

Risk Benefit Assessment Record Sheet and Advice

The purpose of **Risk Benefit Assessments** are to enable us to provide challenge, progression, excitement, creativity and fun in our play environment. They cannot and will not provide complete 'safety' and this is not their purpose.

They can help us to think about, predict, and manage the most serious and most likely potential causes of harm. We have two approaches to managing risk: Standing Benefit-Risk Assessments and Dynamic

Risk Management

Standing Risk Benefit Assessments means we look at our usual environment and practices at least annually, and also when significant changes take place and keep a written record of the areas in the table below.

Dynamic Risk Benefit Management means that staff should be aware of 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 or harm with preserving as much of the benefit of the play as possible, and empowering the children to manage future risk as much as possible.

Common areas that need standing assessment include:

Boundaries to dangerous areas, trees management and tree climbing, fixed equipment and inspection, broken loose parts, rope tying especially at height, water use and water features.

Staff will carry out daily, on-going risk assessment and pass on any potential hazards to Jennie Eaton or a member of SLT.



Risk Benefit Assessment

Description of Activity, Principle or Object, who might be at risk and what kind of harm.	Benefit or Utility Or Related Policy	Description of risk management and maintenance agreed	Nominat ed person	Action Date	Reviewed on
Pupils playing with heavy loose play equipment whilst den building: Potential for splinters, crush injury from pallets. Potential injury when lifting heavy objects.	Pupils able to lift and move heavy play parts and use in a safe, creative way.	Pupils briefed in assemblies about safe holding, moving and stacking. Staff apply principles of dynamic risk assessment and guide children in movement and use of heavier play parts. Children must not use the pallets as a roof for dens due to risk of falling.	Jennie Eaton	October 2026	October 2027
Trees unsafe to climb: potential injury falling from trees with thin or weak branches.	Tree climbing allows for extension of motor skills and assessment of own risk	All children briefed not to climb trees. Supervision by staff to enforce this.	Jennie Eaton	October 2026	October 2027
Pupils playing in different environment with new potential dangers. There is an increased risk of minor injury. Pupils may require first aid.	Increased freedom to play will foster more creative play and ensure pupils learn to manage risks more effectively themselves.	Pupils with minor injuries (scratches and minor first aiders. More serious injuries referred to SLT to contact hospital or parent.	Jennie Eaton	October 2026	October 2027



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Pupils playing in sand pit: Sand pit possible attraction for cats, dogs and fox faeces. Sand in eyes.	Large, 25m squared area enables creative, sensory play for a large number of children.	Pit checked daily by the staff before use. Site supervisor to monitor weekly. Sandpit covered at the end of every day. New Sand added annually.	Jennie Eaton	October 2026	October 2027
The use of tyres: the risk of tyres being rolled down the hill resulting in injury. Tyres collecting water that is turning stagnant	Increased freedom to play will foster more creative play and ensure pupils learn to manage risks more effectively themselves.	Children reminded of the potential risk during Play Assemblies. The school's supervision styles (Remote and Ranging) allow the team to manage potential risk. Reminder to children when the water freezes not to lick or eat. Wash hands after use.	Jennie Eaton	October 2026	October 2027
Children slipping and injuring themselves in wet weather either on the grass or in the wooded area.	Active outdoor play at all times of the year is an important part of obesity prevention and helps to establish life-long patterns of healthy physical exercise.	Children to wear appropriate clothing (coats and wellies) from November to April. Appointed First Aiders available if injury occurs. Leaves removed during autumn. Children reminded not to roll on wet grass.	Jennie Eaton	October 2026	October 2027

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Children using sticks to play: risk of injury by using sticks inappropriately.	Playing with sticks not only ignites children's imaginations but also has other therapeutic benefits. Branches and other large sticks can build strength and muscles as children lift, drag, or carry them to and from places outdoors. Teamwork happens when a stick is too large for just one child to move.	Children shown how to play appropriately with sticks. Regular reminders during Play Assemblies.	Jenn ie Eato n	October 2026	October 2027



