

The Discovery School



EYFS Risk Assessment

Reception Class

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 a number of 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 the 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.

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Daily Safety Check

Item	Details	
OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT		
1	EYFS gate is locked once all the children are in	
2	Check for any animal excrement and dispose of appropriately	
4	Check under the canopy, sweep if necessary	
5	Pick up litter or any slip hazards	
6	Check climbing frame can be used – children are not able to use if it is wet	
7	Check blue surface around frame is dry and not wet – use cones to warn children of slip hazard	
8	Check outdoor furniture is safe	
9	Remove any broken/unsafe outdoor toys and equipment	
10	Check the outdoor surface is safe	
11	Ensure all resources are stored safely and at child height	
12	Check for any mould or fungus – corner off if appropriate	
13	No stables pulled out or loose	
14	Shed doors for resources to be opened with door stops	
INDOOR ENVIRONMENT		
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 classroom floor	
4	Check the snack table is clean and that the children have access to fresh water	
5	Unlock the fire door to the outside area	
6	Place chairs out around tables and check for damage	

Benefit Risk Assessment: Indoor Activities

Prepared by: N.Aiston

Date:12/09/2022

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice – their assessment of risk	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
				L	C	R		
Malleable activities	Physical development as well as motor skills practice.	Possible allergic reactions to materials. Consumption of materials.		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 children
Toy boxes/baskets	Add stimulus to play increasing vocabulary, interaction and communication.	Falling toys, heavy boxes being moved unsafely, trapped fingers or drops on toes.		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
Slips and trips		Children trip or slip on toys left on the floor		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
Scissors, hole punches	Promotes the children's motor skills and creative play	Children cut themselves or others		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
Open shelves	Encourage independence and self-selection of resources	Children climb the shelves or hang of it causing shelves to fall		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 – their assessment of risk	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
				L	C	R		
Contact with soil	Exposure to beneficial bacteria to build a healthy immune system. Sensorial open ended materials. Normal childhood experience.	Ingesting soil		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
Soil contamination	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		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 garden or surrounding areas.	Staff Part of daily checklist
Washing up hands	Children learn good hygiene practices	Wet areas Slips and trips		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
Washing up utensils, equipment	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		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
Water	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		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

Water	As above	Stagnant water, consumption/ absorption of contaminants		unlikely	moderate	MODERATE	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
Wet/dirty clothes	Children become responsible for their own belongings Children practice changing clothes and shoes	Children get cold		possible	insignificant	LOW	School has a supply of mud suits and wellies. Parents are asked to supply coats that they do not mind getting muddy.	School Parents
Gravel, pebbles, woodchip or other pieces of natural material	Fine and gross motor skills are developed when lifting, mixing, stirring and pouring The connection to nature	Choking		unlikely	moderate	MODERATE	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
Using plants and other foraged natural materials	Connection to nature Creative stimulus Sensorial Open ended materials	Ingesting or absorption of poisonous plants Allergies		unlikely	moderate	MODERATE	Raise the risk of eating plants Plants within the play area are chosen carefully. Adults to remove hazardous plants Children encouraged to follow a no consumption rule in this area. Children encouraged to wash their hands after play.	Staff

Benefit Risk Assessment: Allotment/Digging

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice – their assessment of risk	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
				L	C	R		
Contact with soil	Exposure to beneficial bacteria to build a healthy immune system. Sensorial open ended materials. Normal childhood experience.	Ingesting soil		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
Soil contamination	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		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 garden or surrounding areas.	Staff Part of daily checklist
Washing up hands	Children learn good hygiene practices	Wet areas Slips and trips		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
Using gardening tools	Children develop safe handling skills; understand the purpose of gardening tools.	Cuts/grazes from using tools. Poking or eye injuries.		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

Growing own food to cook in the environment	Scientific knowledge of plants and growth cycles. Understanding about environmental issues. Cooking and tasting a variety of home-grown foods.	Allergic reaction to foods.		unlikely	moderate	HIGH	Ensure all information on allergies is stored centrally and all staff are aware of known allergens. Parents to inform school of any changes and updates and ensure all medication is in school. Staff to check dates and ensure all medication is stored centrally and in date. Plan activities carefully for children with allergies considering ingredients and possible sources for reaction. Source alternative safe ingredients where necessary.	Staff, parents, children
Cooking and /or eating food grown in the allotment	Knowledge of foods and how they grow. An understanding of healthy diets.	Allergic reaction to food. Consumption or absorption of a contaminant.		unlikely	moderate	HIGH	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
Water	As above	Stagnant water, consumption/ absorption of contaminants		unlikely	moderate	MODERATE	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
Wet/dirty clothes	Children become responsible for their own belongings Children practice changing clothes and shoes	Children get cold		possible	insignificant	LOW	School has a supply of mud suits and wellies. Parents are asked to supply coats that they do not mind getting muddy.	School Parents

