

# OPAL Risk-Benefit Assessment (RBA)



The purpose of this **Risk-Benefit Assessment** is to ensure our school provides challenge, progression, excitement, creativity and fun in its play environment.

It cannot and will not provide complete 'safety' and this is not its purpose. It can help us to think about, predict, and manage the most serious and most likely potential causes of harm.

We will apply two approaches to managing risk: **Standing Risk-Benefit Assessments** and **Dynamic Risk Management**:

- **Standing Risk-Benefit Assessments** means you should look at your usual environment and practices at least annually, and also when significant changes take place;
- **Dynamic Risk Management** means that staff should be aware of the changing nature of the play taking place. They should support pupils 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 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 pupils to manage future risk as much as possible.

This Risk-Benefit Assessment has used the following documents and reports as guidance: [HSE Play & Leisure](#), [HSE Risk, Benefits & Choices](#), [Managing Risk by Play Safety Forum](#), [Managing Risk by Neil Coleman](#), [Is School a Workspace or Playspace? by OPAL](#), [COVID guidance by OPAL](#), [Free-range supervision by OPAL](#).

**The Play Team will carry out daily, dynamic risk assessment and pass on any potential hazards to a member of SLT or the HT**

**The RBA will be regularly reviewed and updated as necessary; duty incident forms will be completed as necessary and appropriate action taken**

**Risk Assessment Last Updated: 28.04.25**

**Assessed by: Mrs Wood & Play Team**

RISK RATING		Likelihood		
		<b>Probable:</b> Occurs repeatedly, to be expected or could affect large number of people	<b>Possible:</b> Could occur sometime or effect a few people	<b>Remote:</b> Unlikely to occur or not many people to be affected
Impact	<b>Major:</b> Major injury, permanent disability or ill-health	High	High	Medium
	<b>Severe:</b> Injury requiring medical treatment	High	Medium	Low
	<b>Minor:</b> First aid treatment	Medium	Low	Low



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## Generic Risk-Benefit Considerations

Description of Activity, Principle or Object, who might be at risk and what kind of harm	Risk rating (H/M/L) (before)	Benefit or Utility Or Related Policy	Description of risk management and maintenance agreed	Risk rating (H/M/L) (after)	By Whom
<b>1. Lack of first aid:</b> Potential for children's medical needs are not attended to in a timely fashion.	M	H&S Policy, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy <a href="https://www.langtoft.lincs.sch.uk/policies.asp">https://www.langtoft.lincs.sch.uk/policies.asp</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school has adequate first aid provision and this includes the provision of first aid at lunchtime and breaks. All members of staff are first aid trained and are able to manage first aid in inside and outside provision (use of first aid bum bag kits). Member of SLT radioed for more serious injuries/second opinion.</li> <li>Supervision can be maintained when first aiders are dealing with injured pupils/walkie talkies are provided, if required e.g. when on the field.</li> <li>Keep training up to date and review.</li> <li>Regular updates on pupil medical conditions (e.g. diabetes)</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD
<b>2. Lack of supervision:</b> Potential for pupils to not be supervised appropriately and not receive the care required during free-play.	M	Children's needs are met, including social, emotional, physical and medical. <i>Behaviour Policy, H&amp;S Policy, Play Policy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On Supervision, the key rule to apply is always 'At least one adult is already on the playground/field before any child emerges from a classroom'.</b></li> <li>Supervision has been assessed using the <a href="#">Free-range approach</a>.</li> <li>Every Play Team member is first aid trained</li> <li>Blindspots e.g. side of Playzone to be closely monitored</li> <li>Play Team wear high-viz vests so highly visible</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD
<b>3. Shed door hinges:</b> If doors are not kept open with cabin hooks/latches there is a risk of swinging doors hitting people and fingers getting caught.	M	Sheds enable play equipment to be stored and accessed throughout the day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All shed doors to be latched open when in use.</li> <li>If a latch breaks, the door must be closed immediately - pupils must be informed not to open them until they have been fixed; a Play Team member will collect equipment at the end of play and put it away. An SLT member to be informed.</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD
<b>4. Pupils playing with heavy loose play equipment/Manual handling:</b> Potential for head & back injuries due to heavy lifting. Potential for splinters, fingers being trapped/crushed, objects hitting a shin or falling on a	M	Moving equipment around allows for creative and motion-type play. Pupils are encouraged to move equipment around designated play areas to encourage outdoor play, physical activity and teamwork/collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils briefed on safe holding, moving &amp; stacking e.g. (<i>pairs always</i>), enforcing good carrying rules ("Ready, steady, lift" – bent knees, straight back). Regular Play Assemblies and recapping of agreed safety rules</li> <li>The Play Team to continually scan areas of play re: heavy play parts.</li> <li>Pupils put equipment away in designated areas encouraging teamwork.</li> <li>Pupils keep designated play areas tidy particularly at the end of play.</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD

