



Nettlestead Parish Council

Policy Document:  
Use of Inflatables on Parish Property

# Use of Inflatable on Parish Council Premises

Government statistics indicate that every year there are a large number of accidents resulting in injuries to adults and children arising from the use of inflatable bouncy castles within the UK.

This policy and guidance note is aimed at anyone organising an event on Nettlestead Parish Council premises, where inflatables will be present and provides helpful tips to ensure that the event is both enjoyable and safe.

## 1. Introduction

The use of Inflatable play equipment (e.g. bouncy castles) may be organised as part of an event on Nettlestead Parish Council property. If the inflatable play equipment is not well managed and supervised, there is a high risk of serious injuries especially from individuals bouncing off the inflatable onto the ground, knocking into other objects and people, or by falling awkwardly. Accidents may also be caused because many inflatables are designed for use by children rather than adults.

This policy and guidance note is aimed at anyone organising an event where inflatables will be present and provides helpful tips to ensure that the event is both enjoyable and safe.

The sections below outline control measures that should be considered when planning an event which includes inflatable play equipment.

## 2. Before Hiring

The equipment should be hired from reputable hire companies, and where possible, set up, operated and supervised by the hire company's own staff. This is particularly important if substantial numbers of children are likely to be present.

Before hiring a bouncy castle, ensure that you have checked the following;

- Is the operator conforming to the PIPA Scheme?
- Has the inflatable a PIPA tag?
- When the equipment was last fully inspected?
- Can you have a copy of the current PIPA test certificate for this equipment?
- Have they carried out the daily checks on the equipment as required by EIS7?
- Will you get full instructions on its SAFE operation?
- If it is set up, with the blower unit 1.4 metres distance, consider will the bouncy castle still fit in the desired location on the site?
- Is the equipment clearly marked as to its limitation of use (max. User height etc.)?
- Do they have £5 million Pound Liability Insurance?
- Who will be responsible for supervising the use of the inflatable are they trained?

## 3. Self-Operation

If you are to operate the bouncy castle, ensure that you are provided with written instructions about the safe setting up, operation and supervision of the equipment and that the name and address of the manufacturer or supplier is clearly marked upon it.

- You will need to obtain Public Liability Insurance, minimum cover of £5 million Pound. A copy must be provided to Nettlestead Parish Council **before the event**.
- Full Responsibility for the setup, operation and supervision and dismantling of the bouncy castle will remain with the hirer of the Parish Council premises or grounds used for the event.
- Ensure a minimum of two adults are available to carry out continuous supervision.
- Do you have first aid cover in place in the event of an accident?

Further guidance on the British Standard and law relating to inflatable play equipment is available on the PIPA inflatable Play Inspection Scheme website. <http://www.pipa.org.uk/index.asp>

#### **4. Risk assessment**

You will need to carry out a risk assessment for your event to ensure that any hazards have been identified and suitable control measures are in place. The main hazards associated with using inflatables (including bouncy castles) are:

- Instability and blowing away in windy conditions.
- Falls from the structure.
- Tripping (particularly over anchorages).
- Injury to users caused by boisterous behaviour, or overcrowding.
- Access to dangerous parts of machinery (e.g. inadequately protected or unguarded blower units).
- Electrical hazards (e.g. shock or burns).
- Inadequate means of escape in case of fire.
- Injury to users caused by wearing inappropriate clothes and shoes.
- Suffocation and entrapment.

Details of effective control measures are outlined in section 5 below. You may wish to use the example risk assessment in appendix 1 as the basis for your own risk assessment, but please note that this is not a complete document and you must add to and alter the information in the example to reflect your event and the hazards involved.

#### **5. General health and safety requirements:**

The event organiser will need to obtain risk assessments from the supplier of the inflatable to cover the delivery and retrieval, locating, set-up and supervision of the equipment. In addition, the event organiser must ensure that all aspects of the use of the inflatable are included in the event risk assessment.

To ensure risks are controlled the following control measures will need to be implemented:

- Hire inflatable equipment from a reputable hire company. Ensure that the equipment is designed for commercial use and has been properly maintained and inspected in the form of the Amusement Devices Inspection Procedures Scheme (ADIPS) inspection report or the Pertexa Inflatable Play Accreditation (PIPA) scheme.
- Equipment must be set up, operated and supervised by an adequate number of competent person(s). All persons supervising the inflatable equipment must be adequately trained. As a minimum, each inflatable should be supervised by at least two competent individuals.

