



# THE ST. MARY'S PARTNERSHIP

## EYFS

# Risk assessment

### Why risk assess?

In our early years setting, we have risk assessments in place to ensure a safe, nurturing environment where children can learn and play. These assessments help identify potential risks in both indoor and outdoor areas, allowing us to mitigate risks and create a secure space for every child. We conduct a daily checklist of the environment before opening to parents and children, carefully reviewing classrooms, play areas, outdoor spaces, and any facilities the children will access. This process allows us to catch and address any issues immediately, ensuring that the environment meets safety standards every day.

Beyond our daily checks, we also review our comprehensive risk assessments annually. Additionally, any significant changes—such as a new intake of children, adjustments to our provision, or changes in layout—prompt an immediate review. This approach ensures that we are responsive to the evolving needs of our setting and that our safety procedures are current, relevant, and effective. Our commitment to these practices supports the wellbeing of all children in our care and provides peace of mind to parents and caregivers, underscoring our dedication to maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment.

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- Access to the EYFS area

## Risk Assessment: Indoor Activities

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Risk Assessment			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
			L	M	H		
<b>Malleable activities (playdough / Creative area)</b>	Physical development as well as motor skills practice.	Possible allergic reactions to materials. Consumption of materials.		X		Check all information on allergies and avoid allergens. Make sure all other materials are sensitive and are diluted according to the instructions. Staff to set expectations of no consumption rules in this area. Playdough will either be from the shop or cooked as per new guidance.	Staff including admin team when checking registration paperwork for allergies and children
<b>Kallax toy boxes / construction drawers in EYFS</b>	Add stimulus to play increasing vocabulary, interaction and communication.	Falling toys, heavy boxes being moved unsafely, trapped fingers or drops on toes.	X			Ensure boxes and baskets are not overloaded. Use low storage for the boxes in the kallax unit. Adults to oversee manual handling and model safe techniques.	Staff and children
<b>Slips and trips</b>	Resources in the room support development of communication, interaction.	Children trip or slip on toys left on the floor		X		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. Tidy up time set expectations for tidying.	Staff and children
<b>Scissors</b>	Promotes the children's motor skills and creative play	Children cut themselves or others		X		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. In Nursery, activities with scissors should be guided with an adult.	Staff and children
<b>Open shelves</b>	Encourage independence and self-selection of resources	Children climb the shelves or hang off it is causing shelves to fall. Pull resources off shelves.	X			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. Use shelves that are at the children's height so there are not stretching to reach resources from the top. Label items clearly and have no clutter in the shelves for children to access resources easily.	Staff and children

Signed by:

Date:



