

OUTDOOR & PLAY SPACES POLICY®

DOCUMENT SUMMARY/KEY POINTS

- The Network has many outdoor & play spaces that are designed for therapeutic use by patients and their families.
- The spaces have been designed for children with sickness and disabilities.
- Each site has specific areas with different purposes and restrictions.
- These outdoor & play spaces are designed to be positive places to escape the health setting. In some circumstances, clinical staff may need to accompany a patient. Users of the outdoor & play spaces require supervision, safety awareness and need to adhere to safety rules.
- Maintenance of the outdoor & play spaces is the responsibility of relevant departments and Corporate Services.
- A Liability Statement is provided in this document.

CHANGE SUMMARY

- Updates relating to the title of outdoor & play spaces.
- Hazard inspection details included.
- Update of Ongoing Maintenance.
- Liability Statement included.

READ ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- Staff intending to access a SCHN outdoor & play space should read and acknowledge that they understand the contents of this policy.

This document reflects what is currently regarded as safe practice. However, as in any clinical situation, there may be factors which cannot be covered by a single set of guidelines. This document does not replace the need for the application of clinical judgement to each individual presentation.

Approved by:	SCHN Policy, Procedure and Guideline Committee	
Date Effective:	1 st September 2020	Review Period: 3 years
Team Leader:	Health Promotion Officer	Area/Dept: Kids Health

Introduction

The outdoor & play spaces are designed to provide patients and their families with positive places to escape the health setting. They are often a place of tranquillity enabling positive, enjoyable and therapeutic interactions. They have been developed with the help of staff and families within the Network and are often custom-designed to provide access to children with all levels of ability, including wheelchair access and children with medical equipment e.g. IV drips. In addition to internal therapy settings within the Hospital, the outdoor play spaces and equipment are utilised by Child Life Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists as part of their care/therapy treatment.

The following document provides general instructions on safety and the appropriate use of the outdoor & play spaces.

Purpose

- Ensure the safety of all users.
- Ensure the play equipment and natural landscape is maintained.
- Promote understanding of the outdoor & play spaces and how they can meet patient and family needs.
- Inform users of the purpose of the outdoor & play spaces - providing an alternate setting free from procedures, which can motivate rehabilitation, enhance relaxation and stimulate the senses.

Location, Access and Bookings

- Will vary depending on the specific area - please see attached links for space specific policies.
- If the CHW outdoor & play spaces are being used for organised events or activities, this needs to be approved by CHW Outdoor & Play Spaces Committee in consultation with Fundraising to mitigate event risks and ensure the health and safety of staff, patients and visitors.
- If the SCH George Gregan Garden, Fairy Garden or Happy Garden is to be used for an organised event, this will require the approval of the Public Relations Department. Other play spaces would need to be booked via the associated department.

The Children's Hospital at Westmead	Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick
George Gregan Playground – CHW	George Gregan Garden - SCH
Multisensory Garden (Percy's Place)	Fairy Garden
Ward outdoor play areas	Happy Garden
Child Protection outdoor play area	OT Garden
Emergency Department's outdoor play area (Smurf garden)	Emergency Department play space
Aboriginal Memorial Garden	School playground
Physiotherapy/ Occupational Therapy play area	
Chinese Garden area	

Safety rules

- Patients must be supervised by a parent /adult or staff member at all times when in the outdoor & play spaces.
- Patients must wear shoes and in the summer months, must wear sunscreen and a hat when outdoors. Under therapy direction, the patient may remove shoes for specific activities.
- Smoking and alcohol consumption are not permitted as per [SCHN policy](#).
- Eating and drinking in the garden is permitted, however thorough removal of rubbish and scraps is required.
- All breakages or damages are to be reported immediately to the maintenance department on site.
- Beds are to remain on the hard surfaced paths/areas at all times.
- Patients are permitted to touch and explore the plants (once medical clearance has been granted), however, removal and breaking of plants, leaves and flowers is prohibited. This excludes any herb gardens.
- Do not remove any items including features and ornaments.
- Do not drink the water within any water features as they have been chemically treated to avoid bacteria build up in the water.
- Use all play equipment in an appropriate manner only.
- No climbing of trees.

- Be considerate of others and avoid making excessive noise.
- Ensure the outdoor & play spaces are left clean and tidy after use. Clean up any rubbish or soil spills before exiting the area.

Ongoing maintenance

- The Maintenance Department will provide garden maintenance including mowing of the lawn areas and trimming of garden areas, as required.
- The Maintenance Department will monitor irrigation needs depending on site requirements.
- Safety and preventative maintenance is the responsibility of all who develop or use outdoor & play spaces.
- Maintenance is required to repair or replace any reported defects in the outdoor & play spaces.
- Cleaning Services Department is responsible for regular cleaning and undertaking requests for cleaning of outdoor & play spaces.
- Volunteer maintenance schedules maybe used to support the various sites.
- When maintenance issues arise a BEIMS needs to be completed, to enable the logging of maintenance requests and to monitor the request from “request to completion”. Urgent issues need to be reported directly to the Maintenance Department for immediate action. If the safety concern is noted after hours, the After Hours Nurse Manager should be contacted via switch.

Hazard Inspection

Hazard inspections of identified areas should be undertaken with relevant staff/departments conducting inspections of local play areas & outdoor spaces within their area as part of their WHS monthly/quarterly environmental inspection.

Liability Statement

SCHN takes no responsibility for the misuse of play equipment by users. Please note that the safe and sensible use of the outdoor & play spaces and age appropriate use of play equipment is advised.

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