

Use of Playground and Play Equipment. OPAL

Risk Assessment carried out by – Angela Rees	Job title – Head Teacher	Date of assessment – October 2022
Review interval - Annual	Date reviews carried out	

Staff covered by this assessment – Lunchtime Supervisors and Teaching Assistants	Activities involved – Use of playground & play equipment OPAL
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RISK RATING		Likelihood		
		Probable Occurs repeatedly, to be expected or could affect large number of people	Possible Could occur sometime or effect a few people	Remote Unlikely to occur or not many people to be affected
Impact	Major Major injury, permanent disability or ill-health	High	High	Medium
	Severe Injury requiring medical treatment	High	Medium	Low
	Minor First aid treatment	Medium	Low	Low

Whilst writing Edmondsley Primary School’s risk assessment for Outdoor Play and Learning, the following statements from the Health and Safety Executive document has been taken into account.

“HSE fully supports the provision of play for all children in a variety of environments. HSE fully understands and accepts that this means children will often be exposed to play environments which, whilst well-managed, carry a degree of risk and sometimes potential danger.”

“HSE fully recognises that play brings the world to life for children. It provides for an exploration and understanding of their abilities; ehelps them to learn and develop; and exposes them to the realities of the world in which they will live, which is a world not free from risk but rather one where risk is ever present. The opportunity for play develops a child’s risk awareness and prepares them for their future lives.”

“Striking the right balance does mean:

- Weighing up risks and benefits when designing and providing play opportunities and activities
- Focusing on and controlling the most serious risks, and those that are not beneficial to play the activity or foreseeable by the user.
- Recognising that the introduction of risk might form part of play opportunities and activity
- Understanding that the purpose of risk control is not the elimination of all risk, and so accepting the possibility of even serious or life-threatening injuries cannot be eliminated, though it should be managed.
- Ensuring that the benefits of play are experienced to the full

Striking the balance does not mean;

- All risks must be eliminated or continually reduced

- Every aspect of play provision must be set out in copious paperwork as part of a misguided blanket.
- Mistakes and accidents will not happen.

Dynamic Risk Assessment

This means that staff should be aware of the changing nature of the play taking place. They should support children to assess and manage risk as much as possible for themselves, but they should also be vigilant and take action, if they think that risk of serious harm is becoming unacceptably likely. Actions taken by staff when required should balance the reduction of likelihood or severity of harm while preserving as much of the benefit of the play as possible, and empowering the children to manage future risk as much as possible.

Hazards / issue	Risk rating H/M/L (before)	Controls already in place	Further Action required / comments	Risk Rating H/M/L (after)	By Whom & When
Injury from activities in the playground	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ball games are permitted in designated areas to create a quiet area. • Pupils only allowed to play games that are considered within pupils individual capabilities as decided by staff. • Games can be stopped at any time by staff if considered unsafe or inappropriate. Discussion regarding safety will take place. • Activities to be age appropriate and reflect the mix of ages within the school as well as special needs of pupils. • The schools behaviour policy applies on the playground. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff to enforce school rules and report behaviour problems to School Management. • Ball games in 'tennis court' and on field. • Lunchtime supervisors to discuss any unusual uses of play equipment with PSHCE lead. Decisions made and confirmed in assemblies. Communications with rest of staff via e-mail. 	L	All staff
Lack of supervision	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision has been assessed using the CYPs playground safety guidance. <p>Results of assessment - Max Number Pupils in playground 180</p> <p>Supervision required on duty – Breaktime Details (eg numbers and types of staff) Each Key Stage have at least one member of staff present.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review when required given age of pupils and activities being undertaken. • Lunchtime supervisors have areas of responsibility for supervision timetabled. • Playground rota has specific areas for adults to 'Monitor.' 	L	HT to review annually

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		<p>Supervision required – Lunchtime 5 lunchtime supervisors are employed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervision will always be provided when children are using the outdoor play equipment. 			
<p>Unsafe condition and / or use of play equipment & furniture</p>	<p>M</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre – use checks of play equipment by school logged. Quarterly inspections of play equipment by school recorded. Play equipment is given an annual safety inspection by a competent person All furniture is kept in good condition. i.e. free from splinters, loose joints, protruding bolts or screws etc. The supervision assessment accounted for the risk of injury using the play equipment. Staff supervising use of play equipment understand how the equipment is to be used. Caretaker informal inspections as part of normal duties everyday to look for damage, vandalism, broken glass etc Playground surface maintained in good sound condition to minimise slips and trips. Check free of ice before use in winter Kept free from build-up of leaves in autumn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual inspections of play equipment by competent person to be acted upon when required. Continued monitoring of condition and maintenance – quarterly inspections and pre-use checks. The condition of the playground is included in the annual workplace welfare inspection of the outdoor areas of the school. All staff monitor the condition of the playground when they are on duty and report problems to the site manager /Office Staff/ HT immediately. 	<p>L</p>	<p>HT to arrange checks</p> <p>All staff to monitor condition of equipment</p>
<p>Wet breaks / lunchtimes</p>	<p>M</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervision for wet break / lunchtimes takes into account the school layout and activities allowed in different areas. Lunchtime supervisors have been trained in their role for wet break / lunchtimes. Allowance has been given for SEN and pupils that require closer supervision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff to apply wet break / lunchtime procedures and report problems to the HT / DHT 	<p>L</p>	<p>All staff</p>

