



Risk Benefit Assessment

| Subject of Risk Assessment: | Use of Tools |
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| Description of equipment | <p>Bladed tools for example knives, scissors, axes, loppers, saws, potato peelers, wallpaper strippers, de-barking tools or secateurs.</p> <p>Hammering tools such as mallets, hammers and sledge hammers.</p> <p>Use of power drills and screwdrivers.</p> <p>Use of handcraft or DIY tools such as screwdrivers and spanners.</p> <p>Clamping tools such as workbenches, ratchet straps and clamps.</p> <p>Digging tools such as spades, forks, hole digger, breaking bar.</p> <p>Ladders, stepladders or stepping stools.</p> |
| Description of example activities | <p>Hammering pegs into the ground.</p> <p>Peeling bark, cutting, sawing, whittling and snipping twigs or small branches.</p> <p>Cutting and mixing food.</p> <p>Chopping, sawing or snapping wood.</p> <p>Digging of soil and rubble, removal and moving of rubble in buckets, bags or wheelbarrows.</p> <p>Drilling small holes in wood with power tool and/or hand tool</p> <p>Hammering nails into wood and screwing into wood.</p> <p>Moving, transporting, supporting and connecting the various parts and finished products made (this includes items such as bird boxes, raised beds, small plant containers and excludes structural or safety items such as handrails)</p> <p>Installing of bird boxes, using ladder to access upto a height of 2.5m for children.</p> |
| Our approach to risk | <p>Gargunnock Playgroup 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 normal work and play. For all activities, our staff will dynamically assesses risks and put in place control measures and record as required, but always within agreed and recorded RBAs.</p> <p>Concerns, changes in risk management practice or minor injuries that are deemed by staff to be significant should be reported to the playgroup committee.</p> <p>This RBA should be read in conjunction with Gargunnock Playgroup's Health and Safety Policy, other relevant Risk Benefit Assessments and our Outdoor Play Policy.</p> |

Benefits

Developing Hand/eye co ordination and skills with tools.
 Handling sharp tools responsibly, and using them in a practical and positive way.
 Learning responsibility for yourself and tools, including risk assessing and making good decisions.
 Seeing knives as tools, not weapons.
 Self esteem and confidence will grow though taking park in using tools that require trust and responsibility.
 Being able to build objects or make tools.
 Understand natural resources and materials.

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| Who will be at risk | Children Parents Staff |
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Local factors affecting risks or controls Abilities and experience of attending children

| Potential Hazards: | Precautions and Controls used to reduce the likelihood of the risk occurring or the severity of the risk |
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*All staff members hold a current first aid qualification and a first aid kit is always available.

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| <p>* Cuts through skin, penetrating injuries, minor amputations (fingers and toes) from bladed tools. Particularly when working on hard materials, knotted wood and fine (small) objects such as twig ends. Increased hazard of cuts or penetrations to torso or where major blood vessels are.</p> | <p>Good management and judgement of competence, particularly regarding behaviour, age and attitude. Restricted access to tools and monitoring of use. No tools left lying around on session – either they are being used, or stored. Good storage of tools – in boxes or bags or other when being used for a session.</p> |
| <p>* Being struck by heavy and hard object (all hammers, provided and scavenged).</p> | <p>Group briefing, demonstration and instruction as needed. Monitoring of use by participants. Safe working area and working space.</p> |
| <p>* Dropping items on feet, hands or other body parts that injure through blunt trauma or sharp edge - particularly being struck on head or face with any tool, through movement including that of others, recoil or slipping in use.</p> | <p>Children only use sharp tools on a child/adult ratio of 1:1. Briefing of splinter risk and not running fingers down wood edges. Ladders always installed and 'footed' by staff, children to work at a maximum height of 2.5m or staff at 5m. Heavy loads, or repeated carrying of moderate loads to be restricted in line with good manual handling practice.</p> |
| <p>* Crush injuries from heavy objects or clamping.</p> | <p>Using more hands or lower weights, use of wheelbarrows or similar to restrict loading on persons, particularly children and young people.</p> |
| <p>* Power tools moving suddenly, leading to cuts or incisions.</p> | <p>Good hand washing and hygiene standards enforced by staff, especially if taking a break, consuming food or finishing activity.</p> |
| <p>* Falls from ladders or height, leading to injury.</p> | <p>Gloves to be worn when judged appropriate.</p> |

Precedents and Comparisons

Forest Schools encourage and manage tool use in outdoor settings with a variety of groups. Cooking and everyday tasks involve tool use, including blades and striking objects.

We have used information from

Grounds for Learning (risk benefit assessments)

Education Scotland (information and videos - eg Grounds for Learning - Managing risk in the early years)

Play Safety Forum (Managing Risk in Play Provision)

The Care Inspectorate (My World Outdoors)

to inform our assessment process

Judgement

The severity of the risks is quite high, but good group management and systems will reduce the likelihood of severe injury.

Using tools is a lifelong skill that most adults use daily. It is also proven that using hazardous objects as tools can reduce their use as weapons. In light of this, tool use is an important learning experience for all ages.