

Play Equipment Policy

Play is an expression of human development in childhood. Play is a Vital component of growing up and is how children develop skills, Physical, social, and intellectual. Play provides children and young People with opportunities to test themselves and others and gives Children opportunities to practise and prepare for the outdoor World. Inclusive play areas allow children and young people, Whatever their ability, to socialise and build relationships. "the child shall have full opportunity for play and recreation and Society, and the public authorities shall endeavour to promote The enjoyment of this right" 'united nations convention of the Rights of the child'

Background

Holbeach Parish Council is responsible for three areas within its Parish, they are:

Carters Park

Netherfield

Holbeach Bank

Each area has a range of play equipment, and it is anticipated that Carters Park will, within the next twelve months, have inclusive play equipment.

1. To provide, where possible, conventional play areas to Provide every opportunity to play.

If we are to provide a society in which people live together and care for each other, we must first create a caring and creative atmosphere for children.

2. To ensure the parish play facilities comply with all the appropriate British standards.

To minimise the risk of accidents and help provide a safer environment for children to enjoy play.

3. To monitor and review design, installation and layout of the play area and investigate and take note of new research into safety standards.

To be aware that accidents in playgrounds arise from many causes and modify and update policies as new information, legislation and standards dictate:

- inappropriate design and layout of playgrounds
- unsuitably designed play equipment
- incorrectly installed equipment
- inadequately maintained equipment
- lack of age - and ability - related equipment
- lack of adult supervision
- aggressive or dangerous behaviour of children
- misuse of equipment
- unsuitable clothing worn by children

4. To carry out routine monthly recorded inspections of the play area in addition to a fully documented certified 12 monthly inspection by an independent inspector.

Sites should be visually inspected weekly for superficial defects and faults to equipment in addition to general cleanliness and removal of dangerous objects. Monthly inspections should be more 'in depth' and cover fences, seats, gates, litter bins in addition to the play equipment and impact absorbing surfaces. The documented inspections shall be carried out in accordance with current legislation by an independent inspector.

5. **To monitor safety by keeping a central record of all reported injuries and serious incidents on its playgrounds.**

This information can be taken into account when updating existing play areas and planning new ones.

6. **To liaise with parents, schools & children and take account of children's needs when replacing or updating play equipment.**

Watching children at play and seeking their views on play facilities will be invaluable when planning future play facilities and updating existing play areas. Parents and schools can also prove to be a valuable source of information.

7. **To agree a forward plan and update and amend as necessary and as any new legislation or standards dictate.**

This will take account of all information gained from consultations with the local community and any accidents/incidents reported.

8. **To endeavour to introduce more inclusive play provision for children with and without disabilities.**

Disabled children are simply children with extra needs, and they should have access to a play environment which allows them the same opportunities for recreation and creativity as able bodied children. They should be given the opportunity to mix and play with able-bodied children and, wherever possible, have the use of suitable play equipment. Only by giving them the chance to meet and play with children without special needs will they begin to accept each other and help avoid prejudices that can arise as a result of ignorance.

9. **To try to make parents aware of their responsibility to children at play and seek their help to provide a safe environment in which they can play.**

This can be achieved by the provision of literature on social media being available to all households in the parish, which highlights and explains the need and reasons for the following:-

- Parental/adult supervision in playgrounds
- Prevention of children acting aggressively or dangerously on the equipment
- Wearing of sensible clothing and shoes (toggles on a hood can become caught on a slide and strangle the child).
- Community consultation for future play provisions

10. **To designate all playgrounds within the parish and all recreation grounds as areas where dog owners must clear up after their dogs.**

Local authorities have a duty to keep designated areas in their control, including parks and children's playgrounds, as clear of dog faeces as is practicable under part iv of the environmental act 1990

11. **To maintain a site register for the play area.**

To contain:

- A copy of the parish play policy
- A Site Plan
- Full Equipment Details
- Documentation of the planning & Development of the Site
- Inspection, maintenance, and forward planning programme
- Details of Reported Accidents and Serious Incidents

Summary

The Play Equipment Policy is designed to take account of all statutory requirements in addition to this Council's commitment to provide safe formal play areas within the confines of its budget facilities. Holbeach Parish Council understands and acknowledges the need to: Consult and liaise with parents, children and schools, before purchasing new equipment and thereby ensure only the type of equipment that will be enjoyed and put to its maximum use will be considered. Educate parents/guardians to be aware of their responsibility to their charges at play. Provide more play opportunities for disabled children and bear this in mind when considering the purchase of new equipment. Install signs, in prominent positions, advising that Play Areas and Recreation Grounds are areas where dog owners must clear up after their dogs. Update/or replace old and defective equipment. Recognise the expected 'life' of existing equipment and create a replacement plan. Maintain a site register and ensure it is kept up to date. Ensure inspections are carried out as set out in Policy No. 4.

Implementation

To enable implementation of the Play Equipment Policy, the Parish Council needs to: Identify any grants and sponsorship available to assist with costs. Consider creating a 'replacement fund', which can be added to each year, to enable implementation of Policy Nos. 1. 7. 8. 9 & 10. Ensure awareness of the Play Equipment Policy within the Council and throughout the Parish . Instruct staff to carry out weekly and monthly documented inspections. Acknowledge that the administration and implementation of Policy Nos. 4. 5 & 11 shall be the responsibility of the Open Spaces Committee

Version	Date Approved	Amendments Made	Next Review Date
V1	14/10/2019		
V2	20/12/2021		11/04/2022
V3	19/04/2022		11/04/2023
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