

## Develop, maintain and sustain adventure playgrounds

**Overview**

This standard is about creating and maintaining structures in adventure playgrounds, developing children and young people's ownership of these, and working with the local neighbourhood to maintain and sustain the structures.

**The main outcomes of this standard are:**

1. work with tools and materials to design, construct and maintain structures in adventure playgrounds
2. support children and young people to create, develop and maintain ownership of adventure playgrounds
3. work with children, young people and the local neighbourhood to develop, maintain and sustain adventure playgrounds

This standard is for a playworker working directly with children and young people in a playwork setting whose main purpose is to provide children and young people with opportunities for freely chosen, self-directed play. This standard is for staff that have some responsibility for the playwork setting and others, making a significant contribution to supporting play.

**This standard is underpinned by the Playwork Principles and playworkers must be familiar with these and where possible demonstrate them through their practice and reflection.**

Develop, maintain and sustain adventure playgrounds

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## Performance criteria

You must be able to:

### **Work with tools and materials to design, construct and maintain structures in adventure playgrounds**

1. conduct an environmental audit to assess the **potential use** of the playable space
2. develop and modify the playable space according to your play based observations and feedback from children and young people in the playwork setting
3. provide support to children and young people in designing and building a structure within the playground
4. provide support to children and young people in the design and or enhancement of a feature in the playground
5. acquire, select and use **resources** appropriate to the playwork setting and the needs, interests and requirements of children and young people
6. maintain and ensure safe storage of **resources** in line with resource requirements
7. inspect features and structures to ensure maintenance activities are carried out as required
8. contribute to the safe demolition of structures and features as appropriate to play needs

### **Support children and young people to create, develop and maintain ownership of adventure playgrounds**

9. provide support to children and young people in the ongoing process of building and adapting their play structures and features
10. ensure a sufficient range of appropriate **resources** for children and young people to use
11. enable a play-centred approach in providing children and young people access to the **resources**
12. provide support to children and young people in the maintenance and storage of **resources**
13. undertake dynamic risk-benefit assessment of the children and young people using the **resources**
14. provide support to children and young people to develop their understanding of the basic principles of structural integrity and maintenance

### **Work with children, young people and the local neighbourhood to**

**develop, maintain and sustain adventure playgrounds**

- 15. assess the socio-economic and cultural diversity of the local neighbourhood and use this to inform your practise
- 16. manage issues involved in children and young people arriving and leaving the playground within the limitations of your role
- 17. take action to contribute to the management of safety and security at night
- 18. identify and manage ownership and territoriality issues with due regard to safety
- 19. build relationships with local neighbours and residents
- 20. raise local awareness of the playground's aims and of children and young people's right to play
- 21. contribute to building a sense of local ownership and support of the playground

## Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

### **Work with tools and materials to design, construct and maintain structures in adventure playgrounds**

1. the Playwork Principles within the professional and ethical framework for playwork and how each of the principles can be applied within their own role
2. the factors that need to be considered in carrying out an environmental audit of the playable space
3. ways in which young people and children can be involved in the modification of the playable space
4. the type of contribution that you can make with regards to designing, enhancing and or building features and structures within the playable space
5. a range of building techniques appropriate for building and adapting features and structures
6. a range of methods and strategies for obtaining resources to support the adventure playground
7. methods for adapting and recycling resources to meet play needs
8. procedures for ascertaining the safety of resources before children and young people access them
9. how to identify, select and use play resources to meet children and young people's needs, interests and requirements
10. how to store different types of resources and the organisational guidelines and play needs that need to be taken account of in choosing storage conditions
11. how to ensure that features and structures are adequately monitored and maintained
12. how to facilitate and make sure resources are effectively maintained
13. how to ensure the safe demolition of different types of structures and features and how to gauge the contribution that you should make to the process
14. what safety equipment is required to ensure your personal safety and the safety of **others**
15. how to ensure that building work is left 'safe' when unsupervised
16. the design specifications that support the inclusive use of structures for all children and young people

**Support children and young people to create, develop and maintain ownership of adventure playgrounds**

17. basic principles of structural integrity
18. how to identify **weaknesses in materials** that may not be evident to children and young people
19. how to identify the correct use of wood to make best use of its strength
20. how to develop an inspection and maintenance regime
21. how to develop a scheme of works from your inspection records to sustain the structure or feature in a fit for purpose state
22. how to use a range of **fixings**
23. how to safely use a range of basic tools and building equipment relevant to design and construction
24. the benefits of self-build opportunities for children and young people
25. where to access **expert advice and statistics**
26. the type of support that should be given to people and young people in building and adapting play structures and features
27. different ways in which you can assist in safeguarding outdoor play spaces, structures and features created by children and young people
28. the range and scope of resources that needs to be acquired in order to make sure that there are sufficient resources for *all* children and young people to use
29. 'play-centred' approaches which allow children and young people access to the resources
30. why it is important to increase children and young people's independent use of the resources and different ways of adjusting work approach to encourage this
31. the factors which are important in carrying out effective dynamic risk-benefit assessment of children and young people involved in designing and building structures
32. methods for supporting dug-in structures

**Work with children, young people and the local neighbourhood to develop, maintain and sustain adventure playgrounds**

33. the possible moods and dynamics of individuals and groups of children and young people when they are entering, leaving and whilst on site and how to respond to these
34. why ongoing **consideration** is important in the management of the playground

Develop, maintain and sustain adventure playgrounds

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- 35. the types of actions that can be taken to contribute to the management of safety and security at night
- 36. methods for working with **others** and the local neighbourhood to foster local ownership of the playground
- 37. how to research and adapt your practise according to the socio-economic and cultural diversity within the neighbourhood and why this is important
- 38. how to identify and gain access to relevant individuals in the local neighbourhood for purposes that support the adventure playground

Develop, maintain and sustain adventure playgrounds

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**Scope/range related to performance criteria**

**Potential use**

1. physical
2. affective

**Resources**

1. materials
2. equipment
3. tools
4. Personal Protective Equipment

Develop, maintain and sustain adventure playgrounds

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**Scope/range related  
to knowledge and  
understanding**

**Others**

1. children and young people
2. relevant local organisations and agencies

**Weaknesses in materials**

1. shakes
2. knots
3. joints

**Fixings**

1. nails
2. screws
3. stud bar
4. washers
5. bolts
6. rope

**Expert advice and statistics**

1. Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)
2. Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
3. Play Safety Forum (PSF)
4. Child Accident Prevention Trust (CAPT)

**Consideration**

1. issues related to children and young people arriving and leaving the playground
2. safety and security at night
3. ownership and territoriality



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## Values

The Playwork practitioners involved in writing this standard, in conjunction with SkillsActive, have agreed to adopt the following as the set of values prescribed for all of those working within the playwork sector:

### **Playwork Principles**

These Principles establish the professional and ethical framework for playwork and as such must be regarded as a whole. They describe what is unique about play and playwork, and provide the playwork perspective for working with children and young people. They are based on the recognition that children and young people's capacity for positive development will be enhanced if given access to the broadest range of environments and play opportunities.

1. All children and young people need to play. The impulse to play is innate. Play is a biological, psychological and social necessity, and is fundamental to the healthy development and wellbeing of individuals and communities.
2. Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children and young people determine and control the content and intent of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way for their own reasons.
3. The prime focus and essence of playwork is to support and facilitate the play process and this should inform the development of play policy, strategy, training and education.
4. For playworkers, the play process takes precedence and playworkers act as advocates for play when engaging with adult led agendas.
5. The role of the playworker is to support all children and young people in the creation of a space in which they can play.
6. The playworker's response to children and young people playing is based on a sound up to date knowledge of the play process, and reflective practice.
7. Playworkers recognise their own impact on the play space and also the impact of children and young people's play on the playworker.

8. Playworkers choose an intervention style that enables children and young people to extend their play. All playworker intervention must balance risk with the developmental benefit and wellbeing of children.

The Playwork Principles are held in trust for the UK playwork profession by the Scrutiny Group that acted as an honest broker overseeing the consultations through which they were developed.

## Glossary

### **Play space**

A place formed by children and young people playing. It can be physical, affective, permanent, transient or cyber

### **Playwork setting**

Somewhere children and young people have the opportunity to play that is staffed by playworkers

### **Play needs**

What individual children and young people have to have in order to be able to play, but are not always able to have for a variety of reasons; for example, lack of access, overprotective adults, lack of outdoor environments, etc.

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