EVERYONE CAN PLAY

A GUIDELINE TO CREATE
INCLUSIVE PLAYSPACES

NSW GOVERNMENT



Acknowledgement of Country
The Department of Planning and Environment acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land and pays respect to the Elders past, present and future. We honour Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to place and their rich contribution to our society.

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The community playspace has always been loved in Australian culture. Many of us look back on our childhood with fond memories of playing on slides and swings with friends and family. It is a place where communities come together, interact, and enjoy the outdoors.

It is only natural when kids grow up, they want future generations to share these experiences. Our Everyone Can Play program ensures that playspaces are better – and more inclusive – than ever before.

Everyone Can Play is a best practice toolkit for councils, community leaders, landscape architects – even passionate local residents – to use when creating world-class playspaces designed to include everyone in the community.

On behalf of the New South Wales Government, I encourage you to adopt this guideline and ensure meaningful change can be made for future generations. Together we can create playspaces that leave lasting memories for future generations.

– Anthony Roberts MP
Minister for Planning and Housing

Can I get there?
Can I play?
Can I stay?

These three questions should be central when creating and modernising playspaces across New South Wales.

Whether you are a local council, a playspace designer or a passionate community member, Everyone Can Play is your toolkit for checking your playspaces are designed and delivered according to best practice and will be enjoyed by everyone in the community.

At the heart of Everyone Can Play is a declaration that play really is for everyone, regardless of age, ability or cultural background. As you will read, even the smallest changes can do wonders for ensuring an inclusive playspace.

I would like to thank everyone involved in creating these guidelines. Through sharing your stories, dedication and passion, you have been part of a landmark project that will leave a legacy of wonderful playspaces across NSW.

See you in the playspace!

– Fiona Morrison
Commissioner, Open Space and Parklands
NSW Department of Planning and Environment

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1. Background

Inclusive playspaces are for everyone.

What is an inclusive playspace? 10
Seeing new perspectives 11
The importance of inclusive play 12
Levelling the playing field 13
About Everyone Can Play 14
Who is Everyone Can Play for? 15
How to use Everyone Can Play 16
How was Everyone Can Play developed? 17

2. The Inclusive Play Process

The process of planning, designing and delivering inclusive playspaces.

The six-step inclusive play process 20
Fun for all ages 21
Strategic planning 22
Scope 24
Muston Park Playspace 25
Design 26
The game plan 27
Universal design 28
The design principles 29
Best practice case studies 36
Deliver 44
Evaluate 45
Reality check 46
Champion 47
We are the champions 48
Free to be free 49

3. Tools

The tools to translate ideas into action.

Playspace Evaluation Checklist 52
Design Principles Checklist 62

A commitment for inclusive playspaces in NSW

Our society is incredibly diverse, comprising people of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds.

Our communities have playspaces for adventure, discovery, relationship building and creating joy and memories. But there is more we can do to ensure our playspaces are designed to bring people together.

Play is for everyone. Our playspaces should be too.

Playspaces exist at the heart of our neighbourhoods and should cater for everyone – young and old, families and carers, and people of all abilities.

Playspaces should be welcoming and comfortable, easy to navigate and interesting. They should offer a range of physical challenges, a variety of landscape settings and provide opportunities to connect with others.

Let's ensure Everyone Can Play in NSW.

Whether you are a member of council, a community leader, a landscape architect or a passionate citizen, you can inspire change.

This document outlines the key principles of inclusive playspaces and provides tools to convert your ideas into improvements.

Everyone Can Play is not a new standard but a commitment to the future of play in NSW. This is a set of best practice recommendations designed to encourage more people to create more inclusive playspaces.

A new way of thinking

The creation of inclusive playspaces requires a new way of thinking about the way playspaces are planned, designed and managed. The three principles of Everyone Can Play will promote thinking for more inclusive playspaces across NSW.

For a playspace to be truly inclusive, it is important to consider the wider context. Can I get there? Can I play? Can I stay?



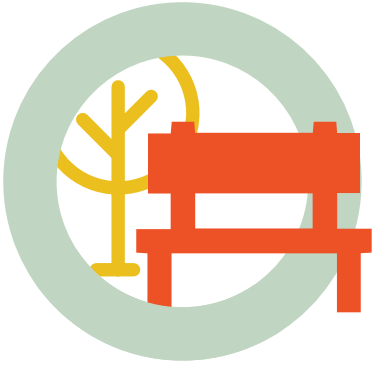
Can I get there?

Consider location, layout, signage, wayfinding and accessibility to ensure everyone can find their way to, in and around the playspace.



Can I play?

The play experience, including the equipment and surfacing, should allow everyone to experience a variety of challenging and engaging play opportunities in a way that suits them.



Can I stay?

Consider safety, facilities, landscape and the wider environment to ensure everyone can stay at the playspace for as long as they would like.



1. BACKGROUND

INCLUSIVE PLAYSPACES ARE FOR EVERYONE

Understand what makes a playspace inclusive, why inclusive play matters and what Everyone Can Play hopes to achieve.



What is an inclusive playspace?

An inclusive playspace invites people of all ages, abilities and cultures to come together.

Inclusive playspaces are easy to access, easy to move around, provide a range of play options and challenges, and have appropriate facilities in a comfortable environment. Inclusive playspaces encourage everyone to stay as long as they choose.

A playspace is more than just equipment. It is the entire setting used and enjoyed as part of the play experience.

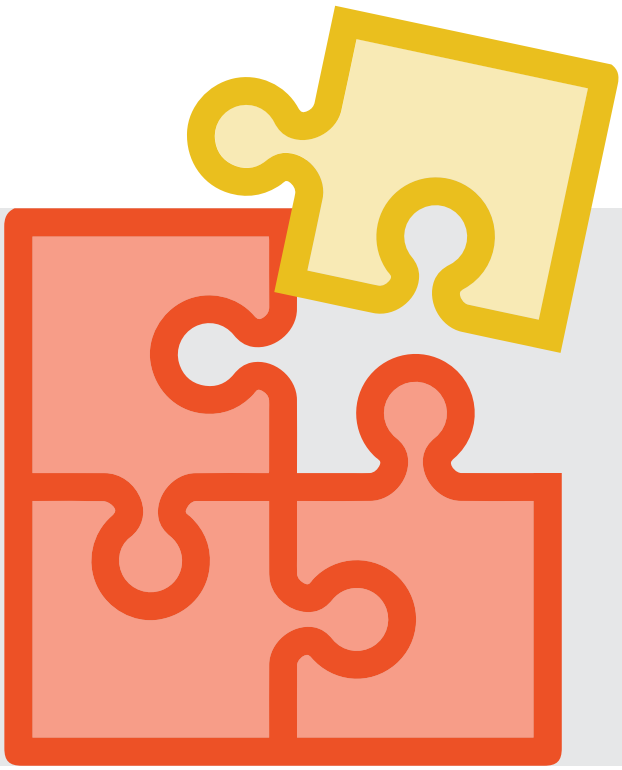
An inclusive playspace utilises principles of inclusive design and accessibility, creating spaces people of all ages and abilities can enjoy.

Accessibility vs. Inclusivity

Accessibility is commonly associated with mobility standards and safety compliance. Accessibility refers to the physical ability of people to access a place or thing. Accessible design mainly addresses the movement needs of people with disabilities. When applied to playspaces, conforming to accessibility standards in key aspects including the equipment, surfacing and supporting facilities, creates an all abilities playspace.

Inclusive playspaces consider as many needs as possible. They provide a welcoming place where people feel comfortable yet challenged, and remove obstacles and barriers that prevent people of all ages, cultural backgrounds and abilities (both physical and mental) from playing.

Inclusive playspaces provide access to a variety of play experiences people enjoy together. The Everyone Can Play guideline encourages users to think beyond accessibility needs, so everyone can experience the joys of play.



Accessibility is one piece of the puzzle.

Seeing new perspectives

A CONVERSATION WITH MEGAN AND EMILY

All Megan, who is legally blind, wanted to do with her daughter Emily was be able to take her to a playspace. Megan wanted a place for the two of them to belong. She wanted to be equal in a community space.

What does taking Emily to a playspace mean to you?

"Going to a playspace is extremely meaningful, as it allows me to feel like I'm being a great parent. I'm not the parent with a disability who can't read her daughter print books. I'm the parent who can take her to the park and race her down the slippery dip. It's a place where I feel I can go and be myself, and my daughter can be herself. We can be comfortable, and people can be comfortable with us.

