



Playground Risk Management Policy

This policy document has been prepared to formally recognise the maintenance and inspection regime of St Mary Bourne Parish Council's recreational facilities and the assets within these facilities. 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. The policy will therefore summarise the parish council's objectives in providing challenging play while identifying an acceptable degree of risk.

Legal Requirements

There is no specific legislation on play safety. However, the key items of legislation are:

- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Act 1992
- Occupiers Liability Act 1957 and 1984
- Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

St Mary Bourne Parish Council have a duty to take actions to ensure the safety of people at work and members of the public who may be affected by the facilities provided by the local authority. It is governed by the test of "reasonable practicability". In other words, it is reasonable to correct major hazards; it is unreasonable to spend considerable resources on minor faults where risk is negligible and potential injury very minor.

Industry Standards and Guidance

These standards and Safety Guidelines are not a legal requirement but are considered to be good professional working practice.

EN1176 – Playground Equipment

EN1176 is the European Standard which replaced the old British Standards. The standard is not retrospective and provides advice on design layout and the inspection of playground equipment. Contained within the guidance are the following key recommendations:

- That if the equipment is not safe, access by the public should be prevented;
- The equipment must be inspected and maintained;
- An inspection record should be retained for 21 years.

Civil Legislation

In the event of a serious accident claims are based on negligence: that is, the parish council took or failed to take some action which made the accident more likely to happen or worse than would otherwise have been the case.

The defence will be based on St Mary Bourne Parish Council's Play Risk Management evidence such as records of inspections and maintenance, compliance with the Standards and relevant risk assessments.

Balancing Risks and Benefits

St Mary Bourne Parish Council's Risk Management Approach will aim to offer play spaces that are stimulating and challenging environments enabling children to explore and develop their abilities. In providing these environments St Mary Bourne Parish Council will manage the level of risk so that children are not exposed to unacceptable risks and hazards.

Playground Inspection Methodology

St Mary Bourne Parish Council is responsible for two recreational area that will adhere to the guidance set out in this document: The Play Area at St Mary Bourne and the Play Area at Stoke.

St Mary Bourne Play Area includes a playground and multi-use games areas (MUGA). Stoke Play Area constitutes a playground. The responsibility for the operational regular inspection of the play in St Mary Bourne will be carried out by contractor employed by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. This section will identify St Mary Bourne Parish Council's methodology in managing the authority's assets following:

- Inspections Frequency and Type
- Inspection Type Definitions
- Assessing the Level of Risk
- Summary of Risks

Inspection Frequency & Type

The table below details the frequency of inspections and the inspector responsible for carrying out the on-site inspections. The inspector and frequency rates are currently feasible given resources available to St Mary Bourne Parish Council.

Frequency of Inspection	Inspection Type	Inspector
Weekly	Visual	BDBC
Quarterly	Operational	Contractor
Annual	Annual Detailed	RoSPA

All inspections findings will be accessed by the Clerk and brought to the attention of the Full Council.

Inspection Type – Definitions

Routine Visual Inspections – EN 1176-7.6.2a – ‘Look & See’

It includes the identification of obvious hazards resulting from use, weather and vandalism, broken parts or bottles, litter, graffiti, equipment misuse. Through existing contract arrangements contractors working on behalf of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. Obvious hazards as described above will be reported to the Clerk.

Operational Inspection – EN1176-76.2b – ‘Poke & Prod’

Operational Inspections provide a more detailed inspection to check the operation and stability of all equipment and surfaces especially for wear.

St Mary Bourne Parish Council may alter frequencies of the operational inspections and this decision will be dependent of the grading of the area which will consider factors such as popularity, profile and equipment type.

Check repairs carried out by others; rust and rot; bearings.

Cleanliness

Equipment Ground Clearance

Exposed Foundations

Sharp Edges

Missing Parts

Excessive Wear (of moving parts)

Structural Integrity

Annual Main Inspection – EN1176-7.6.2c

These inspections will approximately be carried out every 12 months, not exceeding 15 months.

- 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.

The annual Inspections are to be carried out by an independent inspector/contractor.

Operational and annual inspections, whether inspection carried out by the Council or contractor working on behalf of the authority will be inspected and recorded using the same method and system.

Accidents, Enquiries and Claims

St Mary Bourne Parish Council will record all accidents and enquires relating to the play areas and facilities within them. The details of the enquiry, complaint or accident will be recorded within the same system used for issuing and recording inspections. Recording incidents in this manner will enable the Parish Council to illustrate 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 also be an effective management tool for future improvements.

*Adopted at Council meeting
13 September 2022*