

PLAY AREA SAFETY INSPECTION REPORT

Chideock Parish Council

Inspection undertaken April 26th 2021
This report issued May 18th 2021

Park Name: Mill Lane
Location: Mill Lane, Chideock. DT6 6JS

This report is an independent safety assessment of the playground and its equipment produced by;

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REPORT NOTES

The British Standard for Play Equipment Manufacture, Installation & Maintenance is UKEN 1176:2008/2017 in parts. It supersedes 1176:1998 which was withdrawn on 31 May 2009. The standard for Safety Surfacing is BSEN 1177.

Operators and providers are advised that equipment conforming to EN 1176 requires regular maintenance. Guidance on this and appropriate inspection, maintenance and operation schedules are contained within BS EN 1176-7:2008.

National standards have been published by BSI on children's playground equipment since BS 3178 was first issued in 1959, this standard concentrated on specifications for specific types of equipment. It was replaced in 1979 by BS 5696 which switched focus to a design and safety approach. Playground equipment not complying with the various standards and revisions should not automatically be considered as being unsafe or to require replacement.

Goalposts are examined in this report in accordance with the revised guidelines published in BSEN16579:2018 or BS EN 748. Goalposts not complying with this revision should not automatically be considered as being unsafe or to require replacement

Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations and operators of play areas are required to ensure that their provision meets the statutory legal requirements of The Health & Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974.2. (HSWA), The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSW) and The Occupiers Liability Act 1957.

In accordance with the above regulations a risk assessment is used to determine what controls may be necessary or identify those that are in place. This report will recommend actions where appropriate and includes a record of the risk assessments (See 2). Any actions identified will be assumed to be the responsibility of the site operator unless otherwise identified. The Risk scoring matrix has been updated and simplified since the previous reports to allow for a clearer emphasis between categories. This does not affect the overall risk levels or reflect any changes in the risk level on the site. (See Appendix 1-Risk Table).

This report and the risk assessment carried out on the 26th April 2021 have been undertaken with reference to HMG & WHO guidance on the transmission of SARS COVID 19 and measures that can be implemented to reduce the hazard.

This report will examine, but is not limited to;

- The general environment surrounding the play area/equipment and the approach(es) to the equipment, detailing any issues that may affect the operators' duty of care under HSWA/MHSW/OLA.
- The condition and nature of the safety surfacing (if any) and its compliance with BSEN 1177 detailing any issues that require the operators' attention also detailing any issues that may affect the operators' duty of care under HSWA/MHSW/OLA.
- The condition of the equipment and its compliance with the standards and guidelines shown above detailing any issues that require the operators' attention also detailing any issues that may affect the operators' duty of care under HSWA/MHSW/OLA.
- The installation of the play equipment and its compliance with the standards and guidelines above also detailing any issues that may affect the operators' duty of care under HSWA/MHSW/OLA
- An inspection of previous reports (where available) and any actions taken as a result of those reports or that remain outstanding at the date of this inspection.
- The general compliance of the equipment with the standards and guidelines above including verification of manufacturers certification where provided.
- Environmental constraints and potential causality linked to the transmission and spread of C19
- If required, and where possible, it may be necessary to dismantle elements. Sealed units will not be opened but will be subjected to detailed scrutiny.

Time constraints indicated on this report are from the date of issue of the report. Any items considered to be of immediate need of rectification will have been notified in advance of publication.

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1.OVERVIEW

The Play Area is located off of Mill Lane and is shown outlined on the location shot below.

The site is partially overlooked from nearby housing and a footpath passes next to the play area.

There is a small football pitch with the play equipment situated at one end. Access is good and is reasonable for those with limited mobility. In summer months the play area is used by visitors to the nearby campsite.

The site is off of a no through road and traffic movements are light and limited.

The Play Area occupies an area of approximately 500m² (32m x 16m)

The overall site including the football pitch occupies an area of approximately 3,300m² (83m x 40m)

The overall risk for Mill Lane at the time of the inspection was Low including residual risk from C19 transmission. There is increasing concern at the time of publication about the possible spread of new variant strains therefore this risk level may change if infection becomes more prevalent and the situation must be closely monitored

Specific Medium Risk items need attention within 3 months specifically relating to signage.

