



Glaschieburn Early Learning and Childcare Risk Assessment

Risk Benefit Assessment – ELC OUTDOOR SPACE

Who: Staff, children and visitors to the nursery outdoor space

What: Outdoor play

Where: Designated outdoor space:

When: All year round, every day, except in really extreme weather

Benefits of outdoor play in the outdoor space

There are multiple benefits which arise when children to access the outdoor space, all day and every day. From discussions with staff, parents and children, the follow benefits were explicitly referenced:

The benefits of learning outside the classroom are endless. Being outside allows children to express themselves freely and unlike an indoor classroom, there aren't any space constraints meaning children can jump, shout and explore to their hearts content. The sense of freedom playing outdoors brings is fantastic for a child's development, both physically and mentally.

The importance of outside play in early years can't be underestimated and below are just some of the many benefits it offers to children:

Encourages an Active Lifestyle

Children who learn to play outdoors are much more likely to continue to enjoy outdoor activities such as walking, running and cycling as they get older. Given the number of gadgets and new technology available to us all, outdoor play is an extremely important factor in combatting an increasingly sedentary lifestyle.

Appreciation of Nature and the Environment

Learning in an outdoor environment allows children to interact with the elements around us and helps them to gain an understanding of the world we live in. They can experience animals in their own surroundings and learn about their habitats and lifecycles.

Develops Social Skills

Indoor spaces can often feel overcrowded to children and naturally, they may feel intimidated in this type of environment. More space outdoors can help children to join in and 'come out of their shells'. Giving children outdoor learning experiences offers them a chance to talk about what they have done with their friends, teachers and parents.

Encourages Independence

The extra space offered by being outdoors will give children the sense of freedom to make discoveries by themselves. They can develop their own ideas or create games and activities to take part in with their friends without feeling like they're being directly supervised. They'll begin to understand what they can do by themselves and develop a 'can do' attitude, which will act as a solid foundation for future learning.

Reviewed: August 2021





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Understanding Risk

Being outdoors provides children with more opportunities to experience risk-taking. They have the chance to take part in tasks on a much bigger scale and complete them in ways they might not when they're indoors. They can learn to make calculated decisions such as 'should I jump off this log?' or 'can I climb this tree?'

Precedents and comparisons

There is a wide range of research¹ and national documents² which support young children having lots of time outside. It is recognised that all *Curriculum for Excellence* experiences and outcomes can be achieved through outdoor play.

Auditing your first aid, accidents and near-misses

You are strongly advised to review monthly and look for patterns in the frequency, time and nature of the accidents which happen. You need to look for patterns which tell you whether there may be a concern about a feature, area of the outdoor space, resource or even a child that needs attention. You could also use this to compare with indoors, to see if being outside is any more or less dangerous.

Consulting and actively involving children and parents in discussions around safety.

Adjust the questions and approach to suit your children and parents. Be particularly aware of the needs of Minority Ethnic children, their parents and staff. These must be recognised and individual requests for additional protections should be supported wherever possible.³ You may prefer to insert a photo into this RBA that shows you have had a conversation or taken other action, e.g. display, a page in a floorbook, photo of a parent consultation, etc. Keep it simple.

- Children: What do you enjoy doing outside? How do we keep ourselves safe when we play outside? What do we need to do and remember?
- Staff and parents: what do you remember about playing outside as a child? Why do you think outdoor play is so important for your children? Is there anything that concerns you about our outdoor space or provision that you think needs addressing?

¹ <https://www.childrenandnature.org/learn/research/>

² <https://creativestartlearning.co.uk/international/significant-scottish-outdoor-learning-and-play-documents/>

³ See the latest Scottish Government guidance for ELC settings

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-reopening-early-learning-and-childcare-services/pages/risk-assessment-and-support-for-specific-groups/>

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Risk Benefit Assessment – ELC OUTDOOR SPACE

Line Manager name: Emma McDonald		Line Manager signature	Assessment No:
Date: September 2021	Assessed by: Laura McKenzie Signature:	Location: Glaschieburn ELC Outside area Activity: Outdoor Nursery session	Review date: August 2022

This is a Live Template of a risk assessment identifying typical hazards and control measures for outdoor play. Staff should add specific details relevant to each venue and on a regular basis. Delete elements that are not relevant.

