

MANCHESTER PRESCHOOL

MANAGING RISK IN PLAY POLICY

Quality Area 2

PURPOSE:

- This policy will deliver clear and concise guidelines to ensure that an appropriate set of safety procedures are upheld when children are being afforded opportunities to participate in risky play.
- This policy will ensure that risk/benefit assessments are completed for all play scenarios that have been identified as including an element of risk which may compromise the health, safety or wellbeing of the children.
- This policy will ensure that a process of 'dynamic risk assessment' is utilised to measure minute by minute risk potential.
- This policy will make explicit the 'duty of care' of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor and other educators when providing risk-taking opportunities during play.
- This policy will ensure that at all times all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the health, well-being and safety of the children when participating in risky play.

POLICY STATEMENT:

1. VALUES

Manchester Preschool is committed to:

- providing opportunities for children to participate in risky play and acknowledges that such play is an essential component of children's happy and healthy development.
- increasing child's age appropriate understanding of environmental protection and sustainability issues.
- ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children attending the service.
- meeting its duty of care obligations under the law.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Manchester Preschool.

3. BACKGROUND LEGISLATION

Under the National Law and Regulations (NQF), early childhood services are required to protect children from any harm or hazards and adequately supervise children at all times. Adult supervision is a key factor in creating and maintaining child safe environments. Active supervision together with risk minimisation strategies can prevent or reduce risks to children. Risk minimisation strategies supported by clear policies and procedures for specific areas of child safety will help ensure the environment and practices at the service are child safe.

Legislation and Standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic), as amended 2011
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic), as amended 2012
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic) (Part 2: Principles for Children)
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Section 167
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 96, 99, 102, 160, 161, 168(2)(m), 170
- *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth), as amended 2011

- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety
 - Standard 2.3: Each child is protected

4. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- Childsafety Australia: www.childsafetyaustralia.com.au
- Managing Risk in Play Provision: Implementation Guide (Play England)
<http://www.playengland.org.uk/media/172644/managing-risk-in-play-provision.pdf>
- Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): www.acecqa.gov.au

Service Policies

- Child Safe Environment
- Supervision of Children
- Administration of First Aid
- Emergency and Evacuation
- Food Safety
- Hygiene
- Environment and Sustainability
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Participation of Volunteers and Students
- Interactions with Children
- Inclusion and Equity
- Complaints and Grievances
- Record Keeping

PROCEDURES:

The Approved Provider is Responsible for:

- ensuring that parents/guardians have access to a copy of this policy
- ensuring that the Nominated Supervisor and all staff follow the policies and procedures of the service
- ensuring children are adequately supervised and that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy* and *Interactions with Children Policy*)
- ensuring the physical environment at the service is safe, secure and free from hazards for children (refer to the *Service policies* section of this policy)
- ensuring all equipment and materials used at the service meet relevant safety standards (refer to *Service policies* section of this policy)
- implementing and practising emergency and evacuation procedures (refer to *Emergency and Evacuation Policy*)
- ensuring the conduction of risk/benefit assessments for specific risky play scenarios considering children’s safety (*see attachments*)
- Ensuring the utilisation of a ‘dynamic risk assessment flow chart’ for minute by minute assessment of risky play scenarios (*see attachment 1*)
- implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, contractors and parents/guardians
- identifying and providing appropriate resources and training to assist educators, staff, visitors, volunteers and students to implement this policy (refer to *Sources*)
- protecting the rights of children and families, and encouraging their participation in decision-making
- ensuring the Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, contractors, volunteers and students are kept informed of any relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy

The Nominated Supervisor is Responsible for:

