

20 December 2024

Freedom of Information Request, Oxford City Council – Reference: **FOI2024/01325**

Further to our acknowledgement, we can confirm that Oxford City Council can advise as follows in response to your Freedom of Information Request received on 22 November:

Request

Dear Oxford City Council,

I am requesting the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please provide the data for the period from April 1st, 2023 to March 31st, 2024:

1. Playground Closures:

The number of playgrounds permanently closed.

The number of playgrounds permanently closed. No Oxford City Council play areas were permanently closed during this period (or since).

2. New Playgrounds:

The number of new playgrounds opened.

No new play areas were opened by the City Council during this period (others may have been opened in the city by private developers as part of housing schemes).

3. Reports of Vandalism:

The total number of vandalism reports in playgrounds.

If available, provide details of the types of vandalism reported (e.g., graffiti, damage to equipment).

Play equipment is subject to on-going wear and tear, and it's not always obvious whether damage is caused deliberately or just through general use. Serious incidents of vandalism to play equipment are rather rare and have declined over the last decade. Minor incidents of vandalism recorded during the period in question comprised damage to a basket swing, four cases of damage to swing seats caused by dogs (this type of chewing can also be caused by deer) and two incidents of damage to multi-plays (climbing frames with playhouses and slides and climbing wall boards on the sides). There were two incidents of graffiti on play equipment (we have greatly reduced this in recent years by installing open frame design kit which does not have large block surfaces (typically wooden panelling) which provides graffiti surfaces).

4. Number of Injuries in Play Parks:

The total number of injuries reported in playgrounds, broken down by type of injury.
If available, a breakdown of injuries by specific equipment (e.g., swings, slides, climbing frames).

No significant injuries were reported to us/our insurance company during this period. The play areas are not staffed, and minor injuries are not generally reported to us.

5. Inspection Frequency:

The frequency with which playgrounds are inspected by the council.

All the City Council playgrounds are formally inspected every month from April - October and every other month in November- March. They also have an annual independent inspection by RoSPA. Park patrol staff also carry out visual inspections of play areas as they go round and report any obvious defects.

If you disagree with any part of the response to your request, you are entitled to ask the Council for an internal review of the decision(s) made. You may do this by writing to the Monitoring Officer, by either email monitoringofficer@oxford.gov.uk – or by post to Monitoring Officer, Oxford City Council, Town Hall, St Aldate's, Oxford, OX1 1BX. After the result of the internal review, if you remain dissatisfied, you may ask the Information Commissioner to intervene on your behalf. You may do this by writing to the Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Officer

| Freedom of Information Team | Law & Governance | Oxford City Council | Town Hall | St Aldate's
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