

Shrivenham Parish Council

Re-opening of Play Equipment

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.

Key Principle	Government Guidance	Assessment	Conclusion
General Maintenance Issues following Lockdown	Ensure equipment is safe to use and that risks from damaged or defective equipment are addressed before opening.	Nothing to impede this under the current circumstances, apart from the risk of the member of staff carrying out the checks possibly being infected.	This could carry on as normal, as long as all relevant government guidelines regarding PPE and social distancing were adhered to by staff.
Social Distancing	Put in place measures to support social distancing – 2m or 1m plus risk mitigations. Examples given include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limit number of users at any one time• Booking system• Advisory signage• Create waiting areas with barriers	We do not have the staff or resources to monitor that social distancing is followed properly and it is not possible to enforce any of these examples in the open play area. It would be possible to put up advisory signage in the gated play area, but not in the open play area.	We as a council could not ensure that the government guidelines regarding social distancing are properly followed. The open play area would be extremely difficult to control in terms of social distancing.

<p>Cleaning and Hygiene</p>	<p>Clean high traffic touch points frequently. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Play Equipment • Seating Areas • Refuse Bins <p>In addition, use signage to encourage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users to clean equipment before and after use • Use of hand sanitiser and frequent hand washing <p>Where practicable, provide hand sanitiser or hand washing facilities at entry and exit points.</p>	<p>We do not have the resources to ensure that members of staff are available to clean and sanitise high traffic points regularly.</p> <p>Signage is possible in the gated play area, but not possible in the open play area.</p> <p>We do not have the facilities to provide hand sanitising stations at all of the entry/exits points; closing some off may cause congestion issues or 'pinch points'.</p>	<p>We as a council could not ensure that the government guidelines regarding cleaning and hygiene are properly followed by users, or carried out correctly by 3rd parties.</p> <p>Large amounts of the play equipment could not be sufficiently cleaned due to its material (largely wood, rubber etc.)</p>
<p>Face Coverings</p>	<p>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).</p>	<p>If all government guidelines regarding face coverings were properly followed by users and guardians, there would be no issue with this. However, due to not being able to dedicate staff to this area, we could not monitor that these guidelines were being followed.</p>	<p>We as a council could not ensure that the government guidelines regarding face coverings are properly followed by users, but we could ensure all staff PPE is correct.</p>
<p>Additional Measures and Communicating with Parents</p>	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consumption of food or drink on play equipment or in the playground area is banned 	<p>It is possible to put signage up in the gated play area, but not in the open play area.</p> <p>We have a litter bin in the gated play area that can be used, but not in the open play area. However, we would not be able to regularly empty this in high traffic usage.</p>	<p>We as a council could not ensure that the government guidelines regarding additional measures and communicating with parents are properly followed.</p>

(continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	(continued)	(continued)
Considering Children with Additional Needs	Take into account the requirements of children with additional needs.	No change	Children with additional needs will continue to be taken into account.
Keeping Staff Safe	<p>Consider the risks staff may be exposed to and how these can be mitigated. Staff roles may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> cleaning playground equipment/surrounding areas managing queues of those waiting to use equipment stewarding equipment to ensure users comply with rules made by the owner/operator 	<p>Staff would have the necessary equipment available to ensure their safety when cleaning any facilities.</p> <p>We do not have the resources to ensure that members of staff are available to steward the correct usage of the play areas and their equipment.</p>	We as a council can ensure that our members of staff are kept safe when dealing with the play equipment and areas. However, we cannot ensure that users comply with the rules set by the Shrivenham Parish Council.

Conclusions:

Shrivenham Parish Council cannot ensure that government guidelines regarding playgrounds, open exercise areas and play equipment are followed properly and safely. Therefore, we have decided to keep both play areas closed until further notice. This risk assessment will be reviewed regularly, and the play areas will be reopened upon the Shrivenham Parish Council deciding that it is safe to do so for users and staff in accordance with government guidelines and only then.

Risk Assessment undertaken by Lewis Hilsdon – Health & Safety Officer, on behalf of Shrivenham Parish Council on date 01/07/2020 and conclusions agreed by all councillors.