



ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINE

Title: Health & Safety: Playgrounds

Effective Date: February 28, 2002
Revised: April 19, 2007

Responsibility: Director of Education

RATIONALE

The Near North District School Board recognizes the need to promote positive play experiences within a safe school environment and the requirements of current legislation and in the context of the advice by the Board insurer.

1.0 NEWLY PURCHASED OR DONATED PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

- 1.1** All newly purchased or donated playground equipment must comply with Canadian Standards Association's CSA-Z614-03, Children's Playspaces and Equipment. Letters of compliance with this standard from the equipment manufacturer must be retained with all other documents for this equipment.
- 1.2** As the Board bears the responsibility for maintaining playground equipment and may be liable for incidents related to such equipment, all such donated equipment becomes the sole property of the Board.
- 1.3** The Principal is responsible for defining the needs of the school in considering the purchase of playground equipment.
- 1.4** The Principal is responsible for selecting a company (in accordance with Purchasing Administrative Guidelines) and acquiring the funds (where the Board is unable to provide funding through school renewal funds), ie. fundraising, to purchase new playground equipment.

2.0 INSTALLATION OF NEW OR DONATED PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

The Principal is responsible for choosing a location on the property for the playground equipment in consultation with the Manager of Plant or designate.

2.1 INSTALLATION

- 2.1.1** Equipment installation shall be completed, (as approved by the Manager of Plant, Facility Supervisor and Board certified playground inspector) by qualified personnel (e.g. manufacturer or vendor). This will ensure the manufacturer's warranty on the equipment and liability for the installation.
- 2.1.2** Volunteer installations shall not be permitted. Volunteer installations are risky in that there is the potential for injury to volunteers working on the installation. The Board does not carry accident insurance or worker's compensation type of insurance for volunteers.
- 2.1.3** The installer is required to barricade equipment until work is completed (e.g. snow fence).

2.2 SITE PREPARATION/GROUND COVER

All surface and ground preparation must be provided by qualified personnel in accordance with recommended CSA standards.

2.3 FINAL INSPECTION

The Principal and Facility Supervisor shall ensure all newly installed equipment and site preparation/ground cover shall be inspected prior to use by a certified playground inspector. The Principal shall retain inspector's checklist for future reference.

2.4 SIGNAGE

All playgrounds must have signage to identify that they are unsupervised outside of school hours. Refer to Appendix 'A' for signage wording.

3.0 INSPECTIONS FOR NEW OR EXISTING EQUIPMENT

3.1 DAILY INSPECTIONS

The Principal or designate shall implement a daily visual inspection program to look for overnight vandalism to the play structures or harmful debris under the structures. Simple documentation of such should be maintained, e.g. having the designated person initial a calendar page and note the time of inspection. This could be assigned to the first person on yard duty in the morning.

3.2 WEEKLY INSPECTIONS

The Principal or designate shall implement a weekly inspection program. This shall entail checking for loose bolts, wearing on chains or swing seats, etc. and the general

security of the structures. These weekly inspections shall be logged. (Please see attached Appendix 'B' for sample inspection form.)

3.3 ANNUAL INSPECTIONS

The Principal shall implement an annual inspection program. Each playground structure shall be annually inspected by a certified playground inspector. If, during an inspection, a weakness is identified in a structure and it cannot be immediately repaired, the equipment shall be isolated or removed from service until repairs can be made.

The written inspection report must be retained with all other documentation for the playground structure, to be produced for inspection if required.

4.0 ON-GOING MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS

The Board will assume the cost of annual inspections through three Board certified playground inspectors subject to availability. Outside certified inspectors may be brought in at the discretion and cost of the Principal.

In addition, the Board shall cover the costs of minor repairs to play structures and ground cover, up to a maximum of \$500 annually per school.

Custodians and/or Maintenance personnel shall inspect the playground surfacing on a regular basis. Potential defects of a playground include protective surfacing that is compacted, eroded, displaced to an ineffective level, not extensive enough to cover recommended area, unsanitary or littered. Loose-fill materials can deteriorate and will become displaced in heavy-use areas, e.g. under swings and the bottom of slides, so regular monitoring and attention shall be required to ensure that proper material depth and grade are maintained. All corrective measures taken shall be recorded on the "Playground Surfacing Record" as per Appendix 'C'.

5.0 WINTER USE OF PLAYGROUNDS

It is the position of the Near North District School Board that all playground equipment cannot be safely operated during the following winter conditions:

1. Freezing temperatures
2. Snow build-up
3. Ice or freezing rain
4. Periods when students wear winter clothing
5. Frozen ground cover

Therefore, all playground equipment is off limits from November 1 to March 31. Notice thereof to be posted with appropriate signage (see Appendix 'A') and communicated to parents via correspondence, eg. newsletters.

Playgrounds may be used by students during school hours at the discretion of the Principal.

6.0 SAFETY RULES

Teachers, students and volunteer supervisors should be introduced to the following rules with periodic reminders – e.g. September and March.

