



Free Range Project

Referrer Information



What is Free Range?

Free Range is a targeted, referral based project, that is designed to promote children's health and wellbeing through outdoor play in a natural environment. The project is underpinned by the child's right to play.

Free Range provides support to families during school holiday periods and is delivered by Fife Council's Play Practice Development Team based within Early Years, Education Directorate. Free Range takes place at a woodland site within Chancefield, on Falkland Estate, Fife.

Free Range provides nurturing outdoor play experiences, supported by experienced staff. These play experiences will promote challenge, adventure, and fun opportunities for the children to develop their life skills and increase confidence and resilience.

Aim

To improve the quality of life through outdoor play for vulnerable children in identified areas in Fife.

Outcomes

- Children experience increased physical activity and play opportunities
- Children have greater confidence and have gained new skills
- Children have a greater knowledge of the natural environment outdoors
- Families feel more supported

Making a Referral

Children can be referred to Free Range in consultation with their parent/carers by professionals such as a teacher, health visitor, social worker, early years practitioner and other agencies.

Each committee area across Fife is allocated a week during school holiday periods including 1 week during the Easter and October holidays and 5 weeks during the summer holidays.

Referral Criteria

- Age range - pre-school nursery year, to Primary 5
- Children must live in the local area allocated
- Referrals are dealt with on a first come first served basis
- Priority is given to children who have not attended Free Range, however applications will be considered if spaces are available after the closing date
- If a child requires 1-1 PSA support, this should be arranged in advance of the referral being submitted and the referring professional is responsible for funding this support

To make a referral to Free Range, please access the **Referrer Pack** to download the referral forms and access further information relating to the referral process.

On receipt of referral the Free Range Team will assess the information provided taking into account whether a referral to Free Range would be suitable in meeting the needs of the child. Staff are happy to arrange a visits to meet with the child to aid the transition prior to attending Free Range.

Referrers will be informed of the outcome of their referral shortly after the closing date.

The referrer will initially inform the parent/carer the outcome of the referral. If the child is allocated a place, the Free Range Team will write out to the parent/carer to confirm the child's place in writing and provide further details. Progress reports will be sent to each referrer after the child has attended Free Range.

Referrer Pack



Play at Free Range

The Free Range project is based on playwork practice and takes place in a fully outdoor setting. Staff will support the child in their play to ensure that the play spaces and environment affords the children opportunities to experience free play outdoors.

'Free play opportunities provide the biggest benefit in a child's development'
(National Play Strategy 2013, Scottish Government)

During free play, children are given the freedom to come up with their own ideas at their own speed and in turn develop their creativity and growth.

The nature of the outdoors makes it a more interesting, stimulating place to play, and allows children the sense of fun and freedom whilst promoting their physical, emotional, and psychological health. Outdoor free play offers a powerful way of providing some of these enriching outdoor experiences.

In addition, children and young people who play outdoors more often have better social networks, are more confident and are more involved in their local communities than those who are outside less often.

At Free Range we value the long-term benefits of play and exposure to risk – both in terms of physical health and in developing resilience and mental wellbeing.

When the children are engaging in risky play, they are also developing skills in risk assessment and an ability to keep themselves safe which will support their resilience through life.

What will the children experience?



Build a fire



Toasting marshmallows



Being creative



Climbing trees



Explore the forest



Building dens



Play with water and mud



Playing on the rope swings

Using tools



Relax in the hammock



Bug hunting



Playing with loose parts

What do we provide?

The children will attend for up to 5 days on an allocated week during the school holidays and the following is provided:



Lunch and snacks



Waterproof clothing and wellies



Transport from your local area



For more information on Free Range and its impact, please see our **Annual Service Report**.

Children's
Video



Free Range
Video



If you have any further
questions, please email:

Free.Range@Fife.gov.uk



Free Range Project
Children's Booklet

