



Media Release
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Levi Park gets smart

New Zealand's first PGC Smart Playground has opened this week in Selwyn, bringing a new kind of fun to Levi Park, Rolleston.

The park has been transformed into a Smart Playground as part of a 90-day trial aimed at bridging the gap between digital and physical play. New Zealand company Playground Centre (PGC) has exclusive rights to the North American Biba technology that powers the play.

The Smart Playground combines digital fun and physical play as a way to help decrease screen time among children and ensure healthy, outdoor play.

At Levi Park six augmented reality markers are now attached to the existing playground equipment, which can be easily scanned by parents and children to activate mini-games and unlock new play content aimed at three to nine-year olds.

Parents can download the games free from the App Store or on Google Play, by searching for 'playbiba'.

To play, the parent or caregiver holds their phone with a Biba game open, issuing playful instructions based on an imaginary premise (like, "you're a secret agent!") while the child follows them. The child spends most of their session time playing away from the phone on playground equipment based on game directives. They then return to the phone intermittently to perform a game function, complete a mini game or advance their progress through the game's imaginary scenario.

Playground Centre CEO Simon Filleul says his company was excited to work with the Council to trial the first PGC Smart Playground, which encourages young children to enjoy the outdoors and be active rather than rely on sedentary electronic play.

"What's even better is that the set-up process is relatively simple for any Council or playground manager wanting to add a new digital dimension to their existing playgrounds," Mr Filleul says.

At the end of the trial period the Council will assess whether to incorporate the Smart Playground technology at other playgrounds in Selwyn.

To learn more about Smart Playgrounds go to www.playgroundcentre.com/smart-playgrounds/.

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PHOTO: Levi Park, Rolleston has become New Zealand's first Smart Playground

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