



# PROCEDURE

FA-017

## PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

<b>Superintendent Responsible:</b> Superintendent of Business and Treasurer	<b>Initial Effective Date:</b> 2002/10/28
<b>Last Updated:</b> 2023/12/20	<b>Next Review Date:</b> 2027/12/20

### Purpose:

To provide guidance to Grand Erie District School Board (Grand Erie) employees regarding playground equipment on Grand Erie property.

### Guiding Principles:

Playgrounds are safe spaces where kids develop crucial physical, social, emotional and imaginative skills necessary to gain self-confidence, improve coordination, and advance critical thinking capabilities.

### Process:

#### 1.0 Donated Playground Funds and Donated Playground Equipment – Overview

- a) Grand Erie is supportive of community groups purchasing new play structures or additional play equipment on Grand Erie property. Grand Erie assumes the liability and responsibility for the play structure or any additional equipment that is purchased by the school. School-generated funds may be used to support new play structure projects or additional play equipment (e.g., basketball nets, tri-ball, soccer nets).
- b) Grand Erie assumes the liability for the playground equipment and is responsible for regular inspections and the coordination of repairs and maintenance. Grand Erie is financially responsible for inspections; however, all repairs and maintenance of playground structures are the financial responsibility of the school not Grand Erie.
- c) For all additions to playground structures (new and additions to existing structures), the school must retain 10% of the total initial project cost in a “Repair Fund”. This total fund per school – must never drop below the lesser of 10% or \$1,000.
- d) Purchasing Services will not issue a purchase order for the playground equipment project until the school transfers the full project costs to the Business Services Department.
- e) Tax receipts are available for any eligible donations in accordance with Grand Erie procedures.

#### 2.0 Design/Planning Stage

- a) Administrator(s) must consult with the Supervisor of Purchasing Services as well as the Manager of Facility Services (or designate) to share the school's plans for the purchase of new playground equipment and all additions to existing playground equipment during the initial planning stage.
- b) The design, construction and installation of all new playground equipment must conform to the standards from the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) CAN/CSA-Z614, Children's PlaySpaces and Equipment currently in effect at the time of installation as well as current Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) compliance requirements. As such, a third party qualified and/or certified in CCPI (Canadian Certified Playground Inspector) who is independent of the playground equipment manufacturer is required to work with school committees during design and installation and would co-ordinate site specific concerns with

- appropriate Grand Erie employees. Documentation shall be provided to the Grand Erie that the playground structure is compliant to CAN/CSA-Z614 and AODA prior to proceeding with the purchase.
- c) Grand Erie's Maintenance and Capital Division Manager will be included in the planning and installation process to review and approve CSA/AODA compliance, identify potential maintenance issues and approve the site location chosen for the equipment prior to committing to any supplier.
  - d) Although Grand Erie accepts design standards of reputable manufacturers, it has restricted certain design aspects:
    - Wood components (including curbing) are not acceptable materials for playground structure, however for certain features it may be approved in construction with prior written approval from the Manager of Facilities Services. Ground cover, in the form of engineered wood fiber, is acceptable
    - Platform height not to exceed six (6) feet
    - Protective landing surfaces must be compliant with CAN/CSA Z614 Standards and manufacturer must provide proof their product meets or exceeds the energy absorbency requirements for defined fall heights and Head Injury Criteria (HIC) as stated therein. Sand or wood/bark mulch products not meeting acceptable engineered standards will not be permitted.
    - Drainage needs to be considered in the design process to ensure water does not pool underneath or around the play structure.
  - e) Grand Erie reserves the right to restrict other design aspects and protective landing surfaces as deemed appropriate.

### 3.0 Vendor Selection

- a) The purchase of playground equipment must be compliant with Grand Erie's policies and procedures, which must be initiated before committing to any supplier.
- b) Donations of playground equipment by approved playground manufacturers are exempt from Purchasing Services Competitive Bid Guidelines.
- c) All manufacturers installing playground equipment on Grand Erie property must provide proof of vehicle and liability insurance coverage for a minimum of \$2 million dollars with Grand Erie District School Board named as additional insured. The manufacturer must also provide a certificate of good standing from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) before work is awarded. Purchasing Services Department will not issue a purchase order for installation until these documents have been reviewed by the Supervisor of Purchasing Services.

