membership you must be officially authorised to act on behalf of that Group.
9. Job Descriptions and nomination forms for Executive Board officer posts are available from the IPA Secretary at [Secretary@ipaworld.org](mailto:Secretary@ipaworld.org).
10. The names and details of nominated candidates will be announced by email and/or newsletter, and on the website [www.ipaworld.org](http://www.ipaworld.org), together with the procedure for postal ballot (if this is necessary). Elections will be held at the IPA General Meeting, 21 May 2014 in Istanbul, Turkey.

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All nominations must be accompanied by the signatures of the Nominator, Second and Nominee.

\* Please send a brief CV and/or statement of suitability of no more than 2 pages with the completed forms, to be received no later than 31 December 2013 to:

IPA Nominations

c/o Margaret Westwood, IPA Secretary

City of Edinburgh Council

1/2 Waverley Court

4 East Market Street

Edinburgh, EH8 8BG, UK

Or

By e-mail attachment to [Secretary@ipaworld.org](mailto:Secretary@ipaworld.org) with the nomination form in the format of either: digital form with **embedded digital signature** (a photograph of an original signature, not a typed font); OR a photograph of the signed form; OR a scanned, signed form.

# The work of IPA EWNI – update

**12th September 2013 was the most recent committee meeting of IPA EWNI and also our AGM when the new Committee was formed:**

Perry Else – Chair

Paul Hocker - Vice Chair

Blanche Thompson – Treasurer

Paul Soames – Secretary

Bob Hughes - Membership Secretary

Karen Wilkinson

Jacqueline O’Loughlin

Felicity Sylvester

Mike Greenaway

Meynell Walter

As part of the meeting, a planning session as held to look forward to 2014, the results are summarised to the right. These themes will be investigated by the Committee at the next meeting.

Members’ comments and support are welcomed.

## Planning session IPA EWNI September 2013 – Themes

What is unique about IPA EWNI

- The IPA message should be play is valuable for children (with evidence)
- Good news through the General Comment and Declaration on the Importance of Play
- IPA has a wealth of knowledge in the committee and organisation
- IPA people are a good crowd
- Contact IPA World members

People don’t know about IPA EWNI

- More personal messages are needed
- Meet people, talk about what is important
- We need to encourage joint/more activities
- Emphasise the links to the IPA World

Identify client groups/who do we work with

- Need to get the population on board
- Play, Play Profession or broader?
- ‘Play into the zeitgeist’ e.g. Project Wild Thing
- But not play as we know and value it
- Could we help younger people more
- Messages – The Right to Play (already claimed by the sport lobby)

Communication methods

- Regular updates needed on news
- Play Rights
- Newsbrief
- Web updates needed more often

Make our own Campaign – key messages

- Evidence that play is useful
- Article 31 – why it is needed and why it exists
- Network common issues
- Find partners e.g. schools
- Develop educational programmes
- ‘Bad is stronger than good’ how do we promote a positive campaign?

Options

1. Join other big programmes (Compromise?)
2. Make our own Campaign?
3. ~~Stay as we are~~

## Lady Allen of Hurtwood Memorial Trust

### 2014 Awards

IPA is one of the founding organisations of the Lady Allen of Hurtwood Memorial Trust which was established in 1978. IPA has two trustee positions on the board. Currently these trustees are Blanche Thompson and Paul Soames.

The Trust meets three times a year and gives out awards in March of each year.

#### Guidance notes for applications to the trust

The Object of the Trust is to promote the welfare and education of children through the award of a travel grant to those whose proposed project will directly benefit their work with children.

**Amount of award** – Grants are usually in the region of £800-£1,000

**Who may apply**– People working with children and young people. The Trustees particularly welcome applications from those working with disabled and excluded children.

**When to apply** – Application forms are available from the website at [ladyallentrust.org](http://ladyallentrust.org) or contact the Hon Secretary at the address below. Short-listing takes place in February and awards are made in March each year.

**Closing date – The closing date for applications on this round is the 15th January 2014.**

For further information, forms and guidelines please go our website at: [ladyallentrust.org](http://ladyallentrust.org) or email: [lamt@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lamt@hotmail.co.uk)

or write to:

Caroline Richards – Secretary LAMT  
89 Thurleigh Road  
London SW12 8TY

**Applications are now invited for the 2014 travel awards made to candidates working with children, to travel and broaden their professional experience and apply this experience to their work.**

Lady Allen of Hurtwood is remembered for her dynamic contribution to the health and happiness of children throughout the world. Her pioneering action was largely responsible for the Curtiss Report and the original Children's Act 1948. She was also very involved and committed to the early Adventure Playground movement both in the UK and in Europe. She was one of the founding members of IPA in the 1960s. In making an annual award the trustees have tried to fulfil the spirit of adventure and enterprise instilled in all who worked with Lady Allen.

