



Climbing Frame & Apparatus Use Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines safe and appropriate use of all indoor and outdoor climbing frames, play structures, and related apparatus during sports coaching sessions and holiday club activities. It ensures a safe environment that supports physical development while preventing avoidable injuries.

General Principles

- Children may only use climbing frames and apparatus when **actively supervised** by a qualified coach or staff member.
- Children must use **age-appropriate** equipment.
- Coaches must **intervene immediately** if any behaviour, movement, or situation appears unsafe.
- All equipment must be used **as intended**, and rules must be followed at all times.

1. Free Play on Climbing Frames

Supervision Requirements

- A coach must maintain **constant visual supervision** whenever children use the apparatus.
- Staff must position themselves strategically to observe all areas.

Rules for Children

Safe Use

- Only use equipment suitable for your age and ability.
- Move carefully and be aware of others.
- Use apparatus in the way it was designed to be used.

Prohibited Behaviours

- **No climbing up slides.**
- **No jumping off equipment** unless it is specifically designed for safe jumping.
- **No running** on, across, or between parts of the apparatus.
- **No pushing, shoving, or rough play.**

2. Apparatus Use During Structured Games

During structured games (e.g., tag games, floor-is-lava activities, gym rounders), apparatus may be used **only under specific conditions** as outlined below.

A. Tag Games (e.g., Lava Tag, Capture the Flag)

When playing tag-based or similar chasing games:

- **Children must not move fast or jump off of apparatus. They can climb safely under supervision of staff but cannot be involved in a chase.**
- Climbing frames and equipment may be used **as obstacles to hide behind and climbed on safely and slowly.**
- No standing, leaning dangerously, or balancing on elevated parts of the apparatus.
- Children must move safely and avoid sudden changes in direction around equipment.

B. Games Using Apparatus as Part of Play (e.g., Floor is Lava, Gym Rounders)

Apparatus can be used **as part of the game** only when:

- A **full safety briefing** is given beforehand.
- Coaches clearly explain which parts of the apparatus can be used and how.
- Children **must not run on the equipment**—running is allowed only **between** pieces of apparatus, not on them.
- Movements on the apparatus must be slow, controlled, and appropriate to age and ability.
- The coach may stop the game at any time if they observe unsafe behaviour.

3. Coach Responsibilities

- Conduct a quick **environmental and equipment check** before use.
- Clearly communicate rules before any activity involving equipment.

- Intervene promptly to correct unsafe behaviour.
- Suspend use of equipment if conditions become unsafe (e.g., wet surfaces, overcrowding).
- Record any incidents, near misses, or equipment concerns.

4. Environmental Considerations

- Outdoor equipment must not be used in unsafe weather (rain, wind, ice).
- Indoor surfaces must be dry and free from hazards.
- Mats or soft landing areas must be used where appropriate.

5. Consequences of Unsafe Behaviour

- Children may be temporarily restricted from using the apparatus.
- Persistent unsafe behaviour will be communicated to parents/carers and may lead to further action.

6. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or when new equipment, safety issues, or updated guidance require changes.

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