

# TOP TIPS

## FOR MAINTAINING YOUR SCHOOL GROUNDS

School fields are an integral part of every Kiwi school. And managing them so they can be used year round takes forward planning and strategic management.

The key is to have good grass cover. At the moment it is winter, grass growth and recovery is pretty slow which makes it a challenging time to maintain your field.

Here's my tips to help give your sports fields the best chance at providing your school with a quality surface.

If you have any questions or want to talk further about your school sports fields we are happy to help.

**Blair Christiansen**  
EDEN PARK TURF MANAGER



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# THINGS TO CONSIDER:

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## 1) Use management

It's best to manage the use of your field to ensure it is in good condition throughout the entire year. Planning use in winter months will limit damage to grass cover and soil profile. For example, limiting use after heavy rain or restricting the areas of use for PE classes. While inconvenient, it could prevent your field from becoming a mud bath making it unusable in spring.

## 2) Bang for your buck

Budgets are likely to be limited for turf surfaces, so focus on the management techniques that will benefit you the most e.g. grass cover, mowing and line marking. Make sure to spend your money wisely on products that will achieve this before looking at lower prioritised wants & needs.

## 3) Mowing frequency

Mow at the right times rather than sticking to a schedule can be very beneficial to your turf health. Make sure to mow when the conditions are dry and growth is high, this will cause the grass to tiller and grass cover to thicken. At Eden Park, we may only mow once a week in winter but in summer it can be daily.

## 4) Grass length

A trick often overlooked is managing the height of your grass over the seasons. At Eden Park, we maintain a grass height of 35mm in winter. This provides our surface extra protection and gives us more cover going into events such as the Super Rugby games. In the summer, we are able to mow lower as grass growth and recovery is higher. But always keep in mind field usage, as grass cover and protecting your surface is paramount.

## 5) Keep your field safe

Making sure your field is safe for kids to run around on is an important part of field management. After winter, assess your field and look for low areas i.e. goal mouths, high wear areas and even holes that could be potential hazards for children to roll ankles. These areas can be filled with soil and seed, and be roped off until they recover from the winter activity. If the field is really uneven, a great tool to even out the surface is a Cambridge roller.



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