1. No pushing.
2. No running around play structures.
3. Take turns.
4. No fighting.
5. In case of injury – **DO NOT MOVE THE PERSON**. Report to supervisor immediately.
6. No throwing sticks, stones, or other objects.
7. No eating while on playground equipment.
8. Playground equipment is off limits during rainy weather or when conditions in 5.0 are apparent.
9. Skipping ropes, ropes or strings are not permitted on playground equipment.
10. No scarves, loose drawstrings, or helmets, are permitted on playground equipment.
11. Set rules for specific pieces of play equipment – define maximum number of students and age levels permitted.

7.0 ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Parents should be reminded that the Board does not carry accident insurance for students. Student Accident Enrolment forms pointing out the value of this low-cost coverage are available from Health and Safety throughout the school year.

The Board reserves the right, in the case of any playground equipment or otherwise, to remove or relocate such playground equipment in the event of safety, accommodation or other reasonable concerns.

NOTICE

**This Play Space is intended for
users aged 12 and under.**

**Drawstrings on clothing, helmets
and skipping ropes are not
permitted on play structures.**

**Supervision is not provided
before and after school hours.**

**This Play Space is not available
from November 1st to March 31st
for safety reasons.**

Playground Inspection Checklist – Reference Purposes Only
(see next page for definitions)

Appendix B

EQUIPMENT	CHAINS	S HOOKS/C HOOKS	SEAT/TIRES	HANGER BEARINGS	GREASE FITTINGS	STABILITY IN GROUND/TILTING	EXPOSED CONCRETE	ENTANGLEMENT POINTS	UNIVERSAL JOINT	CHAIN COVERS	HAND RAILINGS	SUPPORT BARS/LEGS	FAS TENING POINT AREAS	SIDEWALLS & BEDWAYS	ENTRAPMENT POINT AREAS	SHARPEDESPOINTS	STAIRS/STEPS	PLASTIC COMPONENTS DAMAGE	SPRING & BAR	HANDLES	PIVOT POINTS	NUTS & BOLTS	GROUND CLEARANCE	LOCKING DEVICES (INT/EXT)	WOOD CHECKING (MAX 3/4")	PROTRUSIONS	CAPS/PLUGS	PROTECTIVE SURFACING	EQUIPMENT SPACING/NO ENCROACH	BENCHES	DEBRIS/BROKEN GLASS	ASPHALT PATHS, ETC	LIGHTING	SKINS	FENCING	CONDITION - SATISFACTORY	CONDITION - ATTENTION REQUIRED	ACTION REQUIRED	DATE COMPLETED		
Swing, Tot																																									
Swing Bolt																																									
Swing Tire																																									
Slides																																									
Spring Toys																																									
See Saws																																									
Climbers																																									
Merry-Go-Rounds/ Whirls																																									
Composite Playstructure (1)																																									
Composite Playstructure (2)																																									
General Site Conditions																																									

Location: _____
 Inspected By: _____ Notes: _____
 Date: _____
 Time: _____

CONDITION LEGEND:
 V Satisfactory
 X Attention Required

Explanation of Inspection Sheet Categories
as per CAN/CSA-Z614-98
“Children’s Playspaces and Equipment”

Chains – Check for bent, worn, open links/pinch points/rust/rough edges.

S-Hooks/fastening devices – Check for excessive wear or cracking/properly closed/never reuse S-Hooks

Seats – Check all rubber seats for wear, sharp edges or points/scorching or burn damage/safety bar on tot seats shall be intact and fixed stationary/check tires for wear and sharp protrusions/ensure all fastening points are secure.

Hanger bearings – check for worn or excessive play in bearings and bushings/lubricate nuts, bolts, grease fittings/replace corroded bolts and rivets/check that clamps are secure.

Grease fittings – lubricate moving parts as required, wipe off excess oil or grease

Stability in ground/tilting – Structures should not easily sway/connections are solid and properly adjusted/check alignment or supports, platforms, barriers, etc./check for any signs of sinking/check all posts (wood and steel) in ground for corrosion or rot a minimum of 375 mm (15 in.) below ground level at least once annually.

Exposed concrete – any exposed concrete must be removed to a minimum 150 mm (6 in.) below ground level/backfill and level depressions and open holes with proper material.

Entanglement points/areas – check for gaps that could entangle clothing, drawstrings, etc/particular attention to sitting and sliding sections of slides and entrance of sliding poles.

End/center fittings – check that nuts and bolts of clamps and fittings are secure/check for sharp-edged, cracked, or broken fittings.

Chain covers – check all fastening points – top and bottom/check for damaged covers/visible sign of wear on swing chain.

Hand/safety railings, support bars/legs, steps and fastening points – check for splitting, splinters, protruding bolts or nails/check all welds/check that all bolts and nuts are secure/ block off entrance or opening if any delay of repairs.

