



Housing Landlord Services

Playgrounds & Play Equipment Policy

2019

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Name of Policy:	Housing Landlord Services Playgrounds and Play Equipment Policy 2019
Purpose of Policy:	<p>New Forest District Council is committed to its legal obligations in accordance with Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at Work Act 1992, Occupiers Liability Act 1957 and 1984 Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and will strive to reduce the risks associated with playgrounds and play equipment to as low a level as is reasonably practicable.</p> <p>This policy supports the Council's overarching Health and Safety Policy and sets out the guiding principles and arrangements for Housing Landlord Services.</p>
Policy Applies to:	This policy and the subsequent arrangements apply to all employed housing staff within New Forest District Council and, where appropriate, tenants, contractors, care providers and members of the public.
First Issued and Implementation Date:	1 st November 2019
Reviewed:	At least every 2 years from date of issue or as a result of legislative, organisational changes or an incident investigation.

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Section 1 Introduction

This policy has been prepared to formally recognise the maintenance and inspection strategy of New Forest District Council's play and leisure facilities (Controlled by Housing Services) and the assets within these facilities. The policy will outline the legal responsibilities of the authority and how the Council will meet these responsibilities through a system of inspection, assessing risk and responses to faults and risks. Playgrounds by their very nature should provide a degree of risk and challenges to the users. The policy will therefore summarise the Council's objectives in providing challenging play while identifying an acceptable degree of risk.

Legal Requirements

There is no specific legislation on play safety. However, the key legislation is the: Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at Work Act 1992, Occupiers Liability Act 1957 and 1984 and Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

New Forest District Council and its staff have a duty to take actions to ensure the safety of people at work and members of the public who may be affected by the facilities it provides. It is governed by the test of "reasonable practicability". In other words, it is reasonable to correct major hazards; it is unreasonable to spend considerable resources on minor faults where risk is negligible and potential injury very minor.

Industry Standards and Guidance

These standards and Safety Guidelines are not a legal requirement but are considered to be good professional working practice.

EN1176 – Playground Equipment

EN1176 is the European Standard which replaced the old British Standards. The standard is not retrospective and provides advice on design layout and the inspection of playground equipment. Contained within the guidance are the following key recommendations: If the equipment is not safe, access by the public should be prevented. The equipment must be inspected and maintained. An inspection record should be kept and maintained.

Civil Legislation

In the event of a serious accident claims are based on negligence i.e. a breach of the duty of care which caused the accident and which was foreseeable. Any defence will be based on evidence such as records of inspections and maintenance, compliance with the Standards and relevant risk assessments.

This policy sets out the methodology the Council will use in managing and maintaining the playgrounds controlled by Housing Services. The policy will take into account the authority's legal responsibilities and outline a method of inspections and maintenance.

Balancing Risks and Benefits

The Council's risk management approach aims to offer play spaces that are stimulating, and challenging environments enabling children to explore and develop their abilities. In providing these environments, the Council will manage the level of risk so that children are not exposed to unacceptable risks and hazards.

Section 2 Playground Inspection Methodology

The Council's Housing Landlord Service will adhere to the guidance set out in this document. The responsibility for the operational regular inspection of the play and leisure facilities under the Council's responsibility will be carried out weekly by Housing Maintenance and quarterly by Open Spaces staff.

This section of the policy identifies the Council's methodology in managing the authority's play assets following:

- Inspection Frequency and Type
- Inspection Type Definitions
- Assessing the Level of Risk
- Summary of Risks

Inspection Frequency & Type

The table below details the frequency of inspections and the inspectorate responsible for carrying out the on-site inspections of play areas and play equipment.

FREQUENCY OF INSPECTION	INSPECTION TYPE	INSPECTOR
Weekly (Routine)	Visual	Stock Condition Surveyor
3 Months	Operational	Open Spaces Team
Annual	Annual Detailed	Zurich, RoSPA (or other external organisation)
Bespoke	Reactive	Open Spaces Team (at the request of the Service Manager – Compliance and asset Management)

Section 3 Inspection Type – Definitions

Routine Visual Inspections – EN 1176-7.6.2a - LOOK & SEE

Includes the identification of obvious hazards resulting from use, weather and vandalism, broken parts or bottles, litter, graffiti, equipment misuse.

Operational Inspection – EN1176-76.2b - POKE & PROD

Operational Inspections provide a more detailed inspection to check the operation and stability of all equipment and surfaces especially for wear.

It is recommended that inspections should be carried out every 3 months. The Council may increase the frequencies of the operational inspections and this decision will be dependent

of the grading of the area which will consider factors such as popularity, profile and equipment type.

Check repairs; rust and rot; bearings. Cleanliness Equipment Ground Clearance Exposed Foundations Sharp Edges Missing Parts Excessive Wear (of moving parts) Structural Integrity.

Inspectors will be trained to RPII Operational Inspector's level enabling them to perform an operational inspection.

Annual Main Inspection – EN1176-7.6.2c

These inspections will approximately be carried out every 12 months.

These check the overall safety of equipment, foundations and surfaces, the effects of weather, evidence of rotting or corrosion and any change in the level of safety as a result of repairs made or added or replacement components.

The annual Inspections are to be carried out by the Council's insurance inspector and will be arranged by the Servicing and Compliance Officer.

Operational and annual inspections, whether inspection carried out by a Council employee or contractor working on behalf of the authority, will be inspected and recorded using the same method and system.

Bespoke Inspections

These inspections can be carried out by the Open Spaces team at the request of the Servicing and Compliance Officer.

Typically, bespoke inspections are a consequence of enquiry from a community member, an accident in a play facility, in response to an urgent request or to carry out a post installation inspection following the installation of new equipment. Bespoke inspections are also carried out as a method of verifying and checking existing inspections.

Accidents, Enquiries and Claims

The Council will record all accidents notified to it and enquires relating to the play areas and facilities within them. The details of the enquiry, complaint or accident will (alongside usual accident reporting procedures) be recorded within the same system used for issuing and recording inspections. Recording incidents in this manner will enable the authority to illustrate a clear chain of information from the inspection, the associated risk, details of works and repairs carried out and any information related to an accident or enquiry. This information will enable the authority to defend itself against claims and be an effective management tool for future improvements.

Section 4 Appendices

Appendix 1 Housing Landlord Services are responsible for the following Playparks: -

PLAY AREA	HEATHER ROAD	FAWLEY
PLAY AREA, NEXT TO NEDDERMAN CENTRE	MARRYAT ROAD	NEW MILTON
PLAY AREA	MARRYAT ROAD	NEW MILTON
PLAY AREA	BLIGH CLOSE	NEW MILTON
PLAY AREA	DRAKE CLOSE	NEW MILTON
PLAY AREA	HOWE CLOSE	NEW MILTON
PLAY AREA	STOCKLANDS	TOTTON

PROCESS MAP

