

**The Woodland Federation of Peak District Schools**  
**Risk Assessment for Early Years Foundation Stage**  
**Stoney Middleton CE Primary School**

**2023-2024**



## Why risk assess?

Across the Early Years environment, we aim to offer a wide range of exciting and engaging learning opportunities to help develop children’s foundation skills. In any situation where there are children working and playing together there are risks but there are also benefits. We take the health and safety of children very seriously and assess each situation by considering the potential risks and the benefits and then through discussion we can decide if the risks can be managed appropriately and that the benefits are valid, reasonable and productive in moving children’s learning forward.

The following risk assessments cover the main areas of the indoor and outdoor environment. The general checklist covers our daily considerations before opening up the environment to parents and children. Toileting, first aid and safeguarding are covered in our handbook and by whole-school policies available on the school website. Trips are covered separately using whole-school risk assessment forms and are agreed on a trip-by-trip basis by the Headteacher.

All risk assessments are reviewed yearly to ensure they are up-to-date and relevant however, an assessment will be made immediately if there is an incident or an area of the environment is adapted or changed in any significant way.

Risk Matrix						
		Consequence				
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Almost certain	Moderate	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Likely	Moderate	Moderate	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Possible	Low	Moderate	High	High	Extreme
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Moderate	High	High
	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	High

## Daily Safety Checklist

Item	Details	Tick or Comment
<b>OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT</b>		
1	Colourful gate to playground to be on catch and locked with bolt. Blue gate at front of school to be closed securely.	
2	Pick up litter	
3	Check drain holes are clear	
4	Check outdoor furniture is safe	
5	Remove any broken/unsafe outdoor toys and equipment.	
<b>INDOOR ENVIRONMENT</b>		
1	Check toilets and sinks are clean and there is sufficient toilet paper and soap.	
2	Check indoor furniture and equipment is safe.	
3	Check external front and back doors are properly closed on the magnet.	

# Benefit Risk Assessment: Indoor Activities

Prepared by: Isobel Board

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
				L	C	R		
<b>Malleable activities e.g. playdough</b>	Physical development as well as motor skills practice.	Possible allergic reactions to materials. Consumption of materials.	<i>I can roll and cut this up to make a birthday cake for you</i>	possible	minor	MODERATE	Check all information on allergies and avoid allergens. Make sure all other materials are sensitive and are diluted according to the instructions. Children follow the no consumption rule in this area	Staff and parents
<b>Toy boxes in storage unit</b>	Add stimulus to play increasing vocabulary, interaction and communication.	Falling toys, heavy boxes being moved unsafely, trapped fingers or drops on toes.	<i>We have to think before we move the boxes</i>	possible	moderate	HIGH	Ensure boxes and baskets are not overloaded. Provide low storage for boxes. Adults to oversee manual handling and model safe techniques.	Staff and children
<b>Slips and trips</b>		Children trip or slip on toys left on the floor	<i>You need to look where you are walking, tidy up what you don't need</i>	possible	minor	MODERATE	Set expectations about how much can be out at any one time and encourage children to tidy up what they are no longer playing with to keep the environment safe. Any spills on floor to be mopped up straight away. Any objects on floor that could be a trip hazard to be picked up.	Staff and children
<b>Scissors / hole punches</b>	Promotes the children's motor skills and creative play	Children cut themselves or others	<i>We need to hold the scissors safely and walk with them. I must not put my fingers in the hole punch.</i>	possible	minor	MODERATE	Talk to the children about the use of scissors, e.g. for paper and card. The scissors must be used to cut. Make it clear to the children that you don't use the scissors to cut hair or each other's clothes. Model to the children how to use scissors and walk with them safely. Model how to use the hole punches.	Staff and children
<b>Open shelves</b>	Encourage independence and self-selection of resources	Children climb the shelves or hang off it causing shelves to fall	I must not climb the shelves or hang off the furniture	Unlikely	moderate	MODERATE	Talk to the children about the open shelves and how to use them safely. Encourage the children to find an adult if a child is using the shelves incorrectly.	Staff and children

