

Early Childhood Education and Care Facilities – Design Standards

Part 4: Technical Specifications



Government of South Australia
Department for Education

OFFICIAL



Part 4: Technical Specifications

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Introduction

Must be read in conjunction with the [Education Facilities Design Standards](#), only components specific to ECEC facilities are provided here for performance criteria of the building, building services, finishes, fixtures and fittings, site infrastructure, and outdoor learning areas.

Where the ECEC Design Standards specify a requirement or performance standard which exceeds those in any relevant act, regulation, Australian or International standard or the National Construction Code the designs must comply with the department's higher requirement or performance standard.

Departures from these requirements are to have written approval as outlined in the [ECEC Design Standards](#).

Any reference to National Regulations refers to the [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#).

The following sections describe the general building, fixtures and fittings to be considered in the design and detailing of ECEC facilities.

Refer to [Part 3: Generic Functional Briefs](#) for the building and service requirements applicable to each specific functional unit.

A full [glossary of terms](#) is available in the ECEC Design Standards document.

Building

Walls

External walls and cladding

External walls must:

- have high impact resistance cladding to a minimum above ground height of 2100mm
- not be climbable (including any required retaining walls) no horizontal elements.

External wall surfaces must be smooth with:

- no protrusions or sharp edges that could be a hazard
- no finger entrapment risks in joints and junctions
- brickwork (if used) installed with flush mortar joints to restrict climbing ability.

Internal walls

Wall surfaces shall be:

- smooth finish, painted low sheen acrylic and easily cleanable.

Impervious wall surfaces must be provided to the following areas and extents:

- sheet vinyl, laminated panels, stainless-steel, acrylic sheet or glazed ceramic wall tiles above benchtops where there is a risk of splash or liquid spills
- stainless-steel or glazed ceramic wall tiles behind stoves or cooktops extending flush with the underside of rangehoods, cabinets or bulkheads.

- sheet vinyl or glazed ceramic wall tiles behind wall mounted hand basins, toilet pans, cleaner’s troughs and washing machines from floor level to a minimum height of 1200mm
- waterproof, seamless resilient wall finishes (sheet vinyl or glazed ceramic wall tiles) must be provided in shower compartments to a minimum height of 2100mm to all faces of the shower recess.

Toilet cubicles

Partition systems used in children’s toilet areas:

- may substitute fibre cement sheet with compact laminate systems that must be a minimum 13mm sheet
- must be 1200mm high and have a maximum gap of 85mm underneath (see [Entrapment](#) fact sheet by Kidsafe SA and the Education Standards Board’s [creating safe facilities](#))
- must be between 850mm and 900mm apart (ambulant and accessible toilets to comply with AS 1428.1 requirements).

Acoustics

In the absence of a specific requirement outlined in this document, learning and support spaces must take all reasonable and practicable steps to achieve the [Association of Australasian Acoustical Consultants \(AAAC\) Guidelines](#) for reverberation times, internal noise levels and acoustic separation as relevant.

Reverberation time

Type of occupancy / activity	Reverberation time (seconds)
Open plan learning and play area with all doors open	0.6
Staff prep and offices	0.6
Learning and play area with doors closed	0.4
Spaces for children with special learning needs	0.4

Acoustic separation

Type of spaces	Minimum weighted level difference (Dw)
Any two spaces separated by a standard door arrangement	25
Internal walls separating open learning and play areas and staff preparation areas, and between indoor learning and play areas and external learning and play areas, where it is identified that flexibility in the use of space is more important than acoustic separation between spaces	30
Internal walls separating open learning and play areas, sleep rooms, staff preparation areas, community spaces, clinical and consulting rooms, and office areas where acoustic separation is more important than flexibility	40

Internal noise levels

Type of occupancy / activity	Recommended noise level (dB(A))
Learning and play area - entry doors closed	40
Open plan learning and play area with all doors open	40
Staff prep and offices	40
Spaces for children with special learning needs	35

Floor finishes

Resilient flooring:

- provide slip resistant resilient sheet (refer to slip [resistance below](#)), ceramic tiles or epoxy coatings to kitchens, wet areas, toilet amenities, and stores.

Carpet squares and rugs may be provided to learning and play areas and must:

- be non-static, level loop pile, and soil resistant
- be easily cleanable without the requirement of specialised chemicals, methods, or equipment
- have a non-slip backing to avoid movement.

Slip resistance

The following slip resistance ratings apply to the selection of resilient flooring for wet areas:

Slip resistance requirements as per HB 198:2014 (guide to the specification and testing of slip resistance of pedestrian surfaces)

Area	R rating	P rating	Barefoot
Kitchen - food preparation areas	R12	P5	
Staff kitchen area	R10	P3	
Children's dining area	R10	P3	
Store rooms and cleaners rooms	R10	P3	
Toilets, change rooms and showers	R10	P3	A

R rating = oil-wet inclining platform test (Appendix D, AS 4586)

P rating = wet pendulum test (Appendix A, AS 4586)

A = wet-barefoot inclining platform test (Appendix C, AS 4586)

Doors

Doors to all ECEC spaces must:

- have a maximum height of 2400mm
- be 1200mm high with a maximum gap of 85mm underneath for children's toilet cubicle doors (privacy doors) and be:
 - free swinging

- inward opening (with buffer stop)
- securable inside with reachable adult access
- where sliding doors/operable walls are provided, be capable of being held securely in the fully opened and fully closed position and be operated by staff only (no bi-fold doors)
- not be stable-type doors with top and bottom hinged panels.

To meet *National Regulation 115 – Premises designed to facilitate supervision* viewing panels must:

- start from a maximum of 800mm above finished floor level
- have compliant window furnishings, if installed, to provide privacy during health consultations or treatment
 - glazing film to external and internal doors is to provide for passive supervision between adjacent spaces not full privacy film (frosted full height film is not accepted)
 - installation of one-way glazing film between staff occupied areas and learnings areas in inclusive learning communities, for clinical observation, and professional learning is to be approved by the department.

External doors to learning and play areas and children’s toilets must:

- be capable of being held securely in the fully open position flush against the adjacent wall
- have no gap greater than 85mm between the door in the open position and the adjacent wall
- have restraining mechanisms (and adjacent fixing points) mounted at a height that does not cause a trip or impact hazard for adults and children
- ensure window transoms or mullions are coordinated with the position of the hold back device (if adjacent walls are glazed partitions).

Door hardware

All doors to child accessible areas must:

- be self-closing with a slow close using a cushioning device
- have finger guards fitted to all door hinges to the full height of the door and on both sides of the door
- have child height push pull handles installed at 750mm above floor level with a cabin hook to hold doors in the open position, and have a second return lever and handle installed at 1500mm above floor level for adult control of movement when required.

Door handles to adult areas must be fitted at 1500mm, excluding accessible toilets which must be mounted in accordance with AS 1428(Set) and include access card locks.

Windows

To meet *National Regulation 110 – Ventilation and natural light* the amount of controlled natural daylight and ventilation to all areas occupied by children, staff and the community should be maximised.

Windows must:

- be openable in all occupied spaces to meet NCC F6D7 requirements (be at least 5% of the room floor area) to provide natural ventilation to spaces in temperate weather conditions when mechanical systems may not be required
- in children’s areas have a minimum area of 10% of the room floor area as per NCC requirements
- provide views to the outside from child accessed areas with sill heights a maximum 300mm above floor level
- be provided to both internal and external walls to ensure maximum effective adult supervision of all child accessible areas
- provide sill heights for adult observation between 1000mm to 1200mm above floor level
- have lockable opening sashes in various open positions when publicly accessible (outside the fenced play areas)
- have obscured glass to external toilet windows where line of sight from publicly accessible areas (external to the building or outdoor play areas) are available
- have removable insect screens (mechanically fixed) on all external opening window sashes.

