



# Challengers

**Vision: A world where all children and young people can play together freely**

Mission: To provide truly inclusive, fun and safe places where all disabled children and young people can spend time with their friends. To offer a positive impact for families and the wider community.

## Goals



Enable the people we support to develop skills and confidence through play

Contribute to a more inclusive society by challenging the barriers to play

Connect families together and enable a community of information sharing and support

## Priorities



1  
2  
3  
Excel at providing inclusive play opportunities

Evidence our impact in the communities we serve

Share our knowledge and expertise with a wider audience

Establish a Community Hub

## Foundations



Staff happiness

Sustainable business model

Sound governance

Culture of continuous improvement

## Values



Inclusive

Playful

Trustworthy

Ambitious

Accountable

As we emerge from the COVID-19 Pandemic the focus for Challengers is on rebuilding strong foundations. We have taken the opportunity to develop our previous strategy to one that focuses on both impact and sustainability. Over the past three years, Local Authority funding for Short Breaks has been reducing, as more and more disabled children are being included in mainstream play and leisure. This is great news and contributes to one of our ambitions of developing a more inclusive society, however, there continues to be a growing number of children and young people with more complex requirements, relating either to health, behaviour, or a combination of physical and mental impairments who continue to be excluded and who rely on Challengers for support. The parents of these children, typically have 24-hour caring commitments with little opportunity for a break and are often isolated within their communities. It is these families who consistently tell us how vital Challengers services are and how grateful they are that Challengers will try to 'find a way' so that everyone can be included.



We have identified 3 core goals that bring our vision and mission to life, using play opportunities to develop confidence in children and young people and ensure that every child is enabled to enjoy and experience play. They also set out to ensure that families have the opportunity to reach out to each other, reduce isolation, increase knowledge and improve the quality of information and support they have available to them. Our priorities, therefore, serve to support these goals and ensure that we continue to offer meaningful and impactful play opportunities, evidence our impact and also share our knowledge and expertise to educate and support local communities. These goals and priorities can only be achieved with firm foundations and this is

where the first 12 months of our strategy will focus. We want to attract and retain the best quality staff and to do this we must ensure that Challengers continues to be a great place to work. An organisation that sets out clear roles, responsibilities and expectations, provides staff with the right tools to do the job, remunerates fairly and supports personal development and progression. We also need a sustainable business model, where everyone working at Challengers understands the 'numbers' of the charity, represents good value for money to funders and a positive impact that can be evidenced and attributed to their work. To support this, we will need to embody a culture of continuous improvement, achieving greater impact and efficiency with the funding that we receive. This will be set within a framework of strong governance with clear and accessible policies, good risk and financial management, as well as scrutiny and challenge from a diverse board of trustees. Our strategy, therefore, is underpinned by the Challengers Approach and our five core values demonstrating that we are a 'people-first' organisation.

## VALUES

### INCLUSIVE

We foster an inclusive environment and value diversity of ideas within and across teams. We are respectful and call out behaviour that is contrary to what we stand for.

### PLAYFUL

We take joy in what we do, we are open, friendly, light-hearted and supportive of each other, we celebrate individual and team success.

### TRUSTWORTHY

We do what we say we will do. We acknowledge mistakes and honour our promises, we act fairly and with integrity.

### AMBITIOUS

We seek to innovate and realise opportunities. We support each other to learn, achieve and succeed.

### ACCOUNTABLE

We are accountable for our actions and make decisions that we are proud of. We embody the spirit of Challengers.

## Excel at providing Inclusive Play Opportunities

**Why?** We want to continue to be the best at what we do so that all children and young people can build confidence and reach their full potential. This starts with our Pre-schools and continues through our activity schemes and 555 exclusion services.

**What?** In order to reach more families and increase our impact, we must continue to develop our knowledge of play and improve our model of delivery.