Our children learn boundaries in playspaces. They are where adults teach our children about sharing, collaboration, cooperation and community. If a park does one thing, it breaks down barriers. It breaks down cultural barriers, diversity barriers, and disability barriers. Inclusion matters on all levels, and it's about everybody."

– Megan and Emily
Mother and daughter



The importance of inclusive play

Play is for everyone. It is essential to children's development, shaping the way they interact with the world around them. It enables them to learn new skills, make friends and build self-confidence. Play is also important to the health and wellbeing of people of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds.

Play is important for all children. Through play, children develop the skills they need for life. It teaches children to socialise and interact with others. It allows them to develop creativity and imagination and helps with emotional and cognitive development. Play gives children opportunities to take risks and challenges. Besides the obvious benefits of movement, exercise and fitness, physical play also provides the building blocks for a child's complete development, from balance, vision and hearing, to tactile learning and sensory integration.

Play is not just focused on young children. Young people and the young at heart also benefit from playspaces. So inclusive design needs to consider more than the needs of young children. Everyone Can Play ensures people of all ages have places to be active and have fun.

Providing inclusive playspaces is crucial given 1.3 million people in NSW live with a disability, our ageing population is increasingly involved in the everyday care of grandchildren, and our multicultural society has almost 100,000 overseas immigrants arrive in NSW annually.

Playspaces are key community assets, designed to bring everyone together in a fun, welcoming and comfortable environment.

Everyone Can Play will ensure NSW playspaces invite all people to participate in a variety of play experiences, in ways that challenge, excite and promote an active and healthy lifestyle.

Play is a vital socialisation opportunity for children and their parents or carers. Communities come together, connect and build relationships in playspaces. It is very important to consider this in planning and designing of playspaces.

Creating playspaces that allow people of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds to play together is essential for community harmony, building a society of tolerance and understanding is a value of inclusive playspaces in our community.



Levelling the playing field

A CONVERSATION WITH LEILA AND MIA

When Mia's mum, Leila, wants to take her daughters, Mia (four) and Andie (two) to a playspace, she has to do her research. She needs to check access to the playspace, what the play surfaces are (bark chips are the hardest for Mia to navigate with her prosthetic leg) and whether there is equipment both her girls can enjoy.

A trip to a playspace can cause anxiety for many parents and carers. Everyday things can present huge obstacles to people like Leila and Mia.

"So many playspaces have no options that suit everyone. It's disappointing to me because Mia is more able than some. If I struggle, I can't imagine how it must feel for people who have children or family members with higher needs. It would make such a big difference if designers were to think about accessibility to the playspace and the choices of equipment for everyone in the community."

What does the playspace mean to Mia?

It means Mia can be a kid! She gains more confidence, improves her motor skills and gets to make new friends! Every time we get to the playspace her face lights up and she has the biggest smile. With the right design, it's a place she can be on the same level as all of the other kids."

– Leila and Mia
Mother and daughter

About Everyone Can Play

THE PRINCIPLES

The creation of inclusive playspaces requires a new way of thinking about the way playspaces are planned, designed and managed. The three principles of Everyone Can Play encourage thinking about creating more inclusive playspaces across NSW.

Can I get there?
Consider location, layout, signage, wayfinding and accessibility to ensure everyone can find their way to, in and around the playspace.

Can I play?
The play experience, including the equipment and surfacing, should allow everyone to experience a variety of challenging and engaging play opportunities in a way that suits them.

Can I stay?
Consider safety, facilities, landscape and the wider environment to ensure everyone can stay at the playspace for as long as they would like.

THE INCLUSIVE PLAY PROCESS

The six-step inclusive play process will help playspace designers, planners and managers integrate the principles of Everyone Can Play into the design and management of inclusive playspaces.

Strategic Planning
Plan for inclusive play across your community.

Scope
Review existing playspaces, determine improvements and create a scope for a new playspace.

Design
Use inclusive design principles to inform playspace design.

Deliver
Build inclusive play opportunities.

Evaluate
Conduct continuous reviews and measurement of success.

Champion
Become an inclusive playspace champion.

Inclusion is a sliding scale. Not all playspaces can cater to everyone. Everyone Can Play is a guideline intended to help designers and those planning playspaces to do the best with what they have, within the budget and site constraints they are faced with.

Who is Everyone Can Play for?

Children, adults and young people
Playspaces are utilised by a range of people, including children, adults, young people, families and carers. Everyone Can Play will ensure there are inclusive play opportunities available for a broader range of users.

Communities
Playspaces exist in diverse communities, with people of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds. Improving the network of inclusive playspaces will make our communities more resilient and connected.

Playspace professionals
Councils, developers, designers, planners and manufacturers collaborate to build playspaces. Everyone Can Play provides the considerations and tools to guide the planning, design and delivery process. The majority of playspaces are inspected and maintained by councils. Everyone Can Play sets best practice recommendations for planning, evaluation and ongoing monitoring.

We encourage every agency – private and public – to include the principles of this guideline in the design of their playspaces.



How to use Everyone Can Play

Everyone Can Play is a key resource for the planning, design and evaluation stages of new and existing playspaces in NSW. It aims to ensure everyone can play in NSW. It sets expectations and priorities for improved inclusive play opportunities in regional and metropolitan areas.

Current playspace design theory and an acknowledgment of how universal design creates comfortable and inclusive places guided Everyone Can Play's development.

This development included the establishment of the Everyone Can Play principles and the inclusive play process.

Everyone Can Play is not a new standard and not intended to be prescriptive. Not all recommendations and considerations within Everyone Can Play will be relevant for all playspaces. Our communities are diverse and our playspaces should be too. Everyone Can Play provides guidance for the planning, design and delivery of inclusive playspaces.

Importantly, Everyone Can Play is about doing the best you can with the resources you have.

Councils
can use Everyone Can Play to:

- Inform design briefs.
- Address existing playspaces.
- Determine what improvements can be made to increase inclusivity.
- Influence budget setting for playspaces.
- Educate staff on the importance of inclusion in our open spaces.
- Form part of council's Play Delivery Program.

Communities
can use Everyone Can Play to:

- Inform and educate the community.
- Advocate for more inclusive playspaces.
- Understand what inclusive play is and its importance in the community.

Playspace designers
can use Everyone Can Play to:

- Act as a checklist and reminder of the principles and goals of inclusive design.
- Be an industry leader in the design of inclusive playspaces.
- Lead and influence clients to create more inclusive playspaces.

Industry
can use Everyone Can Play to:

- Educate and inform others on the value of inclusion.
- Act as a vision and commitment to all decision-making.

How was Everyone Can Play developed?

Everyone Can Play's goals and principles were defined by a review of current theory and research into playspace design, accessibility standards and universal design. A common set of principles and criteria were developed, guiding improved inclusive play opportunities in both regional and metropolitan areas.

Everyone Can Play was developed during a highly consultative process, to ensure its principles and aims could easily be applied to industry and councils for maximum influence and benefit. The Office of Open Space and Parklands undertook extensive stakeholder engagement in the preparation of the draft guideline. Advocacy and advisory groups provided guidance and critical review of the draft guideline.

The advocacy group, consisting of nine representatives from the play industry, worked closely to guide the foundation of the guideline. It established the foundation of design principles adapted to the creation of playspaces.

An advisory group of 55 council, community and industry representatives was established to test and challenge the evolving guidelines, ensuring the guideline evolved into a workable and usable document.

These groups met on several occasions between December 2017 and June 2018 to review Everyone Can Play, incorporating their feedback and recommendations were incorporated. At key points in its development, Everyone Can Play underwent rigorous testing against sample playspaces. This included desktop reviews of playspaces currently in the design phase, as well as on-site assessments of existing playspaces.

The draft guideline was placed on public exhibition for a period of six weeks, giving the community, industry and councils the opportunity to submit feedback and comments.

The Office of Open Space and Parklands also held a series of workshops in eleven locations across NSW, where councils and industry representatives were invited to participate and provide feedback.

Feedback received during the public exhibition of the draft Guideline was reviewed and informed the development of the final Everyone Can Play Guideline.





2. The Inclusive Play Process

THE PROCESS OF PLANNING, DESIGNING AND DELIVERING INCLUSIVE PLAYSPACES

Learn more about strategic planning, preparation, delivery and evaluation, the Everyone Can Play design principles, and why standing up for inclusive play is important.



The six-step inclusive play process

Our playspaces are diverse. The steps we take towards improving them will be diverse as well.