- You need to make sure that the inflatable is run safely as the majority of injuries come from misuse. For commercial operated inflatable equipment, there should be constant supervision when the inflatable is blown up. When an inflatable is unattended, it should be deflated and the power source disabled. Do not leave it unattended and inflated.
- The hire company will be able to provide staff to cover this supervisory responsibility, if necessary.
- The number of people using the inflatable must be limited to the number recommended in the hire company's safety instructions. It is suggested that a notice is displayed highlighting agreed numbers and height limits or children.
- Individuals should not be allowed to use the bouncy castle if there is a high wind or in wet weather where there is a higher risk of serious injury.
- All users must be made to remove footwear, hard or sharp objects such as jewellery, buckles and other similar pocket contents.
- Eating, consuming alcohol or chewing gum whilst using the inflatable must not be allowed.
- Users should not be allowed to obstruct the entrance or exit of an inflatable device or climb or hang on to the walls.
- The inflatable equipment must be suitable for the intended users (i.e. if adults will be using the inflatable, the equipment must be designed for, and be able to cope with this use).
- First-aid provision should be suitable for the number of people expected to attend the event.
- In the case of fire, evacuation and escape routes should be known and firefighting equipment should be available for use on site as per the event emergency plan.
- The inflatable must be adequately secured to the ground.
- Soft matting covering hard surfaces must be placed adjacent to the front or open sides.
- Petrol generators must not be used indoors or in an enclosed space and should be of a sufficient capacity / have enough fuel in at the start of the event to prevent the need for refilling during the event.
- Electrical equipment must be suitable for the environment they are being used in.
- If there is an electrical blower with the inflatable, this should have been tested like any other portable electrical appliance. The tube that connects the blower to the bag should be a least 1.4m in length.

## **6. Insurance**

Before confirming your booking, you must check that the hire company holds Public Liability ("third party") insurance to cover the risk of injuries for at least £5M for any one incident. Many hire companies use an overseas-based insurer that is NOT acceptable to Nettlestead Parish Council so ask for written confirmation of the cover and send it to the Clerk of Nettlestead Parish Council for approval before you book: [clerk@nettlesteadpc.org](mailto:clerk@nettlesteadpc.org)

## **7. Refundable Deposit**

One week before your event you will be asked to provide Nettlestead Parish Council a refundable deposit of £200.00 which will be held in case the Parish Council have to incur costs to clean, tidy or repair the area used for the event to return it to the condition it was in prior to the event taking place. The Parish Council will aim to return the deposit within 2 working weeks of the event assuming there is no need for remedial action. You will be informed of any work required before it is undertaken.

## 8. Useful Information

- Pertexa Inflatable Play Accreditation (PIPA) Scheme: [www.pipa.org.uk](http://www.pipa.org.uk) the only inflatable testing scheme support by the Health and Safety Executive and now warranted by many Councils and government departments.
- Amusement Device Inspection Procedures Scheme (ADIPS): [www.adips.co.uk](http://www.adips.co.uk)
- RPII – (Register of Play Inspectors International) provides accreditation and training to the competency level required by the PIPA scheme. By using an RPII inflatable inspector the inflatables used have therefore been inspected to BSEN 14960:2013 standard.
- BSEN – British Standard European Norm – meaning the UK and European Law.

Document History		
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Full Council Approved		
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<b>Site Location Building</b>		<b>Internal/External</b>		<b>Organiser of the Event</b>	
<b>Name of person carrying out Risk Assessment</b>		<b>Signature</b>		<b>Date of Assessment</b>	
<b>Risk Assessment Title</b>	<b>Bouncy Castle at an event</b>				

Hazard Location and description	Who might be harmed	Existing Control Methods	Likelihood (A) 1= not likely 2= likely 3= very likely	Severity (B) 1=minor injury 2=moderate injury 3=serious injury	(A x B) Residual Risk Factor	Comments/ Actions
<b>Putting up and taking down the Bouncy Castle</b>						
Hiring an unsuitable or an unsafe safe Bouncy Castle Not up to current legislation standards  External company Lack of competence Inadequate insurance	All staff, helpers and people/children using the equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vet for competence (member of a relevant association (AIMODS, NAIH or BIHA))</li> <li>• Operator conforms to PIPA / ADIPS scheme</li> <li>• Risk assessments provided</li> <li>• Appropriate public liability insurance in place (min £5M indemnity)</li> <li>• Appropriately trained staff</li> </ul>				
Bouncy Castle is very heavy to lift and manoeuvre	Those who are transporting the bouncy castle, putting it up, or taking it down could injure their backs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least two people will collect, lift or move the Bouncy Castle and the trolley will be used wherever possible.</li> <li>• Advice will be given on correct lifting procedures to prevent injury (using guidance from <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk">www.hse.gov.uk</a> or other sources.</li> </ul>				