A Schedule of Natural Light must be completed and provided to the department as part of the Education Standards Board (ESB) approvals process, see [Part 2: Design Principles \(Master Planning, Architectural & Landscape\)](#) for further information.

Balustrades and barriers

To provide for children’s safe movement and use of spaces consider the inclusion of barriers, to prevent falls in all indoor and outdoor areas, where the change in floor level is less than 1000mm (NCC requirement is for all heights 1000mm and above).

A barrier or restricted opening device must also be provided in accordance with NCC Volume 1 D2.24, for any risk of fall from an openable window of 2m or more in ECEC facilities.

Any barrier used to separate (and ensure the safety of) non-mobile children (generally up to 2 years of age) from mobile children in any indoor or outdoor learning area must be fixed in such a way that they are not moveable by children or able to fall over.

Further information for outdoor areas is available in the [‘protection against falling from heights’](#) section.

Toilets and amenities

Refer to the [‘fixtures, fittings and furniture’](#) section.

Building services

Heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC)

Reverse cycle air-conditioning is the preferred system to be provided for ECEC facilities to utilise South Australia’s low emissions electricity supply and support the Government’s sustainable buildings requirements.

Semi-commercial or commercial ducted or non-ducted systems may be installed.

Air-conditioning units must be inaccessible to children.

Mechanical ventilation complying with AS1668.2 and AS/NZS3666.1 must be provided for all air-conditioning systems:

- for large open learning and play areas, ventilation must be provided by an energy recovery ventilation (ERV) system to temper the air before introducing it to occupied areas
- for smaller areas, ensure the proposed system is capable of coping with the introduction of outside air (where ERV system is not required), as well as any mechanical exhausting required.

Mechanical plant to be designed and installed to DIT Guidelines G189 and G190.

Temperature settings and controls

The temperature setting controller must be:

- located in a secure area (such as store, office or staff preparation area) not within the indoor learning and play areas (and outside of ceiling spaces)
- mounted at 1500mm above floor level when located within child accessible areas.

Water

Sub-metering

Where ECEC facilities are co-located on schools sites, they must have a sub-meter to facilitate the monitoring of water use.

Water temperatures

Fixture	Cold only	Hot 43°C (max per AS3500)	Hot 60-65°C (via mixer taps)
Children's hand basins and sinks	✓		
Kitchen sink and hand basins (including community indoor meeting area kitchen)		✓	
Adult hand basins and showers		✓	
Shower within children's fully accessible toilet		✓	
Baby bath (nappy change bench)		✓	
Staff materials clean-up sink (art sink)		✓	
Bottle preparation sink (if provided)		✓	
Staff centre kitchen sinks (not accessible by children)			✓
Cleaner and laundry sinks/troughs (not accessible by children)			✓
Washing machine outlets			✓

Hot water services

Locations to receive hot water must have a Thermostatic Mixing Valve (TMV) conforming with AS 4032.1 and adjusted to the specified outlet temperature at each outlet supplied from the TMV, or a thermostatically controlled tap conforming with AS 4032.4 and adjusted to an outlet temperature not exceeding the specified

temperature at each outlet.

Electric instantaneous (continuous flow) units:

- can be considered for infrequently used outlets such as the baby bath (nappy change bench)
- are to be installed within a lockable vented cabinet external to child accessible spaces
- must only be proprietary units with the ability to revert back to its pre-set temperatures automatically after tampering or modification must be installed.

Instant boiling and chilled water taps

Must:

- provide under bench boiling water
- be energy efficient
- consider timers for shut-down for nighttime, weekends, holidays
- comply with AS 3498, AS/NZS 3500.4 and AS 1428.1
- comply with NCC Volume 3 Plumbing Code of Australia
- have a minimum 5 year warranty.

Trade waste discharge

Pre-treatment units (such as grease arrestors) may be required wherever there is waste liquid or product such as paint, sand, clay, or plaster particles being discharged into the main sewer system from dishwasher waste, kitchen sinks or art sinks as per the [Schools and Childminding SA Water factsheet](#).

Backflow prevention

Backflow prevention devices, with high hazard rating (RPZ) to comply with the Office of the Technical Regulator, are required to the following locations:

- baby bath (nappy change bench)
- Interactive Water Features (IWFs) in outdoor play areas.

Power

Sub-metering

Where ECEC facilities are co-located on schools sites, they must have a sub-meter for electricity to facilitate the monitoring of energy use.

Power outlets, switches and controls

Internal switches and power outlets:

- must be safety shuttered and RCD protected
- mounted at 1500mm above floor level in areas accessed by children
- mounted to comply with AS1428.1 in adult disability access toilet(s)

- pendant power outlets must not be used in ECEC facilities.

External lockable and weatherproof power outlets:

- must be safety shuttered and RCD protected
- mounted at 1500mm above floor level
- if protected by a verandah greater than 2000mm deep provide IP53 rated switched socket power outlets
- if exposed by a verandah less than 2000mm deep or fully exposed provide IP56 rated switched socket power outlets
- to be keyed alike.

Appliances and hard-wired equipment

Stoves, ovens and cooktops to ECEC facilities to be electric only.

Ensure power outlets, electrical loading and phase connections are appropriate for selected appliances, particularly where commercial equipment is specified in kitchens and laundry areas.

Lighting

The colour rendering index (CRI) of LED lighting must be >90.

The correlated colour temperature (CCT):

- must be 4000K in learning and play areas, community and cultural spaces, offices and work areas
- of 3000k is acceptable in sleep rooms, quiet and rest spaces, parenting rooms, multi-faith rooms, staff lounges and amenities areas.

Provide LED luminous efficacy of the LED luminaire at normal operating temperature in its normal position and enclosure of >100 lumens per watt.

Dimmable lighting

Light sensitive learning environments and learning environments that provide specialist support facilities to children or young people with a disability or special needs are to be provided dimmable/programmable LEDs with a push button or rotary dimmer mechanism.

Alternative options that provide both dimming and colour changing capabilities may also be considered and approved through the formal approval process outlined in the [ECEC Design Standards](#).

Lighting controls

Lighting controls must be:

- mounted at 1500mm above floor level in areas accessed by children
- mounted in accordance with AS1428.1 in adult accessible toilet(s)
- hard wired.

Infrared occupancy sensors are to:

- be installed in series with mechanical light switches

- be set and commissioned/demonstrated at 20 minutes “on” as a minimum
- have a minimum 5-year (on site) manufacturer’s warranty.

Security

Emergency evacuation

To meet *National Regulations 97* and *168*, emergency evacuation procedures (including instructions about what must be done in the event of an emergency and emergency evacuation floor plans) must be clear and concise and displayed near each exit in a prominent position to show the specific location and emergency evacuation routes to be taken to the nominated assembly point.

Safe egress (second exit)

Safe egress (second exit) for staff must be provided in all community accessible spaces where 1:1 interactions may occur (see Figure 1 as an example).

The preferred configuration should include:

- 2 doors located opposite each other - one leading from the public accessible area (foyer) and the other from a staff area (not the children’s education and care spaces)
- door access from the public area to open inward, from the staff area to open outward
- door to staff area must not be fitted with privacy bolts or turn knobs.