2. ANCILLARIES & EQUIPMENT RISK FINDINGS

Ancillaries					
No.	Item	Condition	Risk/Risk Level	Control Required / Control Present	By When
1	Gates (Pedestrian)	Satisfactory	2 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
2	Gate (Vehicle)	Satisfactory	2 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
3	Fencing	Requires attention	6 /Low	Improve fencing adjacent to river	Within 6 months
4	Bins	Improvement possible	4 /Low	Move bin away from bench	Ongoing
5	Benches / seats	Satisfactory	2 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
6	Rubber Grass Mats	Satisfactory	6 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
7	Planting	Satisfactory	2 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
8	Signage	Requires attention	9 /Medium	Provide location and emergency sign	Within 3 months
Overall Risk for Ancillary Items at time of inspection				Low	4

Equipment					
No.	Item	Condition	Risk/Risk Level	Control Required / Control Present	By When
9	Basket Swing	Satisfactory	2 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
10	Junior Swing Set	Satisfactory	2 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
11	Multi Play Unit	Satisfactory	2 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
12	Toddler Swing	Satisfactory	2 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
13	Burma bridge	Satisfactory	2 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
14	4-way climber	Satisfactory	2 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
15	Springer	Satisfactory	2 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
16	See Saw	Satisfactory	4 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
17	Goal Posts	Satisfactory	4 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
Overall Risk for Equipment at time of inspection				Low	2

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Environment					
No.	Item	Status	Risk/Risk Level	Control Required / Control Present	By When
18	Access to traffic	Satisfactory	2 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
19	Layout	Satisfactory	2 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
20	Overlooked	Satisfactory	2 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
21	Proximity to Power	Satisfactory	6 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
22	Proximity to water	Satisfactory	8 /Medium	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
24	C19 Transmission	Satisfactory	2 /Low	Keep suitably maintained	Ongoing
Overall Risk for Environmental factors at time of inspection				Low	4

3.ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

Item	Issues	Recommendation (s)
4	Wooden products including benches	Regularly treat (every two years) with penetrating preservative down to foundation level
4.1	There is some movement in the top joints	Monitor and tighten fixings during dry periods to prevent excess wear
4.5	The decay in the springer base plate will lead to product failure	Plan for removal and replacement within 2.5 years
4.6	Fall height requires good quality turf below unit	Consider installing Grassmats to prevent wear of turf and compaction
4.8	Timbers are decaying	Replace older timber elements within 2 years
4.10	Location and emergency contact signs are missing, and contact details are not shown.	Provide location signs and contact details. Review existing sign requirements.

4. SPECIFIC FINDINGS

The advent of C19 and the subsequent lockdown has had an impact on the way play areas need to be managed and maintained. HMG have published guidance which is available via the link below.

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

Specific Covid 19 controls are included at Appendix 2. The national picture of the occurrence of C19 is currently changing. The recommended control measures are limited but the situation must be monitored for changes and appropriate action taken if new controls are required. A named individual should be given responsibility for this action. Specific general recommendations are included at Appendix 2. Some items may encourage close contact, but it can be reasonably expected that individuals and family groups are, at this point in time, sufficiently aware of regulations to be able to effectively self-police. There is a requirement for the provision of signs to advise on the need for good hand sanitation.

On all timber on the site there is a need for the regular application of a penetrative preservative to reduce decay. This needs to be done below ground if possible, back to the level of the concrete footings. The fencing has recently been done and on-site discussions took place regarding the need to treat the remaining timbers.

The existing safety surfacing is satisfactory but the area around the see saw should be monitored as there are signs of increasing levels of compaction.

The close proximity of the river will always mean that the risk level is elevated but there are controls available to minimise this. It should be noted that although desirable self-closing mechanisms are difficult to effectively fit to wooden gates in picket fences. Because of this other controls regarding to the presence of water, such as warning signs, must be present. There are improvements which could be done to improve the fencing adjacent to the river.

The risk level is heightened due to the absence of location and emergency contact signs. It is highly likely that visitors will arrive at the site without a clear idea of where they are. This could lead to unnecessary delay in the arrival of emergency services in the event of an accident. The placement of such a sign is currently likely to be lost in the noise of the number of signs present. While some signs are desirable, and others are a requirement there comes a point when the message is lost due to the overwhelming presence of signs. The location and need for the signs currently displayed should be reviewed.

4.1 *Twin Junior Swing Set*

Item No. K13-D

Manufactured: 18/01/2016

CFH: 1.25

Safety Surface: Grass / Grass Mat

There is a need for the application of a penetrative preservative to reduce the likelihood of decay. There is some movement in the top joints, but this has not increased since the last inspection.

There are no additional hazards from C19 with this unit that cannot be dealt with under the recommended guidance. (see app. 2)



4.2 Toddler Swing

Item No: N/K

Manufactured: Wicksteed

CFH:0.8m

Safety Surface: Grass / Grass Mat

This traditional frame from Wicksteeds' heritage range is old but in good condition. The gate latch links are in reasonable condition with sufficient links on the outside.

