

Alconbury Elementary School Playground Management Plan School Year 2012-13

PURPOSE: This publication provides policy and guidance for Alconbury Elementary School (AES) playground management and standards in accordance with DoDEA Regulation 4210.01 (04/21/10).

APPLICABILITY: The publication applies to all students, teachers, support staff, volunteers and others who use the designated playgrounds on the AES campus.

POLICY: It is AES policy to promote student physical activity by providing safe, secure, stimulating and accessible playground environments. As such, AES is committed to establishing uniform playground management controls and practices in order to eliminate hazards, while providing challenging and enjoyable playground conditions to promote the motor skill, physical fitness and personal and social development of all students.

DEFINITIONS:

Playground Monitor - Any adult, paid or volunteer, charged with supervising students on a school playground.

AIR - Accident/Injury Report

SIR - Serious Incident Report

COMPONENTS OF PLAYGROUND SAFETY: Safety on the playground, and helping to protect students from injury, require planning, thought, training, and deliberate action. Proper selection, placement, and maintenance of playground equipment, along with effective supervision of playground activities, can help prevent accidents or reduce their severity. To practice due care for the safety of playground users in all phases of playground administration we must consider the following areas of playground safety:

- Adequate, trained, equipped, and attentive playground supervision
- Students instructed on how to properly play on the playground equipment
- Copies of the written playground safety rules were provided and have been taught to all students and staff.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Principal shall:

1. Develop and implement a school Playground Management Program in accordance with DoDEA Regulations.
2. Ensure that playground injury prevention strategies are established, including the prompt removal from service of broken or dysfunctional equipment and subsequent submission of a request for repairs.
3. Ensure all Playground Supervisors maintain a copy of the AES Playground Guidelines and receive playground supervisory training at the beginning of each school year.
4. Ensure adequate adult monitoring and supervision of students during all periods of scheduled playground activities throughout the school day.
5. Ensure that all playground injuries are reported to DoDEA Headquarters via the AIRs online reporting process.
6. Develop and implement a medical emergency plan for the playground.
7. Provide direction and guidance to the school-based Supervisory Management Services Specialist, where assigned. Principals may delegate playground management duties. If school size does not warrant

assignment of a Supervisory Management Services Specialist, playground management duties must be performed by the principal or a qualified designee. In all cases, the principal remains responsible for the proper performance of these duties.

The P.E. teacher shall:

During the first P.E. classes of the year, the P.E. teacher will address safety issues with the students when using the playground equipment. This training will consist of hands on use of the equipment and identifying potential hazards.

The playground monitors shall:

Address safety issues with the students when using the playground equipment. The training will be conducted before the students go to recess. Reminders for appropriate behavior will be given to students throughout the year.

The school nurse shall:

Meet with all staff and offer suggestions and ways to minimize injuries while ensuring students enjoy using the playground equipment.

The School Supply Technician shall:

The School Supply Technician or designee will perform daily and Quarterly Preventive Maintenance Inspections and Annual/Routine Maintenance of play equipment. This individual should be familiar with CPSC/ASTM playground safety guidelines

WEATHER FACTORS PERTAINING TO OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES:

Administration will make the determination on playground usage during inclement weather. In the case of extreme heat or cold, rain or other threatening weather conditions, students may participate in "indoor recess" activities.

PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION:

One of the duties owed to students on the school playground is proper supervision. The main purpose of supervision on the playground is to help protect students from injury or reduce the risk of student injury. Proper supervision has four basic components:

1. Presence and attentiveness:

- Being on the playground before students start playing.
- Staying in a reasonable proximity to the areas of activity.
- Keeping all students easily in sight.
- Not becoming distracted from duties.

2. Student behavior monitoring and intervention:

- Being knowledgeable of and consistently enforcing school rules and policies.
- Restricting students from roughhousing, horseplay or other inappropriate behavior on or near any apparatus.
- Controlling the play environment.

3. Hazard surveillance and intervention:

- Being risk-conscious (prioritizing attention into the areas where accidents are most likely to occur).

- Checking the playground daily, and appropriately addressing ground and equipment hazards.

4. Responding appropriately to emergencies: Handling emergencies that occur on the playground properly to reduce potential injury and damage. This involves being CPR/first aid certified, or having such a staff member readily accessible.

Playground supervisor competency is an important factor to ensure good supervision. Playground supervisors, including volunteers, should meet selection criteria and be trained for their duties.

1. Selection criteria - The playground monitor should:

- Be physically able to do the job (walk around and see the whole playground, climb, free a trapped child, intervene to stop a fight, etc.)
- Have favorable standardized background check as specified in DoDEA Administrative Instruction 4700.3
- Be able to work well with students.

