



Play Space Policy

Reference Number:	5.6
Type:	Council Policy
Category:	Environment and Open Space
Relevant Community Plan Outcome:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A well-designed urban environment that is adaptive to a diverse and growing City• City assets and infrastructure are developed and enhances on a strategic and equitable basis in collaboration with local communities and other relevant parties, including industry and government
Responsible Officer(s):	Manager Open Space, Recreation & Property
First Issued/Approved:	3 December 2012
Minutes Reference:	CoS 4/09/2023, Item 4.38
Last Reviewed:	September 2023
Next Review Due:	September 2025
Applicable Legislation:	Local Government Act 1999
Related Policies:	Environmental Sustainability Policy Public Consultation Policy
Related Procedures:	Open Space Strategy 2025

1. Purpose

The City of Charles Sturt Play Space Policy has been developed in line with the strategies, actions and objectives of;

- Community Plan 2016 – 2027 Charles Sturt – A Leading, Liveable City
- Corporate Plan 2016 – 2027 Charles Sturt – A Leading, Liveable City
- Living Green to 2020 Refresh
- Open Space Strategy 2025

It is the intention of this policy to both formalise and clearly state Council's commitment to the provision of accessible, fun, stimulating and challenging play spaces that enhance children's learning, development and access to opportunities for physical activity.

2. Scope

This policy provides a strategic framework for the provision of play spaces within areas of public open space under the control and management of Council.

3. Policy Statement

3.1 Vision

Play Spaces within the public open space of the City of Charles Sturt are unique and exciting spaces that provide a range of engaging play experiences that are accessible to users of all ages, abilities, cultural and social backgrounds.

3.2 Goal

To provide a diverse range and experience in both structured and unstructured play environments that allows for participation in play spaces that are safe, accessible and inclusive for youth and children of all age and ability groups.

3.3 Objectives

3.3.1 Primary Objective

To ensure the effective design, development and management programmes are in place to facilitate the delivery of dynamic play spaces that respond to community need and aspirations.

3.3.2 Secondary Objectives

To provide quality play spaces that allow for the social, emotional and physical development of users of the play space.

To provide a range of play spaces across the City that are fun, stimulating and wherever possible and appropriate, allow, users of the space to manipulate and shape their environment encouraging active lifestyles and healthy living behaviours.

To provide Natureplay spaces where opportunities present, to allow children to play in an intuitive way, constructing and deconstructing their own spaces while interacting with natural materials and features that can be manipulated or used creatively

To provide playgrounds, play spaces and equipment choices for inclusive play, in line with the recommendations of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and Australian Standard AS 1428 (2021), AS 4685 (2014 and 2017), and AS/NZS 4422 (1996) standard for playground surfacing and testing.

To provide play spaces that encourage interaction between the users of the space and their caregiver/s.

To provide play opportunities for youth as identified within Councils Open Space Strategy.

To ensure that all play spaces within the City of Charles Sturt are created, maintained and renewed in accordance with the appropriate Asset Management Plans, the directions of the Open Space Strategy and relevant Australian Standards.

To provide, where appropriate open space is available, a play space within walking distance of most households, which will be developed in accordance with Council's Open Space Strategy 2025.

The provision of shade at Council-owned and managed playgrounds via the installation of structures and planting of trees to create natural shade, shall be undertaken in consideration of the Open Space Strategy and relevant Asset Management Plans.

Risk Management

Sound management systems which minimise the hazards associated with play spaces is a key priority. All Structured playgrounds are to comply with the requirements of Australian Standard, AS4486.1 1997 *Playgrounds and Playground equipment – Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation*. Natureplay spaces will be managed to allow an acceptable level of risk/judgement for the play space users incorporating hazard management systems to make safe as necessary.

Ease of access within play equipment and the determination of risk assessment by user, should comply with Australian Standard AS 4685.1 2014 *Playground equipment Part 1: General safety requirements and test methods*

- The installation of any new or replacement structured playground will also comply with AS4485.1 SET 2014 *Playground equipment and surfacing Set* and as with any new natureplay space, will require a full risk assessment and risk management process prior to the installation of the play space.

All Structured playgrounds and nature play spaces will be maintained and inspected in accordance with Australian Standard, AS4486.1 1997 *Playgrounds and Playground equipment – Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation*.

4. Definitions

Key Term – Acronym	Definition
Play Space	A place that is designated primarily for children's play and may include structured or unstructured play spaces.
Natureplay (Unstructured Playspace)	Natureplay is play that provides children with access to a range of opportunities that reflect the natural world such as loose parts (leaves, twigs and logs), different surfaces and terrains (mounds, slopes), plants (sensory), water, mud, construction opportunities with natural elements (sand, stick, fabric), areas for reflection (a rock near a pond or under a tree), areas for hiding (bamboo, sunflowers), areas for imaginative play such as boats, decks, winding pathways, and areas to hide. (NRM Education)

Playground (Structured Playspace)	Traditional, manufactured playground containing recreational equipment such as climbing equipment, slides and swings
All Abilities Play Space	A play space that can be accessed and enjoyed by children with varying physical and intellectual abilities.
Risk	A risk is the chance, high or low, that any hazard will actually cause somebody harm.
Hazard	A hazard is something that can cause harm, e.g. electricity, chemicals, working up a ladder, noise, a keyboard, a bully at work, stress, etc.