

Great Finborough Parish Council

PLAYGROUND / PLAY AREAS RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

This policy has been prepared to recognise formally the maintenance and inspection regime of Great Finborough Parish Council's play facility and the assets within that facility.

The policy will outline the legal responsibilities of the authority and how the Parish 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. At all times it is to be recognised that in providing challenging play there will be an identifiable acceptable degree of risk.

The Parish Council aims to offer a play space which is stimulating, and challenging environment enabling children to explore and develop their abilities. In providing this environment, the Parish Council will manage the level of risk so that users of the play area and its equipment are not exposed to unacceptable risks and hazards.

2. Legal Requirements

The Council will be governed by the rules of "reasonable practicability" and will seek to correct major hazards. Minor faults where risk is negligible and potential injury very minor will be monitored unless the fault or hazard changes status.

This policy will take into account the Parish Council's legal responsibilities and outline a method of inspection and maintenance given the resources available to it.

3. Inspection Type & Frequency

Inspection and maintenance activities are carried out to ensure the play area is safe for young people using it. They also ensure timely maintenance to minimise major maintenance issues and replacement costs for equipment.

- a. Visual Inspections - The monthly visual inspection will be carried out by an appointed councillor. The inspection will include the identification of obvious hazards resulting from use, weather and vandalism, broken parts or bottles, litter, graffiti, equipment misuse. Obvious hazards as described above along with the overall results of the inspections will be fed back to the Parish Council for appropriate action.
- b. Reactive inspections - The Parish Council will respond to complaints, requests and reports received about play equipment from members of the public.
- c. Independent Full Inspections - The annual inspection is carried out by an independent accredited playground inspector. The Play Inspection Company currently perform the annual inspection on behalf of the Parish Council through the procurement offices of Mid Suffolk District Council. The annual inspection report is reported to the Parish Council and assesses:
 - 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.
 - Structural Integrity

4. Accidents, Enquiries and Claims

The Parish Council will record all accidents and enquires relating to the play area and facilities within them. Records will be maintained to ensure that the Parish Council is able to identify 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 Parish Council to defend itself against claims and be an effective management tool for future improvements.

5. Responsibilities

The Parish Council will undertake to:

- Nominate Councillors to be responsible for monthly inspections
- Ensure all types of inspections are taking place, reports are filed and identified actions are undertaken in an appropriate timeframe
- Approve spending on remedial actions

The Parish Council will:

- Review the monthly inspection checklist completed by the Councillor
- File all inspection records
- Ensure monthly inspection checklists and annual playground inspections are retained
- Instruct a contractor to perform minor / major maintenance where appropriate
- Instigate action to resolve urgent and/or high-risk issues identified in inspections where such action is required before the next Parish Council meeting.

Nominated Councillor will:

- Perform monthly inspections according to the agreed schedule, including an overall site visual inspection
- Complete inspection reports and file with the Clerk
- Notify the Parish Council as a matter of urgency of any dangerous equipment or take steps to isolate the dangerous equipment with temporary barriers or barricades

Signed:

Dated:

Adopted: 8th April 2025
Next Review: March 2028