## Benefit Risk Assessment: Mud Kitchen

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
				L	C	R		
<b>Contact with soil</b>	Exposure to beneficial bacteria to build a healthy immune system. Sensorial open ended materials. Normal childhood experience.	Ingesting soil	<i>It's fun to get dirty</i> <i>The mud feels good</i>	unlikely	minor	LOW	Provide hand washing facilities during and after play Establish good handwashing routines. Children encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area	Staff At the beginning of each session
<b>Soil contamination</b>	Children can be involved in checking the area before play creating a sense of ownership and raising awareness of potential hazards	Ingesting/ absorbing contaminated soil	<i>Tell the teacher if we see something strange</i>	unlikely	minor	LOW	Soil should be checked for contaminants daily, before play This is part of the daily checklist Children follow the no consumption rule in this area Not using manure or any chemicals on the playground or surrounding areas.	Staff Part of daily checklist
<b>Washing up hands</b>	Children learn good hygiene practices	Wet areas Slips and trips	<i>We need to wash the mud off properly</i>	possible	moderate	HIGH	Provide washing facilities and at times of extreme mud, provide rinsing facilities outside. Staff to monitor floor areas for water and mop up when necessary.	Staff to monitor
<b>Washing up utensils, equipment</b>	Involving the children in the cleaning and tidying creates a sense of ownership Can help with fine and gross motor skills	Manual handling Moving pots and pans	<i>We need to pick the pots up off the floor and put the spoons away</i>	unlikely	minor	LOW	Ensure buckets and baskets are not overloaded. Provide low storage for pots and pans. Adults to oversee manual handling and model safe techniques.	Staff to monitor
<b>Water</b>	Adds a new dimension to the play, changing the states of materials so children can mix, tip, pour and stir to create potions, stews and soups. Covers aspects of maths, and science.	Drowning Flooding during prolonged or heavy rain	<i>I have made a stew we are going to have our friends over for tea</i>	rare	catastrophic	HIGH	Containers provided do not allow children to fall in. Teachers to supervise where large trugs are in use and do not fill deeply. Staff to monitor area during prolonged heavy rain	Staff to monitor

<b>Water</b>	As above	Stagnant water, consumption/ absorption of contaminants	<i>Don't really drink it, it would be yucky!</i>	unlikely	moderate	<b>MODERATE</b>	Water containers are emptied at the end of each session/ day so they do not go stagnant. Water containers are emptied regularly and check for contaminants. Children are encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area. Children are made aware of the hazards of stagnant water.	Staff to monitor
<b>Wet/dirty clothes</b>	Children become responsible for their own belongings Children practice changing clothes and shoes	Children get cold	<i>We should wear aprons when playing in the water.</i>	possible	insignificant	<b>LOW</b>	Parents asked to provide changes of clothes so children can change if needed. Parents are asked to supply coats that they do not mind getting muddy.	School Parents
<b>Gravel, pebbles, woodchip or other pieces of natural material</b>	Fine and gross motor skills are developed when lifting, mixing, stirring and pouring The connection to nature	Choking	<i>I love mixing all the materials into my pot</i>	unlikely	moderate	<b>MODERATE</b>	Any children who are likely to explore putting things into their mouths are identified and given greater supervision in this area Children encouraged to follow a no consumption rule in this area	Staff

## Benefit Risk Assessment: Climbing equipment and free-standing play equipment

Prepared by: Date:

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When	Progress
				L	C	R			
<b>Guttering and supports</b>	Exploring how to fit together so that the water or balls flow down.	Hitting other children whilst handling. Trapping fingers. Trips	<i>I am going to see how long I can make the waterfall.</i>	possible	moderate	MODERATE	Children to be told how to handle the equipment safely. Children to be made aware of risks of tripping as this takes up quite a lot of space.	Staff and children	
<b>Tyres</b>	Opportunity to see the environment from a different perspective, practice jumping, climbing and sliding from different heights Incorporate equipment into role play	Falling from a height, slipping on equipment	<i>I am a going to climb all the way to the top of the tyre mountain</i>	possible	moderate	HIGH	All children to have a safety talk before using the equipment and numbers are restricted to avoid collisions and overcrowding. Equipment is checked prior to use to ensure all parts are safe and secure. Equipment checked for stagnant water and tyres covered each night.	Staff and children	

