



Subject of risk assessment:	Natural, Structured and Loose Materials Play		
Brief description of activity, location, feature, activity and equipment used.	<p>Free play for church playground</p> <p>Structured play (games, activities, challenges and sports) by our staff with children in similar settings.</p> <p>Play involving imported or scavenged loose materials.</p>		
Job title and name of person making assessment	Ben Bonython	Signature of person making assessment	
Date of Assessment	18/1/23	Review Date	1/1/25
Name of senior pastor:	Ben Bonython	Signature of senior pastor:	
<p><b>Risk Management Statement</b></p> <p>Source Church Stirling (SCS) staff and volunteers recognise 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 our staff and clients normal work. For all activities, Source Church Stirling staff will dynamically assess risks and put in place control measures and record as required.</p> <p>Concerns, changes in risk management practice or minor injuries that are seen by SCS's staff to be significant should be reported to the Pastor who has signed off this Risk Assessment.</p>			

Activity or feature:	<p>Running, chasing, jumping, walking, standing, balancing, sliding, swinging, dancing and sitting on features, objects or topography.</p> <p>Rough and tumble play, dancing and moving in groups, chasing, playing games (traditional and 'made up') in groups or alone.</p>
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	<p>Climbing, standing, balancing, hanging or sitting on features both built (such as decking, balance beams, logs, stones, ramps, shelters, fences, steps and structures) and natural objects (trees, bushes, rocks, logs, slopes).</p> <p>Jumping on and off features, objects and topography, both natural and built.</p> <p>Building of temporary dens, structures, hollows, piles and holes (dug in sand pit or dirt), piling up of materials (both man-made and natural, provided and scavenged).</p> <p>Transporting materials both man made (provided or scavenged) and natural (provided and scavenged).</p> <p>Digging dirt, sand, bark or loose materials.</p> <p>Slides and other constructed transport methods (that are provided, scavenged or built by the children)</p> <p>Using ropes, skipping ropes, string, webbing, elastic rope, bungees and Velcro.</p> <p>Using material such as cotton, nylon and plastic sheeting.</p> <p>Using chalk, stones, sticks, pebbles, grit, sand, dirt, grass, hay, straw, flowers and leaves.</p> <p>Using water (in barrels, buckets, pipes, cups, puddles and pans, from taps or rainwater)</p> <p>Capturing wind, reflecting or blocking sun using materials and objects provided and scavenged.</p> <p>Using tools, both specific provided, scavenged or temporarily used. Breaking, snapping, pulling apart, undoing and deconstructing items provided or scavenged.</p> <p>Throwing, passing, lifting, carrying, catching, kicking, batting and hitting any of the above objects.</p> <p>Unpacking and clearing or tidying away of all the objects and items listed above.</p>
<p>How will participants benefit?</p>	<p>Pleasure and fun.</p> <p>Inclusive and mixed groups playing together, developing group working and team working skills.</p> <p>Development of imagination and creativity skills leading to improved problem solving skills.</p> <p>Development of physical literacy and learning opportunities about physical capabilities.</p> <p>Development of confidence, resilience and well-being.</p>

	<p>Appreciation of and engagement with natural spaces and place, including changing weather and seasons.</p> <p>Appreciation of risks and development of experience that allows them to increasingly make more decisions about physical, social and emotional risk taking.</p> <p>Taking responsibility and developing awareness of self and others.</p> <p>Opportunities to develop language and communication skills.</p> <p>Developing and ownership of playground and school ground spaces, preventing damage and vandalism.</p>
Who will be at risk?	<p>Children participating.</p> <p>SCS Staff, and observers may also be at slight risk.</p>
Any local factors that may affect risks or controls:	<p>Group competence and experience.</p>
Possible hazards and risks:	<p>Slips, trips and falls (both accidental and over-ambitious) leading to serious injury or harm immediately or through over repetition of the activity. Slips, trips and falls on slippery surfaces due to rain, or mould and/or higher speed of children, increases this concern, due to increased risk of severity of injury.</p> <p>Serious injuries, from thrown or dropped objects, aggressive use of objects being hit by others.</p> <p>Serious injuries from falls onto, running into, jumping and bumping into sharp or hard objects.</p> <p>Serious injuries from mishandling or incompetent moving of equipment or items.</p> <p>Grit, sand or mud in eyes through rubbing, throwing or wind blowing of items.</p> <p>Serious injury or fear through other children running into, jumping over or colliding with persons.</p> <p>Serious injury through falls on constructed and provided equipment and scavenged or built items standing on den roof).</p> <p>Finger, toe, leg, arm or head/neck traps in gaps between equipment (constructed and temporary, fixed and moveable, scavenged and provided) leading to serious injury.</p> <p>Sudden failure or collapse of fixed, built and mobile equipment or items (provided and scavenged) through lack of maintenance, damage, poor design or specification, that leads to falls, slips and impacts that result in serious injury.</p> <p>Infection/Zoonosis from urine or faeces and dry, dusty soil.</p>