What has the potential To cause harm (hazards) and what harm might result?	Who and how many people might be at risk?	What measures are already in place?	S e v e r i t y	L i k e l i h o o d	R i s k R a t i n g	What further action (s) needs to be taken to reduce risk?	By whom and by what date?
Inadequate supervision Leading to a variety of accidents. Increased likelihood of Children running away	Children	- Staff deployed in line with national guidance to ensure adequate supervision within the totality of the ELC setting, inside and out. - Ratios of staff to children is the same as indoors and adapted where necessary to meet needs of specific children and the unique nature of the outdoor space.	4	2	8		

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		• Staff undertake a daily register of all children present. • Adults keep a sharp eye on the whereabouts of all children at all times. • The nursery follows school procedures for absconding children. • Outdoor space is secure OR working boundaries are known and abided by, e.g. when using part of the wider school grounds. • Caribena is placed on the gate at all times during the school day and removed at night only, replaced with a padlock as additional security for the gate. • Rotas to ensure staff are always present outside. • SLT to alert staff of ratio changes					
Ability Failure to understand and follow instructions can lead to a variety of accidents.	Children Staff	• The ability of the children is taken into account when setting up and planning for the outdoor space. • New equipment and resources are introduced to the children in ways which allow them to explore safely. For example, a member of staff allocated to be near the resource and support children to explore and consider any safety issues. • Staff use common sense, knowledge of children and play and dynamically risk assess.	3	1	3	Think about measures for settling in and helping new children feel comfortable and engaged in the outdoor space.	
Unsuitable resources for children	Children	• Loose Parts resource are checked prior to being used by children and staff.	4	2	8		

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Leading to a variety of injuries		- New resources are introduced with care, and where needed, additional supervision and direct instructions so children understand the safety aspects, where the resource is stored and any other relevant factors. - Observations of children playing enable staff to reflect on the suitability of a resource in terms of its learning and play value. - There are systems in place for cleaning, repairing, removing and disposing of a resource wisely with due regard for the environmental impact.					
Thrown, dropped or colliding objects and people Leading to a variety of impact injuries and death		We have: - A positive approach to behaviour management (Rights and Relationship Guidelines) that mitigates most intentional inappropriate behaviours - An engaging and interesting outdoor environment - Practical reminders given by staff and other pupils. Dynamic risk assessment undertaken by staff and children. - Unforeseeable, unintentional and accidental situations are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and always dealt by an on site first aider.	4	2	8	Think about ways of positively helping children to look out for themselves and each other, e.g. stories, scenarios, catching them doing the right thing and giving praise. Monitor your accidents, near misses and first aid so that you can find out where issues exist, when and what action needs to be taken.	
Built structures collapsing through lack of maintenance, damage, vandalism, poor design	Children Staff Volunteers Out of hours visitors	- Dynamic risk assessment by staff - System of checks in place for semi-permanent structures created by adults and children	2	4	8	It can be helpful for children to be shown how to do some things. For example, children can be taught how to lash	

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Leading to impact injuries, crush injuries, head injuries, death	Wildlife					sticks together properly or to place a peg effectively into the ground.	
Broken equipment Through play or vandalism, etc. Causes a variety of accidents.	Children Staff Volunteers Out of hours visitors Wildlife	- All faulty or broken equipment is cordoned off, labelled as faulty and reported to the manager or janitor for repair or removal. - There is a register of installed playground equipment. The installed equipment meets BSEN 1176 (playground equipment) and where necessary BSEN 1177 (impact attenuating surfaces) standards and has been installed by a reputable company. - Checks undertaken by staff before usage and log anything unsafe with the janitor.	2	4	8	At present, this is the HT's responsibility in LA nurseries. RoSPA can undertake the professional check or you can search a register, e.g. https://www.playinspectors.com	
Working at height Falls leading to impact injuries or impalement	Children Staff Volunteers	- Staff dynamically risk assess children using high equipment – installed or otherwise. - Children and staff check ground and surrounds for protruding objects within the fall zone and keep these spaces clutter free. Staff have an agreed approach to managing play at height. - Installed playground equipment that facilitates children playing at height, has an impact attenuating surface underneath installed by a reputable company that meets BSEN 1177 standard. - Storage of resources ensures that only lightweight resources are stored up high. Staff know how to access these safely, using correct equipment.	2	1	2		

