



APPENDIX B

Play Sufficiency Guidelines for Playground Design and Build

Parks, Biodiversity and Landscape Services Dublin City Council

Background

Dublin City Council's approach to play provision is informed by **Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**, which recognises every child's right to play, recreation, leisure, and participation in cultural life. Playground design shall support the value, diversity, and intrinsic nature of play while promoting equality, accessibility, and inclusion.

Reference Documents

Tenderers should refer to the following documents:

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC): <https://childrensrights.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/UNCRCEnglish.pdf>

UNCRC General Comment No. 17 (Article 31 – The Child's Right to Play):
<https://www.refworld.org/docid/51ef9bcc4.html>

[Play Strategy 2022-2027 | Dublin City Council](#)

Dublin City Play Strategy

The Dublin City Play Strategy promotes the development of meaningful, high-quality play environments that provide natural, inclusive, and accessible play opportunities for children and young people of all ages and abilities.

The strategy supports the vision of Dublin as a child-friendly and playful city where all children and young people can fully exercise their right to play.

Key policy themes relevant to Merrion Square Park Playground include:

- Promoting awareness of the value and importance of play in children's everyday lives.
- Delivering an effective citywide play infrastructure through collaborative and child-centred design.
- Ensuring accessible and inclusive play opportunities for all children and young people.
- Enabling participation in cultural, recreational, and creative play experiences.



Play Sufficiency

The Dublin City Play Strategy adopts the principle of **Play Sufficiency**, as advocated in UNCRC General Comment No. 17. Play Sufficiency seeks to ensure that public play facilities provide high-quality, varied, challenging, and inclusive play opportunities for children and young people of all ages and abilities.

All playground proposals shall demonstrate how the design supports Play Sufficiency and contributes to the creation of holistic play environments incorporating natural, inclusive, and accessible play opportunities.

Play Sufficiency Requirements for Tenderers

Tenderers shall have regard to the Play Wales guidance document:

Play Sufficiency in Wales [Play sufficiency in Wales - Play Wales](#)

The following requirements are provided for guidance and are not exhaustive:

- Incorporate a range of surfacing materials to enhance play value, accessibility, and visual quality.
- Use durable, robust, and low-maintenance materials that are appropriate to the site context.
- Provide accessible routes throughout the play space and ensure inclusive access to play features wherever practicable.
- Integrate inclusive play opportunities that support participation by children of all abilities.
- Provide opportunities for social interaction through formal and informal seating, gathering spaces, and parent/carer supervision areas.
- Consider the inclusion of communication boards and other features that support inclusive play.
- Incorporate sensory play experiences through planting, landscaping, landform, textures, sounds, and scents.
- Facilitate interaction with natural and loose play materials, including leaves, twigs, sand, water, mud play, and den-building opportunities.
- Include natural elements that change seasonally and contribute to varied play experiences throughout the year.
- Retain, utilise, and where appropriate enhance existing site features, including slopes, vegetation, viewpoints, gathering spaces, and serviceable play equipment.
- Provide opportunities for non-prescriptive and open-ended play, including running, chasing, hiding, socialising, and informal recreation.



- Ensure the play environment offers a high level of play affordance, encouraging exploration and movement throughout the space.
- Enable both individual and group play through the layout and selection of play features.
- Where practicable, provide suitable surfaces and space for wheeled play, including bicycles, scooters, and similar activities.
- Incorporate opportunities for managed risk and challenge within both equipment and landscape features.
- Include features that promote creativity, imagination, and child-led play.
- Maximise the site's potential to deliver unique, engaging, and challenging play experiences.
- Unless otherwise specified, designs shall provide play opportunities for a broad age range, from toddler to intergenerational play.