- following the policy and procedures of the service
- ensuring that all educators and staff who work with children are aware of this policy, and are supported to implement it in the service
- protecting the rights of children and families, and encouraging their participation in decision-making at the service
- ensuring that all children are adequately supervised at all times (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy* and *Interactions with Children Policy*)
- ensuring learning environments are established that provide sufficient space, and include carefully chosen and well-maintained resources and equipment that will help enhance the quality of children's learning and experiences
- ensuring all equipment and materials used at the service meet relevant safety standards (refer to the *Service policies* section of this policy)
- ensuring that all visitors sign in to the visitor's log book
- conducting risk/benefit assessments for specific risky play scenarios considering children's safety (*see attachments*)
- utilising a 'dynamic risk assessment flow chart' for minute by minute assessment of risky play scenarios (*see attachment 1*)
- implementing and practising emergency and evacuation procedures (refer to *Emergency and Evacuation Policy*)
- implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, contractors and parents/guardians
- identifying and providing appropriate resources and training to assist educators, staff, volunteers and students to implement this policy (refer to *Sources*)
- keeping up to date and complying with any relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy.

Certified Supervisors and other Educators are responsible for:

- following the policies and procedures of the service
- ensuring all equipment and materials used at the service meet relevant safety standards (refer to the *Service policies* section of this policy)
- maintaining learning environments that provide sufficient space, and include carefully chosen and well-maintained resources and equipment to ensure a safe environment
- actively supervising children at all times (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy* and *Interactions with Children Policy*)
- conducting risk/benefit assessments for specific risky play scenarios considering children's safety (*see attachments*)
- utilising a 'dynamic risk assessment flow chart' for minute by minute assessment of risky play scenarios (*see attachment 1*)
- implementing and practising emergency and evacuation procedures (refer to *Emergency and Evacuation Policy*)
- identifying and providing appropriate resources and training to assist educators, staff, visitors, volunteers and students to implement this policy (refer to *Sources*)
- protecting the rights of children and families, and encouraging their participation in decision-making
- keeping up to date and complying with any changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy.

Parents and Guardians are responsible for:

- reading and complying with the policies and procedures of the service
- abiding by the service's *Code of Conduct*

EVALUATION:

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

ATTACHMENTS:

ATTACHMENT 1: Dynamic Risk Assessment Flow Chart

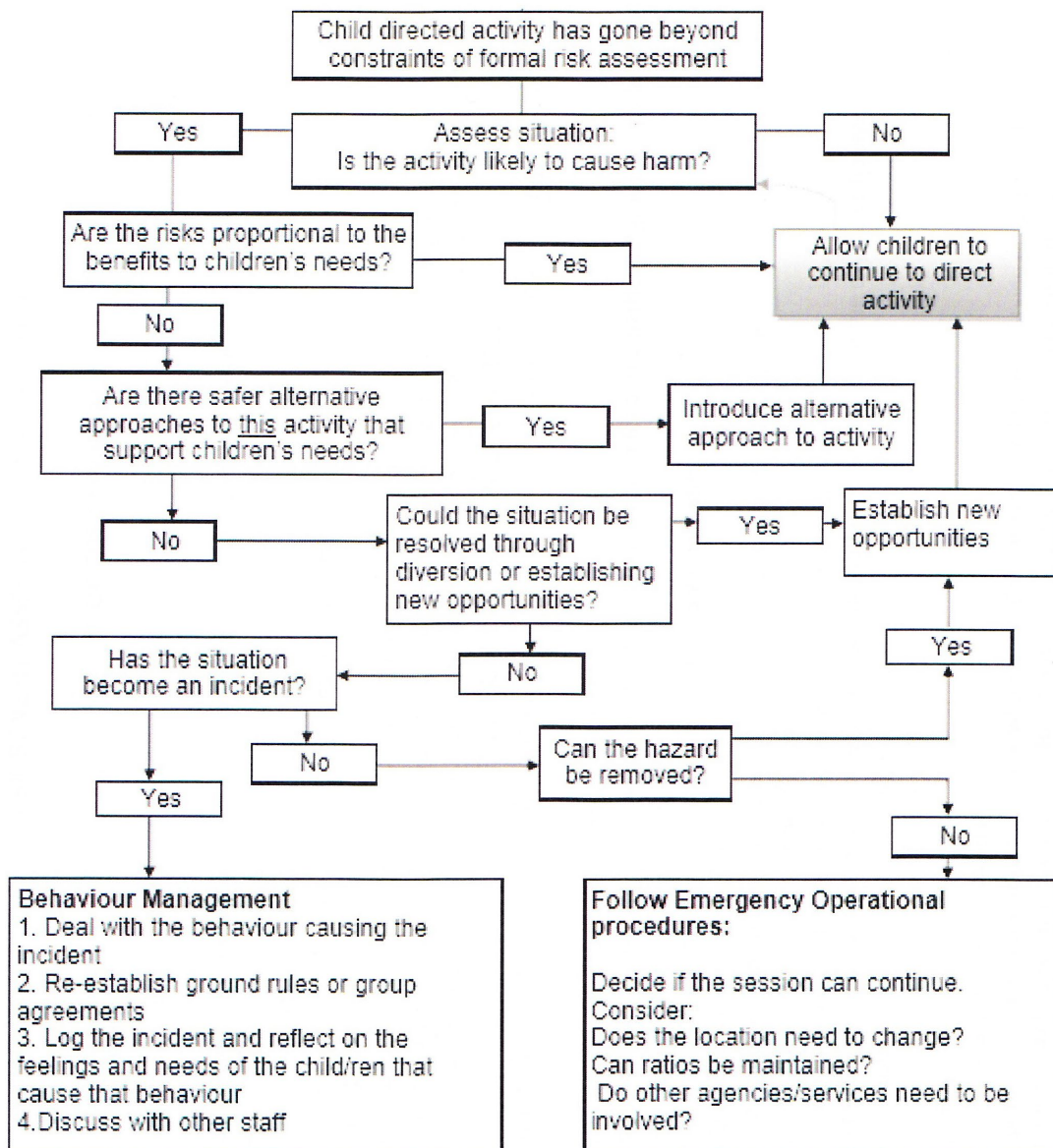
ATTACHMENT 2: Manchester Preschool Risk Benefit Assessment for Fire-Pit Use

