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| Subject of risk assessment: | Playground Boulders & Natural, Structured and Loose Materials Play | | |
| Brief description of activity, location, feature, activity and equipment used. | Access to boulders and open ended loose materials for play and outdoor learning in the school grounds at Sunnyside Primary. Materials available for children and teaching staff to use during class time and during break and lunchtime through playground staff supervision. | | |
| Job title and name of person making assessment | Hannah Neill  Principal Teacher | Signature of person making assessment |  |
| Date of Assessment | 15.01.18 | Review Date | 15.01.19 |
| Name of Headteacher | Denise Penman | Signature of Headteacher |  |
| **Risk Management Statement**  Sunnyside Primary recognises that all risks cannot be reduced to nil, therefore this risk assessment prioritises the significant risks. Significant risks are those which pose risk of serious injury, chronic injury, disability or death, or risks that are overly common in interrupting outdoor play and learning.  At Sunnsyide Primary School, we believe that play is the quintessential element for children to enjoy their childhood. It is fundamental to their quality of life as children. Playing is fun: it is how children enjoy themselves. Children’s’ development, learning, imagination, creativity and independence are promoted through the act of play. Play can help to keep children healthy and active. It allows children to experience and encounter boundaries, learning to assess and manage risk in their lives; both physical and social.  The right to play and formal recreation, for all children and young people up to the age of 18, is contained in article 31 of the UN convention of the Rights of the Child, ratified by the UK government in 1991. The government has a duty under this convention to protect and promote play opportunities for all children and young people.  We believe that play enables children to learn through experience that cannot be taught. Through exploring and testing ideas children learn:   * how to make new friends and communicate with other people. * how to play new games and learn new skills including physical skills. * how to get along with other people, learn how to share and work as a team. * how to stay healthy and build energy levels. * about taking risks and keeping safe.   Sunnyside Primary School recognise the value of play and aim to develop a wide range of  outside play environments to meet the needs of all of our children. Play should be satisfying  and freely chosen by the child. Play may or may not involve equipment or have an end product.  It may be serious or light hearted. It may be done simply for its own sake. We aim to ensure  children’s choice over their experiences is promoted in our grounds.  We Our aim to offer children stimulating, challenging environments for exploring and developing their  abilities. In doing this, we aim to manage the level of risk so that children are not exposed to  u unacceptable risks.  All staff undertake daily dynamic risk assessments in all activities which the children participate in. In outdoor play they will take into account the weather conditions and adjust the choices available to children on the day. Children’s safety is paramount and all staff take their responsibility in this areas extremely seriously.  In the event of an accident, children will be seen by a qualified first aider and first aid treatment administered. All accidents are recorded and monitored carefully. Where the first aider deems it necessary, parents will be contacted to inform them of the event and to give them the opportunity to seek further medical treatment should they wish to.  **This RBA should be read in conjunction with the whole school play policy in place at Sunnyside Primary** | | | |

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| Activity or feature: | Running, chasing, jumping, walking, standing, balancing, sliding, swinging, dancing and sitting on features or loose objects.  Rough and tumble play, dancing and moving in groups, chasing, playing games (traditional and ‘made up’) in groups or alone.  Climbing, standing, balancing, hanging or sitting on features both built (such as balance beams, logs, stones, climbing frames, ramps, shelters, fences and steps) and natural objects (rocks, logs, planks of wood).  Jumping on and off boulders and loose objects, both natural and built.  Building of temporary dens, structures, piling up of materials (both man made and natural, provided and scavenged).  Transporting materials both man made (provided or scavenged) and natural (provided and scavenged).  Using ropes, skipping ropes, string, webbing, elastic rope, ball bungees and Velcro.  Using material such as cotton, nylon and plastic sheeting (tarpaulins).  Using chalk, stones, sticks, pebbles, grit, sand, dirt, grass, hay, straw, flowers and leaves.  Using swings both constructed and temporarily built using materials provided and scavenged.  Capturing wind, reflecting or blocking sun using materials and objects provided and scavenged.  Breaking, snapping, pulling apart, undoing and deconstructing items provided or scavenged.  Throwing, passing, lifting, carrying, catching, kicking, batting and hitting any of the above objects.  Unpacking and clearing or tidying away of all the objects and items listed above. |