2. Initial Training - Adults do not automatically have the skills necessary to appropriately supervise students at play on a school playground. In playground monitor training include general playground supervision information, and information specific to the school at which they will supervise. Teach playground monitors applicable school district policies and procedures and their duties and responsibilities. Include the following basic information in the initial training session(s):

- General playground information should include:
 - The causes of injuries on school playgrounds
 - The basics of how to inspect playground equipment
 - How to identify, report, and help protect students from hazards on the playground
 - How students should safely use play equipment
- General monitor information:
 - Understand the importance of playground supervision
 - Be familiar with the school's method of playground discipline
 - Understand the difference between discipline and punishment
 - Be able to enforce rules
 - Know how to alter students' behavior positively
 - Understand that constant diligence in monitoring the playground is essential
 - Understand that the location of the supervisor on the playground is very important. Supervisors should have an unobstructed view of the entire play area, and should avoid standing together and chatting
- School specific information should help the playground monitor:
 - Know the established playground rules:
 1. No food or drink is to be taken outside.
 2. Balls are available to be checked out. Football is "two hand touch" – NO TACKLE
 3. Students are to stay on the black top or grass area only and not to play on the walk way or in the road. They can sit on the picnic tables but cannot stand on them.
 - Know the importance of and appropriate ways to respond to various emergencies on the playground
 - Know how to handle injuries on the playground

- Know procedures for visitors at the school
 - Know the layout of the entire school grounds, all playground apparatus, and out-of-bounds areas
 - Be familiar with games used on the playgrounds and their rules
 - Know the locations of first aid kits, telephones, fire extinguishers, and the school nurse or designated emergency aide
 - Know how to handle discipline problems
 - Understand what his/her role is in a crisis (earthquake or other school emergency)
 - Be able to correctly complete an incident report for a playground accident
- Follow up training - Conduct annual training with all playground monitors. Design annual training to reinforce the initial training, update the monitors as to any changes, and address specific playground problems and issues at the school
- Supplies and equipment -Equip playground monitors to do their job. Appropriate supplies and equipment may include:
 - A whistle or other means of communicating with students quickly - A clipboard, paper and pen
 - A means of emergency communication with the office (a two-way radio system is often chosen because it is fairly reliable and inexpensive)
 - Minor first aid supplies, including protective gloves
- Supervision of the playground monitors - Charge a knowledgeable administrator with training and overseeing playground supervisors. Administrators should evaluate playground supervisors periodically and analyze their effectiveness in that position
 - The administrator charged with the management of the playground supervisors should periodically (quarterly is suggested) review student playground accident reports to look for patterns of causes and initiate or ensure corrective action

PLAYGROUND INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

A. Daily Safety Inspection. School Supply Technician or designee shall perform a daily safety inspection for all playground equipment and play areas on days in which school is in session.

1. The primary focus of the daily inspection is to visually check for surfacing problems, vandalism, trash and debris, and obvious hazards.
2. A completed Daily Playground Inspection Form will be forwarded to the school principal for review and follow-up action.

B. Quarterly Preventive Maintenance Inspection. Quarterly preventive maintenance inspections shall be performed by qualified maintenance staff to check for potential problems due to age, usage, and environmental impacts.

1. This inspection is more detailed than the daily inspection and requires a physical examination of system components.
2. A site-specific inspection form shall be developed for each playground. The form shall be annotated by maintenance staff and forwarded to the school principal for review and follow-up action, if required.

C. Annual Inspection/Routine Maintenance. On an annual basis, qualified maintenance staff shall thoroughly inspect all playground components for damage or wear. Routine maintenance services should also be performed at this time.

1. This inspection addresses the structural integrity of the playground and must be performed by experienced personnel. Items that should be addressed at this time include excessive wear,

deterioration, and potential hazards. Problems requiring remedial work shall be identified during the inspection and repaired as soon as possible.

2. All follow-up actions on repairs and equipment replacement shall be completed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. An annual inspection may be substituted for one quarterly preventative maintenance inspection during which this inspection was conducted.

3. A customized inspection form shall be developed for each specific playground, based on specific playground components. The form shall be annotated by the supporting maintenance personnel and results provided to the principal for review and follow-up action, if required.

D. Triennial Safety Audit. On a three year cycle, each DoDEA playground facility will undergo an in-depth safety audit by a certified playground safety inspector, via a DoDEA Headquarters funded and managed contract. The audit will assess existing conditions in order to determine compliance with current playground standards. Recommended improvements, including cost projections, will also be developed for capital planning purposes.

E. Safety Spot Checks. The school playgrounds are subject to Area and/or district facilities staff member safety spots checks on a random basis to ensure compliance with the DoDEA policies.

PLAYGROUND PROCEDURES:

Boundaries - Students must stay within the boundaries of the playground area, and never out of the sight of a monitor.