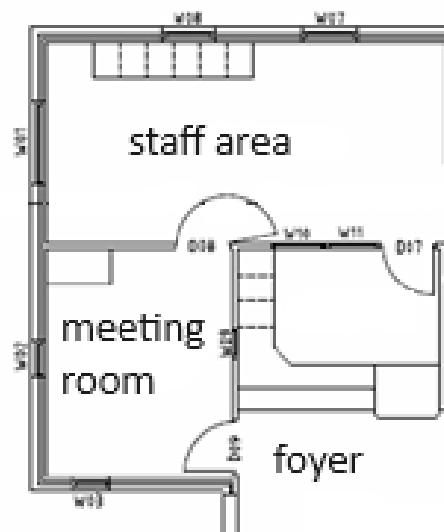


Figure 1: Example of safe egress door configuration.

Information and communications technology

Communications room

ECEC facilities will be provided with the following equipment:

- Core Node - when not co-located on a school site
- Edge Node – when co-located on a school site and sharing the Core Node equipment

The department must be consulted for the physical measurements of servers, uninterruptable power supplies and network equipment required to be accommodated.

Connectivity

The ECEC facility shall have a department internet connection of sufficient capacity to support administration and learning programs. Access to this provision from either local network wired data outlet connections (for desktop computers or printer devices) or an indoor/outdoor wireless network connection. The department's ICT will undertake a predictive wireless coverage survey to determine optimal quantity and location for wireless access points and provide to the design team.

Telephony

Provide digital telephone systems (VoIP) for all ECEC facilities. The use of digital telephony relies on the data network to connect telephone handsets to data outlets as required.

AV solutions

Interactive displays:

- primary connection method is wireless screen casting
- should include front facing connection for back-up physical HDMI and USB cable connections
- must be provided with a double data outlet
- wall mounted
 - require 2 double power outlets - positioned at an above floor height that does not obstruct the display wall mount and concealed behind the display itself making for a neat, uncluttered installation.
 - recommended mounting height for base to be 650mm above floor level.

Fixture, fittings and furniture

Cots

Must:

- comply with the department's [safe sleeping and resting for infants and young children procedure](#)
- have lockable castors to enable them to be relocated during an evacuation/emergency.

Curtains and blinds

Window furnishings to control daylight in sleep rooms, retreat/quiet space/rest area and inclusive learning and play areas are to be manual or mechanically operated systems (corded curtains or blinds are not permitted due to potential ligature risks). All other areas refer to the [Education Facilities Design Standards](#).

Nappy change table (fold down)

To be a recessed or surface mounted fold down horizontal baby change station compliant with AS 1428.1

accessible installation:

- a maximum height of 820mm above floor level (when in the open position)
- a minimum clearance of 720mm underneath (when in the open position)
- hand grip or locking device a maximum 1100mm above floor level
- centreline of the change table no closer than 425mm from any side wall or obstruction, with at least 100mm clearance on either side to prevent finger entrapment
- must not encroach into the circulation space of any other sanitary fixture or door access when in the folded-up position.

Safe

A freestanding safe must be provided for ECEC facilities not co-located with a school. An alternative is a wall safe that can be secured to the building structure and positioned within a joinery unit.

The safe must:

- be fire resistant
- have minimum internal dimensions of 230mm by 320mm.

Sinks/hand basins

Sinks for child use must:

- be mounted at 550mm above floor level for under 2 years
- be mounted at 600mm above floor level for over 2 years
- have all plumbing wastes concealed with sink/plumbing shrouds or in secure under bench cupboards to remove entrapment points (see Figure 2)



Figure 2: Example of sink shroud.

- for art sinks provide a minimum 40 litre stainless-steel laundry trough with integral drainer see Figure 3 (double grated as per the [Schools and Childminding SA Water factsheet](#)) in line with DIT Standard Drawing DD18.

Sinks for adult use must:

- be mounted at 900mm above floor level and in child areas have all plumbing wastes concealed with sink/plumbing shrouds or in secure under bench cupboards to remove entrapment points
- not be in or adjoining food preparation areas for cleaning materials

- wash troughs to allow bucket access under taps
- for kitchen sinks provide a double sink with integral drainer (see Figure 3).



Figure 3: Example of integral drainer.

Nappy change bench (sink):

- provide a stainless-steel Grade 304 (730mmL x 730W x 400mmD) sink within the nappy change bench joinery as per DIT Standard drawing DD13.
- provide a handheld shower via pull out mixer tap to the baby bath
- refer to [nappy change bench](#) for additional specifications.

Tapware

Internal tapware

Provide soft touch 'lever action' timeflow taps to children's hand basins (accessible children's toilets to be provided with lever handle in line with the [Education Facilities Design Standards](#)).

External tapware

All external taps must have:

- consolidated brass 20mm key-locked screw-nosed bib-taps fitted to 20mm copper standpipe, or
- a removable handle or place taps in a recessed enclosure.

The above also applies to any harvested rainwater storage tanks to avoid children drinking from untreated sources in line with the department's [recycled water connections procedure](#).

Amenities for children

Toilet pans

Toilet pans for children (including ambulant facilities) must be junior size with single flap seat (no lids) to meet the accessibility requirements of AS1428.3.

Toilet paper dispenser

For children the toilet paper dispenser must be mounted within a zone that is level with the height of the toilet seat, a maximum of 300mm from the front of the toilet pan and a maximum 570mm from floor level (see Figure 4).

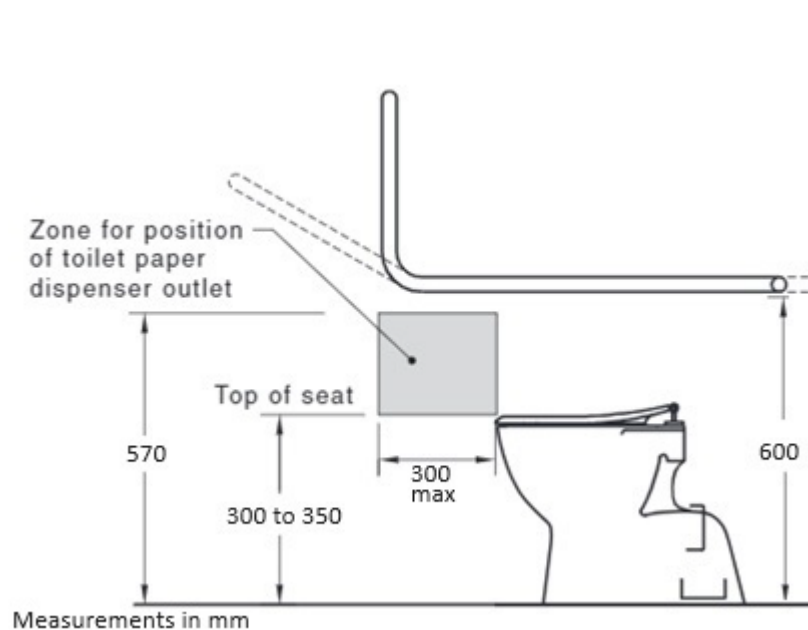


Figure 4: Specifications for junior pan (paper dispenser and ambulant/accessible toilet grabrail) placement.

Soap dispenser

For safety a foaming soap dispenser is to be provided and must be:

- tamper proof and capable of being refillable by maintenance personnel only
- fixed over the sink or hand basin
- installed in line with AS 1428.1.

Hand dryers

For children the operable outlet of the hand dryer/dispenser must be mounted at 650mm above floor level.