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		Resources and equipment are not stored in a way that facilitates access to the roof of the main building or other high up place.					
Litter	Children Staff Volunteers	- The outdoor space is checked daily before or at the start of the session – for litter, playground equipment and surfaces. - Janitor completes a morning check for litter before the children arrives. - Drug materials are removed by a competent person in line with local authority guidance. - Gloves are used to remove glass and the material placed in a cardboard or metal container before placing in the bin. - Animal scat is removed in line with local authority guidance on biological agents.	1	4	4	Nursery staff allocated on rota to do a check first thing in the morning and recorded electronically.	
Manual handling Back injury through lifting, crouching and using heavy equipment Crush injury if heavy item is dropped onto any part of a person's body.	Children Staff Volunteers	- Adults lift any heavy equipment in line with setting, local authority and national HSE guidelines. - Adults model good practice including when crouching to work at child or ground level. - Heavy items are not stored high up. - Children shown how to lift and carry heavy resources appropriately should they attempt this during their play - Loose parts systematically checked prior to being made available for play for potential crush risk				Be aware of any specific medical needs of adults which may affect their ability to carry Look at manual handling guidance for children in the Loose Parts Play: A Toolkit (2 nd Ed) p29 http://bit.ly/2NXizaf	

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Slips and trips People slip and trip on uneven surfaces leading a variety of impact injuries	Children Staff Volunteers	- Children wear suitable/correct sizes of clothing and footwear for being outside in accordance with their own individual need. - On icy days or particularly inclement weather, the ratio of adults to child may alter or the numbers accessing the outdoor space reduced. Key areas of the outdoor space are gritted during cold weather, e.g. entrance areas and other access points. - Systems in place for tidying resources that children play with outside. - A place for keeping resources that are not in use is identified. Everyone knows how and where to leave the resources. Staff dynamically risk assess and ensure resources are not left lying around where they could become a trip hazard.					
Entrapment Trapped or broken limbs, head, neck or fingers leading to injured joints, strangulation and death	Children Staff Volunteers	- Any resource, including loose parts, is systematically checked prior to being made available for play for potential entrapments - Children's constructions are checked by staff through dynamic risk assessment					
Security Unwanted visitors into the grounds Stray dogs in grounds	Children Staff Volunteers	Outdoor space is secure OR working boundaries are known and abided by, e.g. when using part of the wider school grounds.					

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Potential for bites, assault and abduction		- Caribena is placed on the gate at all times during the school day and removed at night only as additional security for the gate. - Any unauthorised persons entering the outdoor space are only to be approached if staff are satisfied they are not putting themselves or children at risk. - Procedures for parents/carers dropping off and collecting children from the outdoor space. - The centre has emergency procedures e.g. assembly point, other place of safety, evacuation plan, etc. - Local authority guidance for stray dogs in the grounds is followed.					
Water Death through drowning Accidental ingestion of outdoor water, e.g. drinking puddle water from a water butt or unemptied water tray or an outside tap. Resulting in sickness, diarrhoea and a range of possible infections including Legionnaires disease	Children Staff Volunteers	- Staff dynamically risk assess - Adequate supervision - Water butt has a lid/cover to prevent debris such as leaves accumulating. Children cannot access the inside of the water butt. <i>Not applicable at present.</i> - Water butts are emptied and cleaned on a regular basis to avoid build-up of scum algae if used for play. <i>Not applicable at present.</i> - Children and adults do not use water from outdoor sources for drinking or handwashing. - All children wash their hands as they leave the outdoor space and after any activity involving sand, water, mud or gardening.	8	1	8		