## Risk Assessment: Mud kitchen including water, Construction and Maths areas

Provision area	Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Risk Assessment			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
				L	M	H		
Garden area / mud kitchen	Contact with soil	Exposure to beneficial bacteria to build a healthy immune system. Sensorial open-ended materials. Normal childhood experience.	Ingesting soil		X		Provide access to toilets/ sinks in classrooms for handwashing during and after as needed. Establish good handwashing routines. Children encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area	Staff At the beginning of each session
Garden area / mud kitchen	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		X		Soil should be checked for contaminants daily before gardening. Children follow the no consumption rule in this area. Do not use any chemicals in the gardening area.	Staff
All outside provision	Washing up hands	Children learn good hygiene practices	Wet areas Slips and trips		X		Provide washing facilities and at times of mud/soil use, provide directed access to the washing facilities. Staff to monitor floor areas for water/ resources and mop/brush when necessary.	Staff to monitor
All outside provision as needed	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	X			Ensure buckets and baskets are not overloaded. Provide low storage for pots and pans. Adults to oversee manual handling and model safe techniques. Ensure utensils from the mud kitchen area are cleaned by staff weekly with children supporting with staff guidance to complete daily cleans. Washing up liquid and water to be accessible during tidy up time.	Staff to monitor
Water area / mud kitchen	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.	Stagnant water, consumption/ absorption of contaminants		X		Teachers to supervise where large troughs are in use and do not fill deeply. Staff to monitor area during prolonged heavy rain. 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. Water containers are washed in warm, soapy water weekly. 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>Maths area</b>	<b>Small counting resources</b>	Allows children to develop Maths skills, explore number physically/ practically, children can transport resources to use imagination e.g the counters are cupcake decorations in the kitchen area.	Smaller resources that can be placed in mouths	X			Adults to set expectations for resources use. Adults to lead play in this provision area throughout the Autumn term. Resources put out in this area are part of the provision offering inside so children have experience with these resources e.g. counters.	Staff
<b>Maths area</b>	<b>Items of food</b>	Allows children to explore using 'real life' everyday objects e.g. pumpkin farm children use the pumpkins to make patterns, compare weight and count	Possible allergic reactions to materials. Consumption of materials.	X			Check all information on allergies and avoid allergens. Make sure all other materials are sensitive and are diluted according to the instructions. Staff to set expectations of no consumption rules in this area. Staff to monitor this area during outside discovery time. Resources to be regularly checked and removed e.g. check for mould	Staff
<b>Areas with sensory resources/paint/ water</b>	<b>Wet/dirty clothes</b>	Children become responsible for their own belongings. Children practice changing clothes and shoes	Children get cold	X			School has a supply of wellies for a small, guided group. Parents are asked to supply coats and wellies. During induction meetings all EYFS parents are told the mantra 'There is no bad weather just bad clothing'. The parents are informed that the children access the outside provision all year round including during colder, wet days. Spare coats in the setting are used for children without and parents are met with to remind them to provide these items.	Staff and parents
<b>Construction/ mud kitchen</b>	<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		X		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
<b>Garden area/ plants around the outside space</b>	<b>Using plants and other foraged natural materials</b>	Connection to nature Creative stimulus Sensory Open ended materials	Ingesting or absorption of poisonous plants Allergies		X		Raise the risk of eating plants. Plants within the play area are chosen carefully. Site team to ensure hazardous plants are not growing during site walks. Children encouraged to follow a no consumption for unknown plants e.g. children have grown and eaten strawberries. Children encouraged to wash their hands after play.	Staff including site team

<b>Garden area</b>	<b>Cooking and /or eating food grown in the garden</b>	Knowledge of foods and how they grow. An understanding of healthy diets.	Allergic reaction to food. Consumption or absorption of a contaminant.		X		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 including admin team identifying allergies listed on registration forms  Parents
<b>Garden area</b>	<b>Cooking and /or eating food grown in the garden</b>	Knowledge of foods and how they grow. An understanding of healthy diets.	Allergic reaction to food. Consumption or absorption of a contaminant.		X		Ensure children are shown 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
<b>Garden area</b>	<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.	X			Ensure children are shown 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

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

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Risk Assessment			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
			L	M	H		
<b>High climbing equipment</b>	Gross motor skills, develop PSED and turn taking, slide frame allows for imagination to be explored children often climb and imagine they are guarding a castle etc	Falling from a height, slipping, on equipment	X			Adults to discuss high equipment and how we use it safely. No jumping from the climbing apparatus or slide frame. Adults to monitor children using the equipment from an appropriate distance so children can be seen using the apparatus. If adults are doing guided provision work or observations are taking place, cordon the area off if you feel you are unable to supervise while observing. Staff to discuss with children 'personal risk assessment' "If you don't feel comfortable climbing high then don't use the equipment until you're ready." No staff member is to help children to access apparatus which they are unable to access on their own.	Staff and children
<b>Slippery surfaces on actual play equipment and soft play surfaces</b>	Gross motor skills, develop PSED and turn taking.	Falling from a height, slipping on equipment	X			Staff on outdoor discovery duty to assess equipment and continue to monitor throughout the day and session. Climbing equipment including soft play and slide to be off limits in heavy rain, ice, snow and severe winds. If adults are doing guided provision work or observations are taking place, cordon the area off if you feel you are unable to supervise while observing.	Staff and children
<b>Damage equipment</b>	Gross motor skills, develop PSED and turn taking.	Falling from a height, slipping on equipment	X			Site team to be in EYFS daily to ensure the areas around the climbing frames are clear. Site team complete annual checks on equipment. If staff notice anything loose, or broken contact the site team and business manager immediately.	Staff including site team