Everyone Can Play has been structured to provide concise principles that focus on creating playspaces where people of all backgrounds, abilities and ages can access and enjoy. To achieve these principles across NSW, all stages of the play process require thinking about inclusion needs.

The six-step play process is designed to assist playspace designers, planners and managers make decisions and recommendations where inclusion is the foundation principle.

Everyone has a role in the play process – from designers understanding community needs, to communities acknowledging site limitations, to council maintenance crews providing ongoing playspace monitors. This six-step process helps integrate the principles of Everyone Can Play into the day to day planning design and management of inclusive playspaces.

The inclusive play process is flexible and can be adjusted for each project, as some stages may not be needed for all playspaces. This process should be used to establish different roles, and includes recommendations to help deliver inclusive playspaces in your community.





Fun for all ages

A CONVERSATION WITH COLIN AND ALFIE

"I love taking my three grandchildren, Alfie, Ollie, and Charlie, to the park. We love going to playspaces that provide for everyone."

"I've just turned 71 so I want to relax but two-year-old Alfie wants to run around, enjoy himself and make new friends. These playspaces have seats and shade but what we enjoy most is when I can join in and play alongside him. We love to play on the big basket swing together and the higher we swing the bigger he smiles.

If I could influence the design of playspaces, I would ask the designers to imagine how the playspace will be used all year round. I would ask them to design the park to be exciting and enjoyable for the children but also to make it comfortable for the adults who accompany them. I would ask them to make sure it's easy for us to get to with prams or walkers, that there's shade, water and bathrooms close by and places for all of us, even the big children, to play.

I have really enjoyed the opportunities I've had to influence the design of a playspace in my community. The opportunity to share my experiences and preferences with the people who are creating places for me and my grandchildren has been exciting, especially when I get to see my requests come to life in the new space."

– Colin and Alfie
Granddad and grandson

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Successful delivery of inclusive playspaces requires enthusiasm and commitment, but it also requires careful thought about location, resources, policies and community needs and perceptions.

Making appropriate plans to deliver inclusive playspaces will provide a strong base for engagement and successful delivery. Each organisation involved in the development of new or renewed playspaces should embed the principles of Everyone Can Play into strategic and project decision-making about play in their community.

Strategic planning considerations

Creating a network of inclusive playspaces across NSW requires strategic leadership from all councils. Embedding Everyone Can Play into the strategic direction of the planning, design and management of open space will build a wider statewide network.

Strategic planning steps

STEP 1

Determine where Everyone Can Play sits in relation to the organisation's strategic and statutory planning documents.

STEP 2

Undertake a review of key planning documents relevant to playspaces and align documents with the aims and principles of Everyone Can Play.

This may include a review of: current master plans; plans for management; development control plans; community strategic plans; open space strategies; public domain technical manuals; and voluntary planning agreements between developers and councils.

If required, update planning documents to incorporate key inclusive playspace considerations or reference Everyone Can Play to inform future thinking. Consider whether an inclusive playspace implementation plan is required to ensure success.

STEP 3

Undertake an analysis of the distribution of existing playspaces and identify opportunities to maximise inclusion in existing playspaces.

Distribution mapping will indicate the current distribution of inclusive play opportunities. This will help identify gaps that can be addressed to provide equitable access to inclusive playspaces across NSW.

STEP 4
Identify the needs of the local community and align strategies and distribution of playspaces to meet these needs and address deficiencies.

STEP 5
Develop appropriate annual budgets for the planning, design, delivery and maintenance of inclusive playspaces.

There are costs required to create change but simple solutions can have a big impact. Consider appropriate budgets for the planning, design, delivery and ongoing maintenance of new and renewed playspaces to ensure they provide long-term benefit to the community.

STEP 6
Embed the overall principles of Everyone Can Play into all statutory and strategic documents to maximise uptake of inclusion in the planning, design and management of playspaces across the local community.

STEP 7
Instil a culture of collaboration between planners, designers, builders and managers to achieve best practice inclusive decision-making.

Project planning considerations

With Everyone Can Play embedded into the strategic framework for the planning of playspaces, the next step is focusing on the Everyone Can Play principles in the planning of individual projects.

When planning a new playspace or an upgrade to an existing one, think of the three Everyone Can Play principles as the overall outcome. That is: I can get there. I can play. I can stay.

To achieve these principles and create a more inclusive playspace, consult the following steps.



Project planning steps

1. Consult with the local community to understand their priorities, cultural considerations and expectations.

2. Understand who you are providing inclusive playspaces for and their unique requirements.

3. Understand the role and function of the playspace within the strategic playspace network. This will help clarify size, function and ancillary facilities needed.

4. Understand the budget for the project and use the outcomes of previous investigation to develop priorities for design.

5. Ensure appropriate resources are available to plan, design, evaluate, deliver and monitor inclusive playspaces.

6. Use the three Everyone Can Play principles (Can I get there? Can I play? Can I stay?) to inform a brief or return brief and define the objectives and expectations for the playspace.

7. Collaborate with suitably qualified professionals to design and deliver improvements.

SCOPE

Applying The *Can I get there? Can I play? Can I stay?* Principles to existing playspaces across NSW.

There are more than 6,000 existing playspaces across NSW. Retrospective application of the Everyone Can Play principles to these playspaces will significantly increase opportunities to improve inclusion.
All councils should consider what modifications or upgrades can be made to existing playspaces. Even the smallest changes to an existing playspace can have a big impact. Changes may take the form of additional shade or seating, a new access path or soft fall surface, or additional play equipment that will offer new play challenges.

The first step is understanding how to modify existing playspaces is to complete an assessment against the Everyone Can Play principles. The completed assessment will formulate a scope for upgrades and modifications.

Conducting a rigorous on-site evaluation of all playspaces in a community will establish inclusive play opportunities.

The Everyone Can Play Evaluation Checklist

The Everyone Can Play Evaluation Checklist provides a set of specific criteria to guide you through an on-site assessment. It is essential for determining improvements to existing playspaces. The results from this comprehensive set of questions will determine improvements needed to deliver inclusive playspaces in your local community.

From this process, key considerations for inclusive playspace delivery can be identified, and opportunities for improvement can be developed. Actions developed from the evaluation set the basis for an implementation strategy, which includes costing, budgeting and programming requirements.

The Everyone Can Play Evaluation Checklist is a best practice measure for existing playspaces to identify ways to improve inclusive play across NSW.

The Everyone Can Play **Evaluation Checklist** can be found in Tools section.

Muston Park Playspace, Chatswood

BEST PRACTICE
PLAYSPACE UPGRADE



Using the Playspace Evaluation Checklist:

Can I get there?

- ☑ The layout of the playspace can be easily understood
- ☑ Points of entry and exit are easy to locate

Can I play?

- ☑ Equipment is well connected
- ☑ Equipment theming and colour palette respond to the local context

Can I stay?

- ☑ Adequate amount of shade to cover play activities
- ☑ Range of seating options

DESIGN

Playspaces can be designed and built in different sizes, each with unique requirements. Whether regional or metropolitan, with a small or large budget, playspace designers should consider the site's characteristics, community considerations and design aspirations.

Everyone Can Play is not a new standard and is not intended to be prescriptive. Not every recommendation and consideration within this guideline will be relevant for all playspaces.

Our communities are diverse and our playspaces should be too. Everyone Can Play provides guidance for the planning, design and delivery of inclusive playspaces. Importantly, Everyone Can Play is about doing the best you can with the resources you have.



Design steps

1. Understand where the playspace sits within the local playspace network.
2. When designing a new playspace, determine a suitable location within the park using the design principles as a guide.
3. Consider the site's context and plan to celebrate the space's unique qualities.
4. Understand who you are designing for by consulting with the local community to recognise their priorities and expectations.
5. Use Everyone Can Play to inform your design brief.
6. Use the six design principles when shaping your concept and detailed design phases (or renewal works) to ensure you are enhancing inclusive play opportunities.
7. Critically review your playspace design against Everyone Can Play.

Refer to the **Design Principles Checklist** in the Tools section to help you design your next playspace project.



The game plan

A CONVERSATION WITH LUCILLA

"Play has been part of my life since my landscape architecture degree. Play is such an important part of growing up and developing our skills, no matter what age or ability."

"It's not just something that's important in my work, but in my personal life too. I have five children, two of them are on the spectrum. So it's really important I can take them places they feel part of and can socialise. It's something I take seriously in the playspaces I work on.