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Bikes/Trikes/Wiggle Boards/scooters- children falling off and getting fingers run over	Increased balance and improvement of gross motor skills. Fitness and core strength improved with use.	Children to be shown possible pitfalls of falling off bikes, crashing into others with bikes and injury while pushing others on bikes. Staff members to blow whistle if they need to get the attention of a child rather than walking through the scooter zone. Children to all stop if a member of staff blows the whistle. Children to scoot within the red lines to allow access around the edge of the playground. Awareness of finger trap risks. Staff to make sure all bikes and scooters have proper rubber handles or taped off Caretaker to check the bikes annually. Helmets must be worn if riding a scooter or bike.	Jennie Eaton	October 2026	October 2027
Water play – hose pipe and water butts around garden	Children to explore water. Use of water supports sensory and creative play. Kids to be shown how to use hose sensibly and instructed to NOT drink from pipes. Water butts to be tethered and secured. Buckets be allowed to run dry and re-filled to ensure no stagnant water.	Risk of drowning very minor.	Jennie Eaton	October 2026	October 2027



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Digging areas	Encourages independent and/or cooperative play and mastery play—fine motor skills improved. Knowledge of gardening improved through digging and planting in Garden area	Designated areas to be created for digging, muddy sides and plant borders.			
SEN Garden (Name TBC)	Sensory and exploratory play—Children to be introduced to the space as a quiet/sensory space with yoga mats and wind chimes installed. Team of children to help with gardening and planting—encouraging responsibility taking	Quiet space of contemplation. Children to be shown responsible management of plans within the space. Play team to monitor growth of any hazardous plants. Children shown how to use any tools correctly and safely.			
Chalk/water paints- dirty brushes spreading bacteria	Beneficial in all ways, develop creativity and fine motor skills	chalks and paint brushes to be maintained by children and play team – stock to be replenished on Friday.	Jennie Eaton	October 2026	October 2027



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Pushchairs	Locomotive play Imaginative play	Fully checked over to ensure sturdiness and the collapse mechanism broken in place to stop the risk of getting fingers caught. Rules in place of where pushchairs can be used (not to be pushed down verges)			



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Stage Small risk of falling from the sides.	Area to sit, play games, perform and use as a performance area	Small drop at front and side, minor risk of fall injury. Children should be told not to push others off the stage and not to climb on the back. Minor risk of banging heads on the wood. Stage to be closed in icy weather.	Jennie Eaton	October 2026	October 2027
den zone ropes- risk of being whipped with a rope or used to restrain another child, risk of children putting it around necks.	Collaborative team building activities, social skills during den making, playing in a group with friends	Children told to use the ropes as intended and not to tie onto other equipment or people. Ropes not to enter other zones.	Jennie Eaton	October 2026	October 2027
Children using the trim trail- risk of slipping or pushing	Children develop gross motor skills and improve general fitness	Area supervised, first aider present, a rota is in place for break times to ensure the trim trail is not overcrowded.	Jennie Eaton	October 2026	October 2027
Tyre swing – risk of children falling from the swing, collisions with other children, entrapment of fingers, or injury caused by children pushing, lifting or standing underneath the swing. Risk of children lifting others onto the swing, leading to falls or crush injuries	Provides opportunities for active play, balance, coordination, upper body strength and risk assessment. Encourages cooperative play and turn-taking.	Children to be taught safe use of the tyre swing through assemblies and regular reminders. Only one child to use the swing at a time unless specifically designed for multiple users. Children must not stand underneath or walk through the swing's arc while it is in use. Children must not lift, push or place other children onto the swing; users must mount and dismount independently. No twisting of ropes/chains or deliberate excessive swinging. Daily visual checks carried out by play staff. Any defects reported immediately and the swing taken out of use until repaired.	Jennie Eaton	October 2026	October 2027