Hand dryers must:

- have a fixed nozzle
- be hard wired with no exposed cabling, RCD protected and isolator mounted at 2100mm above floor level
- have a noise rating less than 65 dB(A) at 1000mm
- have concealed mounting hardware to suit the wall type
- be mounted on vibration insulating rubber
- have a timing circuit which provides time and adjustment to cycles between 30 and 180 seconds
 - alternatively, an automatic sensing type may be offered
- have an automatically reset overload protection circuit incorporated.

Grabrails

Grabrails to ambulant and accessible children's toilets in ECEC facilities must be mounted at 600mm above floor height (see Figure 4 above).

Mirrors

Above each child hand basin provide individual mirrors fixed to the wall, mounted at child standing height, with the lowest edge at 750mm above floor level.

Joinery

The preference is to minimise fixed joinery and to provide flexibility with loose furniture. Fixed joinery items must be excluded when calculating unencumbered floor space. Any fixed joinery should have large radius rounded corners.

Benchtop work surfaces

Benchtop work surface heights for children's standing and seated use (including sinks and troughs) must be:

- 550mm for children under 2 years of age
- 600mm for children over 2 years of age.

Cupboards

Under-bench cupboards, in all ECEC facilities, must be fitted with 2 hinges per door.

Lockable cupboards in children's areas shall be internal finger catches to ensure adult access only.

Nappy change bench

To meet *National Regulations [112 – Adequate and appropriate hygienic facilities are provided for nappy changing](#)*, the nappy change bench must:

- comply with the NCC F4D4 requirements
- have a minimum area of 0.9 m²
- be between 850mm to 900mm above the finished floor level
- be positioned to allow staff line-of-sight to play areas at all times
- have a separate adult hand washing basin within 1000mm
- include access steps with securable gate, or pull-out stairs with lockable castors to provide child access
- for under bench pull-out steps provided a space not less than 800mm high, 500mm wide and 800mm deep
- ensure any stairs to nappy-change benches are secured in a manner that is not accessible by children
 - under bench stairs on castors must be able to be secured in the open and closed position to ensure the safety of children
 - fixed stairways must be fitted with a childproof gate to prevent free access by children to upper levels
- provide grab rails fitted adjacent to access steps or incorporated within pull out stairs
- provide non-slip stair treads (the NCC specifies appropriate stair dimensions)
- provide adequate space for nappy change bins.

Refer DIT Standard drawing DD13 (provide baby bath sink as per [sinks/hand basins](#)) see Figure 5.



Figure 5: Example of nappy change bench layout.

Fixtures

Bag storage

Bag storage shall preferably be:

- provided by pigeon hole joinery units
- 300mm wide x 300mm high x 300mm deep
- no more than 1000mm high.

Where bag storage units are static units against walls they must be securely fixed to the wall. Bag storage units can be mobile units with lockable castors.

Hooks are an alternative and must:

- if providing a traditional metal hook have a protective timber covering (see Figure 6)

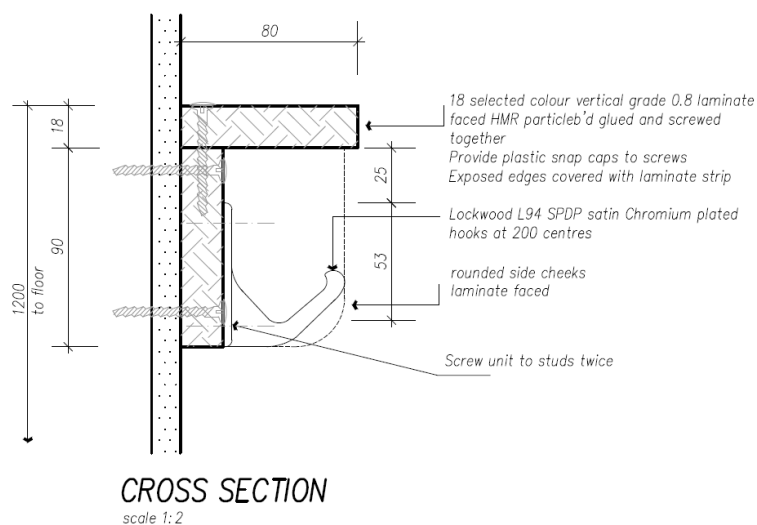


Figure 6: Example of protective timber covering.

- not be provided for children under 3 years old
- consider the use of a 'safe hook' system designed to remove the hazards of traditional hooks.

Display boards, whiteboards and writeable surfaces

Display board(s) must:

- have a surface suitable for velcro material to avoid the use of pins

Display boards, whiteboards and writeable surfaces must:

- extend from floor level to 2100mm above floor level
- coordinate locations with display boards, AV locations, outlets and switches
- ensure power/data outlets, switches, controls and other fittings are not located on them.

Site

Site access

Vehicle access gates

To ensure emergency vehicle and supply truck access can be gained to the outdoor learning and play areas, gates must:

- be double gates with minimum 3500mm wide opening
- be constructed to meet AS 1926.1 in accordance with NCC G1D4
- have self-closing hinges certified to AS 1926.1
- have a latch that automatically catches when the gate closes (with child proof MagnaLatch)
- lock with drop bolt and padlock
 - drop bolt is to have a fastener installed to the shaft to prevent unwarranted removal.

Pedestrian access (paths/walkways)

Solid paths should:

- be provided to entrance doorways, around perimeter of building, between shed, verandah and selected areas (sanded area, water play area, grassed area)
- include a continuous path of travel and adequate clearance from obstructions for persons with disabilities
- not intrude on or go through any impact absorbing area
- be 1500mm wide for accessible pathways
- be 1200mm wide for secondary paths allowing movement through the play space and bike tracks
- be a minimum 900mm wide adjacent to building perimeters.

Pedestrian access (gates)

When main entrances are located near carparks or busy roads, a suitably sized fenced holding area is recommended with self-closing, self-latching mechanisms fitted to gates (see Figure 7). If this is also the main entrance to the facility, additional entry mechanisms may be necessary to ensure facilities are accessible to all.



Figure 7: Example of holding area gate set-up.

Site fixtures

Fencing

To meet *National Regulation 104 - Fencing* all fencing must be designed to prevent movement through, over or under it. To achieve this the NCC G1D4 necessitates construction meets AS 1926.1

Fencing for the outdoor learning and play area must:

- prevent head entrapments (in ECEC facilities) by having a maximum:
 - clear space between vertical pickets of 85mm
 - gap at the base of the fence and the ground surface of 85mm (on sloping ground panels must be raked to achieve the required clearance or additional groundwork is required such as retaining walls, concrete plinths – stepped panelling will not be accepted if resulting ground clearance exceeds 85mm)
- have no V or U shape parts that could create entrapments (flat top is required)
- ensure materials and spacing of vertical pickets do not provide opportunities for finger, arm or leg entrapment, this includes any feature fencing or screens (see Figure 8).



Figure 8: Example of feature fencing requiring entrapment risk compliance.

All gates must:

- have self-closing hinges certified to AS 1926.1
- have latches that automatically catch when the gate closes (childproof MagnaLatch)
- lock by drop bolt and padlock
 - drop bolt is to have a fastener installed to the shaft to prevent unwarranted removal.