Everyone Can Play will help people like me plan more inclusive playspaces. We can use Everyone Can Play to design something that will actually bring everybody together, and will have ongoing impacts for everyone. It's an awesome guide for every council, but particularly us in the regional areas that don't always have a lot of support and information about inclusive play.

Everyone Can Play complements the various Australian standards that ensure our playspaces are safe. Through application of Everyone Can Play and the Australian Standards, we can ensure our playspaces are safe and inclusive."

– Lucilla
Landscape Architect and Group Manager, Community Place
Port Macquarie Hastings Council

Universal design

Universal design is the process of designing for everyone. It is the "design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation and specialised design."

- Ron Mace, 1997

Everyone Can Play is strongly influenced by universal design thinking. Everyone Can Play takes the emphasis for design of playspaces beyond accessibility and ability, to ensure equal emphasis is placed on maximising play opportunities and social integration for people of all ages and cultures.

The principles of inclusive playspaces provided in Everyone Can Play are an adaptation of the Seven Principles of Universal Design (developed by Ron Mace et al. 1997) and the Eight Goals of Universal Design (Steinfeld and Maisel, 2012). These principles and goals have been applied in a practical way to playspaces in NSW.

Seven Principles of Universal Design

1. Equitable use
2. Flexibility in use
3. Simple and intuitive to use
4. Perceptible information
5. Tolerance for error
6. Low physical effort
7. Size and space for approach and use

Playspace design theory

Due to ever changing technology, an increasing awareness of the differing needs of our community, and a greater understanding of child psychology and physical development, a review of best practice theory and design recommendations was required to give Everyone Can Play a well-informed foundation.

We reviewed local and international industry-leading publications to gain an understanding of current innovative design for all abilities. They were also reviewed for intergenerational play, sustainable playspace initiatives and the influences of cultural perceptions on play.

Consultation for Everyone Can Play was a critical source of knowledge, bringing together industry leaders from design, delivery, playspace management organisations and community advocates. We consulted people whose daily lives would be improved by the successful delivery of more inclusive playspaces.

The understanding and insight gained from this consultation ensured Everyone Can Play developed a holistic approach to inclusive play opportunities, for participants and carers.

Eight Goals of Universal Design

1. Body fit
2. Comfort
3. Awareness
4. Understanding
5. Wellness
6. Social integration
7. Personalisation
8. Cultural appropriateness

The design principles

These six guiding design principles address the intent of inclusive playspace design in greater detail. The principles are an important reference for inclusive playspace design. Established through a review of current theory and research into playspace design, accessibility standards and universal design.

The design principles extend the focus beyond accessibility to include opportunities for play and social interaction for people of all ages, abilities and cultures.



Find

Communicate the purpose and location of play elements and facilities.



Fit

Provide a range of play opportunities for people of all abilities and sizes.



Choose

Enable exciting individual experiences and social interaction.



Join In

Create opportunities for everyone to connect.



Thrive

Challenge and involve people of all capabilities.



Belong

Create a place that's welcoming and comfortable.

Refer to the **Design Principles Checklist** in the Tools section to help you design your next playspace project.

Find

Communicate the purpose and location of play elements and facilities.

Focus areas

Location
Layout
Accessibility
Signage
Wayfinding
Play experience
Equipment
Surfacing
Landscape
Safety
Facilities

Outcomes

Playspace users should be able to find their way to, in and around the playspace.

Making the playspace as clear, easy to get to, and logical in its location and layout will assist removing any perceived barriers and encourage users to visit.

Linking the playspace to surrounding elements such as paths and cycle routes, will help people get to the playspace. Additionally, providing a connection between the playspace and the surrounding landscape broaden the play experience.







Fit

Provide a range of play opportunities for people of all abilities and sizes.

Focus areas

Location
Layout
Accessibility
Signage
Wayfinding
Equipment
Surfacing

Outcomes

Inclusive play is about ensuring people of different sizes, abilities and cultural backgrounds can play together.

By playing, users can develop problem-solving skills, foster creativity and imagination, build relationships, and improve emotional and social skills.

Being able to participate in activities and play can increase one's self-esteem, lead to feelings of acceptance and being valued, and encourage people to feel positive about themselves.







Choose

Enable exciting individual experiences and social interaction.

Focus areas

Location
Layout
Accessibility
Signage
Wayfinding
Play experience
Equipment
Surfacing
Landscape
Safety
Facilities

Outcomes

Playspaces should provide a range of options for the user, so they can choose how they wish to play.

Confidence and comfort in decision-making are important skills to develop. If the playspace provides multiple play opportunities for both individual and group play, it enables people to decide how they want to play, and with whom.







Join In

Create opportunities for everyone to connect.

Focus areas

Location
Layout
Accessibility
Play experience
Equipment
Surfacing
Landscape
Safety
Facilities

Outcomes

Playspaces can provide a safe, secure environment for people to connect with others through play. This participation can lead to the development of cooperation, communication and social skills.

The playspace and play equipment should provide engaging experiences and enable all people to use and join in where possible – helping to improve social skills, as well as physical and mental health.







Thrive

Challenge and involve people of all capabilities.

Focus areas

Location
Layout
Accessibility
Play experience
Equipment
Surfacing
Landscape
Safety

Outcomes

Playspaces are a great place for children to challenge themselves and develop cognitive, social, emotional and fine motor skills.

By including a range of stimulating and imaginative activities in the playspace, people of all capabilities are challenged – improving their wellbeing.







Belong

Create a place that's welcoming and comfortable.

Focus areas

Location
Layout
Accessibility
Signage
Wayfinding
Play experience
Equipment
Surfacing
Landscape
Safety
Facilities

Outcomes

Playspaces can be a safe space for the community to gather and play.

Creating an inviting space that encourages members of the community to come together can encourage people to make new connections and friends, develop social skills, and leave a positive impact on mental health and development.

This feeling of belonging can also lead to community-building, through a sense of ownership and local participation.







Collaroy Beach Playspace, Collaroy

Best practice case study

Regional playspaces offer an opportunity to combine a variety of play activities within a setting that is comfortable and enjoyable for a wide range of people.



Shade to the majority of the playspace activity zones and central seating areas

Pause point on entry to allow paced movement into activity zones

Play experiences suitable for all ages and abilities co-located with more challenging play experiences

Formal enclosure through walls and fences to provide sense of safety and comfort adjacent to potential hazards (e.g. water bodies and roads)

All abilities equipment pieces co-located with standard pieces of same play type (e.g. liberty swing immediately adjacent to other swing types)

Surfacing colour contrasted to show activity vs. circulation space

Carousel flush to allow ease of access

Set within existing landscape features to provide strong sense of place

Located adjacent to informal kick-about space

Orientation path of consistent width and material linking entry points and play zones

Primary entry celebrated with signage and artwork



Inclusion of equipment that offers challenge as users develop in ability and strength

