

Playground Inspection Policy

1. Introduction Goring-on-Thames Parish Council is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable environment for all users of its playground facilities. To ensure the safety of children and other visitors, a thorough and systematic inspection process will be implemented. This policy outlines the procedures for the inspection and maintenance of playground equipment, grounds, and facilities.

2. Scope This policy applies to all playgrounds and play areas managed by the Goring-on-Thames Parish Council. It covers the inspection, maintenance, and repair of equipment, surfaces, fencing, signage, and general site conditions.

3. Types of Inspections

- **Weekly Inspections:**

- **Frequency:** Conducted weekly by a trained and designated playground member of staff.
- **Key Tasks:**
 - Comprehensive visual inspection of all equipment and surfacing for damage, wear, and tear.
 - Check for signs of rust, sharp edges, loose bolts, or other hazards.
 - Check play surfaces for wear, appropriate depth of loose fill materials (e.g., bark chippings), or trip hazards.
 - Inspect signage for clarity and visibility, ensuring all safety warnings are in place and legible.
 - Report all findings to the Parish Council and record issues for future reference.

- **Annual Inspections:**

- **Frequency:** Conducted annually by a qualified independent playground inspector (certified to EN1176 or equivalent standards).
- **Key Tasks:**
 - A thorough inspection of all equipment and the surrounding area to ensure compliance with national safety standards.
 - Detailed report with recommendations for repairs or improvements.
 - Recommendations for any necessary replacements, upgrades, or adjustments.
 - Review of the playground's condition in relation to relevant health and safety regulations.



4. Reporting and Documentation

- All inspection findings will be documented and stored for reference. This includes any immediate issues, maintenance actions taken, and any recommendations for improvements.
- Routine inspections will be recorded on a standard inspection form and submitted to the Parish Clerk.
- Any urgent safety concerns or hazards identified during inspections must be immediately reported to the Parish Clerk or the designated person in charge.
- The Parish Council will review inspection reports on a quarterly basis to ensure that all safety issues are being addressed in a timely manner.

5. Maintenance and Repairs

- Based on the results of inspections, the necessary maintenance or repairs will be scheduled and carried out promptly.
- Minor repairs (such as tightening screws or replacing broken components) will be addressed within 24-48 hours.
- More significant repairs (such as replacing large pieces of equipment or resurfacing) will be prioritized and completed as soon as possible, with temporary closures or safety barriers erected if necessary.
- All repairs and maintenance work will be documented for future reference.

7. Risk Management and Hazard Mitigation

- The Parish Council will take all necessary steps to minimize risks and hazards, including the removal of any unsafe equipment or features.
- Where required, safety barriers or signage will be used to limit access to hazardous areas during repairs or maintenance.
- Regular reviews will be undertaken to ensure that all new safety regulations, guidelines, and best practices are incorporated into the inspection and maintenance processes.

8. Staff and Volunteer Training

- All personnel involved in the inspection or maintenance of playgrounds will receive adequate training, which includes:
 - Understanding relevant safety standards (e.g., EN1176, EN1177).
 - Recognizing common playground hazards and how to mitigate them.
 - Correct reporting and documentation procedures.
 - Basic emergency response protocols for playground accidents.
- The Parish Council will ensure that staff are kept up to date with any changes to regulations or best practices.



9. Review and Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains up to date with current best practices, health and safety regulations, and local needs.

Approved by Goring-on-Thames Parish Council:

- Date: _____
- Signed: _____