Administrative Guideline

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| | | How high is safe for us to climb? Trees should be inspected prior to the activity for any rotten/broken branches.Depending on the age group, a progression of risk is also suggested: first we stand on the log, then<br><br>hand. Then we stand on taller logs, then we start to reach for branches of a tree. Students should not be lifted up into trees as they will not know how to get back down if they have not climbed it themselves.<br>Risk injury from falling |
| Speed | Running fast<br>Riding a bike or skateboarding<br>Swinging fast<br>Sliding, skiing or skating | Mitigation Questions: What might happen if I run as fast as I can to that tree? What are some things I need to be aware of before I run/slide down this?<br>Risk injury from falling at speed |
| Technical Tools | Loose parts and tools, including hammers, screwdrivers, rubber mallet, gardening tools, shovels, rakes, wood used for materials. Tools help children gain confidence and physical skills | Mitigation Questions: We have one hammer, so one person will be using the hammer. Is the hammer hard? What do we use hammers for?<br>Tools should be |

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| | places alone or with a small group.<br>Games such as hide-and-seek, camouflage, are examples of the<br><br>game format | the blue backpack. (point to backpack)<br>What are the boundaries of our yard?<br>When we play hide-and-seek, and I blow the whistle, what does that mean?<br>Risk actually getting lost |

Dynamic Risk Assessment must also occur spontaneously; assessing risky play in the moment is a necessary part of outdoor learning. The Child and Nature Alliance identifies five steps for educators to communicate collaboratively with all students so that hazards or risks are identified, discussed, and mitigated (or not). This information together will form the basis of the decision as to whether or not that activity can occur. The five steps are outlined below and available here.

**9.0 Supervision:**

The type of activity will determine the type of supervision required. OPHEA outlines three types of supervision that can be used dynamically throughout the course of an outdoor learning session, depending on the activities planned and the age of the students. Remember, the teacher is not present to simply supervise, they are an active partner and participant in the learning process. As such, they should be providing feedback, giving instruction, asking questions, and encouraging students (see above Dynamic Risk Assessment).

Types of Supervision include:

**Constant Visual Supervision:**

Constant visual supervision means that the teacher is physically present, watching the activity in

activities are going on.

Example: During an outdoor learning session, some students
some are examining animal tracks and others are collecting rocks. For those climbing, the teacher is at the tree, observing the activity, providing instruction and monitoring the height.

**In-the-area Supervision:**

In-the-area supervision means that the teacher could be in the designated outdoor learning area while another activity is taking place in an area adjacent, such as the recess play-yard. In-the-area supervision requires the teacher to be readily accessible.

In-the-area supervision occurs in activities in which students may be out of sight for periods of time and the location of the teacher is not nearby (for example, some students are around the corner of the school building and therefore not in sight at all times). At least one of the following criteria must be in place:

Additional resources, lesson ideas, template letters, risk assessment examples and more information related to successful outdoor learning experiences can be found in the Outdoor Learning Edsby group.

Administrative Guideline

Appendix B: Program/Experience Risk-Benefit Assessment (RBA)

| Program/Experience Risk-Benefit Assessment (RBA) | |
|---|---|
| **Program/Experience Name:** | |
| **Assessor's information** | Name: |
| | Position: |
| | Date: |
| **Describe Site Location:** | |
| **Date of Review:** | |
| **Benefits:** | |
| **Risks:** | |
| **Mitigating Risks:** | |
| **Site factors worth noting:** | |
| **Precedents and/or comparisons (if any):** | |
| **Actions Taken:** | |
| **On-going management and monitoring:** | |
| **Decision:** | |
| **Principal Signature:** | |

## Program/Experience Risk-Benefit Assessment (RBA) EXAMPLE

| | |
|---|---|
| | as it is an extension of their body. Use of the stick, (not as a weapon), safety around pointed sticks and sticks at eye-level and tripping on sticks. |
| **Site factors worth noting:** | Distance permitted to go into the forest. Sticks should not be bent off or broken off of living trees. Sticks at eye level. |
| **Precedents and/or comparisons (if any):** | Compare stick use to toy use. And how it can be shared in the experience. |
| **Actions Taken:** | Sticks are allowed during Outdoor Learning time. (Maybe they are not allowed during recess, but by following the mitigation and steps, students may appropriately play with them.) |
| **On-going management and monitoring:** | Notice if sticks are being used for inappropriate or unsafe uses. Notice if certain students are using them unsafely and how to monitor. |
| **Decision:** | Yes. |
| **Principal Signature:** | |

Appendix C: Setting up Outdoor Learning Routines (focus on Kindergarten Learners)

| **Session Number** | |
|---|---|

Appendix D: Assessment and Curriculum Expectations and Connections

examples The Curious Case of Ants, The Flower of Love, Not Just for the Birds.

Starting Up:

See https://childnature.ca/educator/ for Educator tips including: Working with Challenges, Setting up for Success, Supporting Children with Disabilities and Exceptionalities Outdoors,

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Resources:

https://en.beststart.org/sites/en.beststart.org/files/u4/B2_Sample_Letter_to_Parents.pdf

https://ladybugcc.com/childcarecenter/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Outdoor-Play.pdf

https://childnature.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/PITCH-DECK_-OUTDOOR-PLAY-AND-LEARNING

Appendix E: Parent Letter Template

Date :

Dear Parents and Guardians of _____ class,

Outdoor learning offers many benefits that extend student learning beyond the traditional classroom. Outdoor learning uses an inquiry and experiential learning approach, which fosters resilience, problem solving and creativity as students navigate new and unpredictable environments and overcome challenges along the way.

In addition, outdoor learning cultivates key social and emotional skills as students collaborate and communicate with peers in a natural setting. Spending time outdoors has shown to positively impact mental health, reduce stress levels, and promote overall physical and emotional well-being. Outdoor learning also leads to self-esteem, autonomy, and confidence.

As part of our learning program this year, students will engage in daily/weekly outdoor learning periods. In order to support their complete participation, I request that your child comes prepared with the proper clothing and footwear for the season. I also strongly encourage you to send along a change of indoor clothes that can remain at school should any items become too wet or dirty to remain in for the remainder of the day.

Part of outdoor learning includes the opportunity to explore new materials in novel ways. Students will have access to many loose parts, such as sticks, rocks, tools and wood to augment the learning goal for the day. Students will be taught how to evaluate the risk of various environments and materials, as well as engage in self-assessment to support injury prevention.

For more information about outdoor learning and its implementation within the Near North District School Board, please see the Outdoor Learning Elementary Administrative Guideline on our website: https://www.nearnorthschools.ca/board/administrative-guidelines/

Sincerely,

Teacher Name
Contact Information