Perimeter fencing (see Figure 9)

- be 1800mm high
- be a minimum of 1800mm away from any external (outside boundary) naturally occurring climbing aides (trees) or man-made structures (meter box, sheds)
- ensure a minimum of 1000mm is provided between the top rail and the next rail down

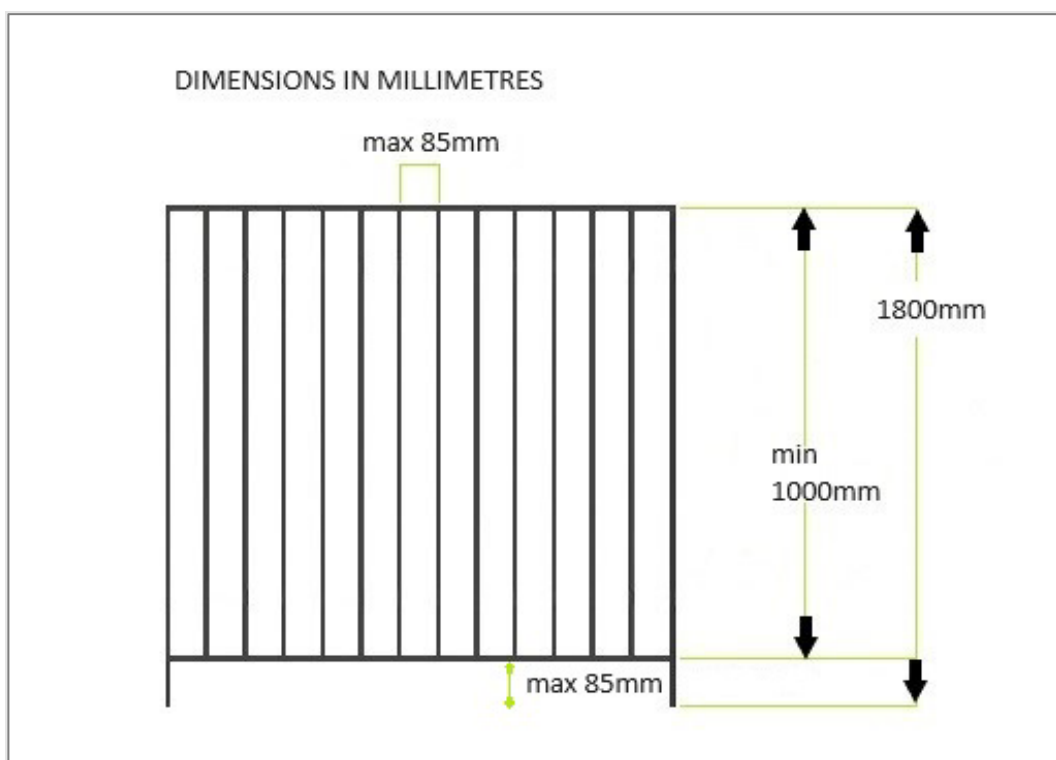


Figure 9: Illustration of fencing that complies with Regulation 104, AS 1926.1 and the department's Security Design Standards Type 2.

Internal fencing

Internal fences may also be required to divide spaces for different age groups, to protect gardens or animals or to provide adequate supervision. These fences must not connect to the perimeter fence in a way that allows that fence to be climbable, and must be:

- 1500mm high to separate an ECEC facility from the primary/secondary school grounds
- 900mm high between any under 24 months and Long Day Care/Preschool outdoor learning and play space
- 900mm high when used between an Inclusive Preschool Program and Preschool/Long Day Care outdoor learning and play space

Non-climbable zone

To prevent falls and unintended access, all items inside the fence line must be placed a minimum 1200mm¹ away from fences (see Figure 10).

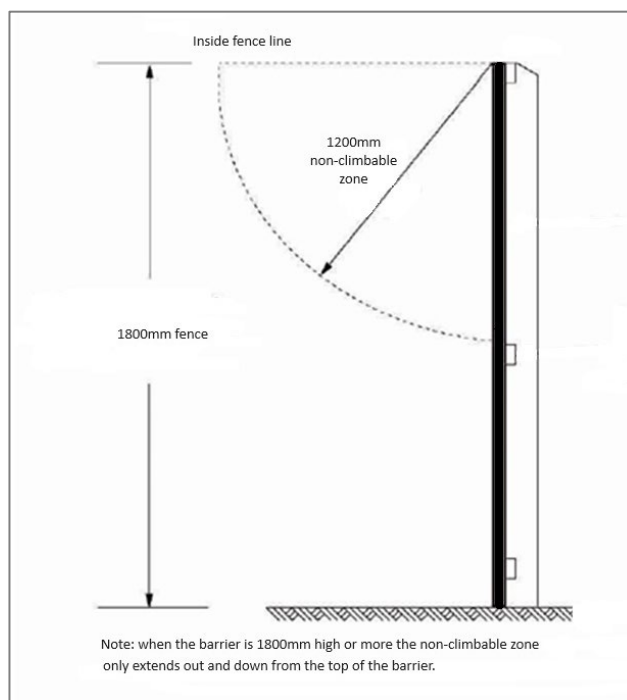


Figure 10: Illustration of non-climbable zone on Type 2 1800mm fencing.

Sheds (outdoor learning environment)

The following should be provided:

- Colorbond steel shed with concrete floor and ramped access to door thresholds
- clear or translucent roof sheeting can be used in areas that are not prone to bushfires
 - must be made of webglass fibreglass material
 - must have galvanized metal mesh installed underneath conforming to AS/NZS 4389 - Safety mesh
- double door, sliding door or roller door access to outdoor play area (tilt-up doors are not accepted)
 - closing mechanism to be installed 1500mm above floor height
 - where roller doors are provided, include a separate pedestrian access door
- fixed shelving on two sides of the shed (Metal Dexion shelving or equivalent is acceptable)
- galvanized metal mesh installed behind wall linings and under roof cladding
- shed downpipes connected to underground stormwater system.

Development approval through the State Commission Assessment Panel is required for all sheds.

¹ Education Standards Board: [creating safe facilities](#)

Stormwater and sewerage

Grates/drain covers

The diameter of drainage grate holes must be smaller than 5mm or larger than 25mm to prevent child finger entrapment. See [Entrapment](#) fact sheet by Kidsafe SA and the Education Standards Board's [creating safe facilities](#).

Outdoor Learning Environments

National Regulations [104](#), [108](#), [113](#), [114](#), and [115](#) apply to Outdoor Learning environments (OLEs) and must comply with the requirements of the Australian Standard suite of documents AS 4685 'Playground Equipment and Surfacing' and AS 4685.0 'Playground equipment and surfacing development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation'.

Must be read in conjunction with the [outdoor learning environments standard](#).

Accessibility

Wheelchair pathways and walkways must:

- comply with AS 1428.2
- be a rubber or synthetic impact absorbing materials with a maximum 50mm depth (this depth may not provide adequate impact absorption for adjacent play equipment)
- be 1500mm wide
- have adequate space for manoeuvring, a turning circle diameter of 2200mm.

Impact areas for play equipment and circulation pathways must be carefully designed to consider the different requirements for each of these uses.

Ramps provided to access play equipment and structures must:

- be at least 1:14 gradient with minimum 900mm clearance between the handrails provided on both sides of the ramp
- have dual height handrails provided with one handrail fixed at a height of not less than 865mm and a second handrail fixed at a height between 665mm and 750mm
- have any landings built to a minimum size of 900mm x 900mm with a preference for larger landings with interactive features that can be used as intermediate play platforms.

