The Springfields Academy

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Risk Assessment

Why risk assess?

Across the Early Years environment we aim to offer a wide range of exciting and engaging learning opportunities to help develop children's foundation skills. In any situation where there are a number of children working and playing together there are risks but there are also benefits. We take the health and safety of children very seriously, and assess each situation by considering the potential risks and the benefits. Through discussion, we then decide if the risks can be managed appropriately and that the benefits are valid, reasonable and productive in moving children's learning forward.

An EYFS risk assessment is a legal requirement for early years providers as a measure to identify and control risk in an early years setting. The risk assessment only forms a small part of our safety and compliance management, a comprehensive system is in place within Trust academies led by our estates team and site management staff'

The following Risk Assessments cover the main areas of the indoor and outdoor environment. The general checklist covers our daily considerations before opening the environment to parents and children. Toileting, first aid and safeguarding are covered by whole-school policies available on the school website. Trips are covered separately using whole-school risk assessment forms and are agreed on a trip-by-trip basis by the Headteacher.

All risk assessments are reviewed yearly to ensure they are up-to-date and relevant however, an assessment will be made immediately if there is an incident, or an area of the environment is adapted or changed in any significant way.

This is an approved template provided to all schools with an EYFS provision. Each school is expected to personalise with the relevant staff details as necessary. It may be necessary to use this template for any additional areas a specific school may have – please attach to the end of the document. If you require any additional guidance please seek support from a member of the Education Team. This risk assessment sits alongside our statutory documentation

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Daily Safety Checklist (EYFS Staff and Children to use)

Item	Details	Tick/Comment
OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT		
1	All relevant external gates are secured and locked	
2	All relevant internal gates are secured and locked	
3	Storage sheds are locked	
4	Check play surfacing, sweep if necessary	
5	Pick up litter	
6	Check drain holes are clear and covered with grill	
7	Check outdoor furniture is safe	
8	Remove any broken/unsafe outdoor toys and equipment	
9	Check the outdoor surface is safe	
10	Ensure all equipment is stored safely	
INDOOR ENVIRONMENT		
1	Check toilets and sinks are clean and there is sufficient toilet paper and soap	
2	Check indoor furniture and equipment is safe	
3	Check the snack table is clean and that the children have access to fresh water	
4	Unlock any fire doors to the outside area	
5	Place chairs out around tables and check for damage	
6	Check classroom floor	

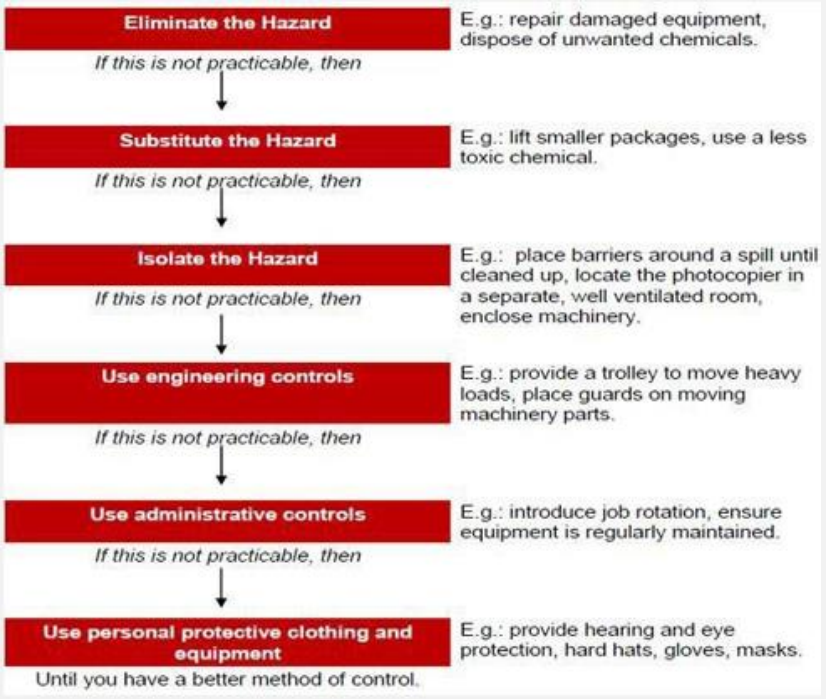
Risk Matrix

Consequence

Likelihood	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Extreme
Almost certain	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	High
Likely	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High	High
Possible	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High	High
Unlikely	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High
Rare	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	High

Once the post-control risk rating has been calculated it will be imperative that appropriate actions and controls are implemented.