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Fungal growth due to storage of wet items and stagnant water in tyres Cross-contamination through shared resources		- Accumulated water in equipment outside is emptied when requires, e.g. in tyres, buckets, etc. - Wet resources are dried thoroughly before storing especially before a w/end or holiday - Cleaning procedures in place in line with HPS <i>Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings</i> are followed. - Where necessary, equipment and resources for water play are cleaned.					
Bacterial or viral infection through contact with naturally-occurring materials and plants and mud Leading to a range of possible illnesses		Hand washing procedures and protocols in place outdoors that everyone knows and follows in line with Health Protection Scotland <i>Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings</i> guidance.	4	2	8	Where necessary equipment and resources for mud play are removed or reduced in quantity.	

Risk Benefit Assessment – SAND AND MUD PLAY OUTDOORS

Reviewed: August 2021



Glashieburn Early Learning and Childcare Risk Assessment

Who: Staff, children and visitors to the nursery outdoor space

What: Sand and mud play

Where: Nursery outdoor space

When: All year round, every day, except in extreme weather

Benefits of sand and mud play in the outdoor space

There are multiple benefits which arise when children have access to sand and mud outside. The aim is to provide a bigger, better or different experience to what is offered inside.

- **Creativity** is developed through offering a wide range of creative possibilities – sand castles and sculptures, miniature cities, roads for toy cars, twig structures, tunnels and fantasy worlds. These are often enhanced with the addition of other props such as toy vehicles, sticks, shells and pebbles. **EA 0-02a, EA 0-05a, TCH 0-14a, TCH 0-15a, TCH 0-01a, TCH 0-11a, TCH 0-12a**
- **Mathematical concepts** are supported through estimating and experimenting with volume, mass, and flow using standard volume measures as well as non-standard volume and capacity explorations (cups, buckets, tubs etc.) **MNU 0-01a, MNU 0-11a**
- **Science and engineering** is supported through experimenting with wet sand and dry sand and mud, construction, understanding that sand and mud have unique properties which enable us to play with it in different ways. **SCN 0-15a**
- **Social and co-operative skills** are commonly developed as children work together on joint projects – building a fantasy world, creating a water channel from A to B, negotiating whose turn it is with the bucket etc. Sand and mud play offers good opportunities for older and younger children to co-operate together – something that's unusual in many playgrounds. **EA 0-06a, HWB 0-08a, HWB 0-05a, HWB 0-19a, HWB 0-23a, , HWB 0-44a, HWB0-44b, HWB0-45a, HWB0-45b, RME 0-02a, RME 0-09a, SOC 0-17a, SOC 0-18a**
- **Language skills** are developed – both in terms of words that describe sand and its used and as children discuss what they are doing with adults and each other. **LIT 0-02a, ENG 0-03a**
- **Motor skills** (gross and fine) are developed through digging, constructing, carrying and manipulating the mud and sand. **HWB 0-21a, HWB 0-22a, HWB0-25a**

Precedents and comparisons

- Grounds for Learning, the Scottish school grounds charity produced an advice sheet⁴ for sand based upon their Scottish Government funded natural playgrounds project which ran from 2011-14.

⁴ <https://www.ltl.org.uk/resources/open-sand-in-schools-and-nurseries/>

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- Creative STAR Learning Ltd also have a web page⁵ dedicated to myth busting around outdoor sandpit and giving a range of international examples.
- Millions of people visit beaches daily and do not suffer any adverse effects. Many public play parks have sand as a safety surface which are also used for play purposes.

Risk Benefit Assessment – SAND AND MUD PLAY OUTDOORS

Line Manager name: Emma McDonald		Line Manager signature	Assessment No:
Date: September 2021	Assessed by: Laura McKenzie - Nursery Team Signature:	Location: ELC outdoor space Activity: Outdoor nursery classroom	Review date: October 2022

This is a Live Template of a risk assessment identifying typical hazards and control measures for outdoor play. Staff should add specific details relevant to each venue and on a regular basis. Delete elements that are not relevant.