Therapy and sensory equipment

Sensory swings and ceiling suspended equipment must:

- be installed with complying [fall zones](#) under and around them
- have impact attenuating surface underneath the swing to the full extent of the impact area complying with AS 4685 Playground Equipment and Surfacing

- the impact area for swings is determined through measurement and calculation described in AS 4685. As a general guide, for a swing with a horizontal load bearing beam at a height of 3000mm, the distance from a stationary swing seat to the containment edge should be approximately 4500mm both in front of and behind the seat. Refer to AS 4685 and [Kidsafe SA](#) for specific information.
- be installed at the correct height (ground clearance as per AS 4685.2)
- use appropriately loaded heavy duty swing hooks (obtain load ratings of hooks and equipment from the manufacturer/supplier to assess whether they are fit for the intended purpose)
- ensure sufficient structural support to bear the maximum swing load (obtain advice from a structural engineer to ensure the structure can bear the maximum load rating of the swing or equipment item)
- have existing ceiling structures inspected and assessed by a certified structural engineer to ensure the structures can be supported
- have any suspension kits installed to the ceiling structure rated for a point load of 200kg
- ensure the swing/hammock or sensory equipment is rated to the approximate weight for the child(ren) who will be using it.

Fall zones and impact absorbing materials

The Australian Standards for playgrounds provide guidelines for fall heights and impact absorbing materials:

- AS 4685.1 to 6 Playground equipment and surfacing
- AS 4685.11 Playground Equipment
- AS 4422 Playground Surfacing – Specification, requirements and test method
- AS 4685.0 Playground equipment and surfacing development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation.

Refer to the Kidsafe SA information sheet – [playground surfacing and swings](#) for further guidance.

Free height of fall

The free height of fall (FHOF) is the distance measured from the greatest vertical distance between the intended body support (hands if hanging, feet if standing) and the impact area below the equipment (playground) or natural elements (tree, log or rock).

All equipment or natural elements that have a FHOF of 600mm or more above ground level, or equipment with forced movement, must have an impact area (minimum depths of impact absorbing materials are only required under impact areas and not over the whole play area).

The maximum FHOF for:

- moveable equipment in ECEC facilities is limited to 1500mm (refer to AS 4685 Playground Equipment and Surfacing for specific requirements for all applications)
- fixed equipment in ECEC facilities is 1800mm
- all other settings is 3000mm
- upper body equipment (such as monkey bars) is 2200mm, measured from the surface of hand support to surface below

- climbing trees is 2200mm, measurement is the maximum distance between the last standing branch and impact area.

Falling space

Falling space:

- is the space in or around the equipment that can be passed through by a user falling from an elevated part of the equipment
- is a 3-dimensional area, commencing at the free height of fall and extending over the same horizontal dimensions that apply to the impact area then extend to the vertical area between
- in most cases, for different items of equipment may overlap, except in equipment with forced movement.

Refer AS 4685 Playground Equipment and Surfacing.

Free space

Free space:

- is the space immediately around a user undergoing forced movement (forced movement could be defined as movement where it may be difficult or impossible to stop part way through a typical arc of motion due to gravity or momentum)
- is represented as a series of cylindrical spaces originating from perpendicular to the surface bearing the user and along the path of movement (it does not include the 3-dimensional area outside the imaginary cylinder in which the falling movement takes place)
- should not overlap adjacent free spaces or falling space unless stated otherwise as part of AS 4685.

Refer AS 4685 Playground Equipment and Surfacing.

Impact area

The impact area:

- is the area that can be hit by a user falling from a piece of playground equipment, climbing trees and other natural elements in the OLE and must have impact attenuating surfacing (minimum depths of impact absorbing materials are only required under impact areas and not over the whole play area)
- can be determined by measuring the free height of fall of a piece of equipment, fixed structure or natural element
- for any elevated parts of equipment (logs, rocks, climbable surfaces, climbing trees or other natural elements between 600mm and 1500mm above adjacent horizontal surfaces) shall be 1500mm around the elevated sections of the equipment
- for any elevated parts of equipment (logs, rocks, climbable surfaces, climbing trees or other natural elements over 1500mm) must be calculated using AS 4685.1.

Impact attenuating surfacing should be provided under all items of play equipment with forced movement regardless of elevated height.

There are specific impact areas for different types of moving playground equipment. Refer to the Kidsafe SA factsheet for specific advice on [impact areas and equipment placement](#) or contact [Kidsafe SA](#).

General impact area guidance

Swings

The impact area for a swing set in which 2 flexible seats are individually suspended from a horizontal load bearing beam are determined through measurement and calculation. In general, for a swing with a horizontal load bearing beam with a height of 3000mm, the distance from a stationary swing seat to the containment edge should be approximately 4500mm both in front of and behind the seat.

Slides

For slides attached to platforms where the run-off out section is short, a long impact area of 2000mm is required beyond the end of the slide.

Cableway or flying fox

Cableways and flying foxes require a minimum impact area of 2000mm at each end and to each side of the cableway.

Impact absorbing materials

Children under 3 must not have access to small objects of a size that presents a choking hazard including bark chip softfall. For existing ECEC facilities with bark chip soft fall in outdoor play areas accessed by children under 3 years of age consider alternative natural loose fill products when complete replacement of existing loose fill is required.

Loose fill

Natural loose fill is the preferred impact absorbing material in OLEs and must be:

- tested to and comply with AS 4422 requirements
- retained by a border or edge to reduce displacement
- sufficiently provided to impact areas underneath and surrounding playground equipment, nature play elements and climbing trees with a fall height of greater than 600mm.

Bark chips must:

- comply with AS 4422
- where used for impact absorption, be maintained to a minimum depth of 300mm in impact areas (this requirement exceeds the minimum depth of softfall identified in AS 4685.0 and allows for product loss and dispersion as children use the play space).

Sand must be:

- certified in accordance with AS 4422, or
- verified in accordance with AS 4685.1 Table 4 (which identifies grain size, particle type, minimum depths and critical fall heights).

Borders or edging must be:

- an appropriate height to ensure loose material can be maintained at a depth of 300mm and does not allow dispersion

- made of materials that are durable and do not present a trip hazard with adjacent pedestrian walkway surfaces or have any sharp protrusions
- positioned appropriately to ensure playground equipment impact area clearances are maintained.

Refer to the Kidsafe SA factsheet – [playground surfacing](#).

Rubber or synthetic impact absorbing material

Rubber or synthetic impact absorbing material must be:

- installed by an appropriately skilled person who can provide written confirmation that the material has been installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and relevant Australian Standards (AS 4422, 4685.0 to AS 4685.6 and 4685.11)
- tested in accordance with AS 4422.

Refer to the Kidsafe SA factsheet – [playground surfacing](#).

Protection against falling from heights

Protection from falling can be provided in the form of handrails, guardrails and barriers. For specific details on the requirements for protection for different categories of equipment and heights refer AS 4685.

Handrails

Handrails are intended as rails to assist the user to keep balance and may be in addition to the requirements for a barrier (see below). They may be used on stairs and ramps leading to platforms and on climbing items.

Guardrails

Guardrails are intended as a rail to prevent the user from falling from the equipment and may be in addition to the requirements for a barrier (see below).

Guardrails:

- must be installed when the platform is 1000mm to 2000mm above the playing surface
- shall completely surround a platform except for entry and exit openings necessary for other items of play equipment
- entry and exit points shall have a maximum clear opening width of 500mm (except in the case of stairs, ramps and bridges where the width of the opening shall be no greater than the width of the adjoining element)
- height is to be 600mm to 850mm measured from the surface of the platform
- must be fitted (to slides greater than 1000mm in height) above the starting section of the slide and positioned between 600mm and 900mm above the slide surface.

