

Playcentre Aotearoa's Playground Safety Checklist



To be completed in **September/October** & emailed to your local Regional Property Coordinator, <https://www.playcentre.org.nz/current-members/property/property-contacts/>. It is recommended that this checklist be done together by outgoing & incoming Property Officers. Please allow about 30 minutes to complete this checklist.

Name of Playcentre:.....

Date of Check:.....

Name/s of Property or Other Officer/s Conducting Review:.....

Refer to final page for FAQ.

	Good	Ok	Needs Work	Comments
Playground Layout				
Is the playground inviting, with good viewing?				
Are there sufficient features to occupy the children?				
Are there places to sit (children & adults)?				
Are there places for quiet play as well as active play?				
Are there sunny & shaded areas?				
Fences & Gates				
Are fences in good condition? (check for loose palings & corrugate, nails or screws sticking out, rotting/rusting, footings/foundation secure)				
Are fences 1.2m high with no footholds for a child/no means of climbing over fully enclosing the play area? Palings/uprights min 100mm apart.				
Do gates swing freely & safely, do they have childproof latches? Do gates secure/close correctly? Do self-closing mechanisms work, if applicable.				
Are all trees, fixed & movable equipment minimum of 1.5m away from exterior fencing or not able to be used to climb over the fence? <i>Refer to FAQs</i>				
Are there any mounds of grass clipping, dirt etc piles up beside fences. These can cause timber fences to rot and build up fences so they are no longer 1.2m.				
Grounds & Landscaping				
Are grounds free of weeds & poisonous plants? (booklet available)				
Are gardens & lawns well maintained? (mown & weeded)				
Are trees/branches not dangerous, away from overhead cables, play equipment?				
Are large trees alive & free from rot, over hanging branches trimmed to 2m above ground level?				



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Is grass in good condition, not muddy or dried up?				
Do mounds have a 1.2m clear area around the base & surface that is in good condition? Refer to FAQs				
Impact Surfacing				
Is grass in good condition, not patchy, no dry cracks, no hard objects or stones?				
Loose fill (bark, woodchip etc.) no foreign objects, rubbish, no hollows, good drainage, min 300mm deep.				
Are borders in good condition, no warping, no bolts, nails screws sticking out, no cracking, rotting, rusting, no splinters?				
Is synthetic material in good condition, no trip/slip points, minimal gaps, no invasion of tree roots, no algae/debris, not brittle or lifting Refer to FAQs				
Sandpit				
Is the frame in good condition? (no nails or screws sticking out, no rotting, no warping, no splinters)				
Is there adequate sand, minimum 300mm, ideal 600mm? Is the sand clean, drains well, free of weeds & rubbish?				
Is there adequate shade? (shade sail/s, pergola, trees) Is it in good condition?				
Is the sandpit cover in good condition, is it adequate to cover the sandpit, able to be fixed in place? (no rotting, holes, clean)				
Swings				
Are swing frames in good condition, clean, no movement, rot, corrosion, cracks, metal strapping/fixings are secure, no nails, screws or bolts sticking out. Foundations are covered by adequate depth of impact surfacing.				
Swing seats are lightweight, slip-resistant, made of impact absorbing material, e.g. rubber? (no sharp edges, cracks, deformation, fraying ropes)?				
Do tyre swings/seats have drainage holes, no exposed wires. Are tyre swings positioned away from support posts (hold swing up horizontal to ground, supports 200mm away from swing in this position)				
Seats are min 400mm from side of frames, min 600mm between seats, min 350mm above ground level (400mm for tyre, barrel & heavy swings). Seat max 500 high.				



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Chains, ropes, shackles, rings, hangers, connections in good condition, no rusting, all tight & secure, no heavy wearing. Ropes are between 12 & 45mm dia.				
Adequate circulation around swings, no moveable equipment, debris, vegetation, toys within swing fall zones				
Fixed Equipment (forts, platforms, climbing frames)				
Is equipment in good condition (e.g. no damage, bolts, screws or nails loose or sticking out, no cracks, water damage, leaks, rot, algae, splinters, slippery surfaces)?				
Maximum height of platforms 1.5m, 1.5m clear right around the equipment.				
Are handrails & balustrading in good condition, higher than 700mm, gaps less than 89mm on forts and equipment 600mm high?				
Are stairs, ladders & ramps in good condition, non-rotating, slip resistant, no algae, moss or rot, no loose fixings, nails, screws, bolts. Balustrading higher than 700mm.				
Slides (Attached Or Separate)				
Is the frame & slide in good condition, no bolts, screws or nails loose or sticking out, no splinters, sharp objects or edges, 1 continuous sheet, overlaps face downwards, no pooling water?				
Slide platform/access no higher than 1.5m				
Is there a horizontal bar above top of the slide, 700-900mm above platform				
Is there horizontal run off at the bottom, run off reduces speed, minimum landing/run off 1m, 2m for fast slides.				
Moveable Equipment Incl. Tredway Boxes				
Is it in good condition, no cracks, rot, loose bolts, screws, nails, no missing parts, no protrusions, corrosion, rust, attachments are secure/unable to fall out, located on level surface, no paint peeling, broken/sharp edges?				
Do the boxes have a maximum height 1m on grass, 1.5m on appropriate impact absorbing surface?				
Is there 1.5m minimum clear area right around equipment, unless part of a cluster? Refer to FAQs				



