



# Medstead Parish Council

## Playground and Recreation Area Inspection Policy

### Introduction

This policy has been prepared to recognise formally the maintenance and inspection regime of Medstead Parish Council's play facilities and the assets within these facilities to minimise the risk of accidents and help provide a safer environment for children and adults alike to enjoy, play and exercise.

The policy will outline the legal responsibilities of Medstead Parish Council and how it 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 Medstead Parish Council's objectives in providing challenging play whilst identifying an acceptable degree of risk.

### Legal Requirements

There is no specific legislation on play safety. However, the key legislation is:  
The 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.

Medstead Parish Council and its Clerk 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 Council. 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.

### Summary

This Playground and Recreation Area Policy is designed to take account of all statutory requirements in addition to this Council's commitment to provide safe formal play areas and environmental play opportunities within the confines of its budget facilities.

Medstead Parish Council understands and acknowledges the need to:

- Consult and liaise with parents, children and schools, when considering the purchase of new equipment and thereby ensuring only the type of equipment that will be enjoyed and put to its maximum use will be considered.
- Educate parents/guardians to be aware of their responsibility to their charges at play.
- Provide more play opportunities for disabled children bearing in mind when considering the purchase of new equipment.
- Install signs in prominent positions, advising that play areas and the Village Green are areas where dog owners must clear up after their dogs.

- Update/ replace old or defective equipment.
- Recognise the expected 'life' of existing equipment and create a replacement plan.
- Ensure sites are regularly visually inspected for superficial defects and faults to equipment in addition to general cleanliness and removal of dangerous objects.
- Monthly inspections should be recorded and be more 'in depth' covering all play and adult gym equipment (including the impact absorbing surfaces), seats, gates, notice boards and litter bins.
- Undertake a detailed annual documented inspection, carried out in accordance with current legislation by an RPII qualified independent inspector.
- To carry out a regular risk assessment in line with HM Government advice and take all precautions necessary to assess whether the playground / adult gym equipment facilities are able to be safely open in light of the Coronavirus or any other restrictions.

### **Inspection Frequency & Type**

The frequency of inspections and the inspector responsible for carrying out the on-site inspections are:

- i. **Monthly Visual Inspections** carried out by Parish Clerk. It includes the identification of obvious hazards resulting from use, weather and vandalism, broken parts or bottles, litter, graffiti, equipment misuse. Obvious hazards as described above will be reported to the Council for action.
- ii. **Quarterly** – Professional company (Rpii certified to operational standard). Operational Inspections provide a more detailed inspection to check the operation and stability of all equipment and surfaces especially for wear. All areas will be inspected with a report to Medstead Parish Council to:
  - 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)
- iii. **Annual** – Rpii professional inspection. The annual Inspections are to be carried out by an independent inspector trained to RPII Operational inspector's level enabling them to perform an operational inspection. It will assess:
  - 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.