### 4.0 Installation

- a) All manufacturers, or their certified sub-contractors, installing playground equipment will be responsible to determine the location of underground utility services and provide a copy of the utility service inspection report to Facility Services Department prior to start of installation.
- b) On completion, the manufacturer is to provide the Administrator(s) with a letter indicating:
  - Equipment and installation conform to the current CAN/CSA guidelines and standards
  - Conformity with AODA requirements
  - The terms and conditions of the guarantee and warranty.
- c) These documents must be reviewed by the Administrator(s) and forwarded to the Facility Services Maintenance and Capital Division Manager.
- d) All play structures and equipment must be installed by an approved manufacturer or its approved subcontractor.
- e) Installation of playground equipment by volunteers is not permitted.

## 5.0 Existing Equipment

- a) All renovations and upgrades will comply with the current CAN/CSA guidelines, AODA requirements and standards for playground equipment.
- b) Additions to existing playground equipment must be approved by the Facility Services Maintenance, and Capital Division Manager prior to any in depth planning.

## 6.0 Inspections

- a) **Daily Visual Inspections:** A visual inspection shall be performed on all playground equipment used by students by the School Custodian at least once on each school day. This inspection is intended to identify obvious safety concerns and needed repairs, such as glass, broken boards, loose or missing handrails or anything that could cause injury to a student. When a deficiency is identified in the daily inspection, the School Custodian will report it to the Administrator(s) who shall follow the steps set out in 7(a) of this procedure. A daily playground inspection log is to be completed in eBase and a copy must be kept on file at the school.
- b) **Monthly Inspections:** Monthly inspections of the playground equipment shall be completed by the Facility Services employee(s). The monthly inspection checklist will be recorded in eBase, and a copy must be retained at the school.
- c) **Recorded Annual Inspection:** A detailed annual inspection of playground equipment located on Grand Erie property shall be performed by a certified inspector (see 2(b) above) appointed by Grand Erie. Where possible, the certified inspector shall make repairs at the time of the inspection.
- d) **Inspection Checklists:** The monthly and annual inspections will use the checklists provided by either the manufacturer or the Canadian Standards Association – they have been established in eBase. (see attached Daily Playground Inspection Checklist – Appendix A and Monthly Playground Inspection Checklist - Appendix B)
- e) **Retention:** All documentation and reports related to the outdoor space or playground will be kept for three years from the date they were created and/or updated (whichever date is most recent).

## 7.0 Maintenance and Repairs

- a) When a school employee on yard duty or the daily inspection of the equipment identifies a safety concern or an item in need of repair, it shall be reported to the Administrator(s) immediately. The Administrator(s) shall report the concern to the Facility Services Maintenance Supervisor responsible for their school immediately. When a defect is reported it shall be repaired as soon as possible and, in the interim, the Administrator(s) shall make the equipment out of bounds to students.
- b) The Work Order for repairs completed by maintenance employees, contractor or equipment vendor will be the record of repair.
- c) Should a repair that involves a safety hazard take more than one day to complete, the children shall be prevented from using the equipment through the use of a snow fence and a “Keep Off” warning sign.
- d) When the cost to repair a piece of playground equipment is excessive, the Maintenance and Capital Division Manager after consulting with the Administrator(s), may decide that the equipment should be taken out of service and removed from the school grounds. The Administrator(s) will inform the community/parent group of any decisions to remove equipment purchased by community funds. Alternatively, the Administrator(s) in consultation with the School Council, may elect to raise funds to complete the required repairs.

