



BLUE DUO EVENTS

GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT

Inflatable play equipment

A practical control document for the safe delivery, installation, operation, supervision and removal of bouncy castles and other continuously blown play inflatables.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

OWNER

Blue Duo Events

PREPARED BY

Matt Morton, Co-Owner

VERSION

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REVIEW

Aug 2027

01 Purpose, scope & use

A general baseline - every booking still requires a site-specific dynamic assessment



What this covers

Transport, siting, installation, electrical supply, inflation, supervision, weather, emergency response, deflation, cleaning and pack-down for continuously blown inflatables.



Who may be harmed

Users, attendants, installers, customers, venue staff, contractors and members of the public - including children and people with additional needs.



CONTROL PRINCIPLE

The operating manual and unit label take priority. If the site, weather, equipment or staffing cannot meet them, do not inflate or stop use and evacuate.

02 Roles & competence



Controller / duty holder

Ensures each unit has a current inspection, operating manual, maintenance record, suitable insurance, trained staff and a site-specific assessment.



Installer

Confirms ground, clearances, anchorage, blower, electrics, pressure and deflation performance; records checks before handover.



Operator / attendant

Maintains constant active supervision, enforces limits, records wind/pressure checks, stops use when conditions change and leads evacuation.



Customer / venue

Provides accurate site information, protects the setup area, follows hire conditions and does not move, alter or re-energise equipment.

03 5 × 5 risk matrix

Risk = likelihood × severity. Record the residual score after controls are in place.

	1	2	3	4	5	
5	5 MED	10 HIGH	15 HIGH	20 STOP	25 STOP	Likelihood 1 Rare 2 Unlikely 3 Possible 4 Likely 5 Almost certain
4	4 LOW	8 MED	12 HIGH	16 STOP	20 STOP	
3	3 LOW	6 MED	9 MED	12 HIGH	15 HIGH	
2	2 LOW	4 LOW	6 MED	8 MED	10 HIGH	
1	1 LOW	2 LOW	3 LOW	4 LOW	5 MED	
	SEVERITY →					Severity 1 Insignificant 2 Minor injury 3 Medical treatment 4 Major injury 5 Fatal / multiple serious

DECISION RULE 1-4 proceed and monitor | 5-9 improve where practicable | 10-15 senior review before work | 16-25 STOP

04 Before leaving base

- Match each inflatable to its operating manual, unit label, correct blower and valid annual PIPA/ADIPS inspection record.
- Check fabric, seams, anchor points, ropes, zips, inflation tubes, blower guards, non-return flap, plugs and cables; quarantine defects.
- Pack anemometer, manometer, RCD protection, cable covers, barriers, impact mats, stakes or 170 kg water bags, protective rubber underlay and first-aid provision.
- Confirm competent crew, safe loading and handling aids. Check forecast, venue access, underground services, water supply/drainage and emergency contacts.

05 Site survey & safe installation

01

CONTROL THE AREA

Cordon off the work zone. Keep customers and children clear while unloading, anchoring, filling, inflating and testing.

02

CHECK THE SITE

Use firm, level, well-drained ground. Remove debris and overhead/underground hazards. Maintain manual clearances and safe escape routes.

03

ANCHOR EVERY POINT

Outside: use every supplied anchor point. Ground stakes must be at least 380 mm long and 16 mm diameter/width with rounded tops and welded O/D rings, unless the manual requires more.

04

HARD STANDING - WATER BALLAST

Where stakes are unsuitable, use one BS EN 14960-compliant 170 kg water bag at every required anchor point, unless the manual requires more. Fill fully in final position, close/check valves and connect the rings with rated compatible fixings. Never use partially filled bags.

05

PROTECT SURFACE & BASE

Lay clean, flat, slip-resistant rubber matting beneath the complete inflatable footprint to prevent abrasion or damage to the base and hard surface. Remove folds, gaps, sharp edges and trip hazards; this does not replace entrance impact protection.

06

BLOWER, INFLATE & TEST

Correct blower and protected electrics. Confirm pressure, shape, matting and all ballast attachments. Test deflation before use; users must have time to evacuate while the unit retains safe shape and rigidity.

06 Pre-use acceptance check

☐ Unit identity and inspection status verified☐ All anchor points fitted and secure☐ Correct blower; tube secured; intake clear☐ Pressure within manufacturer range☐ Rubber underlay flat; entrance mats correct☐ Blower, ballast and anchors barriered☐ Operating manual and limits available☐ 170 kg bags full; valves/fixings secure☐ No holes, tears, open seams or distortion☐ Deflation test passed and recorded☐ Cables protected; RCD and plugs sound☐ Emergency route and communications ready

07 Safe operation & supervision

- One suitably trained attendant provides constant, active supervision; add attendants where the manual, layout, user group or event conditions demand it.
- Display and enforce the unit-specific maximum user number, maximum user height/age and any additional manufacturer restrictions. Never substitute a generic capacity.
- Group users of similar size/ability. Control entry and exit, prevent overcrowding and stop boisterous behaviour before it escalates.
- Shoes and glasses off; pockets empty; no jewellery, sharp items, food, drink, chewing gum, face paint or silly string where prohibited.
- No flips, wrestling, pushing, climbing or hanging on walls, sitting on steps, deliberate collisions, or entry while carrying another person.
- Do not admit anyone intoxicated, unwell, injured, unable to use the unit safely, or whose behaviour presents a risk. Make reasonable adjustments without defeating safety controls.
- Keep entrance and escape routes clear. Recheck anchors, blower, pressure, unit condition and mats throughout operation and after any interruption.