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least two people will roll up the Bouncy Castle, following the instructions and secure it with the strap provided</li> </ul>				
<p>Manual Handling Weighty, bulky and unwieldy load</p> <p>Difficulties in getting a grip of the load</p> <p>Individuals with pre-existing conditions</p> <p>Physical Injury – difficult posture Muscular skeletal disorders Sprains / strains</p>	Anyone setting up or moving the equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient number of people to move inflatable.</li> <li>• Minimise carrying distance</li> <li>• Individuals aware of correct lifting techniques</li> </ul>				
Electrical Safety	Anybody who is working around the bouncy castle, or near the electrical blower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If there is an electrical blower with the inflatable, this should have been tested like any other portable electrical appliance. The tube that connects the blower to the bag should be a least 1.4m in length.</li> </ul>				
Long electric power cable	Those who are setting up other stalls at the event could trip on the cable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure the power cable to the ground as soon as it is laid down, and do not remove the tape until cable is due to be wound up</li> </ul>				
Damage to the electric power cable	Anybody who touches the damaged cable could be electrocuted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unroll the electric cable, and check the full length of the cable, plus any plugs or sockets</li> <li>• Ensure that the power cable is plugged into a power supply that has a trip switch OR use the power breaker supplied</li> </ul>				
Safety of the equipment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CHECK that the inflatable has been built to the current British Standard (BS EN 14960):</li> </ul>				

		<p>you should be able to see this on a label. If there is no label you may be taking a risk with the safety of those using it. The label should tell you when it was made, how many people can use it and what heights they should be – these restrictions must be followed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CHECK that the inflatable equipment is designed for commercial use. You must not use an inflatable that is marked ‘not for commercial use’ or ‘for domestic use only’.</li> <li>• If the inflatable is over a year old, it should have been checked on an annual basis by a competent person. A new unit should have an “initial test” which should comply with BS EN 14960. The HSE support annual examination by inspectors registered with PIPA or ADIPS. There should be evidence of the examination on the inflatable.</li> </ul>				
Using poorly maintained equipment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thoroughly examined every 14 months by a registered inspection body. The blower, inflatable and the electrical system should be examined and a certificate issued. These should be checked before use.</li> <li>• Inspected prior to the first use on any day following supplier/ manufacturer’s instructions</li> <li>• Inflatable has PIPA tag / current PIPA test certificate</li> </ul>				



Heavy duty stakes to be driven in using a mallet, and removed at the end of the day	Those banging in the stakes could hit their hands Others in the area could be hit with the mallet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold the stakes halfway down when banging them in</li> <li>• Knock the stakes sideways using the mallet before trying to pull them out</li> <li>• Make sure the area is clear of other people</li> </ul>				
The Bouncy Castle is wet when it's put away	Those rolling the Bouncy Castle up could be injured as it will be slippery and heavier if wet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If possible, the bouncy castle will be dried out before it is put away</li> <li>• At least 3 people will put away and lift the bouncy castle if it's wet.</li> </ul>				
Accident if incorrectly set up.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There should be a manual which provides full details on how to safely set up the inflatable.</li> <li>• Every inflatable should have at least six anchor points, with the equivalent of 163kgs, though bigger ones will need more.</li> <li>• All anchor points must be used, preferably with metal ground stakes of at least 380mm length and 16mm diameter with a rounded top.</li> <li>• If there is no manual you cannot be sure how many tie down points there should be for safe use, so it is not advisable to use these inflatables.</li> </ul>				
<b>Using the Bouncy Castle: At least two adults will supervise the Bouncy Castle at all times</b>						
Lack of supervision resulting in injury	Adults and Children using the Bouncy Castle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervised by competent individuals from hire company at all times – will stop overcrowding and boisterous behaviour</li> <li>• Unruly children will be removed</li> <li>• Control measures outlined in hire company's risk assessment adhered to</li> </ul>				

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire company's insurance is adequate and has been approved by the Insurance Office</li> <li>• Adequate levels of first aid provision available</li> <li>• Shoes will be removed, no eating</li> </ul>				
Adults or older children jumping on the Bouncy Castle	Adults or older children could jump over the sides of the castle The seams of the castle could split causing it to deflate very quickly and injure all of those who are on it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The height restriction of 1.5m, an age restriction of 10 years, will be strictly enforced by those running the inflatable.</li> <li>• Supervised by competent individuals from hire company at all times – will stop overcrowding and boisterous behaviour</li> <li>• Unruly children will be removed</li> <li>• Control measures outlined in hire company's risk assessment adhered to</li> <li>• Hire company's insurance is adequate and has been approved by the Insurance Office</li> <li>• Adequate levels of first aid provision available</li> <li>• Shoes will be removed, no eating</li> </ul>				
Larger children colliding with smaller children	Smaller children could be injured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children will be grouped by age and limited to 8 children at any one time.</li> </ul>				
Children jumping off or falling off the front of the Bouncy Castle	Children could be seriously injured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure inflatable is suitably located and has enough space around it. Sited away from other obstacles, e.g., generator, cables etc.</li> <li>• Equipment inspected as part of the PIPA scheme</li> <li>• Crash mats will be put down in front of the Bouncy Castle</li> <li>• At least one adult supervisor will be at the front of the Bouncy Castle at all times, and</li> </ul>				