Barriers

To provide for children's safe movement and use of spaces consider the inclusion of barriers, to prevent falls in all indoor and outdoor areas, where the change in floor level is less than 1000mm (NCC requirement is for all heights 1000mm and above).

Barriers are intended to prevent the user from falling from the equipment and from passing beneath, and:

- can be used on platforms, stairs, ramps or rigid bridges
- may also be required to other trafficable surfaces and retaining walls where there is a change in level between adjacent ground surfaces
- must completely surround any platform (except for entrance and exit openings necessary for each play element)
- entrance and exit openings must have a clear opening width of 500mm maximum (unless a guardrail is provided across the opening)
- exit openings for stairs, ramps and bridges shall be no greater than the width of these elements
- must consider the age group of users of the OLE
- may be advisable above the minimum requirements of AS 4685 in particular situations
- must be provided on equipment that is easily accessible to all ages (and in all ECEC facilities) and should be a minimum of 700mm high (measured from the surface of the platform, stairs or ramp) on any platform and walkway 600mm and above in height from adjacent ground level (see Figure 11)
- must, where the equipment is not easily accessible, be provided on any platform or equipment 1000mm or above in height measured vertically from the surface beneath (see Figure 11)

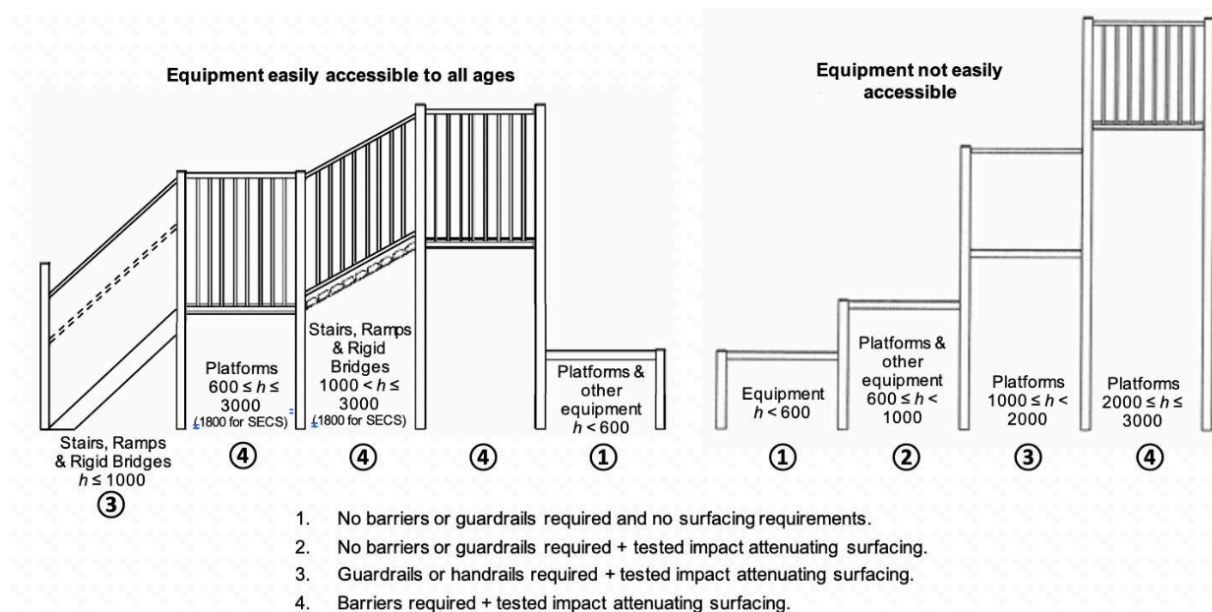


Figure 11: Examples of fall heights and barrier requirements².

- must not permit a 130mm sphere (refer small head probe in AS 4685.1) to pass through any opening
- must not facilitate climbing on any horizontal or decorative infill elements
- tops should not encourage children to stand or sit on them
- shall have gaps underneath no greater than 85mm

² [A Guide to Australian Playground Standards \(written by Andrew Reedy – Play Check\)](#) – page 17

- openings must not create any form of entrapment (including gaps, V-shaped openings or protrusions) in which a part of clothing can become trapped while or immediately before the user is undergoing a forced movement
- openings must be:
 - less than 85mm or more than 230mm in diameter to prevent head entrapment
 - less than 5mm and more than 25mm in diameter to prevent finger entrapment
- chain gaps must be smaller than 8.6mm
- S-hooks and connectors gaps must be smaller than 8.6mm or larger than 12mm.

Refer to the Kidsafe SA information sheets – [Entrapment](#) and [Barriers, guardrails and handrails: protection against falling](#) and the Education Standards Board’s [creating safe facilities](#).

Sand environments

The depths of non-compacting sand required for impact absorption is dependent on the type of sand. Obtain details of impact absorption from the supplier.

The recommended depths of sand for play areas designed for use by children:

- < 2 years of age is - minimum depth: 400mm, centre depth: 500mm
- > 2 years of age - minimum depth: 400mm, centre depth: 800mm.

Sand areas must not be bordered by boulders in areas for children < 2 years of age.

Refer to the Kidsafe SA information sheet – [Sand pits](#).

Drainage

To allow for adequate drainage of a sand area it is recommended:

- the base is loose paving stones on a gravel bed, banked to the centre
- a drainage membrane is installed separating the sand from the gravel base.

Rocks and boulders

Rocks and boulders:

- must be larger than 35mm diameter so as not to present a choking hazard
- should measure less than 500mm in height from the playing surface level for ease of access and to avoid tested surfacing requirements
- if their size requires, are surrounded by the correct impact zone and impact absorbing material
- are positioned to ensure there are no potential limb entrapment hazards or gaps (including finger entrapment gaps between 5-25mm)
- must be stabilised (with the use of cement/mortar) so no movement occurs when children and adults travel over them
- must be provided with smooth well-rounded surfaces ensuring any sharp corners/edges are removed

- must have adequate drainage to prevent pooling of water to discourage the harbouring of vermin and snakes between them.

Interactive water features (IWFs)

The following applies to IWFs:

- are not acceptable in Port Pirie where cross contamination of water sources can occur from lead dust contamination in the area
- water courses are preferred and must be designed so that the depth of the water, at any point, is less than 300mm
- additional considerations should be given to ECEC facilities and an appropriate depth (less than 300mm) should be identified following a risk assessment
- where possible, are to be directed into sand areas and garden beds that have suitable drainage systems
- water supply must be from a potable water source to protect student health and wellbeing (however IWFs must not be used for drinking water)
- a 'Do Not Drink' warning sign must be installed at every outlet of an IWF in compliance with AS/NZS 3500.1 Clause 9.7.2
- installation of plumbing must comply with the NCC Volume 3 and AS/NZS 3500.1:2018 Plumbing and drainage Part 1: Water services for cold water installations.
- are 'end of line' equipment items and must have a testable backflow prevention device to protect the drinking water system from contamination
- must ensure compliance with the Office of the Technical Regulator (OTR) who regulate the installation of pipework connected to the IWF including the installation of backflow prevention devices (detailed in the [Interactive Water Features Plumbing Advisory Note](#)) including:
 - all plumbing pipework and equipment supplying water to IWFs must be WaterMarked
 - where an IWF is connected from a dedicated water storage tank, or a rainwater tank, the tank must be installed above ground and comply with AS/NZS 3500.1 Section 8.
 - a reduced pressure zone (RPZ) backflow prevention device must be installed on the dedicated water supply branch to the IWF to protect the on-site plumbing drinking water system from contamination
 - there must be no branches connected to the pipework between the testable backflow prevention device and the IWF
 - plumbing installations including all pipework and RPZ backflow prevention device must be carried out by a licensed plumber.

