

# ONGAR TOWN COUNCIL

## PLAY POLICY

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Play 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.

- Play is a vital component of growing up.
- Play is how children develop physical, social and intellectual skills.
- Play provides children with opportunities to test out themselves and others.
- Play gives children opportunities to practice and prepare for the outdoor world.

### 2.0 POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Ongar Town Council seek to provide, where possible, conventional play areas, environmental play areas and community play activities to ensure that every opportunity of play is in place.
2. Ongar Town Council will ensure that the play facilities that it provides comply with all the appropriate British Standards in order to minimise the risk of accidents and help provide a safer environment for children to enjoy.
3. Ongar Town Council will monitor, assess and review design, installation and layout of play areas and investigate and take note of new research into safety standards.
4. Ongar Town Council will carry out routine daily and monthly recorded inspections of all play areas in addition to fully documented certified annual inspection by an independent inspector.

Sites will be visually inspected daily for defects and faults to equipment in addition to general cleanliness and removal of dangerous objects and materials, or sites may be closed until they have been cleared. Annual safety inspections will be made by accredited experts.

5. Ongar Town Council will monitor safety and keep a central record of all reported injuries and serious incidents on its playgrounds. This information can then be taken into account when updating existing play areas and planning new ones.

6. Ongar Town Council will carefully consider the implications for access to, and experience of, environmental play opportunities when dealing with planning applications relating to new developments.

Flexibility about age restriction for use of equipment will be applied for children with disabilities where appropriate

Ongar Town Council will endeavour to make all play areas suitable for all children regardless of their abilities.

7. Ongar Town Council will encourage schemes and provide, where possible, experience of the natural environment.
8. Ongar Town Council will liaise with parents, schools and children and take into account children's needs when planning, replacing or updating play equipment. The Council will achieve this by seeking the views of parents and children when planning play facilities and updating existing play areas. Schools can also prove to be a valuable source of information.
9. Ongar Town Council will take account of any new legislation or standards.
10. Ongar Town Council will make parents aware of their responsibility to children at play and seek their help to provide a safe environment in which they can play. This will be covered in guidelines on notices in the play areas.
11. All dogs will be excluded from OTC playgrounds .On recreation grounds dogs are to be kept on leads and under control.

In accordance with current legislation local authorities have a duty to keep designated areas in their control, including parks and children's playgrounds, as clear of dog faeces as is practicable under Part IV of the Environmental Act 1990

12. Ongar Town Council is to maintain a site register for each playground. This will contain –

- A copy of the council's play policy
- A site plan
- Full equipment details
- Documentation of the planning and development of each site
- Inspection, maintenance and forward planning programme
- Details of reported accident and serious accidents.
- A copy of each annual site inspection.

### **3. IMPLEMENTATION**

To enable implementation of the Play Policy the council needs to –

- Identify grants and sponsorship available to assist with costs
- Recognise the expected life of existing equipment and create a replacement plan
- The Council will ensure the play policy is adhered to.
- The administration and implementation of the policy is the responsibility of the Town Clerk