



Brighton Council

POLICY NAME: Playground Safety

POLICY NO: AP02

PURPOSE OF POLICY:

Council playgrounds are to be maintained to a high standard, to contribute to the amenity of Council's open spaces, to be fully functional for public use and enjoyment, and to remain in a safe, useable condition at all times.

The Council shall provide maintenance of playground equipment, park furniture, landscaping items located on Council owned or maintained land. The works shall include graffiti removal and maintenance of Council owned playground assets, park furniture and landscaping.

SCOPE:

Works Services.

POLICY:

Health and Safety requirements

The Council has a duty of care to any person who may be affected by what the Council does. All persons engaged in the maintenance of Council reserves and facilities shall at all times comply with the requirements of the Council's Work Health and Safety policy.

Public complaints

Complaints from the public shall be forwarded to the appropriate person so that the relevant actions may be taken.

Avoidance of nuisance

The Council shall at all times take reasonable steps to minimise nuisance (including nuisance from noise, dust, debris and obstructions) to the public. Reasonable requests from persons affected by the works for the cessation of a nuisance shall be complied with.

Work areas shall be kept clean and tidy at all times with rubbish and other spoils being regularly removed from the site. Prior to completion of works, all waste, surplus materials and rubbish shall be removed from the site and the area thoroughly cleaned and left in a condition acceptable for public use.

Adequate measures shall be taken to restrict public access to areas affected by maintenance work by the provision of temporary safety fences and appropriate signage.

Sub contractors

Before any sub-contractor commences work for the Council, copies of the sub-contractors Public Liability Insurance Policy shall be submitted. The sub-contractor shall carry all costs associated with the insurance policy.

The contractor shall be informed of the Council's Work Health and Safety Policy and their roles and responsibilities to the Council, themselves and members of the public as required by this Policy.

Before a contractor commences work on site a Works and/or Purchase Order shall be issued in accordance with Council's procedures for procuring Goods and Services.

RESERVES ASSET MAINTENANCE

Generally

Park furniture generally includes all signs, tables, seats, BBQ's, litter bins, sculptures picnic shelters etc., placed on Council parks and reserves.

Removal of assets

Where an asset, including playground equipment, signage, gates, fencing, park furniture, trees and the like, are required to be removed, either through acts of vandalism, nature or if requested, the area shall be maintained in a safe, clean and tidy condition at all times.

When an asset is required to be removed, all supports, posts, brackets etc., shall be removed to a minimum depth of 50mm below natural ground level. Natural ground level in playground areas shall be 250mm below the surface level of the surrounding softfall material. The surrounding surfaces shall be reinstated as appropriate to match existing. If required, grassed areas shall be covered with instant turf or topsoil and seeded to match surrounding levels.

Acts of Nature

All damage as a result of an act of nature (such as storm or wind damage) shall be rectified as soon as possible after detection. Should the asset be damaged beyond reasonable repair, the asset shall be removed and the area made safe.

Vandalism

All acts of vandalism shall be repaired as soon as possible after detection. Should the asset be damaged beyond reasonable repair, it is to be removed, the area made safe, and the relevant Council Officer notified.

Bills, Posters and Graffiti

All Council assets, including trees, are to be kept free of bills, posters, stickers and graffiti. Bills, posters, stickers and graffiti etc that do appear on Council assets shall be removed as soon as possible after detection. Following the removal of bills, posters, stickers or graffiti, the surface of the asset should be returned to its original condition.

Horticultural Waste

Leaves and other horticultural waste, irrespective of it's origin (either by actions of the public or by nature), shall be collected and disposed of to ensure plant debris on any lawn, path or vehicle standing area, does not reach a depth, coverage or condition that will cause damage or become a potential hazard.

Litter

Council facilities and reserves shall be inspected on a regular basis for the presence of litter. Litter that has overflowed from bins (either by actions of the public or by nature) shall be reported so that the appropriate arrangements may be made for its disposal.

PLAYGROUNDS

Generally

Playground equipment and softfall shall be maintained to conform to Australian Standards.

If a playground or softfall does not comply with the specified standard, the playground and softfall may be brought to the specified standard through programmed maintenance and shall then be maintained at the new standard.

Inspection and maintenance

Playgrounds, including the surrounding area, shall be regularly inspected to ensure there are no hazards or defects which could represent a risk to the public. The surrounding area of a playground shall extend to the property boundaries of the reserve or park and shall include all park improvements.

Should a defect or hazard be found, the equipment, park furniture etc., shall be made safe as soon as possible. If the item cannot be repaired or made safe immediately, it is to be made unavailable for public use until repaired, removed, or replaced.

Sharps, glass or other potentially dangerous objects must be removed immediately upon detection. Sharps are to be collected in dedicated containers in accordance with Council's Work Health and Safety Policy and disposed of through the Council's Environmental Health Department.

Softfall

Softfall areas consisting of approved materials (pinebark), shall be maintained at a minimum thickness of 250mm and shall be raked over to avoid compaction and the development of hollows in high use areas. Foreign materials including stones, branches, grass etc, shall be removed.

Softfall shall extend for a minimum distance of 2.5 metres from playground equipment in all directions around equipment where a fall is possible. In general, the softfall zone applies all around equipment. If engineering means or equipment design would prevent a fall in a particular direction, the softfall zone requirements may not apply to that area.

The softfall zone shall be measured from the following points:

1. For equipment with no moving components (e.g., a slide) the measurement should be from the perimeter of the equipment;
2. For equipment with a freely moving component (e.g., a skale, tarzan rope), the measurement should be made from the furthest extension of the moving component(s);
3. For equipment which includes moving as well as non-moving components (e.g., a swing), the swing shall be made from both-
 - The furthest extension of the moving components in the direction of movement; and
 - The perimeter of the equipment for the non moving components.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

Reports

Inspections shall be carried out regularly by a competent person to identify potentially hazardous wear points and areas prone to corrosion or decay. Reports shall be held by Works Services staff.

Where hazards are identified, the appropriate corrective action shall be noted and as well as the time within which that corrective action is to be taken. If the hazard is immediate, the equipment shall be either removed or secured to prevent user access.

The report shall be on an approved form and shall indicate the playground, location, date of inspection, name of inspector, condition of each piece of equipment or park furniture.

REFERENCES:

AS 4685 (1-2014) Playground equipment and surfacing -
General safety requirements and test methods.

AS/NZS 4422 (1996) Playground surfacing –specifications, requirements and test method.

AS/NZS 4486 (1997) Playgrounds and playground equipment, Part 1, Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation.

ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS:

Policy compiled: January 2003

Adopted by SMT: February 2004

Reviewed: February 2006, September 2011, September 2016, August 2020

To be reviewed: August 2022

Responsibility: Municipal Engineer



GENERAL MANAGER