

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council

Re-opening of Play Equipment

Risk Assessment

The Government recently announced that Play Parks could be re-opened on 4th 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 in the context of the open access Play Areas and MUGA Pitch in Hatfield Peverel.

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.	RoSPA annual inspection carried out in June 2020.	No urgent issues identified on the report. Play areas are safe to re-open from a maintenance perspective.
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	Staffing and financial resources make it not reasonably practical to steward/marshal the play areas. The play areas are open access; therefore, a booking system is not reasonably practical or enforceable. The distance between swing seats allows for appropriate social distancing.	Advisory signage to be placed around the play equipment highlighting the Government’s guidance on social distancing and household groups. The Nounsley play area will have designated entrance and exit only gates (with signage) to facilitate a one-way system at pinch points.

			<p>Consideration to be given to 'keep your distance' floor stickers and 2m indicators spray painted on tarmac.</p> <p>The MUGA to re-open with advisory signage in place.</p>
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>Staffing and financial resources make it not reasonably practical to clean the equipment frequently or to supply hand washing or hand sanitising facilities.</p>	<p>Both UV light and rain exposure are believed to lower the risk of transmission.</p> <p>Advisory signage to be placed around the play equipment highlighting the Government's guidance on hand washing, hand sanitising and general hygiene.</p> <p>The Nounsley play area will have its gates secured open to reduce the number of high traffic touch points. The recreation ground infant play area will have one gate (facing the recreation ground) secured open/removed, with the side entrance gate left closed (due to its proximity to a main road). However, this will remain under regular review due to the potential of dogs entering the play area.</p> <p>The MUGA gates will be secured open to reduce the number of high traffic touch points.</p>

<p>Face Coverings</p>	<p>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>	<p>Face coverings recommended when social distancing of 2m cannot be met, although not mandatory in outside spaces.</p> <p>Infant play area designed for younger children; therefore, face coverings may not be appropriate.</p>	<p>Advisory signage to be placed around the equipment highlighting Government guidance on face coverings.</p>
<p>Additional Measures and Communicating with Parents</p>	<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>The sites are large enough to accommodate parents and carers and has adequate space to install signage.</p>	<p>Advisory signage to be placed around the equipment asking users not to consume food or drink when using the play equipment; and reminding users to dispose of used PPE and litter appropriately.</p>
<p>Considering Children with Additional Needs</p>	<p>Take into account the requirements of children with additional needs.</p>	<p><i>Consideration of the following needs:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing impairment (awareness of other 	<p>Advisory signage to be placed around the equipment highlighting the Government's guidelines on social distancing and hygiene, with</p>

		<p>children coming close may be less).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual impairment (unable to read signs; awareness of others coming close may be less). • Physical impairment (parent/carer may need to accompany child on/near the equipment). • Learning difficulties (may find it difficult to maintain social distancing/respond to other safety advice). 	<p>suggestion to return at a different time if the play area is busy.</p> <p>Advisory signage to include images to make it easier for children to understand.</p>
<p>Keeping Staff Safe</p>	<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 	<p>Staffing resources make it not reasonably practical for cleaning or stewarding the play areas or MUGA pitch.</p>	<p>Advisory signage to be placed around the equipment asking users to dispose of their used PPE and litter in the litter bins provided. Staff to be advised of this and a supply of 'surgical style' gloves to be made available to staff (to be worn under the 'grip' gloves already issued as standard PPE).</p> <p>Staff to be reminded of the importance of wearing the PPE already issued.</p> <p>Staff to be reminded about social distancing requirements and advised to enter enclosed play areas at quieter times.</p>

			<p>Gates to be secured open/removed enabling staff to enter the area to empty litter bins without encountering additional high traffic touch points.</p> <p>Play equipment and general maintenance contractor to be asked to provide a Risk Assessment concerning work in these areas in relation to Covid-19.</p>
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Conclusions

- The Council is asked to authorise the Clerk to purchase the necessary signage and request the handyman to install and maintain.
- The play areas will remain closed until the above-mentioned measures are in place.
- Information on the closure extension beyond 4th July 2020 will be put on the website and social media so that residents are aware; temporary signs will be put in place around the play equipment to this effect by the handyman.
- Residents will be informed once the play areas re-open.
- Recommendation is for the MUGA pitch to remain closed.
- A risk assessment will be carried out/reviewed whenever Government guidelines are updated.
- Risk assessment updated 23rd July following instigation of measures identified. Health and safety concerns raised regarding the side gate to the infant play area and its proximity to Maldon Road, therefore, the RA has been changed to reflect this.
- Risk assessment updated 7th August following the resolution to re-open the MUGA. Health and safety concerns raised regarding people scaling the fencing to access the MUGA. Health and safety risk deemed greater than risk from Covid-19.

Risk Assessment undertaken by Cllrs Weale and Wallace and the Clerk, and conclusions presented to all Councillors.

July 2020