

Healthy Approach to Risk Policy

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.

Stramash, as an outdoor early years provider, considers taking risks in play as paramount to the essential development in the early years. As laid out in **Realising the Ambition** (2020)¹:

“The benefits of risky play outdoors include helping children to build resilience, to manage risk and to know their limits”.

Stramash 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.

Throughout the natural rhythm of play in Stramash 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. Stramash 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)², Stramash uses Risk Benefit Assessments to balance the benefit and risk in an opportunity with how to manage risks 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 Benefit Assessments, Stramash staff dynamically risk assess throughout their supervision. Stramash 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, Stramash staff do not make these

¹ [Realising the Ambition \(2020\) Being Me - Scottish Government](#)

² [Out to Play \(Practical guidance for creating outdoor play experiences in early learning and childcare\) \(2018\) Care Inspectorate](#)

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)³.

For where there is considerable risk of harm, Stramash 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. Examples of these types of harmful risks could be an increased wind speed near a campfire, or a breach in the boundary of the site.

³ [My world outdoors: Sharing good practice in how early years services can provide play and learning wholly or partially outdoors \(2016\) Care Inspectorate](#)