Accessible parking spaces adjacent

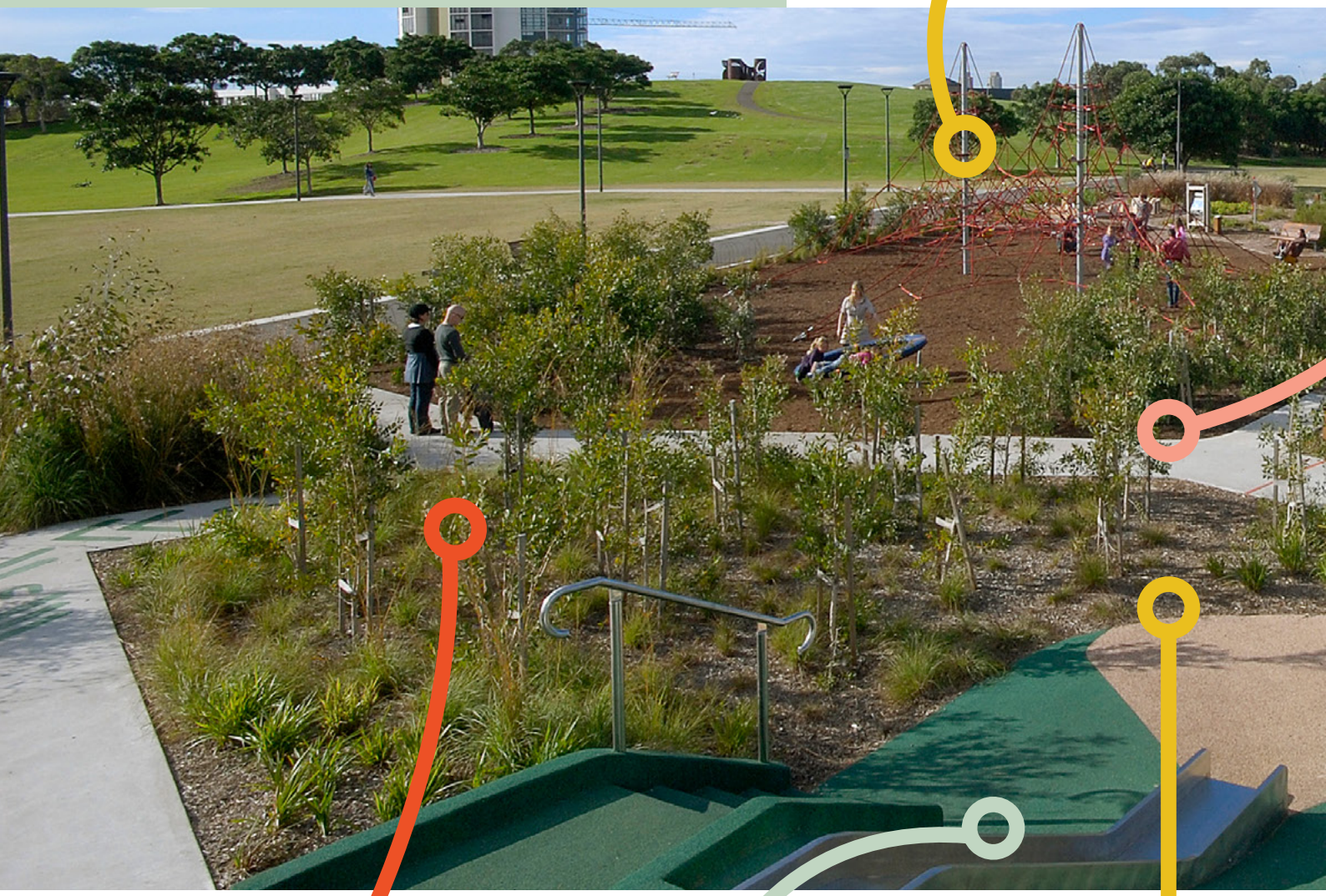
Multiple seating options (some with backs and arms) with sufficient circulation space

Passive lawn area away from activity zone for rest and quiet play

Sydney Park Playspace, Sydney

Best practice case study

By integrating a playspace into the landscape of a park, playspace users can benefit from not only the challenges of play but also the opportunities of the surrounding park facilities.



Appropriate lighting to enhance time of day use and provide a feeling of safety

Orientation path of consistent width and material linking entry points and play zones

Equipment for all abilities and ages fully integrated into the playspace and reachable for everyone

Sensory focused and natural elements

Multiple play opportunities (both challenging and comfortable) to engage people of different ages and abilities

Passive lawn area away from activity zone for rest and quiet play

Sufficient hard surface adjacent to seating to allow for wheelchair and pram parking, without obstructing the path



Provide variation of seating types at regular intervals on the orientation path to ensure everyone has appropriate rest options

Informal play opportunities to encourage creativity

Surfacing colour contrast to show activity vs. circulation space

Westport Park Playspace, Port Macquarie

Best practice case study

No two inclusive playspaces will look the same, but small inclusions can make a big difference.



Formal enclosure through fences to provide sense of safety and comfort adjacent to potential hazards (e.g. water bodies and roads)

Passive lawn area away from activity zone for rest and quiet play

Orientation path of consistent width and material linking entry points and play zones

Informal seating for park users throughout the space

Play equipment reflects the local environment and integrates the playspace into the surrounding landscape

Picnic/BBQ facilities in central location with solid shade to provide all year-round weather protection

Located adjacent informal kick-about space

Rubbish bins are provided and suitably located

Clear sightlines for passive surveillance



Equipment provides multi-user play opportunities for all abilities and ages fully integrated into the playspace and reachable for everyone

Surfacing colour contrast to show activity vs. circulation space

Carousel flush to allow ease of access

Melaleuca Park Playspace, Jordan Springs

Best practice case study

By selecting play equipment and a materials palette relating to the site's context, a playspace can better connect with its surroundings – providing a more integrated play experience.



Surrounding landscape provides a comfortable and enjoyable environment

Seating opportunities are easily accessed from the circulation path

Play equipment theming and colour palette respond to the local context

Clear lines of sight throughout the playspace



Public art incorporated to educate users and add to the character of the playspace

Unprogrammed spaces for imaginative play

DELIVER

We acknowledge everyone will have different methods of delivering inclusive playspaces to the community. By collaborating with a wide range of people, including traffic engineers, play equipment manufacturers, landscape architects, developers, community group representatives, open space planners and the community, you will ensure the most inclusive outcome for everyone.

Delivery considerations

The planning

Developing an inclusive playspace implementation plan may be beneficial assisting in the immediate and ongoing delivery of improvements to inclusive playspaces.

The technical elements

Review the playspace against the Evaluation Checklist prior to the finalisation of the playspace documentation to ensure all opportunities to maximise inclusion can be reached. Once complete, undertake any necessary improvements. Review local, statewide and Australian policies and standards to ensure your design is compliant.

Consultation

Consultation is crucial for success. Consult the local community, play equipment manufacturers, advocacy groups, designers, schools, and people who use the playspace to assist with the delivery.

Partnerships

Partnering with others will help deliver better playspaces. Seek partnership opportunities with neighbouring councils, government agencies, local businesses, developers, advocacy groups, designers, and international service organisations, such as Lions Club and Rotary clubs.

Beyond delivery

Ongoing maintenance will ensure playspaces look and function as intended. It is important to educate and upskill professionals on Everyone Can Play, to maintain and improve playspaces. Partner with neighbouring councils to share resources and knowledge, or establish community working groups to foster a sense of ownership and pride of playspaces.It is essential that both new and improved playspaces are continually reviewed, monitored and adjusted

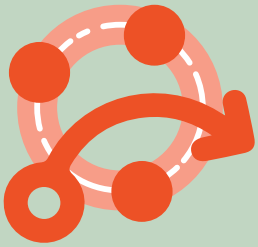
EVALUATE

appropriately. We recommend you review these spaces annually, in line with regular checks already being undertaken.

As the people who make up our communities change, so too will the requirements for playspaces. Similarly, as new equipment and technology is developed, there will be an opportunity to review and adapt our inclusive playspaces.

Everyone Can Play is an important tool for monitoring playspaces. The design principles and Evaluation Checklist are key resources to help review playspaces and ensure they continue to succeed.

These documents will help us understand if, and to what extent, inclusive playspaces become the norm.



Evaluating steps

1. Use the design section of Everyone Can Play to inform your thinking for new playspaces and existing playspace designs.

2. Understand the current provision, condition, access and distribution of playspaces and identify areas for improvement.

3. Undertake ongoing consultation with the community to understand their changing priorities, cultural considerations and expectations.

4. Update and review relevant planning documents including implementation plans, maintenance programs, playspace strategies and the Everyone Can Play planning section on a regular basis.

5. Keep up to date with current research and innovation of playspace equipment, surfacing materials and inclusive products.

Reality check

A CONVERSATION WITH RACHAEL

In her role in recreational project delivery and design, Rachael delivers playspaces for her region. She knows the importance of thoroughly assessing a space to create an inclusive strategy for each playspace. Rachael tested this guide's Evaluation Checklist (located in the Tools section) and shares her experience of how it will help her in pre-design planning and evaluation.

"The Checklist will empower my team to confidently assess existing and new playspaces against the criteria and ensure we are providing the best possible facilities for our community. It will highlight areas where improvements can be made – especially small changes for big gains and ensure making playspaces inclusive becomes ingrained in the planning stages of all facilities in the Central Coast.

Using this Checklist will guarantee all aspects of inclusiveness are considered and addressed when designing, constructing and maintaining our playspaces.

Simply by going through the list, you understand that designing for inclusion is more than just accessibility, it's about making spaces that are better for the whole community, and that small changes can make a big difference to so many users.

Everyone Can Play and the tools it includes will help ensure we consistently evaluate and plan our spaces. It gives me a tool to promote and to educate staff, project managers and senior management on the importance of providing inclusive facilities."

– Rachael
Project Manager, Recreational Project Delivery and Design
Central Coast Council



CHAMPION

Education and advocacy

Inclusive playspaces play an important role in the lives of countless Australians. They are spaces for development – of physical and social skills, of learning, enjoyment and growth. Many people experience their first memories at playspaces and continue to visit them throughout their lives.