	<p>Ingestion of toxins through oral contact or eating of objects or materials (provided and scavenged).</p> <p>Sunburn and heat stroke due to adverse weather.</p> <p>Serious injuries from falling branches or blown items, due to extreme wind and woodland and objects.</p> <p>Bullying or inappropriate behaviour taking place between peers, especially of varying age groups.</p> <p>Vandalism or damage to equipment, that accidentally (or by design) puts children at risk significantly more harm than the norm.</p>
<p>Precautions and control measures to reduce the risk severity or likelihood:</p>	<p>SCS Staff training and sharing of good practice is part of this process.</p> <p>Our Agreed Practice for the Playground still reflects adults' thoughts and expectations.</p> <p>Good design, construction, management of playground area and equipment, informed by experience and policy. Particular effort will be made concerning entrapment risk and risk of collapse. This extends to selecting specific areas, within a larger space, to use for a specific play activity.</p> <p>Simple inspection and maintenance of the playground, equipment and items, with hazards being central to this. Inspection include condition of equipment and inspection for dangerous items, damage and vandalism, faeces and urine, risks from flora and fauna.</p> <p>Simple visual inspection of other local issues or factors such as fencing or condition of trees, especially during times of inclement weather.</p> <p>Simple systems for reporting and acting on concerns, including staff and children being able to dynamically risk assess and communicate clearly to teachers and exec.</p> <p>Initial group discussion facilitated by SCS staff member introducing each resource available and identifying the potential risks involved. Agreed rules amongst the group regarding safe handling and agree the consequence for inappropriate behaviour. SCS staff will supervise and interact with the children and observe play behaviour throughout play session.</p> <p>Behaviour of the children demonstrates responsibility and competence, and SCS staff will monitor and intervene where necessary to ensure play can continue, without unacceptable risk or inappropriate behaviour that causes accident, harm or fear.</p> <p>Behaviour standards are already agreed in advance, and relate strongly to existing controls in our church e.g. hands off, no throwing of sticks or other natural objects (rocks, sand)</p> <p>Carrying of items that are heavy, awkward or sharp enough to injure should be managed carefully, with good lifting practice (share the weight, straight backs etc) shown by SCS staff member and then employed by all.</p>

	<p>Stacking or building of items or digging holes or piling of materials, onto which children will climb or under which they will shelter or move, will be dynamically risk assessed, and steered where required by the responsible staff.</p> <p>Awareness of how ropes (or similar items) are being used will be of great importance, with observation for opportunity for accidental strangulation or similar being a priority.</p> <p>The weather's impact on a session will be assessed at the start and ongoing during a session, as per normal playtime activities.</p> <p>All SCS staff hold a relevant emergency first aid qualification, and carry a first aid kit.</p>
<p>Precedents or comparisons :</p>	<p>All playgrounds and play practices offer a level of risk, and there is a clear history for children experiencing 'free play' from their time in the Source Church Stirling</p> <p>Programs providing break and lunch times, to allow for physical exertion, social interaction and mental stimulus is a standard practice worldwide.</p> <p>We have taken guidance from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nature Play Document(South Australia Dept of Education and Child Development) <a href="https://www.education.sa.gov.au/schools-and-educators/grounds-buildings-and-facilities/creating-outdoor-learning-environments-resources">https://www.education.sa.gov.au/schools-and-educators/grounds-buildings-and-facilities/creating-outdoor-learning-environments-resources</a></li> <li>- Dr Rob Long Email: rob@humandymensions.com.au www.humandymensions.com</li> </ul>
<p>Judgement:</p>	<p>Free play and structured play offers real benefits to the children participating.</p> <p>Good preparation in choice or design, inspection, management and maintenance of play sites is, as well as assessment of a group and individuals competence, is central to a session that has acceptable risks.</p> <p>Continual dynamic risk assessment will also support children in making good decisions, especially when a 'light touch' approach is adopted.</p> <p><b>In light of our experience and good judgement, free play, loose materials play and structured play offers an acceptable level of risk compared to the benefits</b></p>