## 8.0 Equipment on Local Recreation Authority Property

- a) In many cases, playground equipment that is used by the students at school is located on non-Grand Erie property adjacent to the school property. In these cases, the daily inspections process shall be carried out by the Administrator(s) or designate as detailed in 6(a) and the Administrator(s) shall follow the same process

- for reporting a concern to Maintenance Supervisor responsible for their school as detailed in 7(a). The Administrator(s) shall make the equipment out of bounds to students until the equipment is repaired.
- b) Maintenance Supervisor(s) shall advise the local recreation authority of the need to repair playground equipment located on Recreation property and shall monitor the progress of repairs and advise the Administrator(s) when the repairs are completed.

**9.0 General**

Each school will communicate playground safety rules applicable to the specific location. These sessions should be held for students, teachers, noon hour supervisors and any volunteer yard supervisors at the beginning of each school year and will include warnings about restricted use during inclement weather.

**Reference(s):**

- Asbestos Procedure (FA-018)
- Canadian Standards Association (CSA) CAN/CSA-Z614, Children's Play Spaces and Equipment
- Fundraising Policy (SO-01)
- Fundraising Procedure (SO-001)
- Purchasing Policy (BU-06)
- Purchasing Procedure (BU-006)
- Receipts of Charitable Donations Procedure (BU-012)







## Grand Erie District School Board CSA\* Monthly Playground Maintenance Inspection Checklist

\* Canadian Standards Association

**Seats/tires** - Check all rubber seats for wear, sharp edges or points, and scorching or burn damage. Ensure that safety bars on tot seats are intact and fixed in a stationary position. Check tires for wear and sharp protrusions. Ensure all fastening points are secure.

**Hanger Bearings** - Check for worn or excessive play in bearings and bushings. Lubricate nuts, bolts and grease fittings. Replace corroded bolts and rivets. Check that clamps are secure.

**Grease fittings** - lubricate moving parts as required. Wipe off all excess oil or grease.

**Stability in ground/tilting** - Structures should not easily sway. Connections should be solid and properly adjusted. Check alignment of supports, platforms, barriers, etc. Check for any signs of sinking. Check all posts (wood and steel) in ground for corrosion or rot to a minimum of 375 mm (14.76 in) below ground level at least once annually)

**Exposed Concrete** - Remove any exposed concrete to a minimum of 150 mm (5.90 in) below ground level. Backfill and level depressions and open holes with proper material.

**Ground clearance** - Check for proper clearances of all structures and equipment components as specified in this Standard.

**Locking devices** - Ensure all locking fastening devices (interior and external) are secure.

**Wood checking** - Check wood timbers and support posts for excess checking. Note cracks exceeding 19 mm (0.79 in.)

**Protrusions** - Check for protruding bars, bolts, nuts, etc. Test with applicable protrusion gauge. Cover or file sharp edges.

**Caps/plugs** - Check for and file sharp edges. Replace broken cap covers. Cap all open-ended pipes with plastic plugs.

**Protective surfacing material/borders** - Check border-edging material for cracking, chipping, excessive checking, splintering, decay, or damage. Check for exposed concrete. Ensure that there is an adequate depth of protective surfacing material under and around equipment for a minimum of 1.8 m (70.87 in) or as required and specified in this Standard. Ensure surfacing material is loose, not compacted, and free of debris, broken glass, needles, animal excrement, etc.

**Equipment spacing/no-encroachment** - Ensure proper spacing between equipment, protective surfacing zones, and no-encroachment zones as required and specified in this Standard.

**Benches** - Check for splinters, excessive checking, cracking, decayed or damaged material, and problems with stability and tilting. Check fastening points. Secure all nuts, bolts, etc. Check welds. Check for sharp edges.

**Debris/broken glass** - Check entire play space for debris and litter, broken glass, needles or syringes, animal excrement, etc. Check sand areas and protective surfacing materials for compaction.

**Pathways** - check for any visible damage. Check for low ponding areas.

**Lighting** - Check for any visible damage. Ensure lights are in proper working order.

**Signs** - Check for any visible damage or graffiti. Check for proper pedestrian head clearance. Check fastening points. Replace weathered or damaged signs.

**Fencing (includes baseball diamonds)** - Inspect for any visible damage. Check for any protruding points, fence fabric, hardware (bolts, nuts, etc.) Check for attachments, e.g., skipping ropes.