Jump ropes - are to be used for jump rope only. Circle rope is permitted, but the rope must be kept on the ground.

Kickball, Soccer, and Nerf Football - are permitted in large open areas only. Nerf footballs may be used for passing and tag football only. No tackle or takedown is allowed at any time. Balls that are thrown or kicked over the fence may not be retrieved. No footballs, kickballs or soccer balls are permitted within close proximity to school windows.

Monitors - are to be respected and listened to without argument. Be respectful and follow their instructions. They are there for student safety.

Nurse - Students must have a pass to go to the nurse. The best practice is to send a "buddy" from the same class to accompany the injured or sick child so he/she can tell the teacher where the child is when the students return to the classroom.

Playing tag or keep-away - are not permitted on or around the playground equipment or soft tile. This is especially dangerous on the slides.

Returning to Class or using the Media Center - is only permitted if the student has a pass from a teacher or monitor.

The Suspended Bridges – are for walking across only. No jumping, swinging, sitting, or climbing up over the rails is permitted.

Uneven Bars – The uneven bars are for pull-ups or simple exercising. No standing or balancing on top is permitted.

CONDUCT ENFORCEMENT:

1. **WARNING** - A warning will be given to students for inappropriate, but less serious, behavior.

2. **TIMEOUT** - Arguing, shoving, "roughhousing" or repeated behaviors of a less serious nature will result in a timeout for 5 minutes or more. Playground cleanup is an option that can be offered to students but is never mandatory.

3. **PLAYGROUND REFERRALS** - If a student is consistently argumentative or disruptive, or continually disturbing others, he/she should be referred to a counselor or administrator on duty.

4. **OFFICE REFERRALS** - Any student sent to the office for inappropriate behavior should be accompanied by an adult and sent with a note describing, in sufficient detail, the nature of the problem and unsuccessful interventions.

HANDLING MEDICAL EMERGENCIES ON THE PLAYGROUND:

One of our responsibilities to students on the school playground is prompt and appropriate medical care. Medical emergencies may include but not limited to the following:

Unconsciousness, difficulty breathing, profuse bleeding, altered mental status, allergic reactions, suspected broken bones, and falls from a significant height.

Be sure to follow school district policies and procedures and document all playground injuries other than minor scrapes and bruises.

Summon assistance by walkie-talkie or student runners for the nurse and/or the office staff in the absence of the nurse.

Emergency medical care:

- Make sure the injured child is always attended by an adult.
- Never fail to give aid (err on the side of caution)
- Administer first aid as trained until the nurse or medical professionals arrive
- Do not move the child (due to the possibility of neck and spinal injury)
- Injured child will be assessed by the school nurse
- Notify the principal when requiring emergency medical assistance in the absence of the school nurse
- Report the accident to the school office (nurse)
- Contact parents via phone and email as soon as possible (nurse and/or principal)
- Complete an accident / incident reports (AIR's) report promptly (nurse)

Playground Injury Prevention Strategies

Students are trained in the proper use of playground equipment at the beginning of the year by PE teachers, lunch monitors, and administration.

Lunch monitors circulate the playground area to ensure proper use of equipment and appropriate play.

Procedures for adult monitoring during periods of playground activities throughout the day

All paraprofessionals share in the responsibility for ensuring student safety during the lunch/recess hour.

Each paraprofessional has scheduled lunch/recess duty. There is a schedule which tells the paraprofessional whether he/she will be outside, inside, or floating during the recess time.

The following guidelines will help ensure a safe & pleasant lunch/recess period:

1. Arrive on the playground a few minutes before the beginning of lunch.
2. Have a radio.
3. If you are unable to cover your assigned lunch duty, notify administration asap.
4. Walk around all areas of the blacktop. Do not stay in one place for too long.

Alconbury Elementary School

Daily Playground Safety Inspection Form

Inspected by: _____

Date/time: _____

Supply Technician/Principal review: _____

Date: _____

Item Inspected	Hazard Identified	Priority Code	Corrective Action Taken
Graffiti or vandalism			
Trash or debris in play areas			
Animal waste/insect nests			
Damaged benches or trash cans			
Missing or damaged equipment or components			
Damaged sidewalk or pathway			
Tripping hazards, exposed or damaged concrete			
Loose or uneven synthetic materials			
Equipment not firmly anchored to ground			
Sharp points, edges or corners			
Protruding nuts or bolts			
Loose handrails and guard rails			
Standing water			
Missing end caps and plugs			
Peeling or chipped paint			
Other			
Other			

Priority Codes:

1. Emergency condition observed that required immediate equipment isolation and follow-up emergency repairs or equipment removal.
2. Urgent condition observed that required priority repair work and close monitoring.
3. Routine repairs or preventative maintenance required.
4. No deficiency observed, follow-up action not required.