To champion change, we need the support and dedication of all people involved. This goes beyond the communities, and extends to developers, councils, suppliers, maintenance staff and everyday people.

Championing inclusive playspaces can be as easy as leading by example. It can be creating best practice playspaces that incorporate the principles of inclusive playspace design, or communicating with and educating others on what you know or where they can find information. Councils can include a commitment to provide inclusive playspaces in Disability Inclusion Action Plans, or pass a motion mandating the use of Everyone Can Play for new and upgraded playspaces. Collaboration with other professionals is also critical in overcoming challenges and barriers to inclusion. You should consult with users to achieve playspaces that are embraced by the community and well used.

Championing change could simply be promoting great playspaces. This could include drawing attention to best practice examples and encouraging others to create more inclusive playspaces.



We are the champions

A CONVERSATION WITH BEC

Playspace champion Bec knows an inclusive community place requires more than just soft fall and wide paths.

"It's about leading and educating, working together to solve problems, and challenging people to think differently.

Once we know what inclusive play looks like it's so important to keep spreading the message, and to promote compassionate design that shows kindness to everyone in the community who will use the space.

Play is the thing that equalises us all. It's the measure recognised internationally of a happy individual and society. Being a champion means you stand up and speak out. You use your capabilities to enable every member of the communities you service, to belong."

– Bec
Inclusive playspace champion



Free to be free

A CONVERSATION WITH BRIAN

Brian's work in disability support services has strengthened his belief that inclusive playspaces are a vital element for working towards an inclusive society.

What challenges do you face when looking for a playspace for your clients?

"It's really important I find somewhere that is inclusive for people of all physical abilities, as well as places that provide a safe environment for those with cognitive impairments, who may be at risk of becoming overwhelmed easily and behave unpredictably in public spaces.

Certain elements can make it easier to enjoy a playspace: tables that are wheelchair friendly; benches easily accessible for people with impaired mobility; play equipment suitable for people who require assistance – like large swings that are lower to the ground and allow the user to lay down in them; and spaces that are interesting and visually unique.

Inclusive playspaces allow people with varied levels of physical ability and cognition to interact with one another. They feel included. They feel as though spaces are made for them and their peers, and not just the portion of the population living without disability.

These spaces are so important because they allow everyone to interact in a fun and stimulating environment. They don't exclude one group through the process of including another. They allow a demographic of people who are marginalised within many aspects of society to feel accepted."

– Brian
Disability support services



3. TOOLS

THE TOOLS TO TRANSLATE IDEAS INTO ACTION

Do the best you can with the resources you have!
The following tools will help ensure everyone can play.



Playspace Evaluation Checklist

A tool for reviewing existing playspaces and playspace designs.

Each playspace is unique and not all playspaces will meet every criteria of this Checklist.

Use the Everyone Can Play Evaluation Checklist to see where improvements can be made, in line with available budget, playspace size and location. Remember, it's about doing the best you can with the resources you have.

This Evaluation Checklist is designed to ensure more people can get to, play and stay at existing playspaces in our communities. It can also be used as a tool for reviewing inclusive playspace designs.

Playspace name: _____

Playspace address: _____

Can I get there?

Location

	NO CHANGE	POTENTIAL CHANGE	CHANGE REQUIRED
Information about the playspace is available before I go.	○	○	○
Car parking is easily available/close to the playspace (e.g. street parking, a dedicated car park).	○	○	○
Accessible car parking bays are provided.	○	○	○
The playspace is connected to a shared path or cycle route.	○	○	○
There is a public transport link (bus stop, train station, light rail) close to the playspace.	○	○	○
The playspace's access point can be used easily and comfortably by most people without having to cross a main road or other barrier (e.g. unsignalised intersections, kerbs, streets without footpaths or pram ramps).	○	○	○

Layout

The layout of the playspace can easily be understood by a first-time user.	○	○	○
The playspace has signage or a map to aid navigation.	○	○	○

	NO CHANGE	POTENTIAL CHANGE	CHANGE REQUIRED
Points of entry and exit are easy to locate from inside and outside the playspace.	○	○	○
There are pause points at the entry and exit to view and assess play opportunities on arrival.	○	○	○
There is an area within the playspace for carers to interact and supervise.	○	○	○
There are clear lines of sight throughout the playspace for carers.	○	○	○
Play equipment for different age groups is grouped together without being separated from the main area of activity.	○	○	○
Formal and informal seating is provided in appropriate locations (e.g. at regular intervals, near shade, adjacent to activity areas).	○	○	○

Signage

Signage is easy to read, using simple language, graphics and high colour contrast.	○	○	○
Signage is located at a height that is easy to read for all playspace users, including children and those in wheelchairs.	○	○	○
Pictographs and braille are provided on key instructional and safety signage.	○	○	○

Access

There is an orientation path or circulation path within the playspace.	○	○	○
There is a flush edge from the path surface to the play surface for easy access by all users. (The entire surface does not need to be flush – just key transition points.)	○	○	○
Access gates can be operated by an adult using a wheelchair or mobility device.	○	○	○

Can I get there? Notes:

Can I play?

Play experience

	NO CHANGE	POTENTIAL CHANGE	CHANGE REQUIRED
The playspace provides opportunities for a variety of age groups (e.g. toddlers, children, teenagers, adults).	○	○	○
Varied play types are provided.	○	○	○
There are a variety of multi-user equipment pieces.	○	○	○
There are opportunities for intergenerational play.	○	○	○
Equipment is challenging for multiple age groups and ability levels.	○	○	○
Play opportunities can be accessed at a variety of heights.	○	○	○
Everyone can access the main play piece and have meaningful play experiences.	○	○	○
There are multiple opportunities for people with limited mobility.	○	○	○
There are unprogrammed spaces for imaginative play.	○	○	○
There are quiet points within the playspace for rest and passive relaxation.	○	○	○

Wayfinding

There is a map at the playspace entry to assist with navigation and decision-making.	○	○	○
Maps follow the points listed for inclusive signage (i.e. easy to read, located at a height for all users to see).	○	○	○
There is directional signage along activity trails.	○	○	○
There is a clear path network hierarchy (e.g. easy to distinguish between main orientation path, circulation paths and play paths).	○	○	○
There is an appropriate colour contrast between the paths and the play surfaces.	○	○	○

Access

	NO CHANGE	POTENTIAL CHANGE	CHANGE REQUIRED
The site's topography creates an obstacle or barrier to playspace access (e.g. steep slope with no footpath, stair-only access).	○	○	○
Any barriers can be overcome with the inclusion of a ramp.	○	○	○
There is an orientation path linking to, in and around the playspace that links to access points and key activity areas.	○	○	○
The orientation path is clearly identifiable.	○	○	○
The orientation path has a consistent width and surface finish.	○	○	○
The orientation path conforms to relevant Australian access standards.	○	○	○
The orientation path connects directly to all access points.	○	○	○
The majority of play elements are connected to a circulation path.	○	○	○
The circulation path has a consistent width and surface finish.	○	○	○

Equipment

Equipment is well connected.	○	○	○
The majority of equipment is designed so that adults can be fit in, on or under (e.g. swings, slides, climbing structures).	○	○	○
Elevated equipment pieces include a ramped access point for people of various ages with limited mobility.	○	○	○
Dynamic play pieces are arranged in a sequence promoting skill development.	○	○	○
Equipment theming and the colour palette respond to the local context.	○	○	○

Surfacing

	NO CHANGE	POTENTIAL CHANGE	CHANGE REQUIRED
There is an accessible edge or point of access (flush or ramped) from the circulation path to the majority of play surfaces.	○	○	○
All accessible equipment pieces have an accessible surface treatment to enable ease of use.	○	○	○
The majority of play pieces have an accessible surface treatment or accessible path to the equipment's entry and exit points to enable ease of use. (Consider relevant fall zone surfacing requirements.)	○	○	○
Path surfaces provide sensory play opportunities through materiality or texture features.	○	○	○
There is enough circulation space (beyond fall zone requirements) around the majority of equipment to provide safe movement.	○	○	○

Can I play? Notes:

Can I play? Notes:

Can I stay?

