



Public Sector Services

Public Sector Services have a major impact on all our lives, our society relies on public support. It is therefore right that the public sector takes the lead when it comes to Health, Safety and Equalisation. The public sector therefore has a duty to discuss, promote and lead the way when delivering the services they provide.

Local Government, health and social services are crucial provisions in a modern society and can enable all people to live a full and fulfilling life.

Some Legislation highlights specific issues relating to the public sector, and some European Standards i.e. outdoor playground equipment and the Disability Discrimination Act. (DDA) will come under the public sectors remit.

BS EN 1176 / 1177 Playground Equipment

We would all agree that the safety of our children is paramount. Health and Safety Standards have been set not only for the provisions of new equipment, but also for the up keep and maintenance of existing equipment. General requirements and test methods have been outlined in the Directive.

The major differences seem to be:

- Impact Absorbent Surfacing (ISA)
- Spacing between play structures.
- The height at which you need to provide barriers or handrails.

Having read the Directive through carefully, attention needs to be placed in determining the correct ISA for specific structure heights, plus we need to recognise the difference between Free Space and Falling Space.

Free Space is defined as the space in, or around the equipment that can be occupied by a user. It must cover the movement of the equipment and or the space free required in its use i.e. a swing or slide.

Falling Space is defined as the space in, on or around the equipment that can be occupied by a user falling from an elevated part or structure.

Equipment Separation. This highlights the issue that falling and free space shall not contain any obstacles and is separate from free or falling space definitions.

Maintenance and Inspection

Routine Visual Inspection this is to identify hazards that result from wear and tear, vandalism or weather conditions. Operational Inspection is a more detailed inspection checking the overall general condition of the equipment.

It is also suggested that should any serious defects be found, they should be corrected immediately or the equipment should be secured, immobilized or removed.

Disabled Discrimination Act 1995

With the final part of stage III coming into force 1st October 2004 many businesses and local authorities will be planning the final adjustments to their premises. This applies to service providers where physical features would make access to their services difficult for disabled people.

Harness-it also aims to assist employers by helping them to reduce the risk of mis-matching person and task responsibilities. Disability is defined as any person with a 'physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out day to day activities.'

eSupport@Harness-it.net