What has the potential to cause harm (hazards) and what might result?	Who and how many people might be at risk?	What measures are already in place?	S e v e r i t y	L i k e l i h o o d	R i s k r a t i n g	What further action(s) needs to be taken to reduce risk?	By whom and by what date?

⁵ <https://creativestarlarning.co.uk/developing-school-grounds-outdoor-spaces/sandpits-outside-roar/>

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Sand blow or throw – into eyes - Irritated eyes, scratched corneas	Staff Pupils	- Sandpit is covered overnight - First aid for irritated eyes	2	2	4	Make sand wet on windy days or keep covered if not appropriate.	
Bringing sand indoors Whilst not a health concern, sand inside can get into IT equipment and resources.	Staff Pupils	- Outdoor clothing available for children to wear, - Mat for wiping feet at inside door - Children wash hands after playing in sand/prior to coming inside	1	4	4	It can be helpful to train children to give a wiggle and a shake before leaving a sandpit so that the sand stays there as much as possible.	

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Risk Benefit Assessment – WEATHER

Who: Staff, children and volunteer helpers

What: Weather arrangements and considerations for outdoor provision

Where: Nursery outdoor space and routine and expected off-site visits, such as weekly visits to local greenspace

When: All year round

Benefits of being outside in almost all weathers. Children learn:

- How to dress appropriately for a range weather conditions HWB 0-15a, HWB 0-33a
- How to manage being outside in a range of weather conditions, developing resilience and a positive attitude HWB 0-03a, HWB 0-07a
- About features that provide shade on sunny days HWB 0-48a
- About the creative possibilities afforded by the different weather conditions, such as a range of art, music, drama and dance EXA 0-05a
- How to use the weather conditions for mark making opportunities outside LIT 0-26a
- How to keep warm when it is cold HWB 0-16a, HWB 0-17a, HWB 0-21a, HWB 0-22a, HWB 0-25a
- About how other animals manage in different weather conditions and seasons SCN 0-01a
- How to move over or around slippery surfaces such as frozen puddles or wet wood HWB 0-16a, HWB 0-17a, HWB 0-21a, HWB 0-22a, HWB 0-33a. SCN 0-05a
- How to recognise when to change clothing and eventually doing this independently HWB 0-16a, HWB 0-17a
- How to apply sunscreen HWB 0-16a. HWB 0-17a, HWB 0-33a, HWB 0-48a,
- About the need to eat plenty of good food and drink sufficient water HWB 0-48a
- To observe, listen, feel and recognise the prevailing weather conditions and the play possibilities that arise as a result of the weather. HWB 0-11a, HWB 0-19a, HWB 0-25a
- Learn new vocabulary and expressions associated with the weather and seasons. LIT 0-10a, MNU 0-13a
- Develop fine and gross motor skills based upon managing changing terrain and ground surfaces HWB 0-21a, HWB 0-22a,

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- Can reflect upon the experience and be actively involved in documenting the experiences, e.g. drawing pictures, talking about photos or videos, wondering about weather, talking about their perceptions of weather and/or fears. HWB 0-19a, LIT 0-09a, SOC 0-09a,

Precedents and comparisons

There are more than 30 outdoor settings throughout Scotland where children are outside in almost all weathers. The number of days where alternative arrangements for adverse weather are rarely more than five days per year. However, the outdoor provision does change according to the weather and staff ensure children are supported to cope in all weathers.

Conclusion

There's no such thing as bad weather. We just have to adapt our outdoor practice to make the most of the benefits provided by our variety of weather.

Line Manager name: Emma McDonald		Line Manager signature	Assessment No:
Date: September 2021	Assessed by: Laura McKenzie- Nursery Team Signature:	Location: ELC Outdoor space Activity: Outdoor Nursery Classroom	Review date: August 2021

This is a Live Template of a risk assessment identifying typical hazards and control measures for outdoor play. Staff should add specific details relevant to each venue and on a regular basis. Delete elements that are not relevant.

