

Media Release

New playground an early Christmas present for Christchurch

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The opening of the new Margaret Mahy Family Playground next week will allow Christchurch's children to enjoy the new facility throughout the summer holidays.

"We've been working hard to make sure the playground can open on 22 December, and that has been quite challenging given the amount of work that has to be done," says Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) Chief Executive John Ombler.

"But I am happy to be able to say it is all coming together and the playground will be open to the public from 1pm next Tuesday."

The playground is believed to be one of the largest in the Southern Hemisphere. It has been designed with input from the city's school children, and to reflect Canterbury's four main habitat types with a forest zone, a peninsula zone, a plains zone and a wetlands area.

The playground itself has cost \$3m, including \$2m worth of equipment tailored for the facility. Some of the highlights will be the double flying fox, a four metre wide slide, water-play areas and a spider climbing net.

Works by Margaret Mahy and Elsie Locke feature in a Story Arc which highlights the important contributions by the two authors to children's literature, along with stories from Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.

"There are some other features that will be added progressively in the New Year too, so there is a lot to look forward to over the summer months," Mr Ombler says.

"With a number of food concessions opening in the picnic area, the playground is truly designed to be a family destination for the holidays."