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foot off a child due to loss of balance/weight suddenly shifts.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lunchtime has a specific time for pupils to tidy up (10 minutes approximately prior to the end of lunchtime period each Friday, 5 minutes other days).</li> <li>There are no pupils currently who require support to move around the school environment.</li> </ul>		
Play Area: Playground					
Description of Activity, Principle or Object, who might be at risk and what kind of harm	Risk rating (H/M/L) (before)	Benefit or Utility Or Related Policy	Description of risk management and maintenance agreed	Risk rating (H/M/L) (after)	By Whom
<b>1. Front gate access and boundary fence:</b> Potential opportunity for strangers/ visitors to enter the school building unsupervised by climbing the playground/boundary fence	M	H&S Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gates locked and secure at all times. Admittance for visitors only by office staff</li> <li>Visually inspected signs of wear and tear present (daily checks by caretaker).</li> </ul>	L	BW/JHD
<b>2. Injury from games activities in the playground:</b> Potential for slips, trips, falls and general physical harm as a result of games.	M	Team games encourage pupils to communicate, learn game rules, problem solve, and understand team strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ball games are only permitted in designated areas to create quiet areas and appropriate space for team games.</li> <li>Pupils are only allowed to play games that are considered within pupils' individual capabilities as decided by staff.</li> <li>Games can be stopped at any time by staff if considered unsafe or inappropriate. Discussion regarding safety will take place.</li> <li>Activities to be age appropriate and reflect the mix of ages within the school as well as special needs of pupils.</li> <li>The school's behaviour policy applies on the playgrounds and field.</li> <li>Staff to enforce school rules &amp; report behaviour problems to the Play Leader/SLT/HT.</li> <li>Member of SLT on duty each lunchtime to check</li> </ul>	L	BW/JHD
<b>3. Plastic barriers:</b> Potential for barriers to be lifted (see manual handling guidance), moved and mounted.	M	Plastic barriers can provide physical development, social skills and critical thinking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils are briefed on moving equipment together e.g. (<i>pairs always</i>) and enforcing good carrying rules e.g. ("Ready, steady, lift" – bent knees and straight back - see manual handling for extra information).</li> <li>Barriers should not be built up by the use of tyres.</li> <li>Broken barriers to be taken out of use and discarded.</li> </ul>	L	BW/JHD