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What has the potential To cause harm (hazards) and what harm might result?	Who and how many people might be at risk?	What measures are already in place?	S e v e r i t y	L i k e l i h o o d	R i s k R a t i n g	What further action (s) needs to be taken to reduce risk?	By whom and by what date?
Adverse weather which includes: • High winds: falling trees and branches; wind borne debris • Thunder and lightning • Heavy snow or hail • Hot, sunny weather Adverse weather which may lead to: • Hypothermia • Hyperthermia	Children Staff Volunteers	Checks and closures • Weather conditions are checked daily and the daily routines and outdoor experiences adjusted accordingly. • Nursery closure procedures in place – parents and carers are aware of these. • Off-site visits reviewed during adverse weather Appropriate clothing and footwear • Children and staff are wearing appropriate clothing and footwear for the prevailing weather, including accessories. • There are sufficient spares of all clothing to ensure all children and staff can stay and play outside as much as they wish. • Staff and children have their own outdoor clothing and footwear, that is identifiable to the owner.	4	2	8	Ensure that weather-related checks are included in your daily site check list of your outdoor space See <i>Out to Play</i> guidance p39 for clothing advice. Stramash gear guide provides practical advice on range of clothing and accessories needed https://stramash.org.uk/gear-guide/ If an off-site visit is to be cancelled or postponed, then remember to let parents know.	

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• Sunstroke, sunburn and dehydration • Impact injuries through slips and trips • Head injuries • Impalement injuries		Sunny weather • Sunscreen is applied in line with ELC setting policy. Sun hat and long-sleeved clothing worn by children and modelled by adults. • Spare drinking water available on site and on off-site visits. • Activities in shady places are encouraged by staff. Windy weather • Consider the risks of materials being blown about in windy weather. Resources available are suitable for windy weather Snow, ice, hail and weather below freezing • Wind chill factor is taken into account. • Adequate clothing available • Sufficient heating available in indoor or sheltered spaces to warm up children and staff and dry clothing. • Staff actively encourage children to move around and find ways to keep warm. • Areas of outdoor space are gritted prior to children's arrival to reduce slips and trips in identified key areas of movement, e.g. entrance areas, access paths. • Outdoor space may be reduced or numbers of children accessing outdoor space may be limited,				Dens and shelters may also be created for providing shade. Have actions needed built into daily site checklist for outdoor space. Have actions needed built into daily site checklist for outdoor space. Have sufficient spare clothing, accessories and footwear available for children who need it. This should be stored where it can be easily accessed.	
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		Lightning storms • Wide open areas and locations under tall trees avoided during lightning storms.				Snow is a free and found loose part. So is ice. Maximise the play opportunities that arise!	
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Glashieburn Early Learning and Childcare Risk Assessment

Risk Benefit Assessment – Using Ropes, String and Other Long Things

Who: Staff, children and visitors to the nursery outdoor space

What: The use of ropes in play: simple rope structures, e.g. low level swings and bridges, pulleys, den building, bandages in role play, wire in technology explorations

Where: Nursery outdoor space, local green space

When: All year round, every day, except in extreme weather.

Benefits of using ropes, string and other long things

- Encourages cooperative play, especially big rope explorations **HWB 0-05a**
- Facilitates communication and discussions around what can be done with a rope or piece of string. **LIT 0-02a**
- Practical skills such as tying knots are acquired. **TCH 0-10a**
- Children learn responsible use of rope and string and safety measures required. **HWB 0-16a**
- Den building requires use of rope, washing line, etc. This is construction and role play activity that requires creativity, imagination and use of problem-solving strategies. **TCH 0-10a** Pulleys are useful to enable children to explore forces and transport materials at a range of heights. **SCN0-07a**
- Development of physical motor skills required to use rope, ribbon and string. **HWB 0-22a**
- Opportunities to explore a range of different ropes, string and other long materials and discover their properties including what rope or string works best for each job or activity. **SCN 0-15a**
- The enjoyment of playing on rope structures where the children have helped create them. **HWB 0-19a**
- Different widths and lengths of ropes, etc enables children to explore measurement in their play. **MNU 0-11a**
- Use of bandages in role play linked to people who help us. **SOC 0-16a**
- The creation of a pendulum: a rope swing, or otherwise is an introduction to forces, can be used for art investigations around line and pattern and is part of exploring time. **EXA0-02a, EXA0-04a, EXA0-05a**

