

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE
BY DEPUTY L.V. FELTHAM OF ST. HELIER CENTRAL
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 3rd JULY 2023
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 10th JULY 2023**

Question

“In relation to public play areas and parks, will the Minister advise –

- (a) what minimum safety standards are in place for children’s play areas;
- (b) how adherence to these standards is monitored and enforced;
- (c) how, if at all, his department provides support to the Parishes and to other providers of such facilities to meet safety standards;
- (d) what agreements, if any, are in place with contractors to ensure that safety standards are met; and
- (e) what maintenance plans, if any, are in place to ensure play areas are useable and safe?”

Answer

- (a) The Department for Infrastructure works to the same standards as the UK and Europe, namely British and European Standard BS/EN1176 for Children’s Play Equipment and BS/EN1177 for Safety Play Surfacing.
- (b) The standard requires operators to undertake at least weekly visual checks, with a requirement for full play equipment inspections on a minimum of a quarterly basis, with external full examination on an annual basis. Where there is high use of the play equipment these inspections increase to daily and monthly.

In addition to ensuring play equipment and surfacing is manufactured and installed in accordance with the above standards, we have trained staff that conduct visual checks to ensure that play equipment in all our parks is safe. Inspections are currently recorded manually and any repairs required are managed through our maintenance administration systems. This is due to change imminently to a digital system, providing greater oversight of the condition of the play areas. Additionally, quarterly checks are carried out by our own staff who are qualified play equipment inspectors and verified by an annual external inspection by “the Play Inspection Company” which is based in Poole in Dorset.

- (c) Our current trained play inspectors have been available for advice to the Parishes and other States departments, and a small number of inspections have been undertaken in-house on behalf of other departments. School play equipment is managed by Jersey Property Holdings who contract out quarterly and annual checks to third party play inspectors with the responsibility for daily and weekly checks remaining with the schools.
- (d) The main contractor agreement is in relation to annual inspections as detailed above.
- (e) Maintenance of play equipment is driven by the above inspection regime with any failing equipment being replaced immediately. A rolling programme of play equipment renewal is being developed and a funding bid for this programme is currently under consideration for inclusion in the Government Plan 2024-2027.