#### Grants cannot be given for:

- Academic course fees
- Attendance at specific conferences
- Building and equipping centres
- Supporting individual children
- School trips
- GAP year projects or similar travel
- Medical electives

Successful candidates – Successful candidates are required to provide a written account of approximately 1,500 words of the experience gained whilst visiting the project or projects. This must be received by the trustees within six months of receiving the award

#### Some projects that have won awards

An award to a teacher involved in the education of deaf blind children so she could visit a pioneering centre of excellence in Ontario Canada working with children and young people with the same condition. Whilst there she investigated and explored the role of the teachers, activity programmes and the assessment methods used. This experience was brought back by the person concerned to improve her own practice but also share the knowledge gained across the local authority within which she worked.

Award to a London-based Play Association staff member to visit and spend time in Germany with a team of workers who build innovative wooden play structures for children. The knowledge and experience gained was brought back to inform and change the practice of the Play Association concerned and enabled a team to be trained up in the building of these new structures.

Award in 2009 to the Co-ordinator of a Horse Club based in London. This is a pioneering project based in an inner-city area whereby young people access horse riding, training and learn how to care for the animals. The Co-ordinator visited similar well established projects in Philadelphia and Los Angeles to look at the work they carry out and to establish longer term links with these projects.

## Donne Buck one of IPA EWNI's Lifetime Members reflects on the benefits of International Play Association Membership

My first job as a professional play worker began in 1957, long before I joined IPA. In those days the few of us who were employed, mostly in London, all knew one another and frequently met to exchange information and form valuable friendships. We worked towards professional status through formal training and personal development at a time when facilities for these were non-existent. In those days IPA was in its early days. Membership was limited, by default, mainly to an elite group of movers and shakers in other professions and politics. These people had helped to establish play services and facilities, but were not hands-on workers on the whole.

It was not until 1969, when, having moved from London to run a new playground in Stevenage, I was introduced to IPA by a visiting teacher, who paid my first subscription. When I began to participate in events, other members, many of whom I already knew, looked askance at me in my muddy boots and seemed to challenge my right to participate in decision-making on policy and practical matters. It is not at all like that now. For many years IPA has provided a unique national and international forum for all who are committed to its principle aim of giving shape and form to Article 31 of the UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child (the Child's Right to Play).

The widespread development of play facilities and services by local authorities in the 1970s, by diversifying them and introducing various forms of training, caused a breakdown the close contact between play workers that we enjoyed in the early days. As I well know from personal experience as a play worker and local government officer in play, IPA has helped to correct this trend. It has achieved this, for example, by offering better means of communication through its publications, training events and conferences. Members who wish to change things for the better also have good opportunities to influence its own and official national and international policies and priorities in play. This process is well illustrated currently by IPA/EWNI's direct involvement in the work to develop and launch the General Comment on Article 31 in Geneva, where two of our members will be present.

As I move into my 80<sup>th</sup> year, probably the aspects of IPA membership that I value most are my memories of the wonderful contacts that I have had with play people and places all over the world, through its conferences and related tours. These have had a powerful impact on my personal development and the way I work. Above all, I treasure my continuing contacts with outstanding play people who have made a real difference to children's day-to-day lives and to public understanding and

development of opportunities for them to develop to their full potential through play. Through my own continuing practice as a volunteer play worker and that of others of my generation, I have discovered the truth of the adage, "you do not stop playing when you grow old, you grow old because you stop playing". [ENDS

An extra item sent it by Donne Buck. This verse .... **like children** was written by the late Joe Benjamin, one of the early (1950s) Lollard Adventure Playground playworkers. He went on to work in Grimsby and Birmingham and wrote a book about his work. It reflects one person's view of things as they were at the time pre-professionalization, and it might stir up memories and some views on the changes, if any, that readers have observed meanwhile.

.... **like children**

Playleaders  
Are a noisy minority;  
A vociferous variety  
Without an identity  
Who will not see  
That parents, too,  
Are 'interested'  
In children,  
As are social workers,  
Teachers,  
Probation Officers  
And youth workers.  
Playleaders, however,  
Have more in common  
With children;  
A sense of empathy:  
They shout  
Against Authority  
And Institutions.  
They don't read  
And won't write.  
They think  
Their (professional) elders  
Are out of touch.  
Like children  
They want  
To make their own way.  
Like children,  
They welcome  
Benevolent handouts  
From  
A caring ministry  
Or voluntary org.,  
Whom they then abuse.