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Precedents and comparisons

There is a tradition of using these materials for play purposes within early years settings and the play sector. Guidance⁶ produced by the Forestry Commission provides sensible advice about testing rope swings and checking strength – and this is for use by all ages. The York College incident⁷ in 2012 is the most recent precedent where a 3yr old managed to access a rope tied up on a slide. Systematic removal of rope after use and following of agreed safety procedures needs to happen.

Line Manager name: Emma McDonald		Line Manager signature	Assessment No:
Date: September 2021	Assessed by: Laura McKenzie- Nursery Team Signature:	Location: ELC Outdoor space Activity: Outdoor Nursery Classroom	Review date: August 2022

This is a Live Template of a risk assessment identifying typical hazards and control measures for outdoor play. Staff should add specific details relevant to each venue and on a regular basis. Delete elements that are not relevant.

What has the potential To cause harm (hazards) and what harm might result?	Who and how many people might be at risk?	What measures are already in place?	S e v e r i t y	L i k e l i h o o d	R i s k r a t i n g	What further action (s) needs to be taken to reduce risk	By whom and by what date

⁶ Harrop, P (2006) [Rope Swings, Dens, Treehouses and Fires](#), Forestry Commission England

⁷ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-york-north-yorkshire-26187033>

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Children's abilities and inadequate level of supervision leading to an increased likelihood of accidents happening. Slips and trips People lose their balance and fall causing sprains, broken limbs, head injury.	All participants	When ropes and string are used, it is under adult supervision. Ropes and string not in use are stored away. Ropes are counted out and counted back in, so that none are inadvertently left out. The quantity and lengths of rope available depends on the planned activity, the age, ability and experience of children as well as the level of supervision deemed necessary. Bright coloured ropes are used which are more visible or tags added to ropes which are more camouflaged if needed when ropes are used in places which are less visible to children.	6	2	12	
Rope running through hands - Splinters or burns from rope Loops in ropes - Fingers getting trapped in ropes If rope gets looped around a child's neck – risk of strangulation Working at height – falling off and getting tangled in	All participants	Children and adults know the rules for using rope. These include: • Avoiding letting rope run through hands • Long hair needs tied up or kept under a hat • Dangly jewellery should be removed • Children do not bind their hands or arms or wrap rope or string around their bodies, especially the neck. • Staff are vigilant about rope at ground level and rope looping which can trap fingers or feet. • Staff and children check rope structures and knots before using them. No frayed or badly damaged rope, • Ropes are not used for climbing trees nor carried up a tree for attaching at height by any				

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the rope leading to strangulation		adult or child who is not sufficiently competent to do this. Rope structures such as simple rope swings, bridges and hammocks are placed at a low level and over a soft surface, e.g. grass.					
Children fall from height leading to impact injuries	Children and staff	- Ropes checked prior to use by observation and pulling firmly: no frayed or badly damaged rope used. - Support structure is checked prior to use and the following are not used/avoided - Dead or rotten branches or tree - Trees with evidence of fungal growths - Trees where there a risk of children crashing into the tree or support - Height of rope swing is low – max 60cm at resting point and highest swing point checked to ensure children can manage (always less than 2m). - Soft surface underneath, e.g. grass, forest floor. Protrusions and sharp objects removed. - Surrounding trees and/or structures are also checked to ensure they will not impact on rope swing or structure.	4	2	8	Do a check when setting up a structure. Consider creating a specific checklist for this purpose. <u>Harrop, P (2006) Rope Swings, Dens, Treehouses and Fires, p6</u> has a list of checks that have been used in this section of the RA. Remember that rope trapezes are different and will be higher so children can hang from them.	

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