ATTACHMENT 3: Sample letter to parents regarding Fire Pit sessions

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Manchester Preschool on 16/10/2018.

ATTACHMENT 1
Dynamic Risk Benefit Assessment



ATTACHMENT 2

Risk-Benefit Assessment for Fire-Pit Use

BENEFITS OF THE EXPERIENCE:

- Fire is a common occurrence within the Australia landscape and fire safety awareness is a critical component of the education of young Australian children.
- Lighting a fire with children allows children to experience the nature of an open flame within a safe and controlled environment.
- Children are able to learn the risks associated with fire and how to moderate such dangers.
- Children will learn to respect fire and to be safe around fire.
- Children will learn about the impact fire can have on the natural landscape including the flora and fauna.
- Children will learn about 'total fire ban' days.
- Children will learn about fire safety procedures around the home.
- Fire is a part of our history and culture and by providing such experiences, we are continuing this long tradition.
- For many children, experiencing a fire and cooking in the outdoors may be a new, exciting and rewarding experience.

ATTACHMENT 2

Risk-Benefit Assessment for Fire-Pit Use

EVENT OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES:

The guidelines outlined within this document must be adhered to prior to and during any scheduled event.

Prior to event:

P1. The fire-pit is deemed suitable for use during Term 2 and Term 3 only.

P2. The Nominated supervisor and staff will make an assessment in relation to the dynamics of the particular group of children enrolled to determine if the activity will appropriately meet the needs of the group.

P3. A notice will be disseminated to parents 2 weeks prior to an event and will include:

- A request for additional assistance on the day
- A parent helper 'notification of attendance slip' to be returned to the preschool prior to event confirmation
- An outline of specific parent responsibilities on the day.

P4. The attendance of 4 parent helpers *must* be confirmed before the event can take place.

P5. The note to parents must outline the details of what is regarded as 'safe clothing' to be worn on the day. Specifically:

- Long sleeves and trousers (natural fibres ie. wool/cotton).
- Closed toed shoes
- Long hair tied back
- No items of clothing that have components which dangle (ie. Cords, ties, scarves)

P6. No siblings are able to be in attendance on the day.

P7. For supervision purposes, a fire-pit event must take place when all children are involved in the 'outside program' only.

P8. The number of children involved directly in a fire-pit session at any one time must not exceed a maximum of 10.