		<p>will ask children to move back if they come too close to the front of the Bouncy Castle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inflatable will not be used in adverse weather conditions (advice will be sought from competent staff from the hire company)</li> </ul>				
Children colliding with each other whilst on the Bouncy Castle	Children could be injured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those supervising the Bouncy Castle will ensure that children do not bump into each other or become overly boisterous</li> <li>• Children behaving in a boisterous manner will be removed from the bouncy castle.</li> </ul>				
Sharp objects that could puncture the Bouncy Castle	Adults or Children on the Bouncy could be injured by sharp object on the Bouncy Castle or if the Bouncy Castle got punctured and deflated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Bouncy Castle will not be set up on concrete or gravel and will be checked thoroughly before it is used.</li> <li>• Adults and Children will be asked to remove their shoes and any other objects i.e. jewellery, watches, belt buckles, before they go on the Bouncy Castle</li> </ul>				
Anchor points becoming untethered	The bouncy castle could move or tip, causing injury to the children on it, or anyone standing near it. If untethered it could lift off the floor and blow over.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Bouncy Castle will not be put up if the wind exceeds Force 5, i.e. small trees sway (not just their branches)</li> <li>• All anchor points used as per manufacturer instructions, and spare leads etc. stowed safely.</li> <li>• The Bouncy Castle will be tethered securely to the anchor points</li> <li>• There should be a manual which provides full details on how to safely set up the inflatable. Every inflatable should have at least six anchor points, with the equivalent of 163kgs, though bigger ones will need more. All anchor points must be used, preferably with metal ground stakes of at</li> </ul>				

		least 380mm length and 16mm diameter with a rounded top. If there is no manual you cannot be sure how many tie down points there should be for safe use, so it is not advisable to use these inflatables.				
Anchor points and other equipment around the outside of the Bouncy Castle (such as the trolley)	People could trip over any of these items and injure themselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those setting up the Bouncy Castle will mark off the lower area with fencing, hazard tape or cones</li> <li>• Where possible ensure electric cables do not cross any public pathway, if unavoidable try to erect the cable overhead or cover with cable management system, highlight with warning tape</li> </ul>				
Bouncy Castle blower on ground near the Bouncy Castle	People could trip over the blower and injure themselves, or cut off the power and cause the Bouncy Castle to deflate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those setting up the Bouncy Castle will mark off the blower area with fencing, hazard tape or cones</li> </ul>				
Bouncy Castle gets wet	Adult or Children might slip and injure themselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Bouncy Castle will not be used if it rains, and will be dried completely before Adults or Children are allowed on it</li> <li>• Food and drink will not be allowed on or near the Bouncy Castle</li> </ul>				
Using a petrol generator (the Bouncy Castle is supplied with an electric cable, but it can be used with a 3kva generator)	If other appliances are run from the petrol generator there could be a reduction in power to the Bouncy Castle which could cause it to deflate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No other appliances will be plugged into the generator</li> <li>• A fire extinguisher will be kept near the petrol generator</li> </ul>				

	The generator could catch fire, injuring those near it					
Display Safety Notice		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is a good idea to display notices next to the inflatable stating that:</li> <li>• Parents allow their children to participate at their own risk.</li> <li>• Nettlestead Parish Council will not accept any liability for injury, loss or damage to property from any accidental cause.</li> <li>• Shoes (but not socks) should be removed before using the inflatable.</li> <li>• No food and drink are permitted whilst using the inflatable.</li> <li>• Children who misbehave will not be permitted to continue using the activity.</li> </ul>				

Risk Assessment Calculation Guide	Severity = A	Likelihood =B
	1 = Minor (<7 days off work)	1 = unlikely to occur
	2 = Moderate (>7 days off work)	2 = likely to occur
	3 = Serious Harm (death or major injury)	3 = very likely to occur

Risk Factor	Risk Category	Action Guideline
1-3	Low	Maintain control measures
4-6	Medium	Review control measures
9	High	Stop activity and improve controls