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<p><b>4. Tyre use:</b> There is a risk of harm from protruding nails and wire from old tyres. Heavy tyres could be a hazard if pupils try to move them and they fall on body parts. Tyres stacked high could topple off onto pupils and if rolled, or inside, there could be an increased risk of injury by hitting other people or objects. If hands aren't washed between playing with tyres there is an increased likelihood of poor hygiene.</p>	M	<p>Tyres are used in almost all OPAL schools because they are plentiful, free, versatile and generally carry a low level of risk. They can be used as free standing loose parts, fixed play objects or filled with earth, sand or stone and dust to act as borders for sand pits or social spaces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All tyres will need to be checked for nails and protruding wire prior to usage.</li> <li>• Any tyre with nails and wire exposed will be discarded.</li> <li>• Heavy tyres will either be kept in one position or only moved under adult supervision with 6 KS2 pupils per tyre. Key Stage 1 pupils are not to move heavy tyres.</li> <li>• Tyres may only be stacked up to armpit height but NO HIGHER (arms and head kept clear).</li> <li>• If pupils are inside tyres and they are rolling at a dangerous speed, this type of play will be discussed with the children to help them understand the risks.</li> <li>• Pupils should wash their hands between playing with tyres and eating.</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD
<p><b>5. Crate play:</b> The main risks from crate play usually come from unstable stacks toppling over or injury caused by hands or feet getting caught or cut in split and damaged crates.</p>	M	<p>Crates can be used by pupils in many different ways; for pulling by hand or ropes and pipe and pushing each other around, for building towers, homes or dens, for climbing on top of, for simply sitting in, for bracing other loose parts so they don't easily move, and especially as stepping stones, when upturned.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crates will have a stack height limit of shoulder height on tarmac/soft grass/artificial surfaces.</li> <li>• Avoid standing on a stack of crates over 100cm off the ground on Tarmac and 150cm max on soft grass/mud/artificial surfaces.</li> <li>• Test stacks of crates (pupils and regularly by staff) for stability before playing with them to reduce likelihood of them toppling over.</li> <li>• Only lift single crates above head height, not multiples of crates to prevent head-bump hazard.</li> <li>• Riding in dragged crates is fine on Tarmac but beware of speed and cornering and avoid artificial grass or rubber surfacing to protect these surfaces.</li> <li>• Sliding down a slope (eg on a board - like a luge) in a crate should only happen after staff and pupils discuss the fall height, angle of slope and the plank/board for stability (it may require bracing with tyres etc to stop someone sliding off sideways) including the 'landing area' at the end of the plank/board, as well as both sides of the board for hard hazards like roots, stones or people if a child falls out, loses control or tips over.</li> <li>• DO NOT USE CYCLE HELMETS – instead teach pupils, by modelling in Play Assemblies, how to protect themselves around the head with their arms.</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD



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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All crates need to be inspected for structural integrity by staff at least weekly for finger traps, sharp edges, breakages, etc.</li> <li>• If a pupil discovers a broken crate they should immediately stop playing with it and take it to the nearest member of staff for checking.</li> <li>• If a crate is repairable it should be placed out of reach of pupils until fixed. If broken beyond repair it should go into the waste bins for off-site disposal.</li> </ul>		
<b>6. Pupils playing with skipping ropes/den rope:</b> Potential for neck injury and strangulation.	M	Rope enables pulling, dragging and other safe applications such as demarcation, den-building.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All pre-looped rope has been discarded.</li> <li>• Climbing rope is not used.</li> <li>• All rope is checked by Play Team to ensure it is of reasonable thickness/regular checking to ensure it is not frayed</li> <li>• Pupils briefed about the dangers of looping rope.</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD
<b>7. Dressing up</b>	M	Dressing up enables the kids to play out all different characters and roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respect all dressing up items</li> <li>• pupils briefed about kind communication within play</li> <li>• check for chokeables</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD
<b>8. Small World Area:</b> Potential for small objects to be ingested.	L	Small worlds, as well as being fun, are the ideal platform for nurturing children's imagination from a young age. This play provides them with an opportunity to explore new materials, act out scenarios from real life, build language, practise social skills, and gain an understanding of the world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rules are briefed on not putting small world items in mouths.</li> <li>• Small world needs to stay in small world areas.</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD
<b>9. Wheeled Play</b>	M	A good selection of wheeled play resources will provide for many	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils briefed in safety talks about using the scooters, skateboards, wheeled play items in the playground.</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD



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There is an increased risk of slips, trips and falls, especially if slopes or bridges are introduced. Scarves and long hair could get caught up in wheeled play. If the handles break off of scooters or the rubber grips wear away, the round end of the handle tubes could be sharp. These present a cut hazard.		kinds of gross motor skills including muscle development, arms, legs, shoulders and core. They will help increase coordination, balance, spatial awareness and prediction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The steepness of slopes needs consideration and therefore the maximum speed scooters can reach needs to be closely monitored.</li> <li>• Adequate space will be provided and, if required, sectioned off.</li> <li>• Any broken handles should be sealed with new grips or gaffer tape or discarded if unrepairable.</li> <li>• If wheels on scooters/wheeled play items break off, these could be repaired or discarded but pupils should not use them until fixed.</li> <li>• Staff are vigilant with items getting caught up in wheels and pupils are encouraged not to wear scarves/long flowing dressing up clothing items and to tie long hair up to avoid tangling.</li> <li>• Ensure all wheeled toys are checked over regularly for damage.</li> <li>• If pushing one another on a wheeled play item, children to ensure head is up looking at surroundings to avoid collisions.</li> </ul>		
<b>Play Area: Field</b>					
Description of Activity, Principle or Object, who might be at risk and what kind of harm.	Risk rating (H/M/L) (before)	Benefit or Utility Or Related Policy	Description of risk management and maintenance agreed	Risk rating (H/M/L) (after)	By Whom
<b>1. Digging pit:</b> Potential for slips, trips and falls (when entering or moving around the digging area), splinters and crush injury from trowels and other gardening tools.	M	Mud is a great natural, creative and sensory play resource.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure pupils only enter and exit through the main entrance (not stepping over the rope/posts).</li> <li>• Pupils must wear wellies to enter the digging pit (when wet/muddy)</li> <li>• Each class has own welly rack with appropriate seating nearby. Box of spare wellies and outdoor clothing available for children.</li> <li>• Welly washing station set up in winter months/when muddy to clean wellies and outdoor clothing.</li> <li>• A maximum of 20 pupils to be in the area at one time.</li> <li>• Child-sized wheelbarrows used.</li> <li>• Rules discussed and shared for the digging area</li> <li>• Staff encourage pupils to tidy all tools away at the end of each session.</li> <li>• Staff monitor digging activities carried out.</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD





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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff encourage pupils to help each other put on/take off waterproofs.</li> <li>• Pupils encouraged to back fill holes at the end of the week.</li> </ul>		
<b>2. Pupils playing in the sand pit:</b> Sand pit possible attraction for cat faeces. Sand in eyes. Trip hazard of sand pit play items. Overcrowding	M	Sandpit area will enable creative, sensory play for up to 25 pupils (at a time)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pit checked and raked daily by the PLAY team.</li> <li>• Sandpit covered at the end of each play session</li> <li>• PLAY Team carry saline solution in 1<sup>st</sup> aid pouches to wash eyes in the event of thrown sand.</li> <li>• All pupils briefed regarding hazards, including overcrowding (maximum 25 in the sand pit at any one time), ways to travel and equipment use.</li> <li>• Equipment in sand pit to be checked by Play Team and any broken items placed in broken parts bin.</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD
<b>3. Den building:</b> Potential for poking with sticks/splinters/stick in the eye, head or body injury by wood being lifted and swung around. Bumps, bruises and broken bones from collapse of the den.	M	Dens are built from the child's perspective (without adults' constraints such as tidiness) and offer a spatial boundary between the child and the rest of the world. They are meeting places where invited friends enjoy shared interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils briefed on the dangers of playing with sharp sticks.</li> <li>• Pupils briefed about being aware of other people when lifting wood while building dens.</li> <li>• Pupils instructed not to run with sticks and to carry them below waist height.</li> <li>• Pupils briefed about den construction e.g. supporting the weight.</li> <li>• Check structure before entering to ensure it is safe.</li> <li>• Any splintered sticks discarded.</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD
<b>4. Mud Kitchen and water play</b> Stagnant water, consumption/absorption of contaminants.		Mud is a great natural, creative and sensory play resource. The area allows and encourages children to role play and create. Adds a new dimension to the play, changing the states of materials so pupils can mix, tip, pour and stir to create potions, stews and soups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Containers provided do not allow pupils to fall in.</li> <li>• The Play Team to supervise where large trugs are in use and do not fill deeply and during prolonged heavy rain.</li> <li>• Play Team control use of tap (fresh water)</li> <li>• All water containers/trays are emptied at the end of each day and refreshed with clean water each day (and checked for contaminants).</li> <li>• Pupils are encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area.</li> <li>• Pupils are briefed on the hazards of stagnant water.</li> <li>• The Play Team to ensure all water toys are drained and left to dry overnight – toys are periodically sterilised and checked for mould. Toys to be replaced when necessary.</li> <li>• Wellies always available.</li> <li>• Waterproof always available.</li> <li>• Children encourage to wash their hands after mud/water play.</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD



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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play Team inspect area daily. Checks made on mud kitchen utensils/equipment.</li> <li>• Children ensure mud kitchen equipment stays in that area.</li> <li>• Children place all broken items in the broken parts bin for adult inspection.</li> </ul>		
<b>5. Play House:</b> Overcrowding could present a trip/crush hazard. Children could fall from the upper level if not climbing down correctly.	M	The Playhouse provides a social and safe space for pupils to interact and to role play scenarios.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A maximum of 5 children in the playhouse at any one time.</li> <li>• Children have been taught to climb down backwards/feet first from the upper level and not to jump down.</li> <li>• Children will not be allowed in during extreme high winds.</li> <li>• Staff will inspect the playhouse weekly for structural integrity and repair when required.</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD
<b>6. Pallets/Planks:</b> Main risks come from unstable stacks, toppling over, children slipping between gaps, injury resulting from nails popping up, from slats breaking under pressure or from minor splinters caused by hands-on roughly sawn wood.	M	Pallets can be used in many different ways: building forts/dens/structures, climbing on, sitting on etc. Promotes imagination and creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pallets will have a stack height of 90cm (maximum 6 pallets high when laid flat one on top of the other) on tarmac/mud/grass for KS2 and 4-pallet height limit for KS1 pupils.</li> <li>• Children taught about the integrity of the pallet structures and check this before standing on them.</li> <li>• Children taught about how to handle correctly to minimise risk of splinters. First aid provided by Play Team. All staff first aid trained.</li> <li>• Pallets moved by minimum of 2 KS2 pupils and 4 KS1 pupils</li> <li>• Pallets inspected twice weekly by staff for structural integrity – for exposed nails, finger traps, broken slats etc. Staff complete random stability checks (once/twice a week) to ensure pupils are building structures sensibly.</li> <li>• If children discover broken pallet, stop playing with it immediately and report to staff member.</li> <li>• If pallet is repairable, it will be placed out of reach of children until fixed. If broken beyond repair, it will be removed and disposed of off-site.</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD
<b>7. Cable reel:</b>	H		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum of 2 KS2 children/4 KS1 children will move the cable reel and children will be taught to roll these into position.</li> <li>• Cable reel will not be stacked and being under 1m, children are able to climb on these when laid flat.</li> <li>• One child at a time to walk on cable reel – choosing size within own competencies. Teach children slightly lean and jump forwards when balancing on top. Have spotter by their side to support.</li> </ul> <p>Cable reels to be used on field only when being walked on.</p>	M	BW/ JHD





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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play Team will regularly inspect for damage and structural integrity. If children discover a broken cable reel</li> </ul>		
<b>8. Tyres/crates/rope</b>	M	See Playground above		L	BW/ JHD
<p><b>9. Trees:</b> Potential for falling from a tree, landing on something hard or pointed, branches, falling onto someone from above e.g. concussion, broken bones, twigs or branches going through the skin or into the eyes, teeth being knocked out, bumps and bruises. Potential urge to be up high is very strong and instinctive in children especially as they gain confidence in their bodies.</p> <p>Rope ladders and swings on the trees.</p>	H	<p>Tree climbing provides many benefits to children including coordination, self-esteem, confidence, physical strength, hand-eye coordination, prediction, planning and providing opportunities for pride and a sense of achievement. Trees and branches used for swinging and motion in the playground offer therapeutic experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OPAL recommends that schools should go with the same BS EN guidance as for fixed climbing equipment - 15m max free height of fall onto grass, loose soil or an absorbing surface.</li> <li>• A clear fall of more than 15 metres should necessitate an impact absorbing surface such as 300mm depth.</li> <li>• <b>Pupils are only allowed to climb trees on the field.</b></li> <li>• Trees are not allowed to be climb while very wet/high winds</li> <li>• The ground around the fall zone is grass/mud.</li> <li>• The ground below the tree must be clear of large stones, wooden stumps and other solid objects.</li> <li>• The member of staff on duty must consider the possibility of a child falling from the tree onto another person below, or hitting a part of the tree on the way down.</li> <li>• Fall heights are usually calculated as a fall straight down and are measured from the feet not the head.</li> <li>• Daily and weekly check of tree branches by Play Team/site manager.</li> <li>• Children not to climb trees in high wind/unsafe weathers</li> <li>• Tree survey completed by registered professional (certificate obtained)</li> <li>• <b>The Rule of Three</b></li> </ul> <p>There are four points on your body that come into contact with a tree's branches: two hands and two feet. Make sure that your grip is firm. At least three of these points should be supported by branches at all times [Reason: If one of the three branches breaks, then at least two branches will still be supporting you].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Keep Close to the Trunk</b></li> </ul> <p>Always step onto or grab a branch at the point closest to the trunk [Reason: This is where a branch can support the most weight].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Stay off the Dead</b></li> </ul> <p>Avoid using dead branches when climbing If you must use a dead branch, be sure to follow the "Keep Close to the Trunk" rule [Reason: Dead branches can easily snap; living branches will bend before they break].</p>	L	BW/ JHD