Refer to the following resources for additional information:

- [Office of the Technical Regulator – Interactive water features – Plumbing Advisory Note](#)
- [SA Health – Managing health risks associated with interactive water features – fact sheet](#)
- [Kidsafe SA factsheet – Water safety in education and care settings.](#)

Slopes and mounds

Slopes and mounds:

- should have maximum gradient of 1:3 to allow children access without slipping (for example every 1000mm in height will need to be 3000mm to 4000mm in width)
- should have an extra 1000mm flat area provided at the top of the mound to act as a landing or low level platform
- where possible should incorporate accessibility provisions such as wheelchair access to ensure all children experience various levels of elevation
- may have a slide installed (provide 1000mm free space from the centre of the slide on each side and a 2000mm radius impact absorbing surface at the end of the slide) with handgrips recommended at slide entrance to assist children upon entering
- with incorporated landings and other features with FHO of 600mm or more above ground level must have an impact area and may require a barrier to prevent falls.

Timber

The recommended Hazard Class for different installations are as follows:

- Hazard Class 3 for exterior above ground timbers such as decking
- Hazard Class 4 for exterior in-ground timbers such as posts, stumps and landscaping features
- Hazard Class 5 for exterior in-ground timbers in contact with fresh water such as wetlands and water course installations.

Timber used externally must meet the Hazard Class ratings above and the following requirements:

- be durable, robust and require limited on-going maintenance
- any timber which is to have a painted finish shall be primed all around before fixing
- any structural timber to conform to AS1684 Residential Timber Framed Construction
- rainforest timbers are not permitted
- no timbers treated with arsenic containing preservatives are permitted.

Any timber or reconstituted timber product used as floor decking to an area that is attached to a building must be tested and achieve either a Group 1 rating in accordance with AS/NZS 3837, or be tested and certified to withstand exposure up to a minimum BAL-29 in accordance with AS 3959 Construction of Buildings in bushfire-prone areas. For sites located in bushfire zones requiring construction above BAL-29 comply with the requirements of the relevant bushfire attack level for that area.

Copper chrome arsenate (CCA) treated timber must not be used in OLEs. Alternative choices for CCA preservative treated timber (permapine) includes:

- Light organic solvent protection (LOSP) suitable for H1 (inside, above ground, dry), H2 (inside, above ground) and H3 (outside, above ground)
- Tanalised ecowood or NatureWood suitable for H3 (outside, above ground), H4 (outside, in ground) and H5 (outside, in ground or fresh water)

- Treated timber must comply with Australian Standard AS/NZS 1604 series and should bear a treatment brand (a label or ink stamp) generally on the end-grain.

Fire pits

Fire pits must be approved by Local Council in accordance with Environmental Protection Authority requirements and must:

- be located a minimum of 3000mm away from any structure (building/verandahs/shade) and vegetation (including overhang) and not positioned directly on grass
- be a minimum 150mm in depth and 600mm in diameter
- have a tap and hose adjacent to the fire pit
- have a 2000mm radius free from flammable materials cleared and maintained around the fire pit.

Playground equipment

Australian Standards

The Australian Standards for playgrounds provide minimum benchmark guidelines for the design, installation, maintenance and operation of playgrounds:

- AS 4685.1 to 6 Playground equipment and surfacing
 - Part 1: General safety requirements and test methods
 - Part 2: Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for swings
 - Part 3: Additional specific safety requirements and tests methods for slides
 - Part 4: Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for cableways
 - Part 5: Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for carousels
 - Part 6: Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for rocking equipment
- AS 4685.11 Playground Equipment
 - Part 11: Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for spatial networks
- AS 4422 Playground Surfacing – Specification, requirements and test method
- AS 4685.0 Playground equipment and surfacing
 - Part 0: Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation.

New playground equipment, fixed play structures and nature play spaces

Playground equipment, fixed play structures and nature play spaces must:

- comply with the relevant Australian Standards above
- be installed strictly in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- be sourced and selected in compliance with the department's [Procurement governance policy](#) and considering:
 - quality control over installation

- after sales service
- maintenance and availability of replacement parts and components that local suppliers or companies with SA based representatives can offer
- ensure swings and fixed play structures are suitable for the ages of children
- ensure pigtail hooks for swings allow back and forward motion only (360 degree rotational hooks are not accepted) S hooks are not to be used for basket swings.
- ensure nylon sleeves are installed to hooks to prevent metal on metal wear between hooks and play equipment frames.

Recycled and donated items

Recycled and donated items intended for installation as fixed play structures must be inspected by a trained person for suitability and condition including:

- sharp edges, entrapment risks, rough surfaces, protrusions, moss, mould, rust, insect or wildlife infestation, robustness, structural integrity and general deterioration.

Equipment and structures are to be installed by a play equipment installer approved by the manufacturer (for proprietary play equipment items) or an appropriately skilled tradesperson with a builder's licence (for custom-built structures). Written confirmation is to be provided from the installer that new playground equipment has been installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Further operational information is available in the [Outdoor learning environments - installation, maintenance and inspections procedure](#) (under development).

Moveable play equipment

Moveable play equipment includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- trestle frames
- balance beams
- see-saws or rockers
- plastic interconnected structures
- toddler, jogger, rebound trampolines with handles.

Moveable play equipment must:

- comply with AS 4685.1 to 6:2021 Playground equipment and surfacing
- have a maximum FHO of 1500mm
- be placed on a level surface for stability with due consideration for the type of surface and activity
- have a complying impact area and certified playground surfacing for all items that measure 600mm or more above ground level (where equipment is intentionally connected then the impact area is to reflect the perimeter of the setup, refer Kidsafe playground safety information sheet [moveable equipment](#))
- be set up on a soft surface such as well-maintained grass for equipment items less than 600mm above ground level
- have an impact area of 1500mm between each piece of equipment that is not linked

- have a minimum circulation zone of 1000mm surrounding low equipment items that are designed for climbing, rocking, jumping and balancing
- be placed to ensure pieces of equipment designed to be linked do not inadvertently create entrapment or crush points.

Inground trampolines

Inground trampolines must:

- be constructed of twice galvanised frame and all stainless-steel hardware
- have safety pads to completely cover springs and frame and extend past the outside edge of the frame by a minimum of 75mm with heavy duty reinforced tie straps to secure the pads in place
- have bounce mats that are UV resistant heavy duty breathable weave mesh
- provide a minimum of 1000mm of free space from the edge of the bouncing surface (fall zones of other equipment must not overlap this space)
- provide a 1500mm clearance zone from the edge of the bouncing surface that has impact attenuation provided within this zone
- provide under surfacing in accordance with AS 4422
- have a layer of suitable drainage material underneath the trampoline and agricultural drainage may also be required, depending on the soil type at the proposed site
- comply with the relevant standards:
 - AS 4422
 - AS 4685.1 to 6
 - AS 4685.11
 - AS 4685.0

Revision record

Version: v1.0 (DE20/05086)

Edits: New document to replace the reviewed Early Childhood Facilities (birth to age 8) Design Standards and Guidelines.

Approved by: Executive Director, Infrastructure

Published: September 2024

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