

Playground equipment and surfacing —

Part 7: Guidance on installation, inspection, maintenance and operation

ICS 97.200.40

National foreword

This British Standard is the UK implementation of EN 1176-7:2008. It supersedes BS EN 1176-7:1998 which will be withdrawn on 31 May 2009.

The UK participation in its preparation was entrusted to Technical Committee SW/65, Children’s playground equipment.

Attention is drawn to BS EN 1176-1:2008, Clause 4.2.8.5.2 Note 1 and the use, within the UK, of natural grass as playground surfacing. The UK committee, following representation from the national Play Safety Forum, offer the subsequent guidance. This guidance is drawn from the experiences of the UK committee, and the experiences of other European organizations, in the application of BS EN 1176-1:1998 over the past ten years.

Grass is a low cost, readily available and environmentally friendly surface that is liked by children. It is visually attractive, easy to maintain and importantly for children, can, by increasing the uninterrupted playing surface of a playground, enhance opportunities for incidental and unstructured play.

Grass can, on playgrounds with a low intensity of use, be successfully used below and around play equipment, removing the necessity to install specialist Impact Attenuating Surfaces. The suitability of grass has to be determined locally by risk assessment. The following criteria can form part of this assessment and will provide guidance as to whether grass is suitable for use.

- The maximum fall height of the equipment is less than 1,5 m.
- It should be assessed whether the grass has at least 150 mm of soil beneath it. (A reasonable evaluation may be made by pushing vertically by hand into the ground a thin probe, such as a screwdriver, to a depth of 150 mm, at regular and frequent locations, without it being impeded by a high proportion of solids, such as stone, brick or tree roots.)
- It should be ensured that the grass remains throughout the year and does not become mud or bare earth. Its impact absorbency is dependent upon the roots maintaining an uncompacted soil structure. This will need to be continually assessed following installation of equipment.

Following completion of a satisfactory risk assessment including the three principal criteria above, grass is suitable for use. However, operators may want to use other criteria they believe necessary to ensure the suitability of grass.

Grass, even in low usage playgrounds, will not sustain intensive use; for example: beneath the central arc of a swing; the run out area of a slide; below a fire fighters’ pole; around the outside of a carousel; equipment access and exit points. For these relatively small high-wear areas, in order to meet the requirements of this standard, other surfaces to replace or prevent erosion of the grass are needed, taking care that no trip points or hard edges occur.

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Amendments/corrigenda issued since publication

Date	Comments
30 September 2008	Correction to national foreword

Operators and providers are advised that equipment conforming to EN 1176 require regular maintenance. Guidance on this and appropriate inspection, maintenance and operation schedules are contained within BS EN 1176-7:2008.

National standards have been published by BSI on children's playground equipment since BS 3178 was first issued in 1959, this standard concentrated on specifications for specific types of equipment. It was replaced in 1979 by BS 5696 which switched focus to a design and safety approach.

With the increasing introduction of overseas equipment BSI led the way by calling for a European Standard to address the conflicting safety advice and standards from other countries. This was published in 1999 as BS EN 1176 and further focused on the safety of playground equipment.

All standards published by BSI are regularly assessed and this revision is part of the process, it takes into account new design concepts and the operating experience available to the standards committees.

It is advised that the previous version of BS EN 1176 will not be withdrawn until 31 May 2009 to give manufacturers time to amend their product lines.

Playground equipment not complying with this revision should not automatically be considered as being unsafe or to require replacement. A risk assessment by competent persons should be used to determine what action, if any, is necessary. Manufacturers and Inspectors of the Register of Play Inspectors International (RPII) are amongst those that will be able to assist in this.

A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its secretary.

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

English Version

Playground equipment and surfacing - Part 7: Guidance on installation, inspection, maintenance and operation

Équipements et sols d'aires de jeux - Partie 7 : Guide
d'installation, contrôle, maintenance et utilisation

Spielplatzgeräte und Spielplatzböden - Teil 7: Anleitung für
Installation, Inspektion, Wartung und Betrieb

This European Standard was approved by CEN on 25 April 2008.

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This European Standard exists in three official versions (English, French, German). A version in any other language made by translation under the responsibility of a CEN member into its own language and notified to the CEN Management Centre has the same status as the official versions.

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