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Rocking & Rotating Equipment (seesaw, rockers, spinning)				
Is equipment in good condition, no cracks, rot, loose bolts, screws, nails, missing parts, corrosion, rust, fixed in well, no rotating foot rests or handles, foundations covered with appropriate impact absorbing surfacing.				
Is there a maximum fall height of no more than 1m and a 2m clear zone around rotating & 1.5m clear zone around rocking equipment?				
Are seats greater than 400mm above ground level, & platforms & foot rests greater 230mm above ground level ?				
Ropes, Cables, Chains, Nets				
Are ropes in good condition, no rusting, fixed securely, no missing parts, corrosion, no fraying?				
Ropes/nets thickness should be between 12mm and 45mm				
Cargo net openings in both directions should be between 110mm and 230mm. No solid bar at base to fall on.				
Are climbing ropes anchored at both ends?				
Are hanging ropes, 2m long max with no loops, 600mm away from other fixed equipment & 900mm away from other swinging equipment?				
Chain links should be between 8.6mm and 12mm gaps, can have rope threaded through				
All parts in reasonable condition with no fraying/splintering/thinning.				
Flying-Foxes/Aerial Cableways/Trackways/Aerial Runways				
Is it in good condition, no rusting, corrosion, rot, no loose bolts, screws, nails, no missing parts, attachments secure, no excessive wear & tear?				
Do cables have stop measure 2.5m or more from the end posts, i.e. is there something to stop the equipment from running into the posts at the ends?				
Are there clear fall areas to both sides of at least 2m with impact absorbing surface material?				
Seat 400mm min clearance from ground.				



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What changes have happened with your playground over the last 12 months, i.e. new swings, bark topped up & when, trees pruned by arborist & when, working bees, etc?

Any items for business meeting discussion?

Items to add to annual budget for consideration?

Working bee tasks?





FAQs:

What happens if I tick "Needs Works", does this mean my Centre can be shut down?

A Centre will only be required to shut if there are significant Health and Safety Issues picked up as part of the Checklist, i.e. sewage leaking, fencing missing, no hotwater, no electricity, etc., and even then consideration will be given to whether the area can safely be temporarily fenced off until works are completed.

What happens if I have multiple items in one category?

Some Centre's will have two slides, two forts or similar. Please assess all equipment and make notes beside the categories if necessary.

What happens if the Centre does not have one of the items listed on the checklist, i.e. Flying Fox/Cableway?

Not all Centre's will have every item. Please cross out the section or write n/a in comments if you do not have the piece of equipment or it doesn't apply to your Centre.

What happens if the Centre has trees or bushes that are closer than 1.5m to perimeter fencing?

If you have trees or bushes that are closer than 1.5m to a perimeter, then these will need to be pruned so that children are not able to use them in order to climb over the fence. If this is not possible then they will need to be removed or replanted away from perimeter fencing and other fixed equipment.

If trees and bushes are growing through power lines please DO NOT attempt to trim these yourselves. This will need a professional and also for the electricity to be switched off on the street or power pole. Please contact a professional arborist and your local lines supplier for further information and help.

What is considered a mound?

A mound is a grassed or other covered hump or raised area that is over 600mm high with sloping sides. These are often used for children to run, roll, ride up and down. 1.2m should be kept clear of fixed or moveable play equipment, toys, natural elements – like rocks, trees, bushes, paths and edging around the base of the mound.

What is synthetic material?

Synthetic softfall surfacing is most likely to be rubber, either tiles or wet pour. It could have a surfacing over it like fake grass or astro turf. Synthetic softfall will have been professionally installed and should have come with some maintenance instructions.

What is a cluster of equipment?

NZ Standards allow for a number of objects being used together, i.e. an obstacle course, to be defined as a cluster in regards to fall zones around the equipment. So if you have two Tredway boxes connected by some smaller boxes or a bridge then they are considered a cluster and the connecting pieces don't have to be 1.5m away from each other. But if you have the above situation but another Tredway box beside one of the others but it isn't connected or being used as part of the cluster "obstacle course" then it needs to be moved to 1.5m away from that grouping.

What are aerial cableways, runways and trackways?

These are similar to a flying fox but the components that make up the group may be different, i.e. instead of rope or wire it could be a fixed metal runway.