## Benefit Risk Assessment: Wheeled Toys

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When	Progress
				L	C	R			
<b>Riding on and being a passenger on the bikes</b>	Physical development, spatial awareness, communication and social skills. Part of creative play.	Knocking other children, clothing trapped in moving parts, bikes tipping.	<i>We are chasing a tiger it escaped from the zoo.</i>	possible	minor	<b>MODERATE</b>	Involve children in safety talks about using the bikes in the playground Make sure children do not wear scarves in the playground to avoid tangling in wheels. Ensure all wheeled toys are checked over regularly for damage and replaced when necessary.	Children and staff	
<b>Scooting / riding around the playground</b>	Physical development, co-ordination. Social and creative play.	Knocking into other children, scooters tipping/sliding. Clothing trapped in moving parts	<i>This is a police scooter we are keeping people safe.</i>	possible	minor	<b>MODERATE</b>	Involve children in safety talks about using the scooters in the playground space. Make sure children do not wear scarves in the playground when playing on wheeled toys to avoid tangling in wheels. Ensure all wheeled toys are checked over regularly for damage and replaced when necessary.	Children and staff	



## Benefit Risk Assessment: Growing Plants / Seeds

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
				L	C	R		
<b>Contact with soil</b>	Exposure to beneficial bacteria to build a healthy immune system. Sensorial open ended materials. Normal childhood experience.	Ingesting soil	<i>It's fun to get dirty</i> <i>The mud feels good</i>	unlikely	minor	LOW	Provide hand washing facilities during and after play. Establish good handwashing routines. Children encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area	Staff At the beginning of each session
<b>Soil contamination</b>	Children can be involved in checking the area before play creating a sense of ownership and raising awareness of potential hazards	Ingesting/ absorbing contaminated soil	<i>Tell the teacher if we see something strange</i>	unlikely	minor	LOW	Soil should be checked for contaminants daily, before play. This is part of the daily checklist Children follow the no consumption rule in this area. Not using manure or any chemicals on the playground or surrounding areas.	Staff Part of daily checklist
<b>Washing hands</b>	Children learn good hygiene practices	Wet areas Slips and trips	<i>We need to wash the mud off properly</i>	possible	moderate	HIGH	Provide washing facilities and at times of extreme mud, provide rinsing facilities outside. Staff to monitor floor areas for water and mop up when necessary.	Staff to monitor
<b>Using gardening tools</b>	Children develop safe handling skills; understand the purpose of gardening tools.	Cuts/grazes from using tools. Poking or eye injuries.	<i>We need to dig up the potatoes for our soup.</i>	possible	moderate	HIGH	Ensure children are show how to use the tools safely and that they only work under supervision when using sharp tools. Make sure tools available are child sized and appropriate. Check all tools regularly for damage and replace where necessary.	Staff and children

<b>Cooking and /or eating food grown in the playground (e.g. peas / strawberries)</b>	Knowledge of foods and how they grow. An understanding of healthy diets.	Allergic reaction to food. Consumption or absorption of a contaminant.	<i>I didn't know potatoes grew under the ground.</i>	unlikely	moderate	<b>HIGH</b>	Children to understand not to put anything in their mouths in this area. Foods harvested to be washed and prepared safely. Staff carrying out cooking activities to have the relevant food hygiene certification. (EYFS manager to ensure this is kept up to date) Children to be involved in safe food preparation to develop their understanding.	Staff and children	
<b>Water</b>	As above	Stagnant water, consumption/ absorption of contaminants	<i>Don't really drink it, it would be yucky!</i>	unlikely	moderate	<b>MODERATE</b>	Water containers are emptied at the end of each session/ day so they do not go stagnant. Water containers are emptied regularly and check for contaminants. Children are encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area. Children are made aware of the hazards of stagnant water.	Staff to monitor	
<b>Wet/dirty clothes</b>	Children become responsible for their own belongings Children practice changing clothes and shoes	Children get cold	<i>We might need to get changed.</i>	possible	insignificant	<b>LOW</b>	Parents asked to supply spare clothes. Parents are asked to supply coats that they do not mind getting muddy.	School Parents	