Safety

	NO CHANGE	POTENTIAL CHANGE	CHANGE REQUIRED
The playspace can be clearly observed from the street or neighbouring properties.	○	○	○
There are clear sight lines to all play equipment pieces from the pathways and seating options to ensure comfortable supervision by carers.	○	○	○
The playspace is protected from adjacent potential risks (e.g. busy roads, open water bodies).	○	○	○
There is a sufficient boundary enclosure to provide a secure environment (e.g. fence, natural features such as mounds, rocks, planting).	○	○	○
There is adequate lighting provided from the street or within the playspace to support appropriate time of day use.	○	○	○
Supporting facilities (BBQ, toilet, car park) are adequately lit.	○	○	○

Facilities

Seating provided is adequate for the scale and use of the playspace.	○	○	○
Seating provides various options to cater for a range of users (e.g. varied heights, back rests, arm rests).	○	○	○
Various seating arrangements, such as individual and group seating, are provided.	○	○	○
There is enough clearance space adjacent to the seat to park a pram, wheelchair or mobility device without blocking the circulation space or path.	○	○	○
There are seating opportunities provided in a quiet location for retreat.	○	○	○
There is access to drinking water.	○	○	○
Water can easily be accessed by all playspace users and has fixtures that are easy to operate.	○	○	○

	NO CHANGE	POTENTIAL CHANGE	CHANGE REQUIRED
Rubbish bins are provided and suitably located.	◯	◯	◯
Bins can be utilised by all playspace users.	◯	◯	◯
Toilet access is available within the playspace or nearby.	◯	◯	◯
There is an accessible toilet nearby that includes changing facilities for babies, children and adults.	◯	◯	◯
There are picnic tables provided within and adjacent to the playspace.	◯	◯	◯
There are BBQ facilities provided.	◯	◯	◯
Facilities are accessible to all users, are considerate of children's safety and are easy to operate.	◯	◯	◯

Landscape

There is an adequate amount of shade to cover the majority of play activities.	◯	◯	◯
There is an adequate amount of shade to cover seating areas and protect park users.	◯	◯	◯
The surrounding landscape provides a comfortable and enjoyable environment to be in.	◯	◯	◯
There are views or visual links to the local context outside the playspace, to contribute to a sense of play.	◯	◯	◯

Can I stay? Notes:

Design Principles Checklist

A tool to assist determining priorities when designing a playspace.

The best practice recommendations are designed to inspire innovation, challenge existing processes and prompt designers to create inviting playspaces with inclusion top of mind.

Not all design recommendations will be relevant for all playspaces. Consider the unique context of the playspace to ensure the design is appropriate for the site's characteristics, size, budget and design aspirations.

Find

Location, layout and accessibility

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Connect to street footpaths and the park entry with safe road crossing points.	○	○	○	○
Connect with transport networks and include appropriate arrival facilities: pedestrian and cycle routes, accessible parking, mini-van drop off zones, busy bays through close proximity.	○	○	○	○
Orientate and position the playspace to utilise the site's unique features, including views, existing vegetation, topography and passive surveillance.	○	○	○	○
Include an accessible path (without stair-only access) from/to the street, carpark and supporting facilities that are wide enough for a wheelchair and pram to pass each other with ease.	○	○	○	○
Consider a primary entry point that is linked by an orientation path to help people connect between all points of entry and exit.	○	○	○	○
Consider a formal entry zone that provides a sense of welcome to the playspace and a pause point to observe the layout, become familiar with the space and decide where to go first. A slow introduction to the playspace is important to some people.	○	○	○	○

Signage and wayfinding

Develop a map of the playspace that outlines the location of key features to help people navigate the space. (Primarily for destination playspaces only.)	○	○	○	○

Play experience	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Create a flexible, imaginative and unique playspace that is not solely reliant on equipment for play value.	○	○	○	○
Consider a range of dynamic play options to balance, climb, rock, slide, swing or spin.	○	○	○	○
Provide multiple play opportunities (both comfortable and challenging) to engage people of different ages and ability levels.	○	○	○	○
Position seating and shade directly adjacent to water play to ensure carers can closely supervise.	○	○	○	○
Equipment and surfacing				
Include equipment pieces for all abilities and ages (flush carousel, hammock or basket swing, in-ground trampolines, ramp access to feature structure) that are fully integrated into the playspace and reachable for everyone.	○	○	○	○
Consider a variety of play surfacing to provide a contrast between activity, fall and circulation zones.	○	○	○	○
Landscape				
Develop a design that reflects the local environment and integrates the playspace into the surrounding landscape, utilising existing vegetation and key views.	○	○	○	○
Safety				
Ensure clear sight lines for passive surveillance from the street or surrounding property are not obstructed.	○	○	○	○
Provide a formal or informal boundary enclosure (fence, gate, landform, planting) to provide a secure environment from potential risks. Risks could include busy roads and open water bodies.	○	○	○	○

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Provide appropriate lighting provisions (streetscape or playspace specific) to ensure playspaces are safe at different times of the day.	○	○	○	○
Provide appropriate lighting to the orientation paths and facilities in larger playspaces to enhance time of day use opportunities and provide a feeling of safety.	○	○	○	○

Facilities

Create a gathering point with seating and shade to promote social interaction.	○	○	○	○
Provide variation of seating types (back and armrest, platform seating) at regular intervals on the orientation path to ensure everyone has appropriate rest options.	○	○	○	○
Provide bins, bubbler/water and bike racks near playspace entry points and picnic facilities. (Ensure these facilities are accessible to people of different sizes and mobility.)	○	○	○	○
Provide appropriate, accessible picnic and BBQ facilities situated within the playspace or close by.	○	○	○	○
Include an accessible toilet/s and feature change facilities (babies, children, adults) near the playspace.	○	○	○	○

Fit

Location, layout and accessibility

Include an accessible path (without stair-only access) from/to the street, carpark and supporting facilities that are wide enough for a wheelchair and pram to pass each other with ease.	○	○	○	○
Include sufficient hard surface adjacent to all seats, allowing wheelchair and pram parking without obstructing the path.	○	○	○	○

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Ensure there is an appropriately located flush edge to the play surface from the access path to help wheelchairs, prams and people with limited mobility travel between the areas with ease.	○	○	○	○

Signage and wayfinding

Include universally designed and multi-sensory entry signage and emergency/maintenance contact details if appropriate.	○	○	○	○
Develop a map of the playspace that outlines the location of key features to help people navigate the space. (Primarily for destination playspaces only.)	○	○	○	○

Equipment and surfacing

Ensure the majority of equipment pieces provide inclusive and engaging play experiences for all people.	○	○	○	○

Choose

Location, layout and accessibility

If possible, locate the playspace adjacent to supporting facilities, such as toilets, informal recreation spaces/kick-abouts and food and beverage facilities.	○	○	○	○
Consider a formal entry zone that provides a sense of welcome to the playspace and a pause point to observe the layout, become familiar with the space and decide where to go first. A slow introduction to the playspace is important to some people.	○	○	○	○
Include a vantage point/s with seating and shade from which the carers can see the whole playspace.	○	○	○	○
Create a quiet area away from the activity zones with seating and a sense of enclosure to provide a place for quiet play and rest.	○	○	○	○

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Arrange activity zones with subtle separation, without boundaries or significant distance between them.	○	○	○	○

Signage and wayfinding

Develop a map of the playspace that outlines the location of key features to help people navigate the space. (Primarily for destination playspaces only.)	○	○	○	○

Play experience

Create a flexible, imaginative and unique playspace that is not solely reliant on equipment for play value.	○	○	○	○
Consider a range of dynamic play options to balance, climb, rock, slide, swing or spin.	○	○	○	○
Ensure fun and challenging individual and multi-user play options are included.	○	○	○	○
Create informal and imaginative play opportunities to encourage creativity.	○	○	○	○
Consider including sensory focused and natural elements. These could include interactive technology, music, sand, water and planting to stimulate the senses.	○	○	○	○
Explore opportunities for bike tracks and play paths. This could include directional or activity-themed markings, a variety of bumps, dips and level changes.	○	○	○	○

Equipment and surfacing

Include equipment pieces for all abilities and ages (flush carousel, hammock or basket swing, in-ground trampolines, ramp access to feature structure) that are fully integrated into the playspace and reachable for everyone.	○	○	○	○

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Ensure surfacing to all abilities play pieces is accessible and compliant with the relevant Australian standards.	○	○	○	○
Create surfacing to sensory play and main equipment pieces that is comfortably trafficable by all, including those with limited mobility.	○	○	○	○

Landscape

Include a landscape area (e.g. turf kick-about) close by to provide opportunities for unstructured play and connections to the local environment.	○	○	○	○

Safety

Create a sense of distinction between quiet areas and activity spaces through landform, planting and surface materials.	○	○	○	○
Provide appropriate lighting provisions (streetscape or playspace specific) to ensure playspaces are safe at different times of the day.	○	○	○	○

