

School Playground Planning

In order to reduce risks of injury on school playgrounds, it is necessary to consult with teachers, parents, playground consultants and students in order to determine wants, needs and ideas. Careful planning and consultation can significantly reduce injuries, vandalism, maintenance and other costs by building a sense of school community ownership of the playground.

The following questions should be asked before the planning process begins in order to identify the criteria that the school playground needs to meet:

- What age group will use this play area?
- Is the play area easily accessible to students?
- Does it allow easy supervision for teachers/staff?
- Is there enough room to accommodate all the children using the play area?
- Are there areas for quiet play as well as for active play?
- How much shade do existing trees provide and can natural features of the play space be incorporated to provide opportunities for creative play?
- Will the play area be used before and after regular school hours?
- Does existing playground equipment meet current safety standards?
- What are the requirements for the planned new playground equipment?
- Does the playground offer play and creative opportunities as well as being safe?
- Can the playground be modified to make it useable for disabled children?
- Does the playground challenge physical skills – balance, flexibility, strength and coordination?