P9. 2 staff members must be in attendance at the fire-pit at all times while the remaining staff member is responsible for monitoring the play of children not directly involved.

P10. 2 parents must be in attendance at the fire-pit at all times while the remaining 2 parents are responsible for helping to monitor the play of children not directly involved.

P11. Within the educational program, the children *must* be provided with appropriate briefing sessions regarding fire use and safety. They must be adequately alerted to the danger fire can present to themselves, others and the environment. The children must be instructed on safe behavioural practices when involved in an activity that utilises fire and informed that inappropriate behaviour will result in them being withdrawn from the activity.

ATTACHMENT 2

Risk-Benefit Assessment for Fire-Pit Use

EVENT OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES:

The guidelines outlined within this document must be adhered to prior to and during any scheduled event.

Day of event:

D1. Prior to the commencement of session, the Nominated Supervisor and staff will make an assessment regarding the prevailing weather conditions (temperature, wind etc.) and determine whether or not the event will continue.

D2. Parents and children will be notified of an event cancellation on arrival to preschool and an alternative day will be arranged.

D3. Prior to session, staff must complete the following set-up procedures:

- Check the fire-pit area and remove all potential hazards (ie. bark, sticks and leaves) within the fire-pit square.
- Place a bucket of water (4x buckets in total) at each corner of the fire-pit square.
- Extend the garden hose to the site.
- Place 2x buckets, each containing a towel drenched in water at opposite sides of the fire-pit square.
- Place the preschools emergency first aid kit with mobile phone beside one of the 2 'towel' buckets.
- Place the fire-starter supplies (contained a in tub) adjacent to the fire-pit.
- Wood utilized for the fire must not exceed thirty centimetres in diameter.
- Fire must be lit prior to children entering the fire pit and allowed to burn down for a length of time adequate enough to reduce the flames.
- Matches must remain on the person of a designated staff member at all times.

D4. Prior to commencement, a group meeting must be held in which children are reminded of safety procedures.

D5. The children must then be allocated to 3x groups of no more than 10 children with each group assigned colour coded ribbon pins.

D6. The 3 groups will rotate through the fire-pit experience as directed by staff.

ATTACHMENT 2

Risk-Benefit Assessment for Fire-Pit Use

D7. The following procedures must be maintained for each group involved:

- The activity group must assemble outside the foyer entrance door.
- Staff are required to inspect the children's clothing and hair to ensure that there are no hanging items, such as scarves, that may 'dangle' into the fire.
- Following staff instruction, the children walk around the outside of the log-seating surrounding the fire-pit and are each allocated a log to sit on.
- The children must not walk across the fire-pit square at any time.
- Children remain seated as the fire-pit is prepared. General discussion will ensue as children seek to have questions answered.
- Each child approaches the fire as instructed by, and with the assistance of a staff member.
- Each child is reminded to close their eyes, or turn their face away if smoke blows toward them and to keep their bodies at a safe distance from the fire at all times.
- When each group has finished their fire-pit session, on staff instruction they exit the fire-pit by moving behind their log and away, not across the fire-pit square.

D8. The children who are not involved directly in the fire-pit session are able to play freely within the playground. A yellow rope will be pegged at a safe distance away from and surrounding the fire-pit to define an exclusion zone.

D9. When all groups have completed their turn, the fire must be extinguished immediately with the buckets of water supplied. Staff must ensure that the bricks surrounding the fire-pit have cooled before the children are able to resume play within the fire-pit area. The yellow rope (exclusion zone) must remain in place and supervised by a staff member until staff are satisfied that the fire-pit has cooled sufficiently.

D10. The occurrence of a serious incident requiring medical attention (involving ANY child in attendance) will result in the immediate termination of the fire-pit event.

D11. Visitors arriving unannounced at the service during a fire-pit event must be advised to return at a time that is safe and convenient for staff to give full attention to their needs.