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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Test Weak Branches</b> If you're not sure if a branch will support your weight, test it out by stepping on it (or grabbing it) at a point far away from the tree's trunk. Be sure that you follow the Rule of Three as you do this. If it passes the test, then step on it (or grab it) at a point closest to the trunk.</li> <li>• <b>Always Think About Falling</b> If you keep in mind that you could easily fall at any moment, the chances are you will proceed cautiously.</li> <li>• <b>If It Doesn't Feel Right, Don't Do It</b> If for any reason you feel uncomfortable with what you're doing, then stop. Only climb to a height that you feel comfortable with. Different children will have differing limits depending on their physical abilities and confidence.</li> <li>• <b>Never help up, only talk down</b> Children should never be helped up by an adult, or other children, into a tree. If they can't get up by themselves, they won't be able to come down by themselves. If a child gets stuck, always try to talk them through the downward climb. <i>A physical rescue should be the last, not first resort.</i></li> <li>• In summary, children can climb as far up as you/they want, but any child that climbs to more than 15m above the ground will need an absorbing surface below them and a clear drop zone.</li> <li>• Ground maintenance contract in place.</li> <li>• Staff visually inspecting areas.</li> <li>• Staff to be aware of low hanging branches used for swings.</li> </ul> <p>Ropes/swings two children at a time, staff aware and monitor in case ropes are used dangerously e.g ropes not around necks and check for frayed rope.</p> <p>Also children are very aware of the white circle at the bottom of the tree for no objects to be within the circle, so if they do fall it is less likely to cause harm.</p>		
<b>10. Gun/sword play:</b> There could be an increase of aggressive behaviour.	L	Symbolic gun/swordplay falls within the 'Deep Play' category of play. Pupils act-out scenes connected with life, death, trauma & the big questions of existence. Pupils explore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If groups want to play any form of symbolised conflict or physical sword play then the discussion should be about consent, who wants to be involved and who does not?</li> <li>• A threat is not a threat if you agree to it within the rules of your game.</li> <li>• If the symbolised conflict or physical play starts to have an impact on those not playing within the frame of the play then the players must be reminded that only those 'in the game' should be drawn in or subjected to this type of play.</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD



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		relationships with control, power, leadership & self-determination. These play types often make adults uncomfortable, but they are as deep in our nature as all of the other play types.			
<b>11. Planting guidance:</b> The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) says, "Serious poisoning by plants is very uncommon in the UK. Some garden plants present a hazard, but the risk of severe poisoning, skin reaction or allergy is generally low." The best advice is simply to apply the same common-sense principles to assessing the risks of plants in your site as you are already doing for risks in play provision. See the <a href="#">RHS list</a> for potentially harmful garden plants	L	Planting is an essential part of any good play environment. The greening of hard surface areas has benefits to air quality, mental health and wellbeing, attention and improves and softens the acoustics. Planting can form the structures that provide the social enclosure which so many types of play requires or it can frame a journey from one place to another. The right plants can provide a source of natural loose parts providing a self-renewing source of leaves, flowers, twigs, branches and logs. In time, planting will provide places for pupils to hide and climb, create dens and places where living and changing structures their imaginations are fed and they develop an unconscious closeness to the natural world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils taught 'If it is not a food plant, do not eat it'.</li> <li>• Teach Pupils which plants not to play with.</li> <li>• Use gloves when pruning, weeding, planting and keep skin covered.</li> <li>• Only leave safely selected trimmings for pupils to play with, do not leave other prunings or uprooted plants in reach of pupils or pets.</li> <li>• Check plant labels for toxicity warnings (sometimes stated on label).</li> <li>• If it is suspected a child or adult has eaten part of a doubtful plant, seek medical advice immediately from a hospital Accident &amp; Emergency department. Take a sample of the plant with you. Do not panic and DO NOT try to make the person sick.</li> <li>• Always get the pupils to wash their hands after play.</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD
<b>12. Swings and slack line</b>	M	Swings have long been a staple of childhood play, providing joy and entertainment while also offering a host of developmental benefits. From <b>enhancing physical strength</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils taught agreed safety rules: only one person on the swing at a time</li> <li>• Basket swing: max 2 KS1 pupils and 1 KS2 pupil at a time</li> <li>• No jumping off the swing to avoid awkward landing and potential injury</li> <li>• Pupils to be aware of swing in use and walk around the area giving plenty of space</li> <li>• Pupils to only push as high as the other pupil wishes</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD





