



Penshurst Public School

(temporarily based on the grounds of Peakhurst West Public School)
(entrance on) Belmore Rd, Peakhurst, NSW 2210

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Rooftop Playground **Operational Manual**

Version 1.0

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Rooftop Playground Operational Manual 2021

Description

In 2021 Penshurst Public School opened their newly redeveloped site, which incorporated a unique “rooftop playground space”. The space is **Level Three** of the newly built “sinuous” building. The space is open to the sky and surrounds, with a contemporary mesh grill/fencing system that contains the space. It is a unique, innovative play and learning space that maximises the play and learning space available to the school community, within a high density surround.

Features

The rooftop playground space incorporates “outdoor learning” structures, some seating, a running track, rubber Soft Fall surrounds and shade structures. The rooftop playground includes two highly engineered steel shade structures. It is accessible via two lockable, gated stairways and one swipe protected lift. There are PA speakers for communication and power point access points, rubbish bins and fire extinguishers. The rooftop playground has climber plantings to facilitate shade and greenery and gated accessible service points for trades’ access along the perimeters as well.

Rooftop Playground Operational Safety Considerations

As a unique innovative play and learning space, the rooftop playground presents opportunities to play and learn in new ways. It also brings unique challenges and safety concerns for the operators.

Considerations:

1. **Climbing any part of the fencing, stairwell, shade structure on the structure may lead to highly serious, if not fatal injury.**
2. **Any objects descending from the rooftop playground could gather speed which could make even seemingly light materials, highly hazardous.**
3. **Dependant on the degree of injury, first aid, ambulance and emergency access can be facilitated through lift access.**
4. **Toilet facilities are available for student access on the rooftop playground.**





Given the high level of risks presented to rooftop playground users access will be *strictly limited* and must be *significantly supervised*.

- No child or student under the age of 18 years may ever access the rooftop playground without teacher supervision.
- The space will never be accessible to community users.
- Due to the size and shape of the rooftop playground, there must be always be a minimum of 2x supervising teachers on the rooftop play space with any user group, including lunchtimes when access during break times are permitted, with consideration of student population.
- Supervision ratio is approximately 1 teacher: 60 students maximum for recess/lunchtime play.
- No equipment (including balls, lunchboxes/drink bottles) are not to be taken onto the rooftop.
- All entry and exit is via the western stairs.
- Casual teachers may not be rostered to rooftop playground duties without induction. All supervising teachers must be trained, aware of procedures and risk management strategies, must carry their playground safety bag at all times and must have active reliable communication methods.
- If student user behaviours are of concern at any time, teachers may cease the use of the play space and bring students to the ground level.
- The rooftop is not to be used in extreme weather, including significant wind, rain or when wet.

Operation at Lunchtimes/ Recess

**NB: While the school is able to accommodate the student population on the ground floor (level 0) playground space, the rooftop playground will be inaccessible during break times. Should the student population exceed a student to playground space ratio of 1 to 10m², the rooftop playground may be open during lunch and recess times.*

1. Students meet the two supervising teachers at the base of the eastern stairs.
2. Teachers ensure no balls/lunch boxes/drink bottle or any equipment is brought to the rooftop.
3. Teachers ensure correct student ratios for rooftop access.
4. One teacher at the front of student lines opens the gated access with a key, and accompanies the students to the rooftop outdoor learning area and briefs students regarding rules and safety strategies.
5. One teacher walks behind students as they climb the stairs.
6. One teacher moves to supervise the eastern half of the rooftop play area (fixed equipment and bubblers) ensuring the western stairwell access is shut for safety.
7. One teacher moves to supervise the eastern half of the rooftop play area (running track and outdoor learning).
8. Teachers remain within line of sight of each other and actively roam to supervise play.
9. At the end of play time when the bell rings, students line up at designated meeting point.
10. One teacher leads the students downstairs to ground level.
11. One teacher remains at the back of the student lines, ensuring all students are off the rooftop, shutting and securing the eastern stair gate.

**If there are any safety concerns or incidents students are immediately assembled and accompanied to the ground floor. Teachers are responsible for ensuring gates are secured and shut after use.*

Operation during Learning Times

Teachers are to adapt the procedures above, ensuring two adults are on the rooftop at all times, during use and the gates and site are secure. Students are briefed for safe use and the teachers have effective communication resources if an incident occurs.

Noise Mitigation

In compliance with SSDA conditions

D34. An operational management plan is to be prepared, managed and implemented by the school outlining supervision, mitigation and management practices to be implemented by the school to ensure that the use of the rooftop areas do not result in excessive noise or detrimental amenity impacts to noise sensitive receivers. The completed operational management plan must be provided to the Certifying Authority and the Planning Secretary prior to operation.

The following procedures will be implemented:

- rooftop playground is closed during recess and lunch breaks until student to playground ratio on Level 0 exceeds 1:10m² and during wet and extreme weather conditions
- rooftop playground will be used as a passive play space only
- positive and respectful behaviours will be encouraged to prevent screaming/shouting. Relevant positive behaviour signage will be mounted on the rooftop area as reference and reminders.
- students are reminded to congregate and play, away from surrounding fences
- active supervision by teachers during rooftop access to support student compliance with procedures

Maintenance and Safety Oversight

General Assistant

It is the general assistant's role to **regularly (weekly) walk and inspect** the rooftop playground including stairwells and lift to ensure the site is secure and safe for users.

Health and Safety

The principal or delegate must **regularly (once per term) ensure that they review the safety** of the rooftop playground including the physical site, the procedures and use of the site.

All staff are responsible in identifying any hazards to the principal. This may include a refining of expectations of use, supervision and behaviour.

Both the Principal/delegate and the General Assistant are to liaise with NSW DoE Assets to maximise site safety.

** Please also refer to HWPS Emergency Management Plan, Playground Plans and WHS guidelines.*