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| Return Risk Assessment | | | | | |
| Service Area | Playgrounds and outdoor gym equipment | | | | |
| What are the hazards? | Spread of Covid-19 Coronavirus. | | | | |
| Who might be harmed? | Users, Staff | | | | |
| Risks | **Controls** | **Additional Controls** | **Action by who?** | **Action by when?** | **Done** |
| Contact with play equipment which is harboring  Covid – 19 virus | Children’s playgrounds and outdoor gyms in Gloucester have been closed since 24th March 2020 due to the potential risks of spreading coronavirus (Covid-19) via multiple users frequently touching equipment, gates, handles etc., as well as many users gathering close together in a concentrated space. Young children may not fully understand the risks and may have an inability to safely social distance, or they may frequently touch their faces as they play and touch the equipment.  It is not clear how long the Corvid-19 virus can remain viable out of doors on steel, plastic and wood surfaces. It is therefore important that anyone using playgrounds and outdoor gyms should wash their hands before and after using these facilities and avoid hand to mouth contact.  It would not be reasonably practical to set up handwashing stations at all playgrounds and outdoor gym facilities, or to sanitise equipment each time it is used. Users, and in the case of children those responsible for them, should therefore be encouraged to follow government guidance in respect of hand washing and to bring their own hand sanitiser, wet wipes or a bottle of water for handwashing (before and after using the space). Users and those responsible for children using the facilities should also be encouraged to clean equipment before use, particularly where there are clear touch points such as swing rockers, see saws, machine handles or exercise bars  Eating food or snacks while using play and outdoor gym equipment should be discouraged.  All litter should be cleared from playgrounds and bins emptied regularly. High use touch points such as gates to be sanitised during weekly inspections. | Effective signage to be provided at all playgrounds and outdoor gym facilities reminding users and, in the case of children, those responsible for them to   * wash their hands before using, and as soon as possible after using, the equipment. * avoid eating when using play equipment/outdoor gyms. * clean equipment before use, particularly where there are clear touch points such as swing rockers, see saws, machine handles or exercise bars * bring towel and personal hygiene products when using outdoor gyms and wipe down the equipment after use * bring hand sanitiser gel or wipes to clean children’s hands after they have used play equipment. * take any litter home and dispose safely   The Council’s website, and other social media outlets, can also be utilised to provide information on any necessary precautions in relation to the use of playgrounds and outdoor gym equipment.  Weekly safety inspection of all playgrounds and outdoor gym equipment to include ensuring signage is in place and legible and replacing where necessary.  Please refer to OHU Managers Checklist for cv-19 individual vulnerability risk assessment to determine whether vulnerable staff are fit for work. | Staff, visitors and contractors | With immediate effect |  |
| Potential infection due to close contact with other users | Updated Government guidance, effective from 4 July 2020, is that keeping 2 metres apart from those outside of a household group is still recommended, but where this is not possible, a distance of at least 1 metre should be maintained with additional precautions (such as wearing a face covering and keeping any interactions brief).  All visitors to playgrounds and outdoor gyms should take personal responsibility for their, and their children’s use of these outdoor community facility. Users should practice safe distancing, should not mix multiple family groups, and should use face masks or covering where advised. If any family member is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms the whole family must self-isolate at home and should not visit any communal facilities  Those using playgrounds and outdoor fitness equipment, or, in the case of children those responsible for them, should avoid close contact with people outside their household, and especially face-to-face contact. Play areas and outdoor exercise equipment should be avoided during busy times.  Advisory limits on the number of users able to access the facility at any one time should be set for each playground depending on size/amount of equipment. These limits will need to be individually calculated for each site. Initial ‘best guess’ limits will be suggested which will be subject to amendment in the light of further consideration.  A booking system or any form of supervised queuing system for play areas and outdoor gyms would not be reasonably practical, but visitors to be asked to show consideration if other people are waiting to use the equipment. Removal and/or respacing of equipment to facilitate social distancing is not deemed to be reasonably practical.  Visitors should be encouraged to walk or cycle to the park if possible. | Effective signage to be provided at all playgrounds and outdoor gym facilities encourage parents and, in the case of children those responsible for them, to maintain social distancing and in particular to   * consider coming back later if the facility is busy and talk to children about this possibility before visiting * follow current social distancing guidelines and encourage children to do the same * not exceed advised number of users * be considerate of other people waiting to use the equipment | Staff, visitors and contractors | With immediate effect |  |
| Safety of equipment | Weekly and independent, annual, playground safety inspections should continue to be undertaken and records retained (even where the playground is closed, as some users may still access the space). | Those carrying out inspections and maintenance should be provided with appropriate PPE and follow all relevant government guidance in respect of Covid-19 . | Staff and contractors | With immediate effect |  |
| Review of risk assessment | This Risk Assessment is based on Government publication **covid-19 guidance for managing playgrounds and outdoor gyms** and may be subject to amendment as further guidance emerges. | | | | |