There are no additional hazards from C19 with this unit that cannot be dealt with under the recommended guidance. (see app. 2)



4.3 *Playhouse with bridge & Slide*

Manufacturer – Playquest

CFH 06m

Safety Surface: Grass / Grass mats

There are no additional hazards from C19 with this unit that cannot be dealt with under the recommended guidance. (see app. 2)

The bridge supports have been replaced and this has improved the ground clearance. There is a need for the application of a penetrative preservative to reduce the likelihood of decay.



4.4 Sovereign Agility Cube

Item No. CP-Box (C)
Manufactured:N/K (probably circa 2016)
CFH:0.75
Safety Surface: Grass / Grass Mat

The trim trail has been constructed with a series of elements to form a cube shape.

There are no additional hazards from C19 with this unit that cannot be dealt with under the recommended guidance. (see app. 2).

There is a need for the application of a penetrative preservative to reduce the likelihood of decay.

There are no other issues with this unit currently.



4.5 Sit in Car Springer

Item No:4410

Manufacturer / Supplier: Playquest

CFH 0.6m

Safety Surface: Grass

There are no additional hazards from C19 with this unit that cannot be dealt with under the recommended guidance. (see app. 2)

This springer is supplied by PlayQuest and Venture Play amongst others. The mounting base plate is showing its age and a significant degree of corrosion can be seen. This is the point at which the unit connects to its spring and the stress here means that unit is likely to fail in 2-4yrs. There is no adequate remedial action that can be taken.



4.6 **Wicksteed See saw**

Item No: 6060-999

Manufactured:29/11/1996

CFH 1.35m

Safety Surface: Grass

This Wicksteed see-saw is still in good working order. These units are fitted with an internal “anti-bump” mechanism that damps the unit and prevents children lifting clear of the seat and prevents entrapment issues.

The unit predates the BSEN 1176 standards and the clearance is lower than the current standard recommends. However the damping mechanism means that any element of risk is extremely low.

The fall height of 1.65m means that where grass is the safety surface then it should be maintained in good condition. It may be worth considering rubber grass mats around this unit to prevent further wear and compaction of the surface which is becoming quite apparent.

There are no additional hazards from C19 with this unit that cannot be dealt with under the recommended guidance. (see app. 2)



4.7 Caledonian Play Basket Swing

Item No: CO-BS

Manufactured: 18/01/2016

CFH 1.65m

Safety Surface: Grass / Grassmats

The crossbar on this unit had rotted out and a new crossbar was supplied on the 5/10/2020 and fitted on the 19th October 2020

There are additional hazards from C19 with this unit that cannot be dealt with under the recommended guidance. (see app. 2). However, it can be reasonably expected that individuals and family groups are, by this point in time, sufficiently aware of regulations to be able to effectively self-police and contact is unlikely to be for longer than the maximum recommended time of 15 minutes.

There is a need for the application of a penetrative preservative to reduce the likelihood of decay.



4.8 *Playquest Burmese Bridge*

Item No: 0490

Manufactured:n/k

CFH 0.6m

Safety Surface: Grass

Elements of this unit had rotted out and were replaced on 29th July 2020
The remaining elements (still painted blue) are likely to require replacement over the next 18 months – two years

There are no additional hazards from C19 with this unit that cannot be dealt with under the recommended guidance. (see app. 2)

There is a need for the application of a penetrative preservative to reduce the likelihood of decay.



4.9 Goalposts

Manufacturer: Edwards Sport

The crossbar deflection on both goals is within tolerance.

These 16 x 6 Goalposts are in average condition. There is some rust, and the stanchions are missing. These are replaceable and should be in place if nets are fitted. (Available from Huck /Edwards in Bridport).

The need to keep the nets securely pegged has been raised with the groundsman. There is an ongoing issue with the removal of pegs and this should be monitored as unpegged nets may cause a hazard.



4.10 Signs

There is no location sign with UK emergency contact number displayed. This should be understood in the context of a visitor being unsure of their location, a strong possibility here with visiting campers, and being in need of urgent assistance. The sign should display the location including the post code and 999 as the emergency number

There is an operators' sign asking users to report damage etc. but this has no contact details. This can be an email address or phone number, but it is a requirement.

Effective signs are present indicating the need for social distancing and the need for hand sanitation. These are can now be safely assumed to be a requirement under UK Health & safety legislation.



The two dog notices on the picket fence are contradictory. These should be removed to reduce clutter which diminishes the impact of the required signs.

