

# Loose Parts Play



## Fraserburgh South Park School and Nursery

2023

## Loose Parts Play Policy

"Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities."

*Article 31 UNCRC (leisure, play and culture)*

"Play comes in many forms. It can be active, passive, solitary, independent, assisted, social, exploratory, educational, or just for fun. Moreover, it can happen indoors or outdoors, it can be structured, creative, messy, entirely facilitated by the imagination or can involve using the latest gadget."

*Scotland's Play Strategy*

1. I experience high quality care and support that is right for me.
  - 1.31 As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials.

Health and Social Care Standards

### **Rationale**

At South Park nursery we aim to create an environment which engages children, allowing for creativity, imagination and enjoyment. Introducing loose parts into our nursery creates a richer environment, allowing children to follow their interests and be curious. It is a type of play that supports invention, divergent thinking, problem solving and offers a sense of wonder to children.



### Safe

Having opportunities to develop personal safety skills and understanding, make our own decisions, cope with challenges and learn skills for life.



### Active

Having freedom to fully engage in play, be physically active and use our bodies, muscles, stamina, dexterity and strength through playing with loose parts.



### Healthy

Having daily opportunities for outdoor loose parts play with access to nature, all year round in almost all weathers, in an ethos that supports our overall wellbeing.



### Respected

Having our right to play respected and supported; having opportunities to be actively involved in maintaining, evaluating and developing our loose parts play provision; feeling listened to however we communicate.



### Achieving

Being supported to experience challenging, risky and adventurous play that allows us a sense of achievement, success and exhilaration; having opportunities for creativity including using problem-solving strategies, higher order thinking, communication and imagination.



### Responsible

Having opportunities to collaborate with others and having to take responsibility for others, for resources and the environment.



### Nurtured

Having spaces that have meaning, feel safe and where we gain a sense of autonomy, belonging and place-attachment; having adults around who support our play process respectfully and sensitively; having access to suitable outdoor clothing and footwear to enable all-year outdoor loose parts play.



### Included

Being able to play in the way and at the pace that we choose, following our own interests; being allowed to play alone, in a small group, with children of other ages or as part of the whole community; having help and support to play in the way we would like to.

*Loose Parts Play - A Toolkit by Theresa Casey and Juliet Robertson*

### What are Loose Parts?

Loose parts are materials that have a multipurpose. Loose parts have no specific role or remit. They can be taken apart, put back together, carried, combined, lined up, moved and used alone or combined with other materials. They can be natural objects such as stones, flowers, twigs, shells, pinecones, logs, flowers, seeds etc or synthetic such as balls, ropes, buckets, pots, fabric, boxes.

By having loose parts accessible in our nursery, children can choose their own resources, which provides a wider range of opportunities and allows for more open-ended play than adult led activities.

### Adults role

At South Park nursery the adult's role is to facilitate play by initially observing play, in order to identify knowledge of children's strengths and preference, understand learning that is taking place, so that learning and next steps can be identified. Play with loose parts should

be child led in the main, although at times adult intervention will be required and will support progress.

These key messages should be considered when facilitating play:

- Wait to be invited to play
- Enable play to occur uninterrupted
- Enable children to explore their own values
- Leave children to develop skills at their own pace
- Leave the content and intent of play to the children
- Let children decide why they play
- Enable children to decide what is appropriate behaviour, within safe limits
- Only organise when children want support

At South Park we aim to think about our responses to children's play:

STOP yourself before you respond to, or stop, children's play.

LOOK AND LISTEN to what is happening. What are the children doing?

THINK - are the children managing any risks? What might be the impact of adult involvement on children's play?

ACT - now you can respond in a thoughtful way, rather than by reflex.

REFLECT - was your action the correct one? What have you learned?