## Benefit Risk Assessment: Sand and Water

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When	Progress
				L	C	R			
<b>Sand play</b>	Sociable play, motor skills, creative play, language development.	Sand flipping up into eyes.	<i>We are digging for treasure.</i>	unlikely	minor	LOW	Talk to the children about playing together in the sand and use the rhyme – 'the sand stays down low or out you go' Monitor the number of children playing in the sand pit and regulate if necessary.	Staff and children	
<b>Slipping on loose sand around the pit</b>	Children benefit from playing in a large sand pit and connecting with the material.	Children slip and injury themselves on loose sand surrounding the pit.	<i>I have to climb out carefully and empty my wellies into the pit.</i>	possible	minor	MODERATE	Adults to monitor and clear the build-up of sand around the pit.	Staff	
<b>Sand contamination</b>	Children can be involved in checking the area before play creating a sense of ownership and raising awareness of potential hazards	Ingesting/ absorbing contaminated sand	<i>Tell the teacher if we see something strange</i>	unlikely	minor	LOW	The cover needs to be in place at the end of each day. Adults to remove the cover and check for any contamination. Area around the sandpit to be checked each day for any contamination, rubbish blown in, animal droppings etc.	Staff	
<b>Sand and water</b>	Sociable play, motor skills, creative play, language development. Science and mathematical development.	Water or sand splashed into eyes, consumption of materials.	<i>Keep the sand down low or away you go – we try to do this</i>	possible	minor	MODERATE	Involve the children in setting the safety rules in these areas.	Staff and children	
<b>Sand and water</b>	Sociable play, motor skills, creative play, language development. Science and mathematical development.	Slipping on sand and water on the floor	<i>We need to be careful if there is stuff on the floor</i>	possible	minor	MODERATE	Staff to monitor these areas and encourage children to spot and help clear spillages to reduce the risk of slips.	Staff and children	
<b>Water tray play</b>	Science exploration on water movement, maths capacity, motor skill development in filling and pouring.	Children become wet and cold	<i>I love when the water spills over the top – it's like a volcano.</i>	unlikely	minor	LOW	Staff to consider the temperature outside before placing water trays out.	Staff and children	

<b>Water</b>	As above	Water is dirty or contaminated	<i>The water is dirty.</i>	unlikely	minor	LOW	All water trays to be emptied at the end of the session/day and refreshed with clean water each day. If children have transported soil/sand or other materials into the water then trays need to be washed before they are refreshed.	Staff then children	
<b>Water toys</b>	Offer creativity in the water play, can facilitate maths and science talk and interactive play.	Toys hold water and become mouldy or contaminated.	<i>I love the water mill it spins round and round when I pour the water here.</i>	unlikely	minor	LOW	Staff to ensure all water toys are drained and left to dry overnight – toys are periodically sterilized and checked for mould. Toys to be replaced when necessary.	Staff and children	
<b>Sprays/bubbles</b>	Aiming skills. Blowing. Coordination.	Bubble solution or spray in the eye.	<i>I love watching the bubbles go across the playground then they pop</i>	possible	minor	MODERATE	Staff to involve children in assessing the risks of blowing bubbles or spraying water and look at how to do it safely. Staff to supervise use of bubbles.	Staff and children	





## Benefit Risk Assessment: Baking / Cooking

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When	Progress
				L	C	R			
<b>Using tools – spoons, knives, spatulas etc.</b>	Children develop an understanding of using tools safely and will develop their fine- motor skills in controlling tools.	Children could cut themselves or hurt themselves using equipment.	<i>I love using different tools in my work.</i>	Possible	Minor	Low	Children will only use tools suitable for children – knives will be blunt. Children will only use tools under supervision. Children will be taught and shown how to use tools carefully and properly.	Staff and children	
<b>Heat for cooking or melting materials.</b>	Children will experience the changes that can take place during cooking and will have an understanding of the science behind irreversible and reversible changes.	Burns and scolds.	<i>I love cooking and baking.</i>	Possible	Minor	Low	Children will not be allowed in staff room or kitchen where there are hot things. Children will be made aware of the rules and the risks of touching hot materials. Hot materials will never be left near children. All hot materials will be allowed to cool before placing near children.	Staff and children	
<b>Germs / control of spreading illness.</b>	Children will have a good understanding of the importance of hand washing and will understand how germs can make you poorly.	Children could spread germs to each other through their baking.	<i>I like to stir and mix ingredients when baking.</i>	Possible	Minor	Low	All children will wash their hands using soap before baking / cooking commences. Children will be taught to cough / sneeze away from the cooking area. Children will be supervised to ensure fingers are not put in mouths during cooking. Any children who touch their mouths / noses will be sent to rewash their hands.	Staff and children	
<b>Allergic reaction</b>	Children will experience different foods / tastes.	A child could have an allergic reaction to new foods.	<i>I love to eat what I have made.</i>	Possible	Minor	Low	Parents will inform staff of any known allergies. Ingredients will be checked and not used if an allergen is known within nursery. No type of nuts will be used. Staff will be vigilant and will remove ingredients from the setting if any rash or other symptoms appear during the cooking session. Staff will inform parents prior to cooking to check for any possible new allergies that have not been reported to school.	Staff, parents and children	