

Lower Heyford and Caulcott Parish Council

Re-opening of Play Equipment

Risk Assessment

The Government recently announced that Play Parks could be re-opened on 4 July 2020 and subsequently produced guidance offering “practical advice on how these can be reopened and managed effectively to enable their use while minimising the transmission risk of COVID-19”. The guidance is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-playgrounds-and-outdoor-gyms/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-playgrounds-and-outdoor-gyms>

The guidance includes a requirement to “carry out an appropriate COVID-19 risk assessment”. It is made very clear that “Failure to complete a risk assessment which takes account of COVID-19, or completing a risk assessment but failing to put in place sufficient measures to manage the risk of COVID-19, could constitute a breach of health and safety law”. On that basis, this Risk Assessment takes each of the Key Principles as set out in the guidance and assesses whether or not practical arrangements can be put in place.

Key Principle	Government Guidance	Assessment	Conclusion
General Maintenance Issues following Lockdown	Ensure equipment is safe to use and that risks from damaged or defective equipment are addressed before opening.	Visual inspection conducted in accordance with the current maintenance plan. Annual inspection due in July 20.	The current maintenance schedule remains extant.
Social Distancing	Put in place measures to support social distancing – 2m or 1m plus risk mitigations. Examples given include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limit number of users at any one time• Booking system• Advisory signage• Create waiting areas with barriers	Maintaining social distancing in a small playground will be difficult, especially with children. The current legislation enabling 2 households to be in close proximity should be recommended for the KGF playground to reduce the risk of direct infection. Signage to indicate that ‘no more than two different households may use the playground concurrently’ .	To be added to signage

		To ensure fair access, the signage should also read 'please be courteous to all users and limit your time in the playground to 30 mins at busy times'	
Cleaning and Hygiene	<p>Clean high traffic touch points frequently. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Play Equipment • Seating Areas • Refuse Bins <p>In addition, use signage to encourage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users to clean equipment before and after use • Use of hand sanitiser and frequent hand washing <p>Where practicable, provide hand sanitiser or hand washing facilities at entry and exit points.</p>	<p>It is not practicable to clean the equipment on a frequent basis and there is no cleaning contract in place.</p> <p>Signage to indicate that 'users must clean the equipment before and after use, using a sanitising spray or gel. LHPC and KGF will not be conducting routine sanitisation of the playground or equipment, therefore all users use these facilities at their own risk'.</p>	To be added to signage
Face Coverings	If possible, a face covering should be worn in enclosed public spaces where social distancing isn't possible and where the public may come into contact with people they do not normally meet. (Face coverings should not be used by children under the age of 3 or those who may find it difficult to manage them correctly).	<p>In line with current guidance, users should be encouraged to use face masks if in the playground with other households.</p> <p>Signage to read 'if more than one household is using the playground simultaneously, it is advised that those who can wear facemasks do so to reduce the risk of infecting others'.</p>	To be added to signage

Additional Measures and Communicating with Parents	<p>Promote responsible behaviour by children, parents, carers and guardians. For example, owners and operators should consider putting up signs to make clear to users, parents, guardians and carers that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● consumption of food or drink on play equipment or in the playground area is banned ● parents, guardians or carers should dispose of all litter including any used protective wear such as face coverings or gloves properly in litter bins, taking it home where a bin is not provided. 	<p>Personal responsibility to act within the guidelines remain important. Signage to read 'To help reduce the risk of infection, all users must not consume food or drink on these premises. All litter must be placed in the bins provided or taken home for safe disposal'</p>	To be added to signage
Considering Children with Additional Needs	Take into account the requirements of children with additional needs.	No additional measures are required.	No additional measures are required.
Keeping Staff Safe	<p>Consider the risks staff may be exposed to and how these can be mitigated. Staff roles may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● cleaning playground equipment/surrounding areas ● managing queues of those waiting to use equipment ● stewarding equipment to ensure users comply with rules made by the owner/operator 	This facility is unstaffed.	N/A

Conclusions

The facility is provided for the benefit of the community and should be opened for use. It is not practicable to implement measures such as cleaning regimes and there is no plan to do so. Personal responsibility to act within the Government's guidelines is paramount to the safe operation of this facility. Clear signage must be fixed to the entrance to the playground to communicate and reinforce the key requirements that enable safe use.

Risk Assessments undertaken by Richard Fowles on 5 July 2020 and conclusions agreed by all councillors.

June 2020