

## EFA Guidance for change of use of playing fields

The EFA adopts the definition in s.77(7) of SSFA 1998 being '*land in the open air which is provided for the purposes of physical education or recreation, other than any prescribed description of land*'. It will include:

- **grass pitches and artificial surface pitches** set out for the playing of sports;
- **hard surface games courts** including multi-games courts, tennis courts, netball courts and hard paving marked out for games;
- **informal and social areas**, including grassed areas, paved areas (including playgrounds), outdoor seating and teaching areas including rest and quiet areas;
- **marginal areas**, around the edges of playing fields for run-off and to allow for the cyclical realignment of pitches;
- **habitat areas**, set aside for the formal teaching of nature or informal curriculum purposes, including meadowland, wildlife habitats (including ponds), gardens, nature trails and outdoor science areas. Allotment gardens are included in the definition as well as woodland habitat areas;
- **local authority parkland** or other open space that is used, or has been used in the last ten years, for the purposes of a maintained school.

2. **A sports pitch** will naturally form part of a school's playing fields and means an area of:

- open grassed land that is capable of forming a small pitch of at least 2,000m<sup>2</sup> (the Football Association's recommended area for games played by under-10's). Its configuration and topography should make it suitable for a sports pitch, whether it is laid out or not; or
- synthetic or artificial playing surface, or dedicated hard games court of more than that is set out for team games.

3. **Hard play area** means incidental recreation area with tarmac, concrete or paved surface. It does not include areas provided mainly for any type of sport.

4. **Enclosed social area** means social areas, not used for any type of sport, which are enclosed on at least 3 sides by school buildings.

5. By contrast, examples of land that is non-playing field land includes:

- land on which a building or other structure stands including sports halls, indoor and outdoor swimming pools and incidental land that is functionally linked to such buildings or structures;
- soft landscaped or grassed areas not suitable for use for physical education or recreation purposes, such as marginal waste land outside a school's physical boundary fence and ornamental or other flower beds which directly surround a building or which are connected to a caretaker's house, and
- roads, car parks, paths, and hard standing areas for storing waste containers.