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To The Christchurch City Council

Please find attached our submission on the Sabina Playground Renewal

Disabled Persons Assembly NZ

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# Introducing Disabled Persons Assembly

**We work on systemic change for the equity of disabled people**

Disabled Persons Assembly NZ (DPA) is a not-for-profit pan-impairment Disabled People’s Organisation run by and for disabled people.

Since our formation in 1983, DPA has brought disabled people together and shaped our collective input in a way that drives system level change.

**We recognise:**

* Māori as Tangata Whenua and [Te Tiriti o Waitangi](https://www.archives.govt.nz/discover-our-stories/the-treaty-of-waitangi) as the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand;
* disabled people as experts on their own lives;
* the [Social Model of Disability](https://www.odi.govt.nz/guidance-and-resources/guidance-for-policy-makes/) as the guiding principle for interpreting disability and impairment;
* the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html) as the basis for disabled people’s relationship with the State;
* the [New Zealand Disability Strategy](https://www.odi.govt.nz/nz-disability-strategy/) as Government agencies’ guide on disability issues; and
* the [Enabling Good Lives Principles](https://www.enablinggoodlives.co.nz/about-egl/egl-approach/principles/) and [Whāia Te Ao Mārama: Māori Disability Action Plan](https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/whaia-te-ao-marama-2018-2022-maori-disability-action-plan) as avenues to disabled people gaining greater choice and control over their lives and supports.

**We drive systemic change through:**

**Leadership:** reflecting the collective voice of disabled people, locally, nationally and internationally

* modelling disabled leadership;
* as a member of the [Disabled People’s Organisations (DPO) Coalition](https://www.odi.govt.nz/guidance-and-resources/disabled-peoples-organisations/);
* as a member of [Disabled Peoples International](http://www.dpi.org/);
* as a member of the [Pacific Disability Forum](https://pacificdisability.org/), a member of the [International Disability Alliance](https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/); and
* creating and supporting disabled-led initiatives such as [Mahi Tika – Equity in Employment](https://www.dpa.org.nz/mahitika/mahi-tika-equity-in-employment).

**Information and advice:** informing and advising on policies impacting on the lives of disabled people

* providing a channel for information between disabled people and government;
* providing advice, commentary, and submissions to Parliament, government agencies, and local authorities;
* providing advice to businesses and non-government organisations; and
* research.

**Advocacy:** supporting disabled people to have a voice, including a collective voice, in society

* listening to disabled people and identifying barriers to equity;
* engaging both nationally and regionally with our members and the wider community - disabled people, whānau, allies and organisations;
* building the capacity and capability of disabled people;
* partnering with other organisations on projects and campaigns; and
* engaging with the media.

**Monitoring:** monitoring and giving feedback on existing laws, policies and practices about and relevant to disabled people

* monitoring existing and proposed laws, policies and practices relevant to disabled people and whānau; and
* supporting government, organisations, businesses and the public to recognise, understand and address barriers to equity.

# The submission

DPA is providing this submission for the benefit of the Christchurch City Council in its deliberations over the Sabina Playground renewal project.

DPA welcomes this development and sees it as a positive step as part of the Council’s programme to make playgrounds more inclusive, accessible and user friendly for all children and their families/whanau in Christchurch.

We have several recommendations to ensure that the new playground development is made more accessible and inclusive, especially for disabled children.

The first recommendation is that the Sabina Playground should have more inclusive play equipment installed, thereby giving every child the opportunity to participate in play. This means that if any child is not able to access any specific piece of equipment, then they can play on another piece (or part thereof) that is accessible. We do acknowledge that some of the options outlined in terms of the first option for the slide and the Lunar Spinning Climbing Net do exactly that. However, there are other examples of inclusive play equipment which should be considered for placement in the playground either now or in the future and which are available from New Zealand-based suppliers. [[1]](#footnote-2)

The second recommendation is that seating be placed around the playground of varying heights (either higher or lower) and should include armrests so that people with mobility impairments, children and older people can easily get in or out of the seats. Also, tables with seating to enable a wheelchair or mobility aid to be easily inserted alongside people sitting on benches should be incorporated into the designs too. This will enable the disabled parents/whanau of any children to be included in the children’s play area.

The third recommendation is that the proposed new path from the street to the playground should provide for universal accessibility, and this includes for people using wheelchairs, mobility aids, children’s pushchairs, as well as blind and low vision people. Tactile strips should also be added for blind and low vision people to navigate their way safely around the playground, especially along the pathway.

The fourth recommendation is that fully accessible public toilets (with changing facilities) should be established on the park so that both children and adults can use such facilities if they are at the playground. This would enable any adults supervising children on the playground to have ready access to a toilet and changing facilities if needed.

The fifth recommendation is that a wheelchair user friendly drinking water fountain should be placed on the playground, and preferably at a medium height where both wheelchair and mobility aid using adults and children can access it.

The sixth recommendation is that more trees be grown and that a shade tarpaulin be installed so that there will be more shaded play areas during Summer.

The seventh recommendation is that DPA wishes to be involved in any further discussions on the playground alongside other disability organisations/stakeholders.

# DPA’s recommendations

The Disabled Person’s Assembly recommends:

* **Recommendation 1:** That the Sabina Playground should have more inclusive play equipment installed, thereby giving every child the opportunity to participate in play. This means that if any child is not able to access any specific piece of equipment, then they can play on another piece (or part thereof) that is accessible.
* **Recommendation 2:** That seating be placed around the playground of varying heights (either higher or lower) and should include armrests so that people with mobility impairments, children and older people can easily get in or out of the seats. Also, tables with seating to enable a wheelchair or mobility aid to be inserted alongside people sitting on benches should be incorporated into the designs too. This will enable the disabled parents/whanau of any children to be included in the children’s play area.
* **Recommendation 3**: That the new path from the street to the playground should provide for universal accessibility, and this includes for people using wheelchairs, mobility scooters, mobility aids, children’s pushchairs, as well as blind and low vision people.
* **Recommendation 4:** That public toilets be set up and that these be fully accessible.
* **Recommendation 5:** That a wheelchair user friendly water drinking fountain be installed in the playground.
* **Recommendation 6:** That more trees be planted so there will be shaded areas especially in the summer.
* **Recommendation 7:** That DPA wishes to be involved in any further discussions on the playground alongside other disability organisations/stakeholders.

1. Playground Centre. <https://www.playgroundcentre.com/categories/all-inclusive-and-accessible/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)