



Playground Policy

Written October 2018
Reviewed date October 2020

We will provide a learning environment that empowers, challenges and encourages individual success and social responsibility.



St Matthias Academy Fishponds and Brentry sites both have outdoor spaces which members of the public are permitted to use during evenings, weekends and school holidays. During the school day premises are locked and members of the public are not permitted on site. However, at the end of each school day the gates are unlocked and access is permitted.

In part this recognises that members of the public have caused damage to the school perimeter fences and property in attempts to gain entry if access is not permitted. This also has potential for people to injure themselves climbing over spiked fences for example. The decision has been made to erect signs explaining that members of the public may use the facilities but do so in the knowledge that they are responsible for their own safety. This also complies with requests that the Brentry site remains a building that is useful to the local community – as stated during consultation stages of St Matthias acquiring the council building.

St Matthias Academy does maintain overall responsibility for the safety of these areas. This includes the checks outlined below.

It should be noted that currently the Fishponds site includes the use of the outdoor gym equipment in the playground. All outdoor play equipment has been designed, constructed, installed and maintained in accordance with European standards. Scrambling and climbing elements do not exceed 2 Metres, and height is not the dominant feature on any item of equipment. Interest challenge and enjoyment are the most important factors.

All of our outdoor play equipment meets the appropriate Safety Standards. Fixed climbing equipment is on an impact-absorbing surface. Although impact absorbing surfaces cannot prevent accidents they may reduce the level of injury.

The Brentry site does not have outdoor gym equipment, its facilities are the large tarmac playground which has basketball hoops and football goals. The basketball hoops are permanently fixed into the ground whilst the football goals are not. The football goals are locked by a chain and padlock to support posts in the fence to prevent them being moved or tipped.



INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE

5.1 BS EN 1176 recommends that all outdoor play equipment be inspected and maintained on a regular basis. Such inspection and maintenance is at 3 levels.

Level 1 checks – Daily / pre use checks by staff (these do not require formal recording) Concentrating on the following points:

- No evidence of obvious wear / damage
- Area safe from health hazards e.g. needles, glass, faeces etc.
- Impact absorbing surfaces no cuts, tears, wear or unstuck areas
- All fastening tightly secured
- No broken chains, stretched links or loose or twisted shackles
- Uprights unbroken and firm in the ground

These checks are applied both to the outdoor gym equipment and the goals/basketball hoops.

Both sites must pay particular attention to ensuring the whole school area is free from health hazards and any signs of substance misuse. This applies to the grassy area around the school (at Brentry) as well as the playground.

Where any defects / hazards are identified appropriate steps must be taken to prevent use until problems have been satisfactorily resolved.

Daily checks must be logged and recorded by the member/s of staff who carry them out. The log sheet can be found in the school office.

Level 2 checks – termly inspection in house. A more thorough check of the equipment to be conducted termly by the site supervisor and these records are kept on site. A copy of the termly checklist is on the following page.

Level 3 checks – annual inspection A detailed certified inspection by an independent competent person capable of inspecting to BS EN 1176 and 1177 these checks are formally recorded and records kept on site. Such checks ensure safety and identifies any improvements required in terms of the European standard – this applies to the outdoor gym equipment at the Fishponds site.



DATE INSPECTED..... INSPECTED BY.....

SIGNATURE.....

ITEMS OF EQUIPMENT CHECKED	
1.	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

FEATURE	CHECK FOR	SATISFACTORY			COMMENTS / ACTIONS NEEDED
		Y	N	N/A	
STRUCTURE	Cracking, breaking, warping, loosening and bending				
SURFACE FINISH	Protective coating missing, rust, cracks, splinters				
CONSUMABLE ITEMS E.G. ROPES, CHAINS	Missing, bent, broken, loosened, worn, open hooks				
EDGES	Protrusions, sharp edges				
PINCH OR CRUSH POINTS	Exposed mechanisms, joints or moving components				
MOVING PARTS	Worn, lack of lubrication, seizure or excessive motion				
GUARDS / HAND RAILS / SWING BARRIERS	Missing, bent, broken, loosened				
ACCESS	Missing or broken rungs, steps or treads etc.				
SWING AND OTHER SEATS	Missing, damaged, loosened etc.				
IMPACT ABSORBING SURFACES	Ineffective by being compacted, displaced or not extensive enough to cover possible impact area				
FOUNDATIONS	Cracked, loose in ground exposed				
OTHER ITEMS SPECIFIC TO YOUR SCHOOL					