

THORNER PARISH COUNCIL PLAYGROUND AND EXERCISE EQUIPMENT POLICY

- Play is the highest expression of human development in Childhood.
- Play is a vital component of growing up
- Play is how children develop skills: physical, social, and intellectual
- Play provides children with opportunities to test out themselves and others
- Play gives children opportunities to practise and prepare for the outdoor world

“...the child shall have full opportunity for play and recreation...society and the public authorities shall endeavour to promote the enjoyment of this right,” United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child.

Playground and exercise equipment provisions are provided and maintained by Thorne Parish Council to encourage an active and happy life in the village and to give everyone every opportunity to have fun, play and stay active.

SAFETY

The playground and exercise areas will be maintained as a safe place for the enjoyment of all visitors. The equipment must be inspected regularly by Parish Councillor(s), who will maintain a written record and report all defects to the responsible Councillor, the Clerk, and the whole Parish Council.

Parish Councillors who inspect the playground should be suitably trained in playground inspections. The Clerk will maintain a record of all qualifications.

Signage will be erected and maintained asking that all accidents or defects are reported to the Clerk. All accidents will be recorded in an accident book to be held by the Clerk.

Retention of accident details must be compliant with the GDPR policy as it is likely to include personal information.

All defects and accident reports must be passed on to the responsible Councillor and the whole Parish Council. All reports must be followed up within one week. Unsafe equipment or areas must be taken out of use until remedial work is completed.

An annual inspection by a suitably professionally certified independent inspector will be commissioned by the Parish Council. The report must be reviewed by the responsible Councillor recommendations presented at the next Parish Council meeting. As with user reported accidents and defects, serious concerns should be addressed within a week.

All provisions should meet the required British Standards to minimise the risks of accidents.

ACCESS

Users of the play and exercise equipment may do so between 8am and dusk. The Parish Council will not patrol the area nor police restrictions themselves.

Public access may be withdrawn from the play area for health and safety reasons. When maintenance work is undertaken in play or exercise areas, the entire area must be closed to avoid injury to users of the equipment.

The Parish Council should ensure that the play and exercise equipment is as accessible as is practical. For example, it is accessible to disabled users. Disabled children are simply children with extra needs and they should have access to a play environment which allows them the same opportunities for recreation and creativity as able-bodied children and given the opportunity to play with able-bodied children on the same equipment.

The broad provision of exercise and play equipment should be designed to be suitable for all age groups, ensuring there is provision for babies, toddlers, children, teenagers, and adults.

The play and exercise equipment may not be booked or reserved for exclusive use.

Smoking is not allowed on or near the play and exercise equipment.

MAINTENANCE

The Parish Council will maintain an ongoing fund in each subsequent budget to maintain, repair and refresh the provisions in line with the useable lifespan.

The areas within which provision is made, and immediately surrounding, will be kept safe and tidy, including the removal of weeds, cutting and strimming of grass, control of plants and removal of rubbish, leaves and seeds.

Inspection reports, records of injuries and faults to equipment must be considered when planning maintenance and equipment refresh cycles. All development should be environmentally friendly and provide as natural a play experience as possible.

All plans for development should only proceed following consultation with the residents of Thorner.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Parish Council should make every effort to ensure that parent, guardians and carers are aware of their responsibility to children at play and seek their help to provide a safe environment in which they can play. This is achieved through adult supervision in playgrounds and when using exercise equipment, prevention of aggressive acts, ensuring children wear appropriate clothing and through consultation.

Where volunteers are engaged to help maintain the play and exercise equipment, the volunteers will be engaged in line with the volunteer policy.

Adopted 06 October 2020