High = Intolerable requires further controls to bring it to an acceptable level before it can proceed.
Moderate = Tolerable with enhanced supervision
Low = Tolerable activity can go ahead with limited supervision



Benefit Risk Assessment: Indoor Activities

Prepared by: ***Caroline Box October 2025***

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Pre-Control Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods C	Who/When	Post-Control Risk Assessment (use Matrix)		
				L	C	RR			L	C	RR
Malleable activities	Physical development as well as motor skills practice	Possible allergic reactions to materials Consumption of materials	*I can roll and cut this up to make a birthday cake for you*	possible	minor	MODERATE	Check all information on allergies and avoid allergens. Make sure all other materials are sensitive and are diluted according to the instructions. Children follow the no consumption rule in this area.	Staff and parents Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Toy boxes	Add stimulus to play increasing vocabulary, interaction and communication	Falling toys, heavy boxes being moved unsafely, trapped fingers or drops on toes	*We have to think before we move the boxes*	possible	moderate	HIGH	Ensure boxes and baskets are not overloaded. Provide low storage for boxes. Adults to oversee manual handling and model safe techniques.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Slips and trips		Children trip or slip on toys left on the floor	*You need to look where you are walking, tidy up what you don't need*	possible	minor	MODERATE	Set expectations about how much can be out at any one time and encourage children to tidy up what they are no longer playing with to keep the environment safe. Any spills on floor to be mopped up straight away. Any objects on floor that could be a trip hazard to be picked up.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low

Scissors, hole punches	Promotes the children's motor skills and creative play	Children cut themselves or others	*When need to hold the scissors safely and walk with them* *I must not put my fingers in the hole punch*	possible	minor	MODERATE	Talk to the children about the use of scissors, e.g. for paper and card. The scissors must be used to cut. Make it clear to the children that you don't use the scissors to cut hair or each other's clothes. Model to the children how to use scissors and walk with them safely. Model how to use the hole punches.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Open shelves	Encourage independence and self-selection of resources	Children climb the shelves or hang off it causing shelves to fall	*I must not climb the shelves or hang off the furniture*	Possible	moderate	MODERATE	Talk to the children about the open shelves and how to use them safely. Encourage the children to find an adult if a child is using the shelves incorrectly.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low

Benefit Risk Assessment: Mud Kitchen and Digging Patch

Prepared by: ***Caroline Box October 2025***

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When	Post-Control Risk Assessment (use Matrix)		
				L	C	R			L	C	RR
Contact with soil	Exposure to beneficial bacteria to build a healthy immune system Sensorial open-ended materials Normal childhood experience	Ingesting soil	*It's fun to get dirty* *The mud feels good*	unlikely	moderate	MODERATE	Provide hand washing facilities during and after play Establish good handwashing routines. Children encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area	Staff at the beginning of each session	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Soil contamination	Children can be involved in checking the area before play creating a sense of ownership and raising awareness of potential hazards	Ingesting/ absorbing contaminated soil	*Tell the Teacher if we see something strange*	unlikely	moderate	MODERATE	Soil should be checked for contaminants daily, before play This is part of the daily checklist Children follow the no consumption rule in this area. Not using manure or any chemicals on the garden or surrounding areas.	Staff Part of daily checklist	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Washing up hands	Children learn good hygiene practices	Wet areas Slips and trips	*We need to wash the mud off properly*	possible	moderate	HIGH	Provide washing facilities and at times of extreme mud, provide rinsing facilities outside. Staff to monitor floor areas for water and mop up when necessary.	Staff to monitor Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Washing up utensils, equipment	Involving the children in the cleaning and tidying creates a sense of ownership Can help with fine and gross motor skills	Manual handling Moving pots and pans	*We need to pick the pots up off the floor and put the spoons away*	unlikely	minor	LOW	Ensure buckets and baskets are not overloaded. Provide low storage for pots and pans. Adults to oversee manual handling and model safe techniques.	Staff to monitor Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low