| How will participants benefit? | **Specific feedback from Pupil Playground Group January 2018**   * Sets you a challenge * Makes you more creative * Fun! * Pretending * Encouraging * Improves your imagination * You can create what you want * You can learn without someone telling you what to do * Working together * Everyone has input and everyone gets a go * Lets your imagination go wild   In addition –   * Inclusive and mixed groups playing together, developing group working and team working skills. * Development of imagination and creativity skills leading to improved problem solving skills, perseverance and higher order thinking. * Development of physical literacy and learning opportunities about physical capabilities. * Development of confidence, resilience and well-being. * Appreciation of and engagement with natural spaces and place, including changing weather and seasons. * Appreciation of risks and development of experience that allows them to increasingly make more decisions about physical, social and emotional risk taking. * Taking responsibility and developing awareness of self and others. * Opportunities to develop language and communication skills. * Developing and ownership of playground and school ground spaces, preventing damage and vandalism. |
| Who will be at risk? | Children participating.  Teaching and support staff during class time / break / lunchtime may also be at slight risk. |
| Any local factors that may affect risks or controls: | Most materials, with the exception of the boulders, log stumps and log pennies, are locked in the playground storage unit; therefore, they are unavailable out of school hours.  Vandalism in the school grounds can occur at times  The grounds are overlooked by housing.  The school staff have received training and support with regards to planning, introducing and sustaining play and learning with loose materials outdoors.  Daily checks for dangerous litter within the grounds are in place (and children are aware of what to do if they spot dangerous litter whilst playing). |
| Possible hazards and risks: | **Specific feedback from Pupil Playground Group – January 2018**   1. Risk of injury from damaged materials 2. Risk of injury from dropping items on your head 3. Risk through tripping/slipping/falling 4. Risk through rope play - tripping over lengths of rope and injuries through being tied up 5. Risk of back and limb injuries caused by stacking tyres around pupils or as stand alone towers 6. Risk of injuries caused by items being thrown 7. Risk of injuries through incorrect handling of materials   In addition –  Slips, trips and falls (both accidental and over-ambitious) leading to serious injury or harm immediately or through over repetition of the activity. Slips, trips and falls on slippery surfaces due to rain, ice, snow or mould and/or higher speed of children, increases this concern, due to increased risk of severity of injury.  Serious injuries, fear or death from thrown or dropped objects, aggressive use of objects being hit by others.  Serious injuries or death from falls, slips and trips onto, running into, jumping and bumping into sharp or hard objects.  Serious injuries from mishandling or incompetent moving of equipment or items.  Grit, sand or mud in eyes through rubbing, throwing or wind blowing of items.  Serious injury or fear through other children running into, jumping over or colliding with persons.  Serious injury or death through falls from significant height both on constructed and provided equipment and scavenged or built items (e.g. standing on den roof).  Finger, toe, leg, arm or head/neck traps in gaps between equipment (constructed and temporary, fixed and moveable, scavenged and provided) leading to serious injury or death.  Sudden failure or collapse of fixed, built and mobile equipment or items (provided and scavenged) through lack of maintenance, damage, poor design or specification, that leads to falls, slips and impacts that result in serious injury, fear or death.  Ingestion of toxins through oral contact or eating of objects or materials (provided and scavenged).  Hypothermia, sunburn and heat stroke due to adverse weather.  Serious injuries from poor maintenance of loose objects or materials that have been vandalised.  Bullying or inappropriate behaviour taking place between peers, especially of varying age groups. |
| Precautions and control measures to reduce the risk severity or likelihood: | **Specific feedback from Pupil Playground Group – January 2018**   1. Involve pupil monitors / prefects in lifting out materials from shed and receiving back to put away. Provides opportunity to identify any broken materials. Include regular check of materials and review materials then replenish or recycle when required. Encourage all children to report broken equipment to monitors / prefects and support staff. Place a box outside the shed door for broken kit to avoid it being put away. 2. Rule agreed with all children not to place items above your head / carry items over your head (with verbal reminders from support staff when outdoors if required). Support staff to encourage children to check everyone is out of any den or structure before taking it down during tidy up time. 3. Introduce through a timetable and in a specific area in the early stages whilst developing confidence and establishing routines. Use the 1pm bell as a tidy up bell. Agree with and encourage everyone that all are responsible for helping tidy materials away. 4. Encourage children to carry ropes in a bundle, rather than dragging behind them (with verbal reminder outdoors from support staff as required and agreed consequences for unacceptable behaviour). Blanket rule agreed with all that ropes should never be tied around yourself or others. Incorporate this rule into playground charter poster. 