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## Risk Assessment: Wheeled Toys

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Risk Assessment			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
			L	M	H		
<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.		X		<p>Involve children in safety talks about using the bikes in the garden space.</p> <p>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/slippery wheels.</p> <p>Ensure all wheeled toys are checked over regularly for damage and replaced when necessary.</p> <p>Adults to ensure children are riding in the allocated spaces in the outside area e.g. PD area or the play road</p>	Children and staff
<b>Scooting around the garden</b>	Physical development, co-ordination. Social and creative play.	Knocking into other children, scooters tipping/sliding. Clothing trapped in moving parts		X		<p>Involve children in safety talks about using the scooters in the garden space.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Ensure all wheeled toys are checked over regularly for damage and replaced when necessary.</p> <p>Adults to ensure children are riding in the allocated spaces in the outside area e.g. PD area or the play road</p>	Children and staff

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## Risk Assessment: Sand and Water

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Risk Assessment			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
			L	M	H		
<b>Sand play</b>	Sociable play, motor skills, creative play, language development.	Sand flipping up into eyes.		X		Talk to the children about playing together with the sand. Monitor the number of children playing with sand in the trays	Staff and children
<b>Slipping on loose sand around the pit</b>	Children benefit from playing with sand and connecting with the material.	Children slip and injury themselves on loose sand surrounding the tray	X			Adults to monitor and clear the build-up of sand around the tray. Sweep sand from the walls into the tray before the cover is placed over the sand.	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		X		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 sand 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.		X		Involve the children in setting the safety rules in these areas but water and sand safety expectations as detailed above apply.	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		X		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	X			Staff to consider the temperature outside before placing water trays out. If children are playing at the water have aprons on offer to cover clothing. If children become wet, children are given their spare clothes and changed before returning to discovery provision.	Staff and children
<b>Water</b>	As above	Water is dirty or contaminated	X			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.	X			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.		X		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

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## Risk Assessment: Stage/ Role play area and music area

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Risk Assessment			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
			L	M	H		
<b>Stage area</b>	The children develop social skills, creative skills and communication and language	The children fall of the stage or trip on the low-level stage		X		Make the children aware of the raised stage and to walk at all times. Show the children where the stage stops and talk to them about what will happen if they are not paying attention.	Staff and children
<b>Musical instruments</b>	The children develop the creative skills and communication and language	The children trap fingers in different parts of the instruments	X			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
<b>Items of food</b>	Allows children to explore using 'real life' everyday objects e.g. gingerbread cafe	Possible allergic reactions to materials. Consumption of materials.		X		Check all information on allergies and avoid allergens. Make sure all other materials are sensitive and are diluted according to the instructions. Staff to set expectations of no consumption rules in this area. Staff to monitor this area during outside discovery time. Resources to be regularly checked and removed e.g. check for mould	Staff

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## Risk Assessment: Access to the EYFS area

Area	Risks	Risk Assessment			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When
		L	M	H		
EYFS playground area	Leaving the outside area		X		Green gate to main playground to have the bolt pulled across at all times other than when supervised by a staff member during lunchtimes. Gate with access to the carpark must be closed and bolted at all times (all school staff have had email reminders about this expectation) Staff to stay alert and ensure that children do not leave the area. Head counts to be taken before taking classes back inside. If head counts do not tally, all children to be moved indoors while a search is carried out. SLT immediately made aware of the situation and Team SOS to be used.	Staff
EYFS playground area	Area not to be used out of school hours without staff members supervision.	X			All EYFS parents have been notified of this expectation via parent mail. Parents to drop off and collect with parents. If staff need to meet with parents, children are not to access the outside area without supervision and must come into the classroom for the meeting.	Staff and parents

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	
<b>Comments/follow-up</b>	