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### **Managing Loose Parts**

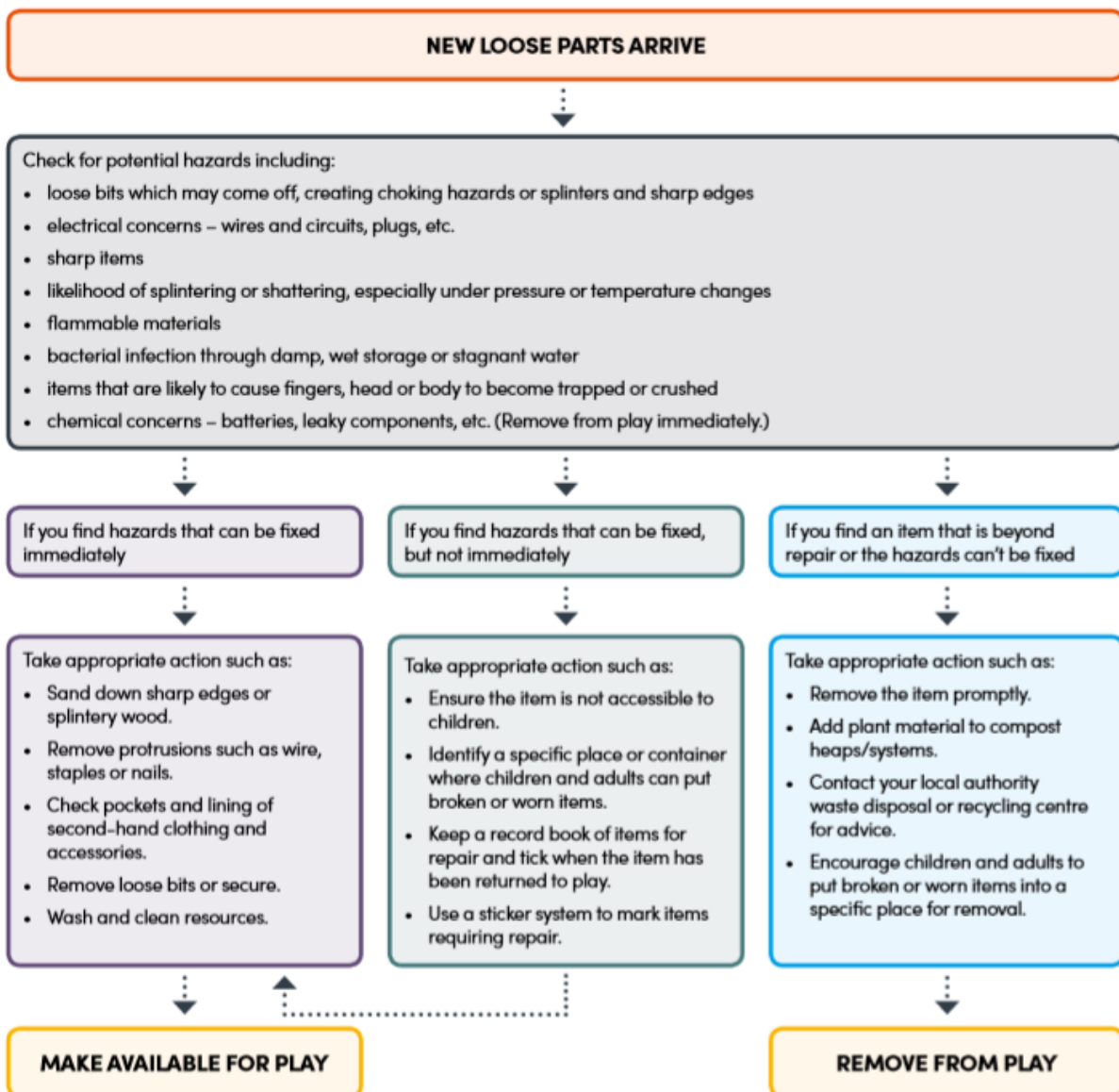
Loose parts will be stored in the nursery with as much variety available as possible.

Sometimes items will be changed over based on evaluation of learning environments and resources, this is due to a lack of space in the nursery room.

It is the responsibility of all adults working in the nursery to ensure that loose parts are safe for children to use. Daily maintenance of loose parts will take place during the nursery session. If an adult identifies an item that they deem to be unsafe, immediate action should be taken. Initially the item should be removed from play, to be assessed, repaired or disposed of as appropriate. A risk assessment identifies more about this process.

Children also have a role in managing risk and the nursery will encourage pupils to be risk assessors, identifying, reporting and acting upon any concerns they note.

When new items are introduced into the nursery the steps below should be followed:



"... Play at this time is not trivial, it is highly serious and of deep significance..."  
(Froebel 1826)

Through play, the child can learn to answer their own questions, learn new skills and learn to work collaboratively with other children and adults. (Realising the Ambition 2020)