



Risk Benefit Policy

At Little Star Nursery, we recognise that play is crucial to child development. It is in play that we test our beliefs of how the world is made up and how we fit and function within it. As part of this testing process we need to take some risk in order to discover the limitations of ourselves and of the world around us. Without this how would we develop?

So by tackling small but real risks in play children develop and learn to deal with risk in the rest of their lives.

For this reason Little Star Nursery believes there is a balance to be struck between ensuring children's safety from serious injury yet enabling stimulating and effective play opportunities which will include an element of risk, as outlined in our [Play Policy](#).

We are supported in this belief both by the Local Authority and the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) who fully supports the provision of play for all children in a variety of environments. HSE understands and accepts that this means children will often be exposed to play environments which, whilst well-managed, carry a degree of risk and sometimes potential danger.

Quality Play Provision and Questions Of 'Safety'

The concepts of 'hazard', 'acceptable risk' and 'unacceptable risk' are critical to making informed judgements about what constitutes the best possible play environment. We therefore seek to create opportunities that allow children to explore and experience themselves their world through the medium of play. This is done through allowing the children to take acceptable risks (that is to freely undertake actions and involve themselves in situations that push against the boundaries of their own capabilities. This can be from anything such as climbing down a step for an 18 month old, to climbing a tree for a 4 year old). This allows the child to learn what cannot be taught, to find things out for themselves.

Unacceptable risks

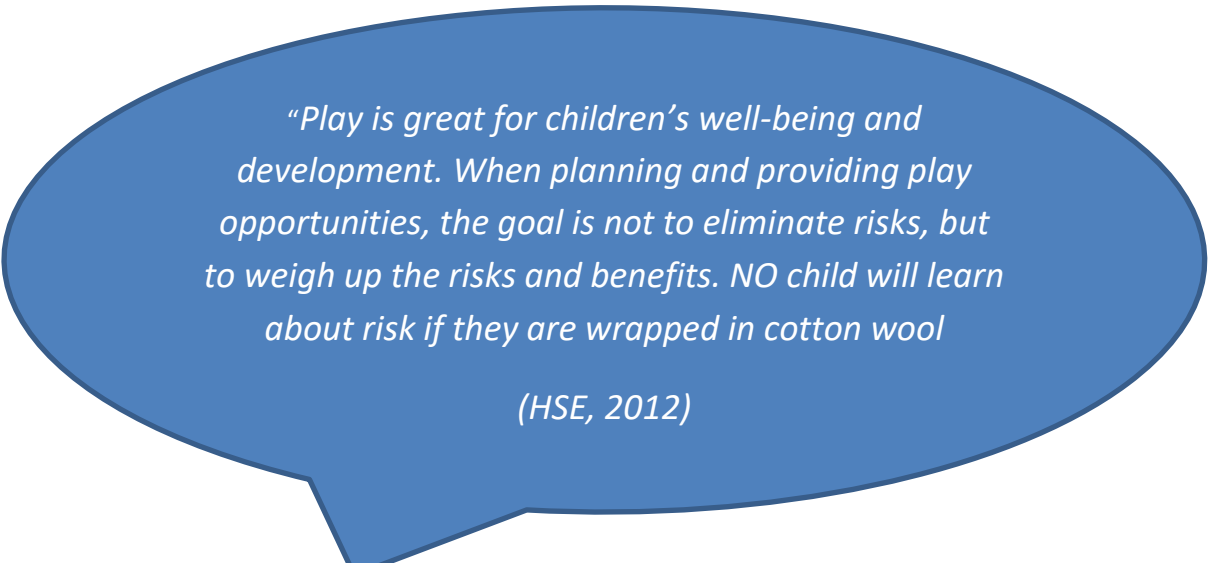
Adults are responsible for ensuring risks are taken in an environment where it is reasonable to assume that the children will not come to harm (for example playing near a busy road).

Risk Assessment

It is a requirement under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 that employers undertake regular risk assessment. At Little Star this is based on a holistic approach: with all staff and children involved in assessing possible dangers and thus managing their own safety measures. When making risk assessment decisions factors are taken into account such as the ages and capabilities of the children using the provision, the level and types of accidents that have occurred and – if applicable – the level of supervision and support that is available.

Specific areas of the setting hold their own risk assessments: such as the garden or the craft area where there will be found possible dangers such as scissors. Children are regularly involved in contributing to these risk assessments to ensure they take ownership of their own safety.

Policy reviewed Sept 2017



“Play is great for children’s well-being and development. When planning and providing play opportunities, the goal is not to eliminate risks, but to weigh up the risks and benefits. NO child will learn about risk if they are wrapped in cotton wool

(HSE, 2012)