ATTACHMENT 2

Risk-Benefit Assessment for Fire-Pit Use

HAZARD/RISK	RISK RATING (Likelihood x Severity)	ACTION TO CONTROL RISK (PROCEDURES)	REVISED RISK RATING	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)
Dangerous Behaviour: eg. Boisterous and excitable behaviour, waving sticks around, running near fire, not listening etc.	Moderate/High	P2, P4, P8, P9, P10, P11, D4, D5 & D7.	Low	Nominated Supervisor/Teacher
Congestion around fire: eg. Collision, bumping or pushing.	High	P4, P8, P9 & P10 & D5.	Low	Nominated Supervisor/Teacher
Clothing catching alight: eg. Dangling into fire.	High	P5, P8, P9, P10, P11, D4, D7 & D9.	Low	Nominated Supervisor/Teacher
Burn injury: eg. To hand, arm, face or mouth.	High	P4, P5, P8, P9, P10, P11, D1, D3, D4, D7, D8 & D9.	Low	Nominated Supervisor/Teacher
Eye injury: eg. From smoke or stick.	Moderate	P8, P9, P10, P11, D3, D4, D7 & D9.	Low	Nominated Supervisor/Teacher
Trip or fall into fire:	Moderate	P8, P9, P10, P11, D3, D4, D7, D8 & D9.	Low	Nominated Supervisor/Teacher
Weather concerns: eg. Wind or heat making fire harder to manage.	High	P1 & D1.	Low	Nominated Supervisor/Teacher
Fire spreading:	Moderate	P1, D1, D3 & D9	Low	Nominated Supervisor/Teacher
Post fire burns/scolding:	High	D9	Low	Nominated Supervisor/Teacher

ATTACHMENT 2

Risk-Benefit Assessment for Fire-Pit Use

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

- 6x Buckets of water
- Garden Hose
- 2x Towels
- 1x Tub of fire starter materials (maximum log diameter should not exceed 5 cm)
- 1x box of long-length matches
- 1x emergency first aid kit and mobile phone
- 3x 10 group colour identification ribbons
- 1x 10 metre length of yellow rope and pegs.

RECOMMENDED PROCEDURAL ADAPTATIONS:

Reviewed in October 2018 with Committee of Management and changes made to point D3:

- diameter of the logs changed from 5cm to 30cm to allow for duration of fire pit session and adequate heat for cooking activities
- on the provision D3 that the fire is lit prior to children entering fire pit and allowed to burn down for a length of time adequate enough to reduce the flames.

NOMINATED SUPERVISOR: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

DATE TO BE REVIEWED: annually, in line with other policies, or as needed before/after a fire pit event.

ATTACHMENT 3
Letter to families



FIRE PIT TIME



Dear Parents,

Our 4 y.o. group have a fire pit activity scheduled for following dates and times:

- **TIME** on **DATE** Proposed activity: **toasting marshmallows**
- **TIME** on **DATE** Proposed activity: **traditional damper**
- **TIME** on **DATE** Proposed activity: **roasting bananas**
- **TIME** on **DATE** Proposed activity:

These activities will be conducted in accordance with the guidelines articulated in the preschool's *Managing Risk in Play Provision Policy* and in the preschool's *Risk-Benefit Assessment for Fire Pit Use* (**document available next to sign-in sheet).

In order for this event to go ahead, we will need a minimum of 4 parents on duty for the duration of the activity. If you are available to help out on the day, please fill in the attendance slip provided below and return it to a 4 y.o staff member by: DATE. Of course, we would be more than happy to have additional help from parents beyond the minimum required.

Parents volunteering for the event will be allocated specific roles to ensure that 2 parents are in attendance at the fire-pit at all times while the remaining 2 parents will assist in monitoring the play of children who are not directly involved.

The following dress code must be observed for the children on the day:

- Long sleeves and trousers (natural fibres ie. wool/cotton).
- Closed-toe shoes.
- Long hair tied back.
- No items of clothing that have components which dangle (ie. cords, ties, or scarves).

Please Note: No siblings are be in attendance on the day.

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FIRE PIT PARENT ATTENDANCE SLIP (Please return by: DATE)

Parent Name: _____ Child's Name: _____

Please list me as a parent helper for the following fire-pit sessions: (please tick)

- Date
- Date
- Date
- Date