



# Playground Inspection Policy

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 As an organisation we have the responsibility to uphold and protect the rights of individuals in all aspects of our operations. Irwell Valley Homes (IVH) has a duty of care to ensure the safety of members of the public who may be affected by the facilities provided by us.
- 1.2 This Playground Policy sets out our obligations and commitments to customers and members of the public, in relation to the safety of our Playgrounds.
- 1.3 IVH own and manage 5 playgrounds which are listed below:
  - Chepstow Avenue – Large Playground.
  - Chepstow Avenue – Small Playground.
  - Hurst Avenue Play Space A.
  - Hurst Avenue Play Space B.
  - Haydock Avenue Play Space.

## 2. Policy Statement

2.1 This policy has been prepared to formally recognise the maintenance and inspection IVH owned play facilities and the assets within these facilities. This policy will outline the legal responsibilities and how we will meet these responsibilities through a well-managed system of inspection, assessing risk and responses to faults and risks.

## 3. Performance Monitoring

- 3.1 The Estates Manager is responsible for ensuring weekly routine visual inspections are carried out by the Estates Officers.
- 3.2 The Estates Manager is responsible for ensuring monthly operational inspections are carried out and also an annual independent main inspection, by an independent suitably approved contractor.
- 3.3 The Head of Repairs & Estates Maintenance and the Estates Manager are responsible for monitoring budget spend on a monthly basis.
- 3.4 Estates expenditure and performance is reported to the Leadership Team monthly and to the Board on a quarterly basis.
- 3.5 The Estates Manager and Estates Administrator are responsible for carrying out regular checks of invoices, orders and recommendations raised by the contractors carrying out inspections on behalf of IVH.

<b>IVH Playground Inspection Policy</b>	Author: Michelle Nutter Head of Repairs & Estates		Page 1 of 4
Approved by/when: Leadership Team, May 2026		Next Review Date: May 2028	

## 4. Inspection Type and Frequency

- 4.1 The British and European safety standard BS EN1176 and the Health and Safety Executive strongly recommend that all play areas have at least one inspection every year from an independent suitably qualified body such as RoSPA.
- 4.2 Weekly routine visual inspections will be conducted via the Estates Officers, these visits will include the identification of obvious hazards, which are described below and will be addressed on site or reported to the Estates Manager for appropriate action. Obvious hazards are listed as, but not limited to - broken parts, litter, graffiti, faulty equipment and trip hazards.
- 4.3 Playgrounds at a minimum will have monthly operational inspections by a suitably qualified person who will carry out an itemised check of each play space to ensure the safety of all equipment located within it. This operational inspection (EN1176-77) includes a more detailed inspection which will check the operation and stability of all equipment and surfaces, especially for wear and tear.
- All areas will receive a monthly operational inspection to:
- Check repairs carried out by others; rust and rot; bearings.
  - Cleanliness.
  - Equipment Ground Clearance.
  - Exposed Foundations.
  - Sharp Edges.
  - Missing Parts.
- 4.4 Annually, an independent main inspection will be completed by an independent suitably qualified appointed contractor (RoSPA approved), to ensure the long-term safety of the site, equipment and ancillary items. This will also meet legal and insurance responsibilities as well as complying with the requirements of EN1176 (the European Playground Standard). EN1177 is the European safety standard for playground impact-absorbing surfaces, defining, testing, and measuring surfacing ability to reduce injury from falls. It defines the Critical Fall Height (CFH) and determines if a surface, such as rubber, sand, or bark, is adequate for the height of the equipment.
- 4.5 This annual main inspection will assess the overall safety of equipment, foundations and surfaces. The effects of weather, evidence of rotting or corrosion and any change in the level of safety because of repairs made or added or replacement components.
- 4.6 In the event of any additional equipment installed, this will be checked upon installation by a RoSPA approved contractor. This is to ensure that the playground has been built and installed correctly and that it meets with the requirements of the standards. This main inspection will form a vital part of the overall site risk assessment, which is a legal requirement.

<b>IVH Playground Inspection Policy</b>	Author: Michelle Nutter Head of Repairs & Estates		Page 2 of 4
Approved by/when: Leadership Team, May 2026		Next Review Date: May 2028	

## 5. Current Legislation, Industry Standards and Guidelines

5.1 Playground Safety is governed through general Health and Safety law. While there is no single piece of legislation specific to playground safety, Irwell Valley Homes' duties are set out through broader health and safety and occupiers' liability legislation and supporting guidance:.

- The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations
- Occupiers Liability Act 1957 and 1984
- England Register of Play Inspectors
- RoSPA Safe play

5.2 EN1176 is the European Standard which replaced the old British Standards. The standard is not retrospective and provides advice on design layout and the inspection of playground equipment. Contained within the guidance are the following key recommendations:

- If the equipment is not safe, access by the public should be prevented
- The equipment must be inspected and maintained

Inspection records will be retained in line with IVH's retention schedule and insurer requirements

5.3 IVH has a duty to take 'reasonably practicable' actions to ensure the safety of people at work and members of the public who may be affected by the facilities provided by us.

In the event of a serious accident, claims are based on negligence: that is, the organisation responsible for the play space area failed to take some known action needed which made the accident more likely to happen.

The defense will be based on evidence such as records of inspections and maintenance, compliance with the Standards and relevant risk assessments. Any accidents or incident will be reported and investigated in line with our accident and Incident procedures.

## 6. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

6.1 IVH is committed to treating people with honesty, dignity, respect, and trust. This applies to colleagues, customers potential customers, contractors, and Board Members.  
At IVH:

- **Equality** is about ensuring that every individual has an opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents.
- **Diversity** is recognising difference and responding positively to those differences.
- **Inclusion** is about creating an environment where our services and employment opportunities are accessible to all.

IVH Playground Inspection Policy	Author: Michelle Nutter Head of Repairs & Estates		Page 3 of 4
Approved by/when: Leadership Team, May 2026		Next Review Date: May 2028	

- 6.2 IVH will be mindful of the Equality Act 2010 in all its actions and will consider all the protected characteristics of the Act which are: Race, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Religion or Belief, Age, Marriage/Civil Partnership and Pregnancy and Maternity explicitly. Further to the protected characteristics, IVH will be mindful of socio-economic disadvantage and will do everything in its power to minimise this and other forms of disadvantage.

## 7. Responsibility

The Chief Operations Officer is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy.

- 7.1 The Chief Operations Officer, Head of Repairs & Estates Maintenance and Estates Manager are responsible for operational implementation of and compliance with this policy. They are also responsible for monitoring performance and customer feedback, and for introducing any changes required to improve performance and the customer experience of the service.
- 7.2 The Chief Operational Officer, Head of Repairs & Estates Maintenance and Estates Manager are responsible for ensuring that colleagues are adequately trained, ensuring they understand and comply with the policy and associated procedures and that they carry out their roles in a safe and competent way.
- 7.3 The Head of Repairs & Estates Maintenance is responsible for the continued review of and updating this policy.

<b>IVH Playground Inspection Policy</b>	Author: Michelle Nutter Head of Repairs & Estates		Page 4 of 4
Approved by/when: Leadership Team, May 2026		Next Review Date: May 2028	