



BSI Standards Publication

Playground equipment and surfacing

Part 7: Guidance on installation, inspection, maintenance and operation

National foreword

This British Standard is the UK implementation of EN 1176-7:2020. It supersedes BS EN 1176-7:2008, which is withdrawn.

BSI, as a member of CEN, is obliged to publish EN 1176-7:2020 as a British Standard. However, attention is drawn to the fact that during the development of this European Standard, the UK committee voted against its approval.

The UK committee submitted a negative vote due to concerns that although the scope of the document is to establish guidance on the installation, inspection, maintenance and operation of playground equipment and surfacing around the equipment, the latest published version of EN 1176-7 contains guidance expressed in the language of requirements. For the purposes of this version of EN 1176-7, the UK committee advises the application of the document within the UK as best practice guidance, as the document has been used since its initial publication.

Significant changes in the requirements for testing the impact attenuation (absorbing) of playground surfacing have been introduced into EN 1176-1:2017 and EN 1176-7:2020 in order to reflect the national variations in surfacing provision across Europe. The UK committee therefore provides a National Annex (NA) in BS EN 1176-1:2017 to comply with clause 5.2. National Annex NA in BS EN 1176-1:2017 contains the UK requirements to be used instead of Annex H of EN 1176-1:2017; these reflect current UK practice that has proven over the lifetime of the current standard to be reasonable and proportionate.

Testing or confirmation of the surface impact attenuating properties, during or after installation, is not a requirement of the UK National Annex. It is strongly advised that the operator confirms that any surfacing provided has an adequate level of impact attenuation for the critical fall height of the playground equipment; this should be confirmed by a certificate of test from a UKAS registered laboratory. For post installation inspections, the considered depth of the surface should be ascertained and provided to the operator; for comparison to this original certificate of test. For Annual and Operational Inspections, it is not necessary to ascertain the depth of synthetic surfaces.

For all surfacing it is important that an adequate level of impact attenuation for the critical fall height be maintained. In the instances of loose fill surfaces, confirmation of the depth of surfacing should be undertaken as part of the inspection process as these surfaces will compact and disperse reducing their depth and impact attenuating properties during normal use.

Operators and providers are advised that playground equipment requires regular maintenance; guidance on this and appropriate inspection, maintenance and operational schedules are contained within BS EN 1176-7:2020. Clause 6.1 of this standard provides for inspection and maintenance information and guidance from the manufacturer of the equipment; this is to assist operators in determining their safety management system. It is appreciated that playgrounds are likely to contain a range of equipment from different manufacturers and installed over a number of years; operators should implement any guidance provided by the manufacturer. Item specific detail is not readily available to Annual Playground inspectors whose report contributes to the operators' overall Annual Main Inspection as detailed in this standard.

The undertaking of the advised inspection protocols, methodologies, and ensuring that the necessary competencies are held by those undertaking these tasks are necessary to ensure a suitable and sufficient safety management system as prescribed under the Health and safety at work act 1974 and its implementing regulations. Where such detailed knowledge base and in-house training is not held it is advised that specialist guidance is obtained, such as from the Register of Play Inspectors International (RPII).

The UK participation in its preparation was entrusted to Technical Committee SW/65, Children's playground equipment.

A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its committee manager.

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

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Amendments/corrigenda issued since publication

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