**PlayBoard** is the leading agency for the promotion, development and delivery of play in Northern Ireland. This vibrant organisation is at the forefront of shaping the future of children and young peoples play opportunities and experiences

**Applications are invited for the following post:**

**Play Development Officer (Ref: PDO/O2)**

(£24,402 - £26,016) - 35 hours per week – 18 Month post subject to funding

**Main Purpose:**

The Play Development Officer will work across Northern Ireland. The post holder will 'deliver models of effective practice where needed, provide information, training and support to strengthen organisational capacity, develop effective practice and work towards achieving recognised Quality Standards

**The successful applicant will need to have:**

A level 3 qualification in a relevant discipline with a min of 3 years face to face delivery experience and 3 years experience of developing, delivering and evaluating programmes to Children & Young People.

If you are a proactive person with a strong focus on service delivery, take pride and ownership in your contribution, have excellent attention to detail and want to be part of a growing organisation this could be your next role.

To receive an application pack please phone, email or write to:



**Lisa O'Connor**  
**PlayBoard NI, 7 Crescent Gardens, Belfast, BT7 1NS**  
Tel: 028 90803380  
Fax: 028 90803381  
E-mail: [lisa.oconnor@playboard.co.uk](mailto:lisa.oconnor@playboard.co.uk)



**Closing date for completed applications: 4pm Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2013**

***PlayBoard strives to be an equal opportunities employer***

**This Project is Co-funded by the OFMDFM and the Atlantic Philanthropies**

## Meynell Games

### A new website has recently launched that may be of interest to IPA members

Since 2007 Meynell Games has been selling books at Conferences and events at prices that always undercut Amazon [sometimes significantly!]. The new website [www.playbooks.org.uk](http://www.playbooks.org.uk) continues the philosophy of gathering all the important play and playwork books in once place and selling them at the cheapest possible price.

**www.playbooks.org.uk**

**All the best  
play and playwork  
books**

**Keep your money in the sector -  
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**We are cheaper than Amazon**

Stack of books including:  
- *Man, Play and Games* by CAILLOIS  
- *Playwork* by Fraser Brown  
- *PlayTypes Speculations and Possibilities* by Bob Hughes  
- *Foundations of Playwork* by BROWN AND TAYLOR  
- *EVOLUTIONARY PLAYWORK* by BOB HUGHES SECOND EDITION ROUTLEDGE  
- *play* by STUART BROWN, M.D. with CHRISTOPHER TRUZHAN  
- *The Ambiguity of Play*  
- *Reflective Playwork* by Jacky Kilvington and Ali Wood  
- *New Playwork Play and Care for Children 4 -16* by Davy & Gallagher Fourth Edition DELMAR

  
MEYNELL GAMES  
01323 730500



### **Gove adviser: School failure could cause 'showers of blood'**

Dominic Cummings is described as the Education Secretary's most influential adviser, at the heart of policy since 2011, but in a dense 250-page essay published last night he describes British education as 'between awful and mediocre'.

He also suggests that the Department of Education should be ruthlessly cut down in size.

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Mr Cummings only has a couple more months in office before he leaves government, but he has been at the heart of the education secretary's team since 2011 after Gove specially lobbied to bring him in.

Here are 10 other radical statements from the text *Some Thoughts on Education and Political Priorities* written in August 2013, and published recently by the Guardian.

#### **1. People leave education unable to understand complex systems.**

'In England, few are well-trained in the basics of extended writing or mathematical and scientific modelling and problem-solving.'

#### **2. This may lead to the world ending in 'showers of blood'.**

'The consequences are increasingly dangerous as markets, science and technology disrupt all existing institutions and traditions, and enhance the dangerous potential of our evolved nature to inflict huge physical destruction and to manipulate the feelings and ideas of many people (including, sometimes particularly, the best educated) through 'information operations'.

'Our fragile civilisation is vulnerable to large shocks and a continuation of traditional human politics as it was during 6 million years of hominid evolution – an attempt to secure in-group cohesion, prosperity and strength in order to dominate or destroy nearby out-groups in competition for scarce resources - could kill billions. We need big changes to schools, universities, and political and other institutions for their own sake and to help us limit harm done by those who, entangled with trends described below, pursue dreams of military glory, 'that attractive rainbow that rises in showers of blood.'

**We need big changes to schools, universities and other institutions to help us limit harm done by those who pursue dreams of military glory, 'that attractive rainbow that rises in showers of blood.'**

*Dominic Cummings*

#### **3. Elite universities damage our future leaders.**

'Generally, they are badly (or narrowly) educated and trained (even elite universities offer courses that are thought to prepare future political decision-makers but are clearly inadequate and in some ways damaging) [...]

'Most politicians, officials, and advisers operate with fragments of philosophy, little knowledge of maths or science (few MPs can answer even simple probability questions yet most are confident in their judgement), and little experience in well-managed complex organisations.'