# OPAL Risk-Benefit Assessment (RBA)



		and coordination to fostering social interaction, swings hold immense value in a child's growth and well-being. Swings play a crucial role in developing a child's vestibular system, which is responsible for balance and spatial orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Careful consideration given to positioning of swings on field (quieter locations)</li> </ul>		
Winter Risk-Benefit Considerations					
Description of Activity, Principle or Object, who might be at risk and what kind of harm.	Risk rating (H/M/L) (before)	Benefit or Utility Or Related Policy	Description of risk management and maintenance agreed	Risk rating (H/M/L) (after)	By Whom
<p><b>Winter play:</b> Play should continue in the majority of weather conditions. However, consider how specific activities may need to be tweaked to respond to the changing weather conditions and increase the risk of injury. Risk presented by weather – both summer and winter</p>	 <p>M</p>	<p>Pupils should play outside all year round! This includes during wet, windy and cold conditions. All of the OPAL principles and ambitions around providing play remain the same, such as opening all of the site for all of the year, providing opportunities and spaces for all pupils, allowing access to the natural environment and fabricated loose parts for play.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss and plan for the winter weather.</li> <li>The Play Leader should consult the Play Team, pupils and HT to come up with some plans and ideas before the wetter and colder weather descends e.g. What are the plans for an icy playground? What about if it snows?</li> <li>Draft parent communications ready to send to parents when snowy days are forecast so that pupils can get out and play rather than stay inside.</li> <li>The Play Team will decide if weather conditions are suitable or not for outdoor activities.</li> <li>Staff to ensure that pupils have appropriate clothing.</li> <li>Digging area to be closed when high levels of water are present.</li> <li>Trees will be off limits to climb in the wetter/windy weather.</li> </ul>	L	BW/JHD



# OPAL Risk-Benefit Assessment (RBA)



Using PE Equipment Risk-Benefit Considerations					
Description of Activity, Principle or Object, who might be at risk and what kind of harm.	Risk rating (H/M/L) (before)	Benefit or Utility Or Related Policy	Description of risk management and maintenance agreed	Risk rating (H/M/L) (after)	By Whom
<b>Unsafe condition and/ or use of sports equipment &amp; furniture:</b> Potential for slips, trips, falls and general physical harm.	M	H&S Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-use checks of sports equipment by school log.</li> <li>• Sports equipment is given an annual safety inspection by a competent person.</li> <li>• All furniture is kept in good condition i.e. free from splinters, loose joints, protruding bolts or screws etc.</li> <li>• Staff supervising use of play equipment understand how the equipment is to be used.</li> <li>• Caretaker informal inspections as part of normal duties everyday to look for damage, vandalism, broken glass etc.</li> <li>• Playground surface maintained in good sound condition to minimise slips and trips.</li> <li>• Check free of ice before use in winter.</li> <li>• Kept free from build-up of leaves in autumn.</li> </ul>	L	BW/ JHD