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Risk presented by weather – both summer and winter	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deputy Head will decide if weather conditions are suitable or not for outdoor activities. Staff to ensure that pupils have appropriate clothing to go outside. Digging area to be closed when high levels of water are present. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HT / DHT to decide as required. Gritting Risk Assessment in place. 	L	HT & DHT
Lack of first aid	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has adequate first aid provision and this includes the provision of first aid at lunchtime and breaks. Supervision can be maintained when first aiders are dealing with injured pupils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep training up to date and review. From September 2017, Teaching Assistants are in place to manage First Aid inside and some outside provision (use of First aid bum bag kits.) 	L	HT to review first aid cover annually
Injury from activities in the playground	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ball games are not permitted in designated areas to create quiet areas. Pupils only allowed to play games that are considered within pupils individual capabilities as decided by staff. Games can be stopped at any time by staff if considered unsafe or inappropriate. Discussion regarding safety will take place. Activities to be age appropriate and reflect the mix of ages within the school as well as special needs of pupils. The schools behaviour policy applies on the playground 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to enforce school rules and report behaviour problems to School Management. 	L	All staff
Manual Handling		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils are encouraged to move equipment around designated play areas to encourage outdoor play, physical activity and teamwork/collaboration. Pupils are encouraged to store equipment away in designated areas encouraging teamwork. Pupils are encouraged to keep designated play areas tidy particularly at the end of lunchtime. Lunchtime has a specific time for children to 		L	

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		<p>tidy up. (10 minutes approximately prior to the end of lunchtime period each Friday, 5 minutes other days).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff encourage children to tidy up, supervising the moving of equipment and items placed in correct areas. • Staff are only expected to manually handle wheeled equipment located in the Green Storage. It take out and put away. Children are not allowed in the Green Storage. • There are no pupils currently who require support to move around the school environment. 			
Welly Stores		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four welly stores located around school site. These are painted with fire retardant paint. • Stores are in good state of repair • Stores have hooks in place to hold doors open. • Spare wellies are available • Staff are encouraged to wear appropriate footwear. 		L	
Tree lined (Benefits – branch used for swing Motion in playground, Therapeutic)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundary of school is tree and shrub lined. • Grounds maintenance contract in place. • Staff visually inspecting areas. • Pupils are not allowed to climb trees in the main school playground/field. • Separate risk assessments are in place for Forest School. • Soil erosion identified around Fencing/Field gates. Fencing has been extended. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff to be aware of low hanging branches used for swings. 	L	

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Rear gate access and boundary wall		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gate locked and secure at all times. • Grounds Maintenance carried out during lesson periods. • Grounds staff sign in to main office. • Visually inspected signs of wear and tear present. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitored. 	L	
Slips, trips and falls	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated play areas identified. • Designated dynamic play area identified at lower grass area (Beech hedge) and side of school field. • Playing field uneven but appropriate footwear worn by pupils and staff. • Grounds Maintenance contractors in place. 	Staff to report any concerns.	L	
Unsafe condition and / or use of play equipment & furniture SPECIFIC TO OPAL <u>Den Building Area</u> Tyres Logs – various sizes Wooden Sticks Wheelbarrow Planks of wood (Benefits – collaboration, co-operation, physical movement, creativity, communicatio	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff supervising use of play equipment understand how the equipment is to be used. • Daily pre-use checks are carried out and recorded. • All furniture is kept in good condition. i.e. free from splinters, loose joints, protruding bolts or screws etc. 	Play Assemblies to take place regularly. Safety will feature in each assembly – encouraging children to think about their own safety and their peers. Palettes are not to be used for building dens.	L	

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<u>Sand kitchen</u> (Benefits – creativity, imagination, social skills, fine manipulative skills, therapeutic)	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broken equipment to be removed Daily pre-use checks are carried out and recorded. 		L	
<u>Wheeled toys</u> (Benefits – social skills, Gross Motor Skills, co-ordination, spatial awareness)	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wheeled toys are used in designated areas only (tennis courts) Tennis courts are not used for ball play whilst wheeled toys are being used. Equipment taken out of use when broken. 		L	
<u>Digging Area</u> - <u>Spades</u> (Benefits – Gross motor skills, spatial awareness, collaboration).	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Space large enough for 30 children to be in area. Limited number of spades. (8 spades) No trowels or equipment which would encourage children to place hands at ground level/danger when spades are being used. Child sized spades used. Child sized wheelbarrows used. One adult in Digging area/den building OPAL Zone. Rules discussed and shared for Digging area. Tyres around area indicate where designated digging area is. Staff encourage children to tidy all tools 	Care to be taken whilst walking in digging area as surface is uneven and grass can be overgrown in some areas. Pupils encouraged to back fill holes at the end of the week. Trowels to be used when fewer children are in area – area large enough to separate groups of children – trowel group and spade group.	L	

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		<p>away at the end of each session.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff monitor digging activities carried out. • Staff encourage children to help each other put on/take off waterproofs to encourage independence and teamwork. • Staff to encourage back filling of areas. 			
<u>Plastic barriers</u> (Benefits - physical development, Social skills)	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children work as a team to move barriers. • Barriers to stay in den building area. • Adult must be present when barriers are used as 'slide'. • Barriers should not be built up by the use of tyres. • Broken barriers to be taken out of use (recorded on appropriate sheet) 		L	
<u>Small World Area</u>	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules for not putting small world items in mouths • Area supervised when being used. 			
<u>Dynamic Play</u> (Benefits – creativity, social skills, Physical development – both gross and fine manipulative)	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All play areas are supervised by members of staff. • Free play encouraged to develop creativity • Some items of play equipment are moved from designated areas to enhance children's play. • Friday Lunchtime all items are placed into designated areas. • Traditional play items are made available. 	Consideration to be made with current weather conditions. Storage of equipment to be reviewed.	L	