



This example of a comprehensive risk-benefit assessment for play in school, was produced by **Oaklands Primary School using OPAL's Risk-Benefit Advice and Record Sheet.**

The purpose of **Benefit-Risk Assessments** are to enable you to provide challenge, progression, excitement, creativity and fun in your play environment.

They cannot and will not provide complete 'safety' and this is not their purpose.

They can help you to think about, predict, and manage the most serious and most likely potential causes of harm.

You will need two approaches to managing risk Standing Benefit-Risk Assessments and Dynamic Risk Management

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

**Dynamic Risk 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, tree management and tree climbing, fixed equipment and inspection, broken loose parts, rope tying (especially at height), water use and water features and playing with non-fixed large items such as tyres.

**Play Supervisors will carry out daily, ongoing risk assessment and pass on any potential hazards to a member of SLT**

Risk Assessment Date: 29.11.21

Assessed by: JW/BH

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	Nominated person	Action Date
Pupils playing with heavy loose play equipment: Potential for splinters, crush injury from cable drums and tyres, ply sheets and 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. "Ready, steady, lift" – bent knees and straight back. Supervisors apply principles of dynamic risk assessment and guide children in movement and use of heavier play parts. Children to be reminded to ask staff if not sure.	Play Supervisors daily. Assemblies SLT	Ongoing
Children playing with rope/hanging swings/tyres: potential for neck injury and strangulation.	Thick rope enables pulling and dragging and other safe applications such as demarcation, den-building etc	All pre-looped rope has been discarded. All Swings must be tied with single line and tight to ends (no loops). All rope checked to ensure it is the correct thickness.	Play Supervisors Daily Play Co-Ordinator	Ongoing
Pupils playing in Forest School area slope.	Future benefit of physical play (rolling, scrambling and jumping) on slope).	Pupils briefed and PSs Monitor.	PSs Daily	
Trees unsafe to climb: potential injury falling from trees with thin or weak branches.	Some pupils will want to climb trees. Limited number of trees that are identified as suitable for climbing or hanging swings.	All children briefed as to which trees to climb. Supervision daily by PSs to enforce this. Tyres checked by SCC play inspector as part of the programme of play ground checks. Weekly checks carried out by Play Co-ordinator. Ropes changed on tyre swings where applicable.	PSs SCC PCo Govs/SLT	Daily Weekly
Pupils playing in Forest School: Trip hazards and potential for cuts in woodland/densely planted areas.	Woodland provides excellent opportunities for den-making, shelter and play "in corners". The Forest School woodland is big enough to accommodate a larger number of children and so disagreements over "territory" will be minimised.	Forest School area and Woodland checked daily by PSs and weekly by Play Co-ordinator for hazards. Unsafe materials removed. Woodland to be checked daily by PS for potential dangers and these reported to JF/JW/PB.	PSs PCo	Daily Weekly

Pupils playing in different environment with new potential dangers: There is an increased risk of minor injury to pupils who may require immediate first aid.	Increased freedom to play will foster more creative play and ensure pupils learn to manage risks more effectively themselves.	All PSs will carry their own 1 <sup>st</sup> aid pouches and maintain the classes 1 <sup>st</sup> aid records. Pupils with minor injuries (scratches and minor abrasions) will be treated in situ. More serious injuries will be referred to lead First Aiders who will deal with as appropriate, informing a member of SLT if the injury requires parental contact or hospital treatment.		