**Stretton Parish Council**

**Covid-19 Policy - Re-opening of Play Areas**

**Risk Assessment**

The Government recently announced that Play Parks could be re-opened on 4 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 all play areas, BMX tracks and skateboard parks.

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| **Key Principle** | **Government Guidance** | **Assessment** |
| Authority to reopen | Government guidance issued giving authority to re-open from 4 July 2020 | Government guidance issued giving authority to re-open from 4 July 2020 |
| Sector-specific advice | Government guidance reviewed and used as basis for this Risk Assessment | Government guidance to be regularly checked to ensure council is following most up to date guidance |
| Maintenance Issues following Lockdown | Ensure equipment is safe to use and that risks to from damaged or defective equipment are addressed before opening. | All Play Areas to be opened to be checked against the current RoSPA Annual Play Area Inspection Report  All essential repairs to be carried out before Play Area is opened |
| Ongoing maintenance / general condition of the site and equipment |  | SPC has a duty to ensure the site is safe for users. There is no on-site staff/management presence. There are regular inspections and signage to ask people to report any concerns:  Weekly play area inspections must have re-commenced before site re-opens  Any equipment where safety concerns are identified to be taken out of use |
| Social Distancing | Put in place measures to support social distancing – 2m or 1m plus risk mitigations. Examples given include:   * Limit number of users at any one time * Booking system * Advisory signage * Create waiting areas with barriers | Notices to be placed at Play Areas to advertise rules on social distancing (notice is attached for reference)  Admittance numbers to each Play Area to be advertised based on number of pieces of equipment, maximum of 8 persons (this includes both children and parents)  Given that the play area is small and has little usage a booking system is not feasible  Other measures were considered but given the sites are unsupervised, it is not practical to take further measures. However, additional information will be posted on local websites and social media to highlight the importance of social distancing on the play equipment to local users |
| Cleaning and Hygiene | Clean high traffic touch points frequently. This includes:   * All Play Equipment * Seating Areas * Refuse Bins   In addition, use signage to encourage:   * Users to clean equipment before and after use * Use of hand sanitiser and frequent hand washing | Notices to include instructions to parents to wipe equipment and children’s hands before and after use  No food or drink to be allowed in Play Areas |
| Face Coverings | 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). | Face coverings are at present not mandatory in outdoor settings and it will be up to individual users to decide on their usage |
| Additional Measures and Communicating with Parents | 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:   * 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. | Notices to be placed at every Play Area to lay out parental responsibilities  No food or drink to be allowed in Play Areas |
| Considering Children with Additional Needs | Take into account the requirements of children with additional needs. | Notices to be placed at every Play Area to lay out parental responsibilities |
| Keeping Staff Safe | Consider the risks staff may be exposed to and how these can be mitigated. Staff roles may include:   * cleaning playground equipment/surrounding areas | All staff to be provided with appropriate PPE when cleaning or repairing Play Areas |
| Additional risks:   * Litter * Site accessibility * Bullying * Sharp objects * Drugs and alcohol * Vehicles/cycles – risk to safety of users * Dogs – risk of aggression/from dog waste |  | Signage promotes responsible disposal of litter, the importance of patience and following footpaths/routes  Signage advises that children should be supervised so the responsible adult can ensure children, including those with additional needs, follow guidelines  Signs ask people to dispose of rubbish which includes food / drink waste |