# OPAL Risk-Benefit Assessment (RBA)



**Langtoft Primary School's Dynamic Risk Assessment Weekly Signing Sheet**





# OPAL Risk-Benefit Assessment (RBA)



Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) – Langtoft Primary School



## Loose Parts safe enough risk assessment daily signing sheet

Week beg date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
	Signed:	Signed:	Signed:	Signed:	Signed:	Signed:	Signed:	Signed:	Signed:
Monday	Plastic loose parts	Plastic loose parts	Plastic loose parts	Plastic loose parts	Plastic loose parts	Plastic loose parts	Plastic loose parts	Plastic loose parts	Plastic loose parts
Tuesday	Tyres	Tyres	Tyres	Tyres	Tyres	Tyres	Tyres	Tyres	Tyres
Wednesday	Mud kitchen/small world area	Mud kitchen/small world area	Mud kitchen/small world area	Mud kitchen/small world area	Mud kitchen/small world area	Mud kitchen/small world area	Mud kitchen/small world area	Mud kitchen/small world area	Mud kitchen/small world area
Thursday	Wooden loose parts	Wooden loose parts	Wooden loose parts	Wooden loose parts	Wooden loose parts	Wooden loose parts	Wooden loose parts	Wooden loose parts	Wooden loose parts
Friday	Digging Area	Digging Area	Digging Area	Digging Area	Digging Area	Digging Area	Digging Area	Digging Area	Digging Area
Week beg date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
	Signed:	Signed:	Signed:	Signed:	Signed:	Signed:	Signed:	Signed:	Signed:
Monday	Plastic loose parts	Plastic loose parts	Plastic loose parts	Plastic loose parts	Plastic loose parts	Plastic loose parts	Plastic loose parts	Plastic loose parts	Plastic loose parts
Tuesday	Tyres	Tyres	Tyres	Tyres	Tyres	Tyres	Tyres	Tyres	Tyres
Wednesday	Mud kitchen/small world area	Mud kitchen/small world area	Mud kitchen/small world area	Mud kitchen/small world area	Mud kitchen/small world area	Mud kitchen/small world area	Mud kitchen/small world area	Mud kitchen/small world area	Mud kitchen/small world area
Thursday	Wooden loose parts	Wooden loose parts	Wooden loose parts	Wooden loose parts	Wooden loose parts	Wooden loose parts	Wooden loose parts	Wooden loose parts	Wooden loose parts
Friday	Digging Area	Digging Area	Digging Area	Digging Area	Digging Area	Digging Area	Digging Area	Digging Area	Digging Area





# OPAL Risk-Benefit Assessment (RBA)



## Loose Parts safe enough risk assessment weekly checklist

	Check	Remove items
<b>Monday</b>	Plastic loose parts (stored outside) (e.g. crates, tubes, pipes etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharp edges/corners</li> <li>• Cracks</li> </ul>
<b>Tuesday</b>	Tyres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protruding wires</li> <li>• Stagnant water inside</li> </ul>
<b>Wednesday</b>	Mud kitchen/small world area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exposed sharp metal (broken saucepan handles etc)</li> <li>• Loose, exposed screws</li> <li>• Broken spoons/cups – sharp plastic or metal edges</li> <li>• Broken cars/trucks (sharp plastic/metal edges)</li> </ul>
<b>Thursday</b>	Wooden loose parts (pallets, planks etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor structural integrity</li> <li>• Nails/screws exposed</li> <li>• Splintered/frayed edges</li> <li>• Snapped pieces of wood</li> </ul>
<b>Friday</b>	Digging Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exposed sharp metal/wood (broken trowels)</li> <li>• Broken plant pots – sharp plastic edges</li> <li>• Exposed sharp metal – broken wheelbarrow handles/sides</li> </ul>

# OPAL Risk-Benefit Assessment (RBA)



## Assembly Risk-Benefit Log

Date	Audience	Topic	Agreed management and mitigations
11.09.23	Whole school + all staff	Introducing tyres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- if you feel anything sharp tell the play team ASAP</li> <li>- wash hands after playing with tyres</li> <li>- be aware of space and others when rolling</li> <li>- only stack 4 tyres high if climbing</li> <li>- keep arms, neck and head free if inside</li> <li>- put tyres back in corner of field</li> <li>- check inside tyres for dirty water</li> <li>- no sitting inside and rolling, lay down only</li> </ul> (See poster by tyre area and on OPAL display)
25.09.23	Whole school and all staff	Introducing digging area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- put trowels away in box</li> <li>- trowels are tools not play items</li> <li>- all digging equipment stays in digging area</li> <li>- only dig in the designated area</li> <li>- wash hands after</li> <li>- put broken items in the broken parts bin</li> </ul> (See poster in digging area and on OPAL display)
02.10.23	Whole school and staff	Small World	Discussed the pros/cons of small world. Agreed that small world items need to stay in the small world areas to avoid items becoming lost and for children not to put any items in their mouth as this could be a choking hazard. Explored possible play opportunities with the children
09.10.23	Whole school and staff	Introducing crates, pallets and wood	