Facilities

Provide variation of seating types (back and armrest, platform seating) at regular intervals on the orientation path to ensure everyone has appropriate rest options.	○	○	○	○
Provide appropriate, accessible picnic and BBQ facilities situated within the playspace or close by.	○	○	○	○

Join In

Location, layout and accessibility

Connect to street footpaths and the park entry with safe road crossing points.	○	○	○	○

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Connect with transport networks and include appropriate arrival facilities: pedestrian and cycle routes, accessible parking, mini-van drop off zones, bus bays through close proximity.	○	○	○	○
Include an accessible path (without stair-only access) from/to the street, carpark and supporting facilities that are wide enough for a wheelchair and pram to pass each other with ease.	○	○	○	○
Consider a primary entry point that is linked by an orientation path to help people connect between all points of entry and exit.	○	○	○	○
Ensure there is an appropriately located flush edge to the play surface from the access path to help wheelchairs, prams and people with limited mobility travel between the areas with ease.	○	○	○	○
Arrange activity zones with subtle separation, without boundaries or significant distance between them.	○	○	○	○

Play experience

Create a flexible, imaginative and unique playspace that is not solely reliant on equipment for play value.	○	○	○	○
Consider a range of dynamic play options to balance, climb, rock, slide, swing or spin.	○	○	○	○
Provide multiple play opportunities (both comfortable and challenging) to engage people of different ages and ability levels.	○	○	○	○
Ensure fun and challenging individual and multi-user play options are included.	○	○	○	○
Create informal and imaginative play opportunities to encourage creativity.	○	○	○	○
Consider including sensory focused and natural elements. These could include interactive technology, music, sand, water and planting to stimulate the senses.	○	○	○	○

Equipment and surfacing	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Include equipment pieces for all abilities and ages (flush carousel, hammock or basket swing, in-ground trampolines, ramp access to feature structure) that are fully integrated into the playspace and reachable for everyone.	○	○	○	○
Ensure the majority of equipment pieces provide inclusive and engaging play experiences for all people.	○	○	○	○
Ensure surfacing to all abilities play pieces is accessible and compliant with the relevant Australian standards.	○	○	○	○
Create surfacing to sensory play and main equipment pieces that is comfortably trafficable by all, including those with limited mobility.	○	○	○	○
Landscape				
Include a landscape area (e.g. turf kick-about) close by to provide opportunities for unstructured play and connections to the local environment.	○	○	○	○
Establish a well-considered planting palette specific to the playspace's context (orientation, shade and wind provision) and environment. This will create a micro-climate for year-round enjoyment with seasonal variation and maximise comfort at all times of day.	○	○	○	○
Include shade structures, sails and significant tree canopies to provide shade to play zones and seating areas.	○	○	○	○
Safety				
Ensure all playspace equipment, fall zones and surfacing complies with relevant Australian standards.	○	○	○	○
Facilities				
Create a gathering point with seating and shade to promote social interaction.	○	○	○	○

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Provide variation of seating types (back and armrest, platform seating) at regular intervals on the orientation path to ensure everyone has appropriate rest options.	○	○	○	○
Provide bins, bubbler/water and bike racks near playspace entry points and picnic facilities. (Ensure these facilities are accessible to people of different sizes and mobility.)	○	○	○	○
Provide appropriate, accessible picnic and BBQ facilities situated within the playspace or close by.	○	○	○	○
Include picnic facilities with a solid shade structure to provide year-round weather protection.	○	○	○	○
Include an accessible toilet/s and feature change facilities (babies, children, adults) near the playspace.	○	○	○	○

Thrive

Location, layout and accessibility

Create a quiet area away from the activity zones with seating and a sense of enclosure to provide a place for quiet play and rest.	○	○	○	○
Arrange activity zones with subtle separation, without boundaries or significant distance between them.	○	○	○	○

Play experience

Create a flexible, imaginative and unique playspace that is not solely reliant on equipment for play value.	○	○	○	○
Provide multiple play opportunities (both comfortable and challenging) to engage people of different ages and ability levels.	○	○	○	○
Ensure fun and challenging individual and multi-user play options are included.	○	○	○	○

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Create informal and imaginative play opportunities to encourage creativity.	○	○	○	○
Consider including sensory focused and natural elements. These could include interactive technology, music, sand, water and planting to stimulate the senses.	○	○	○	○
Position seating and shade directly adjacent to water play to ensure carers can closely supervise.	○	○	○	○
Explore opportunities for bike tracks and play paths. This could include directional or activity-themed markings, a variety of bumps, dips and level changes.	○	○	○	○
Equipment and surfacing				
Include equipment pieces for all abilities and ages (flush carousel, hammock or basket swing, in-ground trampolines, ramp access to feature structure) that are fully integrated into the playspace and reachable for everyone.	○	○	○	○
Ensure the majority of equipment pieces provide inclusive and engaging play experiences for all people.	○	○	○	○
Create surfacing to sensory play and main equipment pieces that is comfortably trafficable by all, including those with limited mobility.	○	○	○	○
Landscape				
Include a landscape area (e.g. turf kick-about) close by to provide opportunities for unstructured play and connections to the local environment.	○	○	○	○
Safety				
Provide a formal or informal boundary enclosure (fence, gate, landform, planting) to provide a secure environment from potential risks. Risks could include busy roads and open water bodies.	○	○	○	○

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Create a sense of distinction between quiet areas and activity spaces through landform, planting and surface materials.	○	○	○	○
Ensure all playspace equipment, fall zones and surfacing complies with relevant Australian standards.	○	○	○	○

Belong

Location, layout and accessibility

Orientate and position the playspace to utilise the site's unique features, including views, existing vegetation, topography and passive surveillance.	○	○	○	○
If possible, locate the playspace adjacent to supporting facilities, such as toilets, informal recreation spaces/kick-abouts and food and beverage facilities.	○	○	○	○
Include sufficient hard surface adjacent to all seats, allowing wheelchair and pram parking without obstructing the path.	○	○	○	○
Include a vantage point/s with seating and shade from which the carers can see the whole playspace.	○	○	○	○
Create a quiet area away from the activity zones with seating and a sense of enclosure to provide a place for quiet play and rest.	○	○	○	○
Arrange activity zones with subtle separation, without boundaries or significant distance between them.	○	○	○	○

Signage and wayfinding

Include universally designed and multi-sensory entry signage and emergency/maintenance contact details if appropriate.	○	○	○	○

Play experience	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Create a flexible, imaginative and unique playspace that is not solely reliant on equipment for play value.	○	○	○	○
Ensure fun and challenging individual and multi-user play options are included.	○	○	○	○
Position seating and shade directly adjacent to water play to ensure carers can closely supervise.	○	○	○	○
Landscape				
Develop a design that reflects the local environment and integrates the playspace into the surrounding landscape, utilising existing vegetation and key views.	○	○	○	○
Establish a well-considered planting palette specific to the playspace's context (orientation, shade and wind provision) and environment. This will create a micro-climate for year-round enjoyment with seasonal variation and maximise comfort at all times of day.	○	○	○	○
Include shade structures, sails and significant tree canopies to provide shade to play zones and seating areas.	○	○	○	○
Safety				
Provide a formal or informal boundary enclosure (fence, gate, landform, planting) to provide a secure environment from potential risks. Risks could include busy roads and open water bodies.	○	○	○	○
Create a sense of distinction between quiet areas and activity spaces through landform, planting and surface materials.	○	○	○	○
Provide appropriate lighting provisions (streetscape or playspace specific) to ensure playspaces are safe at different times of the day.	○	○	○	○

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Provide appropriate lighting to the orientation paths and facilities in larger playspaces to enhance time of day use opportunities and provide a feeling of safety.	○	○	○	○

Facilities

Create a gathering point with seating and shade to promote social interaction.	○	○	○	○
Provide variation of seating types (back and armrest, platform seating) at regular intervals on the orientation path to ensure everyone has appropriate rest options.	○	○	○	○
Provide bins, bubbler/water and bike racks near playspace entry points and picnic facilities. (Ensure these facilities are accessible to people of different sizes and mobility.)	○	○	○	○
Provide appropriate, accessible picnic and BBQ facilities situated within the playspace or close by.	○	○	○	○
Include picnic facilities with a solid shade structure to provide year-round weather protection.	○	○	○	○
Include an accessible toilet/s and feature change facilities (babies, children, adults) near the playspace.	○	○	○	○

Key findings considerations

Key improvements actions

Playspace sketches

