

Information Sheet Number 10

EN1176 Playground Equipment Standard

Introduction

The European Standards for Playground Equipment: EN 1176 and EN 1177 have been published to harmonise existing European standards.

The Standard

The Standard (**EN 1176**) is published in seven parts:

- 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 test methods for slides
- Part 4:** Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for runways
- Part 5:** Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for carousels
- Part 6:** Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for rocking equipment
- Part 7:** Guidance for installation, inspection, maintenance and operation

A further four parts are scheduled to be introduced over the next few years.

EN 1177 Impact absorbing playground surfacing: Safety requirements and test methods.

EN 1176 Part 7 and EN 1177 were published in 1997.

A booklet is available from RoSPA, (£12.00 plus £3.50 post and packing), which attempts to explain in everyday terms for the interested lay person the main new requirements and to identify changes from the old British (BS 5696) and German (DIN 7926) standards where these may be assessed on site. In the event of legal claims or disputes, reference should be made to the full Standards, copies of which are available from **BSI Publications, 389 Chiswick Road, London, W4 4AL**

The main changes are in the areas of the overall height of equipment, equipment separation (Minimum Space, formally referred to as MUZ), and surfacing areas. There are some dimensional changes in other areas, for example, roundabout clearances, swing seat clearances, step accesses.

Background

The new European Standards (EN 1176 and EN 1177) harmonise existing national standards (principally BS 5696, DIN 7926 and BS 7188).

They are not retrospective or, currently, a legal requirement but represent good practice in the event of an accident claim. Their

limitations should be recognised: mere compliance will not automatically create a safe playground. Like previous playground standards they are intended to be used intelligently.

BS 5696 and part of BS 7188 were withdrawn on 1 January 1999. Equipment produced before this date should meet BS 5696 or DIN 7926 or have undergone third party testing or risk assessment. The HSE have a guidance leaflet.

Assessing to the new standard

Where there are differences between the new and old standards, our advice is DON'T PANIC! Equipment which has been perfectly safe under BS 5696 or DIN 7926 for 20 years will not suddenly become dangerous the day after publication of BS EN 1176. Existing equipment will be inspected by RoSPA to the new Standard in 1998 and an assessment of risk made on whether replacement or upgrading is required. A publication on assessing risk on playgrounds is available from RoSPA.

New equipment

New equipment should meet EN 1176.

In future products can carry a BSI Kitemark or a TÜV mark and will normally be identical. The same applies to the provision of impact absorbing surfaces. Having a TÜV mark does not guarantee compliance with EN1176.

As will become apparent, some elements of EN 1176 are open to interpretation. In the event of a dispute, a decision on interpretation

may be sought from BSI or, if necessary, from the European Standards Committee. This may take some time.

It is likely there will be many changes to the Standard in the early years as experience is gained from practical implementation on site. The Standard is currently undergoing its first major five year review and this will inevitably involve some changes. Common sense will remain a good guide.