5. Agreed a rule with all that tyres should not be stacked any higher than waist height (with verbal reminders outdoors from support staff as required and agreed consequences for unacceptable behaviour). Blanket rule agreed and included in playground charter poster. 6. Agreed a no throwing rule with all relating to all loose materials (with verbal reminders outdoors from support staff as required and agreed consequences for unacceptable behaviour). Blanket rule agreed and included in playground charter poster. 7. Agreed safe carrying practice for long materials and heavy materials will all (for example rolling log stumps, a pupil per corner when lifting a pallet and carrying long sticks and guttering upright with one end touching the ground or horizontally with a child at either end). Verbal reminders outdoors from support staff as required. Introduce materials in a designated area as things establish to avoid children carrying materials over long distances and through games being played by other children.   In addition –  School staff training, practical support days in school where materials were introduced to children and staff (involving support from external agencies) and the Pupil Playground Group leading on long term monitoring. These measures were out in place, along with the creation of this risk benefit assessment and the drafting of a whole school play policy, prior to any regular access to materials outdoors.  The materials are only used when there is SLA presence in the playground or teaching staff presence during class time. Children are not allowed access to the materials before or after school.  Behaviour of the children demonstrates responsibility and competence, and adults should monitor and intervene where necessary to ensure play can continue, without unacceptable risk or inappropriate behaviour that causes accident, harm or fear. Behaviour standards have been agreed in advance and children have been involved in the risk benefit assessment process.  Climbing to any height above ground to be monitored, in accordance with the risks posed. This will mean that we advise climbing to be within the capacities of the individual concerned and when climbing that their feet are no higher than their head height from the ground.  Stacking or building of items, or piling of materials, onto which children will climb or under which they will shelter or move, should also be dynamically risk assessed, and steered where required by the responsible adults outdoors. Maximum height of participants upwards.  The weather’s impact on a session will be assessed at the start and ongoing during a session, with care taken over cold and heat injuries, where an adult will insist on clothing or protection as needed. Wind should also be factored into observation, with children likely to make use of the wind. Staff are encouraged by SMT to undertake a daily dynamic risk benefit assessment in relation to use of materials and then action accordingly, for example temporarily taking materials out of use in inclement weather or when playground support staff numbers are reduced.  All staff are aware of the location of the first aid box in school and of procedures in the event of an emergency. |
| Precedents or comparisons: | All playgrounds and play practices offer a level of risk, and there is a clear history and evidence for children experiencing ‘free play’ over generations.  All schools provide break and lunch times to allow for physical exertion, social interaction and mental stimulus as a standard practice worldwide.  Precedents –   1. Scottish Government Play Strategy – published June 2013 2. Managing Risk in Play Provision – written by Play England and endorsed by the HSE and the Scottish Government 3. HSE - Higher Level Statement on the value of risk and challenge in play – published September 2012 4. Grounds for Learning ‘Good School Playground Guide’ 5. ‘Loose Parts Play’ published by Inspiring Scotland and funded by the Scottish Government   Comparisons -  There are schools all across Scotland that have planned, introduced and implemented play and learning outdoors with loose parts, including one other in Clackmannanshire Council (Park Primary School). |
| Judgement: | Free play and structured play offers real benefits to the children participating and the evidence of the value of play in children’s lives is well documented.  Continual dynamic risk assessment will also support children in making good decisions, especially when a ‘light touch’ approach is adopted.  At Sunnyside Primary School, we endeavour to create an educational environment of the highest quality where children feel happy and secure and which:   * Provides children with the necessary skills for life: Wisdom, Justice, Compassion and Integrity * Values and respects each individual * Promotes co-operation and mutual support amongst pupils, parents and staff   **In light of our experience and good judgement, free play, loose materials play and structured play offers an acceptable level of risk compared to the benefits.** |