



If Rating=Very low / Low
No further action – ensure controls are maintained
If Rating=Medium
Look to improve by next review if reasonably practicable

If Rating=High
Look to improve within specified timescale
If Rating=Very High
Stop activities and make immediate improvements

Risk Assessment Form

Site	Assessor(s)	Approved by
Melton Road Playing Field, Melton	P Alder P Donoghue	W Grosvenor
Activity Assessed	Date compiled	Version
COVID-19 Play Areas	12/04/2021	2

Government has advised that outdoor play areas and gyms may re-open from 4 July 2020 and have issued guidance <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 states that owners and operators must work together to undertake a risk assessment to ensure that measures have been considered relating to covid-19 and the re-opening of play areas following an extended period of closure.

The guidance also states owners and operator have discretion over when to open and may decide to keep areas closed should they feel they are not able to facilitate their safe usage. There is public expectation that play spaces are formally re-opened, indeed some play areas have seen use during lockdown. It is not practical for play spaces to remain closed as users will force their way onto site regardless of any advice or measures in place, potentially creating other hazards and general nuisance.

What are the hazards? Risk of potential COVID-19 transmission to users of the equipment such as children, parents, guardians and carers, as well as staff tasked with the maintenance or cleaning of equipment and play spaces. Owners and operators should do everything reasonably practicable to minimise risks recognising that it is not possible to completely eliminate the risk of COVID-19. It is public knowledge that children are at lower risk of developing covid-19 but can spread the virus.

The guidance also refers to the HSE promoting a balanced approach to children’s play and leisure <https://www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/childrens-play-july-2012.pdf> – this states

- Play is important for children’s well-being and development
- When planning and providing play opportunities, the goal is not to eliminate risk, but to weigh up the risks and benefits
- Those providing play opportunities should focus on controlling the real risks, while securing or increasing the benefits – not on the paperwork
- Accidents and mistakes happen during play – but fear of litigation and prosecution has been blown out of proportion



Risk rating scoring matrix

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Ref No.	Hazards Associated with the Location, Equipment or Activity	Persons Affected (User, visitor, contractor, public)	How They Might be Harmed (Risk)	Initial Risk Rating	Existing Control Measures	Residual Risk Rating	Additional Risk Controls Required (Ensure all actions are placed on the action plan and these actions completed in a specified time frame)
1	General Maintenance and Inspection of Play Equipment	Members of public and staff	Defects with equipment that could cause harm through slip, trips, falls and contact with damaged equipment		Routine inspections have continued throughout lock down and defects attended to as per normal existing arrangements. Annual independent inspections are to be completed in July by the Play Inspection Company. Any new defects will be assessed, made safe and works completed as required. All visits and works undertaken will adhere to social distancing requirements.		The likelihood of an accident remains low and there is nothing further that can practically be done to reduce the potential severity of any injury.
2	Contact with COVID-19 infected persons - Social Distancing	Members of public and staff	Exposure to air born Covid-19		Introduction of signage to warn users of the potential risk and to maintain social distancing whilst using the facilities including the supervision of young children. Due to the free access to spaces and the irregular configuration of equipment it is not practical to introduce any form of distancing control measures without significant impact on the benefits of allowing children to play. Staff will also adhere to all COVID measure implemented and only undertake works and inspections whilst maintaining a minimum distance of 2m, barriers will be used as and when required.		Ensure that signage remains in place by way of routine inspections.
3	Contact with COVID-19 on surfaces and equipment	Members of public and staff	Exposure to surface		Suitable signage to be in place advising users that there is a risk of contaminated surfaces and materials and that the		Ensure that signage remains in place by way of routine inspections.



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			contaminated by Covid-19		equipment is not routinely cleaned. Government advice is that the virus can survive for several days on some hard surfaces and that these risks are reduced when outdoors where surfaces may be subjected to UV light and/or rain but there is potential for transmission on frequently touched surfaces. Signage is to advise that all users maintain high levels of hygiene and wash/clean hand before and after using equipment and that children are supervised to avoid touching their mouths with their hands.		
4	Contaminated waste material	Members of the public and staff	Waste material potential contaminated with Covid-19		Potential for contamination on waste materials including food packaging and tissues etc. and bins. All users are to be encouraged via to user litter bins provided/take litter home and maintain high standards of hygiene. Staff emptying bins and collecting litter to follow existing procedures and Covid enhancements. Waste may include face coverings and gloves. Potential for waste levels to exceed normal levels, to be monitored and additional visits to be arranged as required.		Ensure that signage remains in place by way of routine inspections. Undertake additional bin provision and litter picking as required. Provide staff with protective equipment where necessary.
5	Additional advice relating to COVID 19 exposure and prevention	Members of public	Exposure to covid-19		Remind all users by signage that they use equipment at their own risk. Refrain from consuming food and drink in play areas due to the associated risk of exposure to the virus by direct hand to mouth contact. Take PPE home or dispose of them in a bin where provided.		Ensure that signage remains in place by way of routine inspections.



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					A noticeboard will be erected by the playpark gate with advice signage.		
6	Routine cleaning of play equipment by way of spillage etc	Staff	Exposure to covid-19		No regular cleaning will be carried out. Any cleaning of equipment will only be undertaken as per normal operational conditions eg when required due to reported spillages, graffiti etc. Staff will follow Covid practices, will wear protective gloves and if spray and splash is likely to be created then a face mask will be worn. Cleaning activities only to be undertaken when there are no public nearby.		Ensure that staff have adequate protective equipment and cleaning materials
7	Visitor numbers – social distancing	Members of the public	Exposure to covid-19		The play park can attract several users/visitors at any one time. Many visitors will attend in family groups and we should be aware that different social distancing guidance will apply. Clear signage will be introduced to remind users to maintain social distancing as per government guidelines and this should include visual indicators as well as text. There may be an initial surge of users attending any site particularly if the weather is favourable, however it is anticipated that normal levels of use will return quickly. Maximum number of persons in the play area at any one time is set to 20.		Any reports of excessive numbers of users attending any site will be reported to council and instruction sought on how to address persistent problems.
8	Specific changes to equipment	Members of public	Exposure to covid-19		Benches and tables – signage will be placed on benches reminding users to maintain social distancing. Swings – 2 inner swings will be removed from 4-swing set to create greater social		Ensure that signage remains in place by way of routine inspections and fencing closing off equipment remains in place.



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				<p>distancing. 1 swing will be removed from 2-swing set. Slide –2m queuing distance marker to be added. 1 user at a time, do not queue on stairs Roundabout – 1 user/household at a time Supanova – 1 user/household at a time Spinnerbowl – 1 user at a time Seesaw – 1 child per side, max 2 users at a time Multiplay senior – 2 users at a time Nest swing – 1 user at a time Zip wire – 1 user at a time Close off top gate and allow entry/exit through bottom gate. It is hoped that this will encourage users to take notice of the new signage that will be placed by this gate</p>		<p>Climbing frame (Multiplay Junior) will no longer be closed and fenced off. Signage is repeatedly removed and the fencing is torn down making it impossible to enforce. As restrictions are easing and covid cases are falling it seems sensible to reopen. Should restrictions be reinstated consideration will be given to closing off this equipment again.</p>
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