Water	Adds a new dimension to the play, changing the states of materials so children can mix, tip, pour and stir to create potions, stews and soups Covers aspects of Maths, and Science	Drowning Flooding during prolonged or heavy rain	*I have made a stew we are going to have our friends over for tea*	rare	catastrophic	HIGH	Containers provided do not allow children to fall in. Teachers to supervise where large trugs are in use and do not fill deeply. Staff to monitor area during prolonged heavy rain	Staff to monitor Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Water	As above	Stagnant water, consumption/ absorption of contaminants	*Don't really drink it, it would be yucky!*	unlikely	moderate	MODERATE	Water containers are emptied at the end of each session/day so they do not go stagnant. Water containers are emptied regularly and check for contaminants. Children are encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area. Children are made aware of the hazards of stagnant water.	Staff to monitor Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Wet/dirty clothes	Children become responsible for their own belongings Children practice changing clothes and shoes	Children get cold	*We should wear mud suits and wellies so they can get dirty*	possible	insignificant	LOW	School has a supply of mud suits and wellies. Parents are asked to supply coats that they do not mind getting muddy.	School Parents Weekly	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Gravel, pebbles, woodchip or other pieces of natural material	Fine and gross motor skills are developed when lifting, mixing, stirring and pouring The connection to nature	Choking	*I love mixing all the materials into my pot*	unlikely	moderate	MODERATE	Any children who are likely to explore putting things into their mouths are identified and given greater supervision in this area. Children encouraged to follow a no consumption rule in this area	Staff Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low

Using plants and other foraged natural materials	Connection to nature Creative stimulus Sensorial Open ended materials	Ingesting or absorption of poisonous plants Allergies	I like adding leaves and twigs to my potion	unlikely	moderate	MODERATE	Raise the risk of eating plants Plants within the play area are chosen carefully. Adults to remove hazardous plants Children encouraged to follow a no consumption rule in this area. Children encouraged to wash their hands after play.	Staff Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low

Benefit Risk Assessment: Climbing Equipment and Free-standing Play Equipment

Prepared by: ***Caroline Box October 2025***

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When	Post-Control Risk Assessment (use Matrix)		
				L	C	R			L	C	RR
Crates and planks, cable reels, tree stumps	Children develop their motor skills and balance Creative play	Slips, trips or falls Knocks from falling or moving blocks	*We built a castle – you can come over the bridge*	possible	minor	MODERATE	Children have a safety talk prior to using the equipment and agree how to use it safely. Daily reminders are given about assessing the risk in their play Weather conditions to be considered when accessing the equipment Area to be monitored to ensure surroundings are clear and surface is flat All equipment is checked regularly to look for damage.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low

Benefit Risk Assessment: Wheeled Toys

Prepared by: ***Caroline Box October 2025***

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When	Post-Control Risk Assessment (use Matrix)		
				L	C	R			L	C	RR
Riding on and being a passenger on the bikes	Physical development, spatial awareness, communication and social skills Part of creative play	Knocking other children, clothing trapped in moving parts, bikes tipping	*We are chasing a tiger it escaped from the zoo*	possible	minor	MODERATE	Involve children in safety talks about using the bikes in the garden space. Make sure children do not wear scarves in the garden to avoid tangling in wheels. Limit the number of wheeled toys in the garden at any one time and keep them to hard surface area to avoid muddy/slippy wheels. Ensure all wheeled toys are checked over regularly for damage and replaced when necessary.	Children and staff Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Scooting around the garden	Physical development, co-ordination Social and creative play	Knocking into other children, scooters tipping/sliding Clothing trapped in moving parts	*This is a police scooter we are keeping people safe*	possible	minor	MODERATE	Involve children in safety talks about using the scooters in the garden space. Make sure children do not wear scarves in the garden to avoid tangling in wheels. Limit the number of wheeled toys in the garden at any one time and keep them to hard surface area to avoid muddy/slippy wheels. Ensure all wheeled toys are checked over regularly for damage and replaced when necessary.	Children and staff Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Shuffle boards	Physical development, coordination and balance	Tipping off the board Overshooting the board/ falling off	*We can chase each other*	possible	minor	MODERATE	Model to the children how to ride the boards safely. Check boards over each time they are out to check wheels are secure and turning freely. Keep flat surface area coned and clear for the boards. Remove all other wheeled toys at these times.	Children and staff Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low