08 Weather: measure, record, act



Outdoor rule

Use a suitable anemometer at the inflatable, in unobstructed airflow and facing the wind. Phone weather apps do not measure local conditions and are not a substitute.



Absolute ceiling

Never operate above the lower of the manufacturer's limit or 24 mph (38 km/h), including gusts. If no anemometer is available, do not operate outdoors.

MONITORING LOG - suggested minimum

TIME	WIND / GUST	PRESSURE	ANCHORS / UNIT	INITIALS
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Record at setup, before opening, at regular intervals set by the assessment/manual, and whenever wind, temperature, rain or site conditions change. Stop early enough to evacuate safely.

09 Emergency actions

LOSS OF POWER / DEFLATION

Stop entry, call users to the exit, assist evacuation without entering unstable fabric unless necessary, isolate power, keep the area clear and do not restart until the cause and safe condition are confirmed.

HIGH WIND / WEATHER

Stop use immediately at the operating limit or earlier if control is deteriorating. Evacuate, isolate power, secure the area and deflate in accordance with the manual when safe to do so.

INJURY / ILLNESS

Stop the activity; make the area safe; give first aid within competence; call 999 for serious injury. Preserve evidence, record witnesses and notify the duty holder/venue. Consider RIDDOR duties.

FIRE / ELECTRICAL FAULT

Raise alarm, evacuate upwind, isolate power only if safe and call 999. Do not touch damaged live equipment. Generator: never refuel hot or running; keep outdoors away from doors and air intakes.

EQUIPMENT / ANCHOR FAILURE

Evacuate and quarantine immediately. Do not improvise a repair or reduce anchorage. Record the defect and release only after competent inspection/repair and repeat pre-use checks.

10 Pack-down, cleaning & transport

- Close the attraction and prevent re-entry. Confirm all users and loose items are off before isolating power.
- Deflate only in the manual's sequence and within the controlled zone. Keep people clear of collapsing fabric, ropes, ballast, stakes and blower.
- Drain water bags fully in a controlled location before disconnecting or moving them. Never drag, roll or lift a filled bag; control discharge to prevent slips, flooding or pollution.
- Use team handling, a trolley and a planned route. Wet units and rubber matting may be heavier or slippery; do not force an unsafe lift.
- Clean and dry the inflatable, rubber matting and empty bags; inspect valves, rings, carabiners and fabric. Quarantine leaks, damage or suspect fixings.
- Account for all anchors, mats, cables and barriers. Secure the load and report defects before the next hire.

11 Risk register - key hazards

HAZARD / EVENT	PEOPLE	CORE CONTROLS	I	R
Manual handling / crush	Installers	Fill water bags in final position; drain fully before moving. Use team lift, trolley and route plan.	12	4
Vehicle movement / unloading	Crew, public	Segregated unloading zone, banksman where needed, parking brake and controlled access.	15	5
Underground / overhead services	Crew, public	Site information, cable/utility checks, safe clearances; relocate if uncertain.	20	5
Inadequate anchorage / wind	Users, public	Every point: compliant stakes or full 170 kg water bags with rated fixings; recorded wind checks.	25	5
Collapse / rapid deflation	Users	Correct blower/pressure, fabric checks and pre-use deflation test; evacuation plan.	20	5
Electric shock / damaged supply	All persons	Inspection, suitable RCD, dry/protected connections, cable covers and isolation.	15	5
Trips around cables/ballast/blower	All persons	Barrier water bags/anchors; safe cable routes; secure rubber-mat edges; good lighting.	12	4
Falls at entrance / hard surface	Users	Correct impact matting, controlled exit, clear landing zone and supervision.	12	4
Collision / overcrowding	Users	Manual capacity, size separation, active supervision and behaviour control.	16	6
Climbing, flips or rough play	Users	Clear rules, intervention and removal of unsafe users.	16	6
Sharp objects / damaged fabric	Users	Site sweep, footwear/glasses off, empty pockets, inspection and quarantine.	12	4
Water leak / wet surface / heat	Users, staff	Check bags and valves; control drainage; stop for leaks/slips; monitor unit condition.	15	5
Generator fire / exhaust	All persons	Outdoor siting, exclusion zone, correct load, no hot refuelling, suitable extinguisher.	20	5
Unsupervised access	Users, public	Constant attendance while inflated; barriers and prompt deflation after closure.	15	3
Infection / contamination	Users, crew	Cleaning regime, hand hygiene, bodily-fluid procedure and documented quarantine.	9	3

12 Site-specific dynamic assessment

Complete before opening and whenever circumstances change

BOOKING / VENUE / DATE

INFLATABLE ID AND MANUAL REVISION

GROUND AND ACCESS CONDITIONS

WEATHER FORECAST AND RECORDED LIMITS

USER GROUP / ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS

STAFFING AND SUPERVISION PLAN

POWER SOURCE AND CABLE ROUTE

EMERGENCY ACCESS / ASSEMBLY POINT

ADDITIONAL HAZARDS AND CONTROLS

AUTHORISATION TO OPEN

HANDOVER / AUTHORISATION

I confirm the equipment and site controls have been checked, recorded and explained. The inflatable may open only while all stated conditions remain satisfied.

Name / signature: _____ Date/time: _____ Operator: _____

13 Reference & review

- Health and Safety Executive: Bouncy castles and other play inflatables - safety advice (hse.gov.uk/entertainment/fairgrounds/inflatables.htm).
- BS EN 14960-1:2019, Inflatable play equipment - safety requirements and test methods (apply the current edition and amendments relevant to the unit).
- PIPA / ADIPS inspection records, manufacturer's operating manual, unit label, maintenance history and hire documentation.
- Review annually, after an incident or near miss, equipment/manual change, significant guidance change, or when experience shows controls are ineffective.