



# Market Report

A Snapshot of your Market Sector

## Children's Play Area

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Children's Play Area** industry in Scotland, as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the Business Gateway website ([www.bgateway.com/businessplan](http://www.bgateway.com/businessplan)), including an interactive template and tips to get you started.

This market report was updated by Business Gateway in **October 2020**. If you find the information contained in this document useful, tell us about it! Send us feedback [here](#); we will use your comments to help improve our service.

## What do I need to know about the Children's Play Area market?

The following summary statistics have been taken from market research reports and reliable resources that the Information Service uses to compile industry information. They should give you an indication of how your industry is faring at present and whether there is demand for your type of business:

- ◆ Mintel's research finds that **78% of children aged 5-15** play sport outside school PE lessons and that the most common mode of participation is on a non-organised basis, such as in the park with friends. However, repertoire analysis also shows that only **38% play sport** in more than one setting. (Mintel, *Sport Participation - UK*, October 2019).
- ◆ Consumer research found that encouraging more children to play sport was the most popular of a range of possible priorities for government and national governing body investment. Some **52%** of adult internet users identified this as a priority for investment, with **25%** considering it most important of all. (Mintel, *Children's sport: Don't mind the generation gap*, February 2019).
- ◆ With children across the UK out of schools, working out as a family became a viable option for both parents and children alike. As one in four parents of children aged 18 and under cite more opportunities to play sport as a family would most encourage children to be active, this could be a catalyst for a long-term shift towards multigenerational fitness activities and venues. (Mintel, *Exercise Trends: Inc Impact of COVID-19 – UK*, July 2020)
- ◆ The proportion of the population who are children has decreased in recent years, from 22% in 1983 to **17% in 2018**. It is projected to decrease slightly in the future, to 16% by 2038. This is a result of the low birth rate in Scotland (National Records of Scotland, *The Registrar General's Annual Review of Demographic Trends*) ([tinyurl.com/y26k4nq8](http://tinyurl.com/y26k4nq8))
- ◆ The national organisation for this industry is [Play Scotland](#). Other industry bodies include [Play England](#), [Youth Scotland](#), the [Association of Play Industries](#), the [Play Providers Association](#) and the [Federation of the European Play Industry](#).



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## Where can I find more information on my market?

The Information Service has access to a number of databases which can offer more detail on this industry. Some of these reports are listed below - if you would like to be sent extracts from any of these reports, please contact us on **0300 013 4753** or email [info@bgateway.com](mailto:info@bgateway.com).

- ◆ **Mintel – Sport Participation – UK (October 2019)**. Mintel thinks that Children’s sport remains a highly social activity, with 89% of all 5-15-year olds who play outside formal settings doing so with friends. This highlights another opportunity for organised sport providers to reach potential new members by using peer recommendation as a recruitment tool.
- ◆ **Mintel – Marketing to Parents – UK (March 2020)**. According to ONS data, the overall female population is projected to continue growing over the coming years. While this growth bodes well for marketers, it is important to note that it is largely driven by the rapid expansion in the number of women aged over 55, which is set to grow by a further 18% over the 2019-24 period, while the rest of the female population stagnates. Indeed, by 2024, women aged over 55 will account for 17% of the total population and 34% of all females in the UK.

There are also a number of online resources you may find helpful:

- ◆ **Play Scotland** published *Guidelines for unregulated, informal play services*, July 2020 ([tinyurl.com/y2r6k2tq](https://tinyurl.com/y2r6k2tq)) as well as *COVID 19 AND CHILDREN’S PLAY* – updated 2 September 2020 ([tinyurl.com/y263f3ml](https://tinyurl.com/y263f3ml))
- ◆ **The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)** has published advice on indoor soft play and fully enclosed play equipment, including legislative standards and guidelines on setting up the play space ([tinyurl.com/y39t5php](https://tinyurl.com/y39t5php)).
- ◆ **The Scottish Government** - in partnership with Inspiring Scotland, the Care Inspectorate and Smarter Scotland - have a downloadable document on *Practical guidance for creating outdoor play experiences in early learning and childcare* (December, 2018) ([tinyurl.com/y44u6lrd](https://tinyurl.com/y44u6lrd)).

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## How can I find out about my competitors?

Business Gateway's online guide to [Competitor Analysis](#) explains how to find your competitors, how to research what they're doing and how to act on what you learn about them.