#### **4. How should the nation's elite be educated instead? Like this:**

'Universities should develop alternatives to Politics, Philosophy, and Economics such as Ancient and Modern History, Physics for Future Presidents, and Programming. We need leaders with an understanding of Thucydides and statistical modelling, who have read The Brothers Karamazov and The Quark and the Jaguar, who can feel Kipling's Kim and succeed in Tetlock's Good Judgement Project.'

#### **5. Other people shouldn't even go to university at all and are wasting everybody's time.**

'Many of those now attending university courses in the UK and USA are wasting their time, and their own and taxpayers' money, and would be better off in jobs or work-based training. In many third-rate HE institutions, there is a large amount of 'social science' work (in economics, anthropology, sociology, literary theory, and so on) of questionable value both from an intellectual perspective and from the perspective of the students' job prospects.'

#### **6. Education should train synthesisers not specialists.**

The nation's children should be trained in seven fields roughly corresponding to subjects like maths, biology, physics, robots, with humanities bundled into one, called: 'political economy, philosophy, and avoiding catastrophes'. Mr Cummings would also like students to study 'the biological basis of personality'. He hopes these changes would give the nation's children 'a cool Thucydidean courage to face reality including their own errors'.

#### **7. Young people face a future working for middle-aged mediocrities, or unemployment.**

'This essay is aimed mainly at 15-25 year-olds and those interested in more ambitious education and training for them. Not only are most of them forced into mediocre education but they are also then forced into dysfunctional institutions where many face awful choices: either conform to the patterns set by middle-aged mediocrities (don't pursue excellence, don't challenge bosses' errors, and so on) or soon be despised and unemployed.'

#### **8. Actually he (Mr Cummings) doesn't know what he's talking about.**

'This paper is very crude and written by someone with no relevant expertise in any subject except politics - it is a bad version of something I wish I had been given aged 15, prompted partly by thinking, after reading about the Russian Kolmogorov schools, 'we need some schools like that... what would the pupils study?''

#### **9. Institutions should be more like ant colonies.**

'Ant colonies and the immune system are good examples of complex nonlinear systems with 'emergent properties' and self-organisation.'

Institutions could learn from this, suggests Mr Cummings as, like the body or an ant hive, we cannot know in advance all the threats we will face so have to be resilient rather than pre-designed.

#### **10. Genes are more important than teaching.**

'Another field of research that has big potential to inform education policy and improve education is genetics though it remains ignored in current debates outside a tiny group.'

'When it is not ignored, it is often misunderstood, both by those such as Malcolm Gladwell (who wrongly downplayed the importance of genes) and by those who wish to use genetics to justify the view that 'they are doomed by their genes'. However, it is likely that public debate will have to stop ignoring the subject within the next decade.'

'This paper (Science, 23/4/2010) shows how good teachers improve reading standards for all but this means that the variance that remains is more due to genetic differences. This leads to a conclusion almost completely at odds with prevailing conventional wisdom.'

## Join IPA EWNI

If you would like to join IPA EWNI, an organisation devoted to promoting and protecting the child's right to play please visit: <http://www.ipa-ewni.org.uk> see 'Membership' and download an application pack.

## Keeping in touch

Have we got your current contact details? If not, please contact Bob Hughes, Membership Secretary: [playeducation@ntlworld.com](mailto:playeducation@ntlworld.com)

## Contribute

If you are an IPA EWNI member and would like to contribute to future issues of this Newsbrief please contact the editor: [mail@ludemos.co.uk](mailto:mail@ludemos.co.uk)

**IPA EWNI is a Registered Charity  
in England No. 1094980**

We are part of IPA World:  
<http://ipaworld.org>



## Nurseries 'should focus on play – not the three-Rs'

**30 September 2013**

The importance of play, and how it supports children to be confident, communicative, sociable and curious individuals, is being lost, according to teachers and childcare professionals. The Professional Association of Childcare and Early Years said that preschoolers need more time to play to allow them to develop important social and emotional skills before they start school.

Its survey of 1,474 parents, 500 childcare professionals and 160 teachers revealed that the majority believe that developing social skills and independence are the most important factors in helping children to be 'school ready', in contrast to the Coalition's increasing focus on educational attainment. Further, 58 per cent of teachers feel there needs to be greater emphasis on play in England.

'Play is central to childhood and children's development. It is a fundamental part of early years teaching and learning,' said Christine Blower, General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers. 'Teachers oppose the introduction of more 'academic' activities for pre-school children because a focus on reading, arithmetic and writing will not result confident and curious pupils who will have a firm foundation for future learning.'

For more on the PACEY report <http://tiny.cc/a1u74w>

Or for an article in the Telegraph on the report <http://tiny.cc/g2u74w>

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