

# KIRKBY MALZEARD, LAVERTON AND DALLOWGILL PARISH COUNCIL

## RISK ASSESSMENT

### CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA, HIGHSIDE PLAYING FIELDS, KIRKBY MALZEARD

### **REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY PARISH COUNCIL 18 AUGUST 2025**

This document was produced to enable the Council to assess the risks which may exist at the Children's Play Area and to indicate the steps that are taken to minimise those risks.

The Play area is designed to give the children in the community the opportunity to play, challenge themselves and to promote physical exercise.

However, there are inevitably some risks involved in this. As with any outdoor play activity, there is the risk of falling, slipping, tripping or entanglement.

It is therefore important for us to regularly ensure that the equipment and surfaces are safe. Some equipment is intended for use by toddlers and younger age groups, whereas others are provided for junior age children to enjoy. We expect that the appropriate equipment will be used by the right age group of children, and, as the site is unsupervised, we rely on adults to ensure, as far as possible that this is the case.

Contact details for the Council are present on site. If any problems, such as damaged equipment or other hazards etc, are discovered, please contact the Clerk immediately by email at [clerk@kmld-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@kmld-pc.gov.uk)

## Risk Assessment Matrix

| LIKELIHOOD        |                |              |            |                 |        |
|-------------------|----------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|--------|
| Highly Likely (3) | Medium (3)     | High (6)     | High (9)   |                 |        |
| Possible (2)      | Low (2)        | Medium (4)   | High (6)   |                 |        |
| Unlikely (1)      | Low (1)        | Low (2)      | Medium (3) | High (6)        |        |
|                   | Negligible (1) | Moderate (2) | Severe (3) | Very Severe (6) | IMPACT |

In line with current best practice, risks which are unlikely but would have a very severe impact (e.g. risk to life, criminal charges) are scored as High, to ensure they receive enough attention.

1. AIM: To ensure the Play Area (including equipment, seats, bins, fencing and surfaces) is safe to use where applicable by those within the age range intended.

RISK RATING:      Likelihood – Possible - 2  
                              Impact – Severe - 3  
                              Risk Rating – High - 6

### MEANS OF MANAGING RISK:

- a) Weekly inspection carried out by a Councillor and record kept of any relevant aspects. Any essential work arranged as soon as possible. Specific hazards to individual elements of the Play Area to be checked when inspected, are listed in Appendix 1.
- b) Quarterly inspection carried out by specialist contractor (DTMS Ltd of Fellbeck). Any essential work arranged as soon as possible.

- c) Annual inspection carried by RoSPA. Any essential work carried out as soon as possible.
  - d) All maintenance and repair works are carried out by a specialist contractor conforming with appropriate standards (BS EN 1176 and EN 1177).
  - e) If any equipment is found to be unsafe it will be made inaccessible by arranging for safety fencing to be installed by contractor as soon as possible and appropriate notices displayed.
  - f) Regular grass cutting and cutting back of boundary hedges are carried out by an experienced contractor employed by the Parish Council.
  - g) Trees, in and adjacent to Play Area, are inspected annually by an experienced person as part of the tree inspection programme for all trees which are the responsibility of the Parish Council. Any urgent work is carried out as soon as possible.
  - h) Any new equipment or other improvements to the Play Area will be installed by an approved contractor to conform with appropriate standards (BS EN 1176 and EN 1177).
  - i) A sign, incorporating contact details for the Council, inside the Play Area has been provided to advise anyone using it, who to contact if any problems are noted.
2. AIM: To ensure that anyone with a valid claim can obtain appropriate compensation if they suffer injury or fatality whilst using the Play Area, and to ensure there are no undue financial consequences to Council in such a case.

RISK RATING: Likelihood – Unlikely - 1  
Impact – Very Severe - 6  
Risk Rating – High - 6

#### MEANS OF MANAGING RISK:

- a) Parish Council holds Public Liability cover as part of its general insurance. The policy is reviewed annually to ensure cover is adequate.