Immediate competition will be from other businesses in your local area. There are several online directories which can be used to find company information and generate lists easily and at no expense. Many Local Authorities also publish local business directories on the web. Below are some key web resources:

- ◆ General business directories such as [Yell](#) ,[Thomson Local](#) or [Google Maps](#)
- ◆ Trade specialists like [EuroPages](#) (European directory), [The Wholesaler](#) or [Free Index](#)
- ◆ Business to business (B2B) specialists such as [Kompass](#)

Likewise, your local Chamber of Commerce may publish a members' directory; find your local Chamber on the [Scottish Chambers](#) website.

Once you've identified who your competitors are, the next step is to gather information on the way they do business. Which services do they provide? How do they market themselves? How much do they charge?

To learn about your competitors:

- ◆ Look for articles or adverts in local newspapers, trade press and directories.
- ◆ Try to read their marketing material; if the company has an online presence, visit the company's website as a first port of call. Not only does it give you a better understanding of the company's activities, it can also offer a wealth of information such as a company history or staff biographies, as well as the company's partners or suppliers
- ◆ Search for information on limited UK companies via the [Companies House](#) website
- ◆ Gain an insight into your competitor's performance using credit checks and the accounts that limited companies are required to submit to Companies House each year.

We can provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using this resource, or looking for us to help you find relevant publications, please contact us by emailing [info@bgateway.com](mailto:info@bgateway.com) or by calling **0300 013 4753**



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## What about suppliers?

[Choosing and Managing Suppliers](#) can help you decide what you need from a supplier, how to identify one and how to choose one to deal with.

Trade associations or industry specific organisations may also be able to recommend suppliers or contacts. You can also use the aforementioned resources for finding competitors to find suppliers.

Once you have decided on a supplier, we can run a credit check on the company to help assess their financial stability. We provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using the resource please [info@bgateway.com](mailto:info@bgateway.com) or by calling **0300 013 4753**.

## Who are my customers?

Your business plan should include information about the customers you would expect. Business Gateway's guides on [Market and customer research](#) will help you to identify new trends, opportunities, customers and competitors.

It can be useful to group your customers by geographical location, age or lifestyle. The websites listed below are freely available and can provide most of this information. If you can't find what you're looking for from these websites, please contact us and one of the team will be happy to help:

- ◆ Access the latest population estimates from the [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#). NRS also offers demographic factsheets for each council area in Scotland, which can provide summary statistics for the area you will be based in.
- ◆ Information from the most recent census in 2011 is released via the official website. See in particular the [Census Area Profiles](#). Clicking on your area of interest will give the latest population figures, including estimates by age.
- ◆ [Understanding Scottish Places](#) has interactive profiles of towns and cities across Scotland. It can be useful for understanding the interrelationships and flows between towns, and also gives comparisons between two or more places.
- ◆ [Scottish Government Statistics](#) provide accurate and up-to-date statistics on Scotland, covering population, health, education and housing.
- ◆ [The Scottish Household Survey](#) provides information on the structure, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households, both at a national and local level.
- ◆ [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) is the recognised national statistical body for the UK. ONS covers a wide range of demographic, economic and social issues at a UK level.

## How can you help me with other aspects of starting my business?

The Business Gateway website has guides, videos, online tutorials and tips on all aspects of starting up a business in Scotland. Follow the links below to explore each resource:

### Accountancy

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland's (ICAS) "[Find a Chartered Accountant](#)" tool

### Funding

[Practical information](#) on finance and funding for starting and growing your business

### Insurance

[Business insurance guide](#)

### Legal Help

Gov.uk "[Licence Finder](#)" tool

Law Society of Scotland's "[Find a Solicitor](#)" tool

### Pricing

Business Companion [Pricing & payment guide](#).

**Please note:** the most effective way to research pricing is to conduct your own research – visit wholesalers or suppliers to obtain price lists, find quotes from similar companies and work out what other businesses in your area are charging

### Promotion

[BG guides to Marketing](#)

### Training

[Skills Development Scotland's My World of Work](#)

[Funding for training](#)

[Small Business Bonus Scheme \(Scotland\)](#)

Your local Business Gateway can offer events, workshops and 1:2:1 support on all aspects of starting and developing your business. Call the helpline on **0300 013 4753** to find out what is available in your area.

We hope you find this Market Report useful and we'd love to hear your feedback [here](#).

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You must not rely on the information in the report as an alternative to advice from an appropriately qualified professional. If you have any specific questions speak to your Business Gateway Advisor or consult an appropriately qualified professional.

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**Updated by: Aleksandra**

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