Benefit Risk Assessment: Forest School Areas

Prepared by: ***Caroline Box October 2025***

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When	Post-Control Risk Assessment (use Matrix)		
				L	C	R			L	C	RR
Contact with soil	Exposure to beneficial bacteria to build a healthy immune system. Sensorial open-ended materials. Normal childhood experience.	Ingesting soil	*It's fun to get dirty* *The mud feels good*	unlikely	moderate	MODERATE	Provide hand washing facilities during and after play. Establish good handwashing routines. Children encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area	Staff beginning of each session	Minor	Low	Rare
Soil contamination	Children can be involved in checking the area before play creating a sense of ownership and raising awareness of potential hazards	Ingesting/ absorbing contaminated soil	*Tell the Teacher if we see something strange*	unlikely	moderate	MODERATE	Soil should be checked for contaminants daily, before play. This is part of the daily checklist Children follow the no consumption rule in this area. Not using manure or any chemicals on the garden or surrounding areas.	Staff Part of daily checklist	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Washing up hands	Children learn good hygiene practices	Wet areas Slips and trips	*We need to wash the mud off properly*	possible	moderate	HIGH	Provide washing facilities and at times of extreme mud, provide rinsing facilities outside. Staff to monitor floor areas for water and mop up when necessary.	Staff to monitor Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Using gardening tools	Children develop safe handling skills; understand the purpose of gardening tools.	Cuts/grazes from using tools Poking or eye injuries	*We need to dig up the potatoes for our soup*	possible	moderate	HIGH	Ensure children are show how to use the tools safely and that they only work under supervision when using sharp tools. Make sure tools available are child sized and appropriate. Check all tools regularly for damage and replace where necessary.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low

Growing own food to cook in the environment	Scientific knowledge of plants and growth cycles Understanding about environmental issues Cooking and tasting a variety of home-grown foods	Allergic reaction to foods	*We made this leek and potato soup with vegetables that we grew in our garden*	unlikely	moderate	HIGH	Ensure all information on allergies is stored centrally and all staff are aware of known allergens. Parents to inform school of any changes and updates and ensure all medication is in school. Staff to check dates and ensure all medication is stored centrally and in date. Plan activities carefully for children with allergies considering ingredients and possible sources for reaction. Source alternative safe ingredients where necessary.	Staff, parents, children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Cooking and /or eating food grown in the garden	Knowledge of foods and how they grow. An understanding of healthy diets	Allergic reaction to food Consumption or absorption of a contaminant	*I didn't know potatoes grew under the ground*	unlikely	moderate	HIGH	Children to understand not to put anything in their mouths in this area. Foods harvested to be washed and prepared safely. Staff carrying out cooking activities to have the relevant food hygiene certification. (EYFS manager to ensure this is kept up to date) Children to be involved in safe food preparation to develop their understanding.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Water	As above	Stagnant water, consumption/ absorption of contaminants	*Don't really drink it, it would be yucky!*	unlikely	moderate	MODERATE	Water containers are emptied at the end of each session/day so they do not go stagnant. Water containers are emptied regularly and check for contaminants. Children are encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area. Children are made aware of the hazards of stagnant water.	Staff to monitor Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Wet/dirty clothes	Children become responsible for their own belongings Children practice changing clothes and shoes	Children get cold	*We should wear old mud suits and wellies*	possible	insignificant	LOW	School has a supply of mud suits and wellies. Parents are asked to supply coats that they do not mind getting muddy.	School and parents Weekly	Unlikely	Minor	Low

Benefit Risk Assessment: Sand and Water

Prepared by: ***Caroline Box October 2025***

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When	Post-Control Risk Assessment (use Matrix)		
				L	C	R			L	C	RR
Sand play	Sociable play, motor skills, creative play, language development	Sand flipping up into eyes	*We are digging for treasure*	unlikely	minor	LOW	Talk to the children about playing together in the sand and use the rhyme – 'the sand stays down low or out you go' Monitor the number of children playing in the sand pit and regulate if necessary.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Slipping on loose sand around the pit	Children benefit from playing in a large sand pit and connecting with the material	Children slip and injury themselves on loose sand surrounding the pit	*I have to climb out carefully and empty my wellies into the pit*	possible	minor	MODERATE	Adult to model how to empty sand from wellies, into the sandpit. Adults to monitor and clear the build-up of sand around the pit. Sweep sand from the walls into the sandpit before the cover is placed over the sand.	Staff Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Sand contamination	Children can be involved in checking the area before play creating a sense of ownership and raising awareness of potential hazards	Ingesting/ absorbing contaminated sand	*Tell the Teacher if we see something strange*	possible	Moderate	MODERATE	The cover needs to be in place at the end of each day. Adults to remove the cover and check for any contamination. Area around the sandpit to be checked each day for any contamination, rubbish blown in, animal droppings etc.	Staff Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Sand and water	Sociable play, motor skills, creative play, language development Science and Mathematical development.	Water or sand splashed into eyes, consumption of materials	Keep the sand down low or away you go – we try to do this	possible	minor	MODERATE	Involve the children in setting the safety rules in these areas.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low