## APPENDIX 1

Aspects to be checked on all inspections.

|                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Junior Slide (for 5 year olds and over)          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Ensure slide structure firmly fixed to the ground.</li><li>b) Ensure metal frame in sound condition with no significant rusting or sharp edges.</li><li>c) Ensure steps and slide section are in sound condition.</li><li>d) Ensure there are no obstructions to the base of the slide.</li></ul>                                                                                                      |
| Multi-play Unit (for 5 year olds and over)       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Ensure structure is firmly fixed to the ground.</li><li>b) Ensure that all plastic covered surfaces, including the chain climber, monkey bars, platform and slide, are free from defect.</li><li>c) Ensure there are no obstructions to the base of the slide.</li></ul>                                                                                                                               |
| Toddler Swing (for 2 year olds and over)         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Ensure swing structure firmly fixed in ground.</li><li>b) Ensure metal frame in sound condition with no significant rusting or sharp edges.</li><li>c) Ensure chains and shackles are not worn, with no undue risk of entrapment of fingers.</li><li>d) Ensure plastic seats in sound condition and securely attached to chains.</li><li>e) Ensure adequate clearances when swing is in use.</li></ul> |
| Overhead Rotator (for 8 year olds and over)      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Ensure rotator structure firmly fixed to the ground.</li><li>b) Ensure moving section functions freely.</li><li>c) Ensure adequate clearances when rotator is in use.</li><li>d) Ensure matting under rotator is in sound and level condition.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                               |
| Two seat Junior Swing (for 5 year olds and over) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Ensure swing structure firmly fixed to the ground.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

|                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) Ensure metal frame in sound condition with no significant rusting or sharp edges.</li> <li>c) Ensure chains and shackles are not worn, with no undue risk of entrapment of fingers.</li> <li>d) Ensure plastic seats in sound condition and securely attached to chains.</li> <li>e) Ensure adequate clearances when swing is in use.</li> </ul> |
| Stepping Stones (for 3 year olds and over) and Mushrooms (for 2 year olds and over) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ensure the five Stepping Stones are firmly fixed to the ground and are free from any damage.</li> <li>b) Ensure the Mushrooms are firmly fixed to the ground.</li> <li>c) Ensure spinning sections rotate evenly and are secure.</li> </ul>                                                                                                      |
| Basket Roundabout (for 5 year olds and over)                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ensure the structure is firmly fixed to the ground.</li> <li>b) Ensure that the rotating section is in sound condition, spins freely and is securely attached to the base.</li> <li>c) Ensure that the rope network is free from defects and securely attached to the frame.</li> </ul>                                                          |
| Benches                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ensure that the benches are both firmly fixed to the ground.</li> <li>b) Ensure the plastic structures are in sound condition.</li> <li>c) Ensure the paving flags to the base are in sound and level condition to avoid any undue trip risk.</li> <li>d) Ensure grass surround is level with pavings.</li> </ul>                                |
| Fencing and gate between play area and playing fields.                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ensure that the fence posts are firmly fixed to the ground.</li> <li>b) Ensure that the fence is vertical and that all metal work including fittings is sound.</li> <li>c) Ensure the gate swings freely and closes properly.</li> <li>d) Ensure the gate mechanism is functional to avoid undue risk of finger entrapment.</li> </ul>           |
| Wet pour surfaces                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ensure all areas of wet pour surfaces are in sound and level condition to avoid any undue trip risk.</li> <li>b) Ensure there are no sizeable gaps between wet pour and grass to avoid any undue trip risk.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                           |
| Grass                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ensure grassed areas are reasonably level with grass regularly cut to appropriate height.</li> <li>b) Ensure any litter or hazardous material is removed.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Boundary Hedging/Fencing/Maintenance gate.                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ensure hedge is trimmed back as necessary in Autumn.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

|       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) Ensure any weeds such as nettles, or any poisonous plants, under the hedge are removed.</li> <li>c) Ensure wooden rails in the fence adjoining the road boundary are in sound condition.</li> <li>d) Ensure wooden gate from car park area is in sound condition and is locked.</li> <li>e) Ensure information sign is securely attached and in sound and legible condition.</li> </ul> |
| Trees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ensure branches are no lower than 2m from the ground to avoid collision and deter climbing. Any fallen branches to be removed from site.</li> <li>b) Ensure roots are not emerging from the ground to avoid a trip hazard.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                   |

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