**When?** Develop a profile for a 'Play Expert' by March 2022. Develop a framework of standards that can be consistently applied across all settings and services (linked to the Challengers Approach) by Sept 2022. The continuous development of our services is ongoing and will be measured through formal and informal feedback.



## Share knowledge and experience with a wider audience

**Why?** We recognise that we have expertise in reducing the barriers to play and supporting children and young people with the most complex support requirements. We would therefore like to be able to share this expertise in order to improve opportunities and outcomes for disabled children and young people, helping to build a more inclusive society.

**What?** We will develop a training and consultancy offer for local businesses and mainstream play and leisure providers.

**When?** Initial training offer marketed from April 2022



## Challengers Priorities



## Establish a Community Hub

**Why?** The parents and guardians of disabled children typically have 24-hour caring commitments and are often isolated within their communities. By establishing a Community Hub we will be able to connect families together, improve access to information and develop a network of local community groups.

**What?** Initially, a pilot project to explore ideas and opportunities to connect families, reach under-represented groups and engage the local community. This will lead to a funding bid for a community engagement officer post who will deliver and develop these ideas, creating a vibrant Community Hub.

**When?** Pilot project and funding applications complete July 2022.



## Evidence our impact in the communities that we serve

**Why?** We know that we make a significant difference and want to be able to evidence this to our funders, supporters, employees and families.

**What?** This project will seek to establish a framework and approach to the collection, analysis and interpretation of data, that can be tracked over time and published in our annual Impact Report.

**When?** Framework and approach in place to start from April 2022.

## Sound Governance

**Why?** Good governance is the foundation of all charities and is an indicator that the charity is well run and trustworthy.

**What?** Review and update all charity policies, create a cycle of review and version control. Review and update the current Risk Register and Risk Management process. Establish a reporting structure that will ensure that key performance indicators are measured and reported timeously to the Board and scrutiny committees.

**When?** Schedule of monthly policy review in place from July 2021. Revised Risk Management and reporting system in place by Dec 2021. KPI measurement and reporting in place by Sept 2021



## Continuous Improvement

**Why?** Continuous improvement creates opportunities that add value, without adding cost and we want to add value to all of our stakeholders including our funders, families and employees.

**What?** Review of all key departmental and service support processes and procedures using Lean Processing techniques. Explore the use of software and IT as a way of reducing our reliance on manual and paper-based solutions.

**When?** One process or work practice to be reviewed within each department every quarter



# Challengers Foundations



## Staff Happiness

**Why?** To deliver the best services, we must attract and retain the best people and therefore staff happiness will form the foundation of everything that we do.

**What?** We are investing in new IT and telephone equipment so that everyone has the right tools to do their job. We are reviewing all roles and responsibilities so that we can adapt to a more agile way of working, post-COVID, and ensure accountability. We believe that staff should be fairly remunerated and have opportunities to progress, therefore as part of the roles and responsibilities work we will also benchmark salaries and identify potential career pathways. Finally, we will continue to review staff happiness in a bi-annual survey.

**When?** Staff Happiness Survey Jun 2021 and Jan 2022, IT and telephony roll-out Sept-Dec 2021. Roles and Responsibilities review Sept-Dec with recommendations to the Board for 2022/2023 budget.



## Sustainable Business Model

**Why?** Sustainability is critical for all charities and at Challengers we want to make sure that we are both financially sustainable and environmentally responsible.

**What?** To be financially sustainable we must deliver a good service at a fair price and operate services on a Full Cost Recovery basis. These are the foundations for all of the projects identified in this strategy. We will ensure that all managers and leaders have an increased understanding of the charities financials so that they are empowered to make decisions about resource allocation and to be able to measure their performance against budget and contractual agreements. We will also explore ways to reduce our carbon footprint and develop a policy for our environmental sustainability.

**When?** Programme of financial awareness Sept 2021 – Mar 2022. Full Cost Recovery by March 2023. Sustainability policy approved by the Board by September 2022