Sand and water	Sociable play, motor skills, creative play, language development Science and Mathematical development	Slipping on sand and water on the floor	We need to be careful if there is stuff on the floor	possible	minor	MODERATE	Staff to monitor these areas and encourage children to spot and help clear spillages to reduce the risk of slips.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Water tray play	Science exploration on water movement, Maths capacity, motor skill development in filling and pouring	Children become wet and cold	*I love when the water spills over the top – it's like a volcano*	unlikely	minor	LOW	Staff to consider the temperature outside before placing water trays out. If children are playing at the water ensure cover-ups are available to use.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Water	As above	Water is dirty or contaminated	The water is dirty	unlikely	minor	LOW	All water trays to be emptied at the end of the session/day and refreshed with clean water each day. If children have transported soil/sand or other materials into the water then trays need to be washed before they are refreshed.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Water toys	Offer creativity in the water play, can facilitate Maths and Science talk and interactive play	Toys hold water and become mouldy or contaminated	I love the water mill it spins round and round when I pour the water here	unlikely	minor	LOW	Staff to ensure all water toys are drained and left to dry overnight – toys are periodically sterilized and checked for mould. Toys to be replaced when necessary.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Sprays/bubbles	Aiming skills Blowing Coordination	Bubble solution or spray in the eye	I love watching the bubbles go across the garden then they pop	possible	minor	MODERATE	Staff to involve children in assessing the risks of blowing bubbles or spraying water and look at how to do it safely. Staff to supervise use of bubbles.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low

Benefit Risk Assessment: Bug Hotel

Prepared by: ***Caroline Box October 2025***

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When	Post-Control Risk Assessment (use Matrix)		
				L	C	R			L	C	RR
Leaves and sticks in bug hotel	The leaves and sticks encourage bugs for the children to explore	Bacteria and viruses, sharp sticks	*Look! A woodlouse in the leaves*	unlikely	minor	LOW	Explain to the children that they must wash their hands after playing in the bug hotel. Do not put your hands in your mouth. Do not put the leaves and sticks in your mouth. Do not pick up the leaves and sticks and disturb the creature's home.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Snails	The children get to explore the features of a snail and observe them exploring the bug hotel	E. coli	*A snail! Look at its shell and long foot*	unlikely	minor	LOW	Give the children warning and tell them to keep their hands away from their mouth. Wash hands once finished with the activity.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Beetles	The children get to experience different beetles and their features	Beetle jaws – sharp centipedes jaws	*I love this beetle. Look at all of the colours*	unlikely	minor	LOW	Provide brushes to put creatures into bug boxes for viewing. Give warning about shard jaws and clear instructions on handling and viewing.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low

Benefit Risk Assessment: Construction Area

Prepared by: ***Caroline Box October 2025***

Activity/Hazard	Benefit	Risks	Children's voice	Risk Assessment (use Matrix)			Elimination/ Control methods	Who/When	Post-Control Risk Assessment (use Matrix)		
				L	C	R			L	C	RR
Sticks	Gross motor skills, enhance children's imaginative play	Twigs in eyes	*I am going to use this stick as a flagpole on my pirate ship*	Likely	Moderate	MODERATE	Explain to the children that sticks need to be kept down low. The children will be provided with large open space to handle large sticks. The children will be reminded and encouraged to be aware of other children around them.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Crates and cable reels	Gross motor skills, loose parts to enhance children's imaginative play	Crates and cable reels falling	*I am going to use the cable reels as wheels and the crates as seats.*	Likely	Moderate	MODERATE	Explain to the children that heavier items go at the bottom to act as an anchor. Stack no more than 2 crates or cable reels on top if each other.	Staff and children Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Gravel, pebbles, woodchip, nuts and bolts other pieces of natural material	Fine and gross motor skills are developed The connection to nature The opportunity to use imagination using loose parts	Choking	*These bolts are going to fix the aeroplane*	unlikely	moderate	MODERATE	Any children who are likely to explore putting things into their mouths are identified and given greater supervision in this area. Children encouraged to follow a no consumption rule in this area Model to the children how to use the nuts and bolts safely.	Staff Daily	Unlikely	Minor	Low