

Risky and Challenging Play Policy

At The de Lacey Montessori School we understand the positive impact risky play can have on a child's development and self esteem, therefore we actively promote children's exposure to taking risks and facing challenges but in a controlled and safe environment. Some examples of these risks are:

- Using real tools in forest school sessions or when creating woodwork.
- Playing with toys/resources and taking part in activities suitable for an older age range – such as building towers with Lego bricks, using scissors, threading with beads etc
- Outdoor activities such as building with tyres, planks and pallets. Using spades and forks in the mud pit and balancing and jumping from climbing apparatus.
- Cooking and preparing snack using real kitchen implements.

This is in no way an exhaustive list but these are examples of activities we offer and resources that are available.

Staff risk assess all risky activities, and review these before each activity takes place. Because we know each child so well as an individual we can confidently decide if a resource or activity would be suitable for them – or we may adapt them so that each child can take part in their own way.

Activities and resources will be supported by a capable and confident adult when and where needed – this could be 1 adult with a small group of children or 1 adult to each child.

'Children and young people themselves recognise that 'you can't make everything safe' and that a balance is needed between risks and fun. Children recognise that knowing about risks and how to manage them is an essential part of growing up... Through play, children are able to learn about risks and use their own initiative. If children and young people are not allowed to explore and learn through playing and taking part in positive activities, they will not learn how to judge risks and manage them for themselves. These skills learnt through play and other activities can act as a powerful form of prevention in other situations where children and young people are at risk.' (Play England, 2007)

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