Benefit Risk Assessment: Minibeasts

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
				L	C	R		
Playing with minibeasts	Learning about the world and comparing living things.	Bacteria and viruses, sharp sticks		possible	insignificant	LOW	Explain to the children that they must wash their hands after playing with minibeasts. Do not put your hands in your mouth. Do not put the leaves and sticks in your mouth. Do not pick up the leaves and sticks and disturb the creature's home.	Staff and children
Snails	The children get to explore the features of a snail and observe them exploring the bug hotel	E. coli		possible	insignificant	LOW	Give the children warning and tell them to keep their hands away from their mouth. Wash hands once finished with the activity.	Staff and children
Beetles	The children get to experience different beetles and their features	Beetle jaws – sharp centipedes jaws		possible	Insignificant	LOW	Provide brushes to put creatures into bug boxes for viewing. Give warning about sharp jaws and clear instructions on handling and viewing.	Staff and children

Benefit Risk Assessment: Pond

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
				L	C	R		
Slippery / poorly defined pond edges / banks		Children trip or fall. Children possibly fall into the pond.		possible	moderate	HIGH	Check pond before use and ensure children understand the pond rules before entering. Staff member to be in the pond at all times when in use.	Staff
Hygiene		Infection / disease Weils disease Poisoning (blue - green algae)		possible	moderate	HIGH	Ensure the children understand the rules before using the pond, provide hand washing station. Discuss hygiene with the children and help them understand how to keep themselves safe.	Staff and children
Pond use	Children learn about the world and understand change/local wildlife.	Injury from nets Slips, trips and falls Cuts and abrasions		possible	moderate	HIGH	Check nets before use, check area to make sure there are no slip hazards. Have clear rules for the children to follow to keep themselves safe.	Staff and children
Washing up hands	Children learn good hygiene practices	Wet areas Slips and trips		possible	moderate	HIGH	Provide washing facilities, provide rinsing facilities outside. Ensure children wash their hands properly.	Staff to monitor
Gate closed and locked when not in use.		Children could fall in the pond if an adult is not there to help		possible	moderate	HIGH	Gate for pond is locked with a padlock when not in use.	Staff

Benefit Risk Assessment: Climbing equipment and free standing play equipment

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
				L	C	R		
Tyres	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		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
Crates and planks, cable reels, tree stumps	Children develop their motor skills and balance. Creative play.	Slips, trips or falls. Knocks from falling or moving blocks.		possible	minor	MODERATE	Children have a safety talk prior to using the equipment and agree how to use it safely. Daily reminders are given about assessing the risk in their play. Weather conditions to be considered when accessing the equipment. Area to be monitored to ensure surroundings are clear and surface is flat. All equipment is checked regularly to look for damage.	Staff and children
Climbing frame	Opportunity to develop their gross motor skills and opportunity for problem solving.	Falling from a height, slipping on equipment		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 every day to ensure it is not wet.	Staff and children
Canopy Poles	Holds up canopy roof for under cover areas.	Children run into the poles.		possible	moderate	HIGH	Talk to the children about outdoor rules and looking at the risks. Ensure the children understand where it is safe to run and where it is not.	Staff and children

Sheds/role play house and resource cupboards	<p>Used to hold resources for the children to access for their learning.</p> <p>To support imaginative role play.</p>	<p>Children get hit by the doors or shut their fingers in the doors. Children run into the swinging doors.</p>		<p>possible</p>	<p>moderate</p>	<p>HIGH</p>	<p>Ensure the children make sure that there are door stops on the sheds so they do not blow shut. Ensure the children understand the risks of their fingers or body parts being shut in the doors of the sheds. Ensure the children understand the rules of the role play house and that it does not get over crowded or the door slammed.</p>	<p>Staff and children</p>
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Benefit Risk Assessment: Wheeled Toys/Bikes

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
				L	C	R		
Riding on and being a passenger on the bikes	Physical development, spatial awareness, communication and social skills. Part of creative play.	Knocking other children, clothing trapped in moving parts, bikes tipping.		possible	minor	MODERATE	Involve children in safety talks about using the bikes in the outdoor space. Make sure children do not wear scarves in the garden to avoid tangling in wheels. Limit the number of wheeled toys in the garden at any one time and keep them to hard surface area to avoid muddy/slippy wheels. Ensure all wheeled toys are checked over regularly for damage and replaced when necessary.	Children and staff
Scooting around the outside area	Physical development, co-ordination. Social and creative play.	Knocking into other children, scooters tipping/sliding. Clothing trapped in moving parts		possible	minor	MODERATE	Involve children in safety talks about using the scooters in the garden space. Make sure children do not wear scarves in the garden to avoid tangling in wheels. Limit the number of wheeled toys in the garden at any one time and keep them to hard surface area to avoid muddy/slippy wheels. Ensure all wheeled toys are checked over regularly for damage and replaced when necessary.	Children and staff
Shuffle boards	Physical development, coordination and balance	Tipping off the board. Overshooting the board/ falling off.		possible	minor	MODERATE	Model to the children how to ride the boards safely. Check boards over each time they are out to check wheels are secure and turning freely. Keep flat surface area coned and clear for the boards. Remove all other wheeled toys at these times.	Children and staff

