

# Lydiard Millicent Parish Council Enclosed Play Area Management Policy

## Introduction

This policy has been prepared to formally recognise the maintenance and inspection regime of Lydiard Millicent Parish Council (hereafter known as the Council) in respect of their enclosed play facilities and the assets within these facilities. The policy will outline the legal responsibilities of the Council and how they 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:

- 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

The Council 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 provided by the Council. 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.

## 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:

- That 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 maintained for 21 years

## Area(s) of Responsibility

- Jubilee Play Area (owned by the Council)

## Civil Legislation

In the event of a claim being brought against the Council on the grounds that harm has occurred to one or more persons due to negligence on the part of the Council, there would have to be evidence that the Council took, or failed to take, some action which made the accident more likely to happen, or worse than would otherwise have been the case. The Council's defence will be based on the Council's Play Risk Management evidence such as records of inspections and maintenance, compliance with the Standards and relevant risk assessments.

## Balancing Risks and Benefits

The Council's Risk Management Approach will aim 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.

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## Playground Inspection Methodology

This section will identify the Council's methodology in managing the authority's assets using the following approach:

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

## Inspection Frequency and Type

The table below details the frequency of inspections and the inspector responsible for carrying out the on-site inspections. The inspector and frequency rates are currently feasible.

| FREQUENCY OF INSPECTION | INSPECTION TYPE      | INSPECTOR                  |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Weekly                  | Visual               | Parish Handyman            |
| Annually                | Operational/Detailed | RoSPA Qualified Contractor |

## Inspection Type Definitions

### Visual Inspection

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

### Operational / Detailed Inspection

The overall safety of equipment, foundations and surfaces are checked as well as 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 an independent inspector who provides a detailed written report with condition statements for each piece of equipment.

## Assessing the level of risk

### Visual Inspection

The Parish Handyman will:

- record the details of each inspection, including the date of inspection and any identified issues
- address issues where possible (e.g. removing litter or hazards)
- report results to the Parish Clerk

If the Parish Handyman identifies issues that cannot be addressed immediately, these will be flagged to the Parish Clerk for review and assessment in line with the Council's risk management approach.

### Operational/Detailed Inspection

The Parish Council takes a lead from the annual independent inspections risk rating for short and long term maintenance and refurbishment. The most recent annual inspections were conducted by Wicksteed Leisure Ltd and the matrix used is shown below.

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**Risk Assessment Matrix**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                         |   | Scores in the report are multiplication factors of Likelihood x Severity    |                                                               |                                                                       |                                                                |                                                                      |         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                         |   | Severity>>                                                                  |                                                               |                                                                       |                                                                |                                                                      |         |
| Likelihood                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Very High probability, if the situation is not addressed an accident is almost certain. | 5 | Very High                                                                   | VL (5)                                                        | L (10)                                                                | M (15)                                                         | H (20)                                                               | VH (25) |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | High probability an accident is probable without any added factor.                      | 4 | High                                                                        | VL (4)                                                        | L (8)                                                                 | M (12)                                                         | H (16)                                                               | H (20)  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Moderate probability an incident is foreseeable.                                        | 3 | Moderate                                                                    | VL (3)                                                        | L (6)                                                                 | L (9)                                                          | M (12)                                                               | M (15)  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Some probability, requires a combination of factors to take place.                      | 2 | Low                                                                         | VL (2)                                                        | VL (4)                                                                | L (6)                                                          | L (8)                                                                | L (10)  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | No significant probability; lightning strike, freak accident.                           | 1 | Very Low                                                                    | VL (1)                                                        | VL (2)                                                                | VL (3)                                                         | VL (4)                                                               | VL (5)  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                         |   | Very Low                                                                    | Low                                                           | Moderate                                                              | High                                                           | Very High                                                            |         |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                         |   | 1                                                                           | 2                                                             | 3                                                                     | 4                                                              | 5                                                                    |         |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                         |   | No injury likely<br>e.g. damaged or soiled clothing, minor bruising, grazes | Minor injury, laceration or bruising requiring first aid only | Injury requiring medical intervention<br>e.g. cuts requiring stitches | Serious injury including concussions or fracture of long bones | Severe injury involving a potential life changing injury or fatality |         |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                         |   | Severity>>                                                                  |                                                               |                                                                       |                                                                |                                                                      |         |
| Note 1: The total risk scores included within our reports are a multiplication factor of the calculated Likelihood and Severity of each finding. Both Likelihood and Severity are given a number between 1 - 5 as shown on the matrix above and these two numbers are then multiplied together to give the total risk score that is shown against defects on the report. Total risk scores can be divided in both directions, i.e. a total risk score of 12 could be a Likelihood (3) x Severity (4) or Likelihood (4) x Severity (3). |                                                                                         |   |                                                                             |                                                               |                                                                       |                                                                |                                                                      |         |
| Note 2: When we inspect we only see a snapshot of the current condition of the equipment. It is the operators responsibility to ensure that there is a continuing level of maintenance to keep the equipment in good working order and the site fit for use.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                         |   |                                                                             |                                                               |                                                                       |                                                                |                                                                      |         |

**Equipment has been assessed to the following standards where relevant:**

BS EN 1176 Parts 1-11 (Playground equipment and surfacing)  
BS EN 14974 (Facilities for users of roller sports equipment)  
BS EN 15312 (Free access multi-sports equipment)  
BS EN 16899 (Parkour Equipment)  
BS EN 16830 (Outdoor Fitness Equipment).

The output from the annual operational inspection will be reviewed by the Parish Clerk. Any High or Very High risks (or equivalent ratings) will be flagged to the Chairman as soon as possible, and, dependent on the risk may result in any of the following:

- temporary closure of part of the play area
- temporary closure of all of the play area
- emergency remedial action in line with Financial Regulations
- extraordinary meeting of the Council to agree remedial actions

**Summary of risks**

Where appropriate, risks identified as part of the Visual Inspection or Operational/Detailed Inspection will be logged and tracked on the Council's risk management register.

Date Approved by Council: 5 June 2025

Date for Review: June 2027