There are a number of duplicated signs on the main gate.

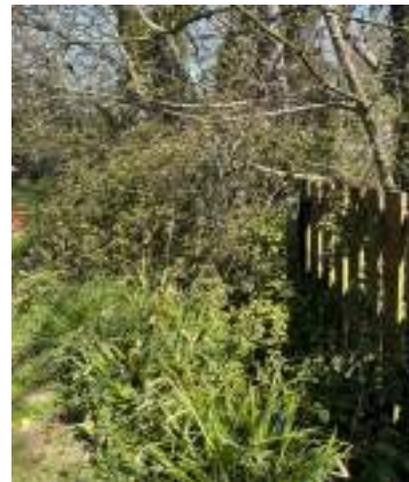


Additional signs are now posted indicating the presence of deep water and of overhead power cables.

4.11 Barriers, Boundaries, Benches & Bins

The site is bordered on several sides by water. In most cases these are shallow drains but just below the main play area is a deep gully with the River Winniford flowing through it. The bench shown right has been moved away from the fence but there are still elements of the fencing configuration which mean it can be easily surmounted. Discussions on site took place and recommendations were made to replace the section shown right with chestnut palings fixed to stakes. This could be moved further out from the bench and cannot be climbed giving an affordable and aesthetically more pleasing finish to the area.

There are several nearby bins and a variety of benches around the site in reasonable condition. During Covid additional care should be taken when emptying bins. The bin shown bottom right should be relocated away from the bench – during the summer this could cause a problem with wasps.



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The fencing in the corner with the bench closest to the road is in need of repair. The bench is too close to the fence, but the risk is lower here outside the main play area.



5. COSTS

Item	Issues	Recommendation (s)	Supply Only	Supply & fit
4.6	Possible compaction issues	Grass mats recommended (min 6)	£180	£255.00
4.8	Original timbers decaying	Supply and fit new timbers to Burmese bridge		415.00

APPENDIX 1. RISK TABLE

Severity	
1	Minor
2	Moderate
3	Serious
4	Major
5	Life Changing

Probability	
1	Highly Unlikely
2	Low Likelihood
3	Possible
4	Likely
5	Highly Likely

Probability

		Probability				
		1	2	3	4	5
Severity	1	1	2	3	4	5
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	5	5	10	15	20	25

RISK SCORING		
1-6	Low Risk	There is a very low likelihood of any injury. At the upper end of the scale there may be more risk to very young or vulnerable users
8-16	Medium Risk	There is an increased possibility of injury and control measures may be required to reduce the likelihood or severity of injury. At the upper end of the scale there may be a need for increased control measures or access restrictions and monitoring and maintenance requirements may be more frequent
20-25	High Risk	The likelihood of significant injury is close to certain and use of the equipment or play area should be curtailed immediately. Measures must be in place to prevent further use until corrective action has been completed.

APPENDIX 2. COVID CONTROLS

1. User numbers on this site are unlikely to be sufficient to require excessive controls.
2. The exposure to UV and external location mitigates extensively against the accumulation and persistence of viral loading on hard surfaces and so additional cleaning measures are not required / practicable.
3. Visitor numbers are low enough that limiting adult supervision should not be necessary.
4. Visitor numbers are low enough that limiting attendance or booking should not be necessary.
5. Visitor numbers are low enough that 3rd party supervision should not be necessary.
6. Visitor numbers are low enough that removal of benches and swing seats etc. should not be necessary.
7. Litter bins should be checked and emptied regularly and those undertaking the role should exercise proper hygiene regimes.
8. All users should be encouraged by way of signage sanitise their hands and the hands of those that they are supervising before and after using equipment.
9. All users should be asked by way of signage to follow social distancing guidelines
10. The consumption of food and drink in the play area should be discouraged. This is specifically to prevent littering by packaging materials that could potentially be contaminated and subsequently picked up others – especially small children or concerned parents.
11. All these measures should be reviewed regularly and any additional controls recorded.
12. Attention **MUST** be paid to any changes in government guidance especially the imposition of additional local controls. A parish council committee member should be nominated to have specific responsibility for monitoring guidance and communicating changes accordingly.

APPENDIX 3. COVID 19 ADVISORY NOTICE



Please keep your distance
 **Maintain a 2m distance between yourself and others**

 **Sanitise your hands before, during and after using the play park, especially after touching play equipment and the access gates**

 **Wash your hands thoroughly when you get home**

 **If the play area is busy, please wait or come back at another time**

 **No food or drink, and please take your litter home with you. Do not lick or put your mouth on the play equipment**

Please be patient and kind. We all deserve to play safely