Benefit Risk Assessment: Sand and Water

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
				L	C	R		
Sand play	Sociable play, motor skills, creative play, language development.	Sand flipping up into eyes.		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
Slipping on loose sand around the pit	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.		possible	minor	MODERATE	Adult to model how to empty sand from wellies, into the sandpit. Adults to monitor and clear the build-up of sand around the pit. Sweep sand from the walls into the sandpit before the cover is placed over the sand.	Staff
Sand contamination	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		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
Sand and water	Sociable play, motor skills, creative play, language development. Science and mathematical development.	Water or sand splashed into eyes, consumption of materials.		possible	minor	MODERATE	Involve the children in setting the safety rules in these areas.	Staff and children
Sand and water	Sociable play, motor skills, creative play, language development. Science and mathematical development.	Slipping on sand and water on the floor		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
Water tray play	Science exploration on water movement, maths capacity, motor skill development in filling and pouring.	Children become wet and cold		unlikely	minor	LOW	Staff to consider the temperature outside before placing water trays out. If children are playing at the water ensure cover-ups are available to use.	Staff and children

Water	As above	Water is dirty or contaminated		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
Water toys	Offer creativity in the water play, can facilitate maths and science talk and interactive play.	Toys hold water and become mouldy or contaminated.		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
Sprays/bubbles	Aiming skills. Blowing. Coordination.	Bubble solution or spray in the eye.		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: Construction area/brick play

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
				L	C	R		
Sticks	Gross motor skills, enhance children's imaginative play	Twigs in eyes		Likely	Moderate	MODERATE	Explain to the children that sticks need to be kept down low. The children will be provided with large open space to handle large sticks. The children will be reminded and encouraged to be aware of other children around them.	Staff and children.
Crates and cable reels	Gross motor skills, loose parts to enhance children's imaginative play	Crates and cable reels falling		Likely	Moderate	MODERATE	Explain to the children that heavier items go at the bottom to act as an anchor. Stack no more than 2 crates or cable reels on top of each other.	Staff and children
Gravel, pebbles, woodchip, nuts and bolts other pieces of natural material	Fine and gross motor skills are developed The connection to nature The opportunity to use imagination using loose parts	Choking		unlikely	moderate	MODERATE	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 Model to the children how to use the nuts and bolts safely.	Staff
Lifting large wooden blocks	Gross motor skills, loose parts to enhance children's imaginative play	Dropping bricks on themselves or others.		possible	moderate	HIGH	Ensure the children understand how to keep themselves safe with the wooden bricks, do not stack them above their height. Children to wear appropriate clothing to keep themselves safe, for example helmets/high vis jackets.	Staff and children
Using real bricks	Gross motor skills, loose parts to enhance children's imaginative play	Dropping bricks on themselves or others. Hurting their hands.		possible	moderate	HIGH	Ensure the children understand how to keep themselves safe with the wooden bricks, do not stack them above their height. Children to wear appropriate clothing to keep themselves safe, for example helmets/high vis jackets. With bricks children use gloves to protect their hands.	Staff and children

Benefit Risk Assessment: Stage area

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
				L	C	R		
Stage area	The children develop social skills, creative skills and communication and language	The children fall of the stage or trip on the low level stage		Possible	Minor	Moderate	Make the children aware of the raised stage and to walk at all time. Show the children where the stage stops and talk to them about what will happen if they are not paying attention.	Staff and children
Musical instruments	The children develop the creative skills and communication and language	The children trap fingers in different parts of the instruments		Possible	Minor	Low	Show the children how to use each instrument correctly and safely. Encourage the children to show each other how to use the instruments correctly.	Staff and children

Benefit Risk Assessment: Surrounding spaces

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
				L	C	R		
Bushes and Fences	The bushes stop people from seeing into the school, they teach the children about growth and they contain living things.	The children crawl behind the bushes and get hurt by the sticks or caught in the fence. The children hide in the bushes and people who live in the surrounding area can speak to the children.		Possible	Minor	Moderate	Ensure children have clear rules to follow and they can explore the bushes with a staff member. Children understand the rules on speaking to strangers.	Staff and children

RISK MATRIX

Risk Matrix							
Likelihood	Consequence						
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic	
	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	