Sidewalls of slide bedways – check for protruding bolts or rivet heads/missing or loose bolts, ensure all are properly fastened and secure/check all welds/check for rust or corrosion, metal fatigue and rough/sharp edges.

Entrapment point/areas – all angles, joining points, or openings shall be less than 90 mm (3.5 in.) or more than 225 mm (9 inc.) to minimize the chance of head/neck entrapment/check for pinch, crush, or shear points which could cause injury.

Stair/steps – Check all platforms and stairs and steps for safety/check welds at all steel joints/check all bolts for secure and proper fastening.

Plastic components – Check for cracks, sharp edges, discoloration, scorching/burn damage, abrasion and excess wear or other damage/ensure components are properly fastened and secure.

Spring and bar – Check and secure spring mounts/check springs carefully for stability, tilting, exposed concrete fittings, check hand and footbars are in place and secure

Handles – must be securely fastened, check welds, bolts, etc. check for sharp points, bending, warping or uneven.

Pivot Points – Test pivot points for free movement/check swivels and bearings for excess wear.

Nuts and Bolts – Check for loose, worn, rusted, or corroded hardware/properly grease/lubricate where required, remove excess lubricant.

Ground clearance – Check for proper clearances of all structures and equipment components as specified in CSA Standard.

Locking devices – Ensure all locking fastening devices (interior and external) are secure.

Wood checking – Check wood timbers and support posts for excess checking/note cracks exceeding 19 mm (3/4 in.)

Protrusions – Check for protruding bars, bolts, nuts, etc./test with applicable protrusion gauge/cover or file sharp edges.

Caps/plugs – Check for and file sharp edges/replace broken cap covers/cap all open-ended pipes with plastic plugs.

Protective surfacing material/borders – Check border edging material for cracking, chipping, excessive checking, splintering, decay, or damage. Check for exposed concrete/ensure adequate depth protective surfacing material under and around equipment for a minimum of 1800 (72 in) or as required and specified in CSA Standard/ensure surfacing material loose, not compacted and free of debris, broken glass, needles, animal defecation, etc.

Equipment spacing no encroachment – Ensure proper spacing between equipment, protective surfacing zones, and no-encroachment zone(s) as required and specified in CSA Standard.

Benches – Check for splinters, excessive checking, cracking, decayed or damaged material/stability/tilting/check fastening points, secure all nuts, bolts, etc/check welds/check for sharp edges.

Debris/broken glass – Check entire playspace for debris and litter, broken glass, needles or syringes, animal defecation, etc/check sand areas and protective surfacing materials for compaction.

Pathways – Check for any visible damage/check for low ponding areas

Lighting – Check for any visible damage/check lights for proper working order.

Signs – Check for any visible damage or graffiti/check for proper pedestrian head clearance/check fastening points/replace weathered or damaged signs

Fencing – Inspect for any visible damage/check for any protruding points, fence fabric, hardware (bolts, nuts, etc.)/check for attachments, eg. skipping ropes

WEEKLY PLAYGROUND INSPECTION CHECKLIST

Location Name: _____

Address: _____

Date Inspected: _____

Time of Inspection _____

Check when
complete

<p>Check for and remove loose garbage, debris, broken glass, animal droppings on play area ground surface.</p> <p>Check play structure for obvious signs of damage, vandalism or broken parts (Advise Management immediately if service is needed)</p> <p>Check for and remove skipping ropes or any other ropes or climbing devices which have been attached to but are not a permanent part of the playground structure.</p> <p>Rake sand/gravel to replenish areas beneath swing bays, slide exits and fire poles</p> <p>Empty garbage can(s) located in playground area.</p>	
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Completed By: _____

School Board Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Playground Surfacing Record

Potential defects of a playground include protective surfacing that is compacted, eroded, displaced to an ineffective level, not extensive enough to cover recommended area, unsanitary or littered. Loose-fill materials can deteriorate and will become displaced in heavy-use areas, e.g. under swings and the bottom of slides, so regular monitoring and attention shall be required to ensure that proper material depth and grade are maintained.

To ensure the protective surfacing is adequate to ensure safety of our students and to meet the CAN/CSA-Z614-03 standard "Children's Playspaces and Equipment", it is important to conduct frequent inspections of the protective surfacing and take corrective measures when necessary. Corrective measures taken must be recorded and retained on file. Refer to CSA-Z614-03, NNDSB Administrative Guideline "Health & Safety – Playgrounds" or contact the Maintenance Supervisor for more information.

Date	Circle all that apply			Initials
_____	Raked	Roto-tilled	Additional Surfacing Added	_____
_____	Raked	Roto-tilled	Additional Surfacing Added	_____
_____	Raked	Roto-tilled	Additional Surfacing Added	_____
_____	Raked	Roto-tilled	Additional Surfacing Added	_____
_____	Raked	Roto-tilled	Additional Surfacing Added	_____
_____	Raked	Roto-tilled	Additional Surfacing Added	_____
_____	Raked	Roto-tilled	Additional Surfacing Added	_____
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