

TURNING A NEGLECTED SPACE INTO AN INCLUSIVE HAVEN



WILLOW ROAD PLAY AREA

Client:	Dartford Borough Council
Address:	Willow Road, Tree Estate, Dartford, DA1 2QP
Budget:	£80,000
Age Range:	Toddler, Junior
Ranges:	Kanopé, Diabolo
Surfacing:	Wetpour

Project Story: In late 2024, Dartford Borough Council issued a £500,000 tender to redevelop five play sites. Proludic secured the project, transforming Willow Road in Dartford into a vibrant, inclusive space designed to serve children of all ages and abilities. The site had significant issues: deteriorating wetpour surfacing, poor drainage, and outdated equipment. Proludic's team thoroughly assessed these problems and devised creative solutions to improve both functionality and aesthetics.

One key challenge was the original multiplay unit, which encroached on residents' privacy. This was replaced with a **3-bay swing set** offering inclusive swing seat options, and the climbing structures were repositioned away from nearby residential home fences. Drainage was upgraded, wetpour and overgrown foliage removed, and a **spinning bowl** was added to enhance play value in that corner.



Transforming Willow Road has been incredibly rewarding. We've created a vibrant, inclusive space where children of all abilities can play safely, connect, and let their imaginations thrive.



Tim Bird
Proludic Area Manager



Contact Us On: www.proludic.co.uk - info@proludic.co.uk - 0115 9823 980





Accessibility and inclusivity were central to the design. A **sensory play panel and communication board** greet visitors at the entrance, supporting children with special needs. An **inclusive WOK spinner (J2406)** and a **wheelchair-accessible trampoline** ensure everyone can participate. To enhance visual appeal and create a calming atmosphere, a wildflower sensory bed was established behind the entrance panels.

Given the site's surrounding houses and extensive tarmac, Proludic developed a jungle adventure theme to inspire imaginative play and brighten the environment. Thermographic floor markings depict a river with boulders for jumping, hopscotch, and colourful trails. A stylish new **multiplay unit** featuring timber-effect panels and dual slides of varying heights allows children of different ages and abilities to play together, supporting inclusive and engaging play for all. Additional features include **Kanopé monkey bars**, a **Diabolo playhouse (J220)** and a **bespoke thermos metal seesaw**.



The revitalised area offers **87 play values** across diverse equipment, including **balance trails**, **hidden woodland accessories**, and **face-to-face springers**. The double-sided **Diabolo multiplay unit (J38124)** encourages social interaction, while the river-themed surfacing and nature-inspired details tie the space together into a cohesive, stimulating environment.

Beyond the play area, the project added social value by donating to the Darent River Preservation Society (DRIPS) and committing to environmental stewardship. Site drainage improvements and thoughtful spatial planning ensure the area remains safe, inviting, and sustainable for years to come. Ultimately, Willow Road was transformed from a neglected corner into a bright, inclusive haven where children can play, learn and grow together.



Contact Us On: www.proludic.co.uk - info@proludic.co.uk - 0115 9823 980

