



Dunoon ELC

Healthy Approach to Risk

Policy

This policy was adopted at a meeting of:

Dunoon Early Learning and Childcare

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On May 2025

Signed: Rachael Bryant

Designation: Principal Teacher

Statement of Purpose



The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 2 (non-discrimination)

Article 12 (respect for views of the child)

Article 19 (protection from violence, abuse and neglect)

Dunoon Primary School ELC considers taking risks in play as paramount to the essential development in the early years. As laid out in Realising the Ambition (2020) "The benefits of risky play outdoors include helping children to build resilience, to manage risk and to know their limits". Dunoon Primary School ELC does not avoid risks in play but looks to explore and develop children's risk assessing and risk management skills in a safe and enabling manner.

Procedure

Throughout the natural rhythm of play in Dunoon Primary School ELC settings, there are opportunities to take risks in a variety of activities and provision - this may include more obviously risky experiences such as cooking over fires, playing with sticks, using tools and climbing trees - to more concealed risks such as asking a friend to play, or trying something for the first time. Dunoon Primary School ELC staff consider risks worth exploring in a safe and valuable manner. As supported by guidance provided in the Care Inspectorate document Out To Play (2018), Dunoon Primary School ELC uses Risk Assessments to balance the benefit and risk in a safe and accessible way. For example, there are risks and benefits to using a saw in a woodwork session - the management of the risks involved are to wear PPE and to have suitable adult to child ratios to facilitate safe tool use. In addition to the Risk Assessments, Dunoon Primary School ELC staff dynamically risk assess throughout their supervision. Dunoon Primary School ELC staff will consider each risk individually and make provisions or put in place protocols to maintain wellbeing without hindering healthy exploration and development. This may include using PPE or having safety briefings with children. These skills that staff use to risk assess are key to enjoying potentially risky activities in a safe and fulfilling way. Unless critical, Dunoon Primary School ELC staff do not make these decisions for children but instead will work alongside children to help children to develop their own skills in how to assess risk and how to manage risk safely. This is in keeping with the guidance document My World Outdoors (2016).

For where there is considerable risk of harm, Dunoon Primary School ELC staff will identify and act upon any possibly harmful risks by putting provision in place to rectify the risk, by removing the risk or by removing the group from the risk.

All staff at Dunoon Primary School ELC have a shared understanding of appropriately risky play in nursery and when out in the community to ensure that all children within the setting have a clear understanding of what they can and cannot do. This is agreed and shared with all staff at the start of the academic year and reviewed throughout the year to ensure all staff are consistent within their approach with children.

Procedure

Health and Social Care Standards:

2.24 I make informed choices and decisions about the risks I take in my daily life and am encouraged to take positive risks which enhance the quality of my life.

2.25 I am helped to understand the impact and consequences of risky and unsafe behaviour and decisions.

5.17 My environment is secure and safe.

National Policy and Guidance

Realising the Ambition (2020) Being Me - Scottish Government

Out to Play (Practical guidance for creating outdoor play experiences in early learning and childcare) (2018) Care Inspectorate

My World Outdoors (2016)