

Quality Standards for Play Provision Framework Guidance

Be Healthy Emotional Health	Level	Examples	Comment
An organisation that provides opportunities for children to explore their own identity and the identity of others			
4 Excellent	The organisation provides a wide range of props and opportunities, and children are free to play imaginatively and to explore their own identities in their own way.		
3 Good	The organisation provides a wide range of props and we provide activities that will encourage children to explore their own and others identities.		
2 Basic	The organisation provides activities for children to explore their own and others identities		
1 Starting	The organisation listens to children when they talk about who they are and who they'd like to be		
0 Absent	The organisation did not provide for this		
An organisation that provides opportunities for children to express their emotions and develop emotional awareness	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	An organisation that supports the expression of all emotions that do not cause harm to self or others and help children to understand and deal with their own emotions safely and the effects these have on others		
3 Good	An organisation that acknowledge that children have a range of emotions and provides a wide range of activities that allow for the expression of emotion in a controlled way.		
2 Basic	An organisation that encourages the expression of emotion within the rules of		

	the provision.		
1 Starting	An organisation that encourages the expression of positive emotion.		
0 Absent	An organisation that tries to suppress extreme emotion		
An organisation that supports children to create and explore their own play experiences and enhance their self esteem	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	The provision is based around the free play of children. The organisation provides an environment and props for them to organise themselves in their own way. They are there to support their play in whatever way they want to.		
3 Good	Children are always free to devise their own play if they do not want to join in the organised activity that they have helped to plan.		
2 Basic	The organisation involves children in planning a programme based on their own ideas.		
1 Starting	The organisation devises a programme that allows time for some free play.		
0 Absent	The organisation tries to occupy the children with a programme of activities.		
An organisation that shows respect to each child	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	The organisation values the unique contribution each child makes to the provision and strives to have a warm and friendly relationship based on mutual respect.		May not be relevant for non staffed provision
3 Good	The organisation sees each child as a individual and tries to provide positive images as a mark of respect to them.		
2 Basic	The organisation listens to all children taking into account their feelings and ideas.		
1 Starting	The organisation tries to get to know each child individually and ignores any differences.		
0 Absent	The organisation caters for the whole group of children, not for individuals.		

Be Healthy	Level	Examples	Comment
Physical health			
An organisation that provides an environment where children can be physically active indoors			
4 Excellent	The organisation have adapted, or have dedicated, space indoors where children are free to be physically active and provide props and opportunities to support this.		May not be relevant for non staffed provision
3 Good	The organisation have adapted, or have dedicated, space indoors where children are free to be physically active.		
2 Basic	The organisation provides a wide range of physical activities for children to play indoors.		
1 Starting	The organisation provides limited physical activities indoors.		
0 Absent	The organisation does not provide for this		
An organisation that provides an environment where children can be physically active outdoors	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	The organisation has accessible space outdoors where children are free to be physically active whenever they want and provide props and opportunities to support this.		
3 Good	The organisation has access to outdoor space where children are free to be physically active when they are able to organise supervision. They provide props and opportunities for this.		
2 Basic	The organisation provides a wide range of physical activities for children to play outdoors.		
1 Starting	The organisation provides limited physical activities outdoors.		
0 Absent	The organisation does not provide for this		
An organisation that promotes active play	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	The organisation recognises the role of both free play and structured physical		May not be relevant for non staffed provision

	activity. They also actively promote this through their provision.		
3 Good	The organisation recognises the role of structured physical activity. They also promote this through our provision.		
2 Basic	The organisation have an active play section in our policies and promote this in their literature		
1 Starting	The organisation has some active play sessions that they promote.		
0 Absent	The organisation does not do this.		
Be safe Emotional safety	Level	Examples	Comment
An organisation that creates an environment and atmosphere that will help to make children feel emotionally safe			
4 Excellent	Children appear relaxed and balanced in the setting, which feels safe. The organisation regularly reviews this. The organisation use appropriate strategies for confronting, undermining, bullying, violent or threatening behaviour. The organisation are always available to listen to the children		
3 Good	Children appear relaxed in the setting, which feels safe. The organisation regularly reviews this through meetings and by listening to children.		
2 Basic	The adults are friendly and approachable and the provision is based around the needs of the children. The organisation use appropriate strategies for managing children's behaviour		
1 Starting	The organisation are welcoming to children and follow their child protection procedures		
0 Absent	The organisation are not aware whether children feel emotionally safe in their environment		
An organisation that where staff take children's concerns seriously and act on them appropriately	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	The organisation listen carefully to		May not be relevant for non staffed

	children's concerns, in a way that will not belittle or ridicule the child and will not create further problems.		provision
3 Good	The organisation listen to children's concerns and act on them where necessary and following their policies and procedures		
2 Basic	The organisation listen to children's concerns and discuss them with the leader if they think the child needs help		
1 Starting	The organisation tries to be aware of children's concerns if they are stopping them having a good time		
0 Absent	The organisation does not consider it to be their job to respond to children's concerns, other than child protection issues.		
An organisation that actively ensures that children are safe from emotional harm	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	The organisation regularly reflects on their interventions and the experiences of the children to ensure that they are not inadvertently harming children emotionally.		May not be relevant for non staffed provision
3 Good	The organisation supervises carefully and report concerns to the leader. The organisation listens to children and are aware of their own and other staffs behaviour and report any concerns to the leader.		
2 Basic	The organisation supervises carefully and reports any concerns if they think children are being teased or bullied.		
1 Starting	The organisation supervises carefully.		
0 Absent	This is not an area that the organisation appears to have considered		
An organisation where staff intervene sensitively	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	The organisations staff respond appropriately to children's play cues. They take a problem solving approach if they have to intervene in children's affairs. They try to help the children sort things out for themselves.		May not be relevant for non staffed provision
3 Good	The organisations staff observe what is going on and intervene in response to a		

	play cue or if they think the children cannot sort things out for themselves		
2 Basic	The organisations staff intervene to help children have better play experiences or if behaviour needs sorting out.		
1 Starting	The organisations staff intervene if children are not following the rules or if children are not playing well		
0 Absent	The organisations staff are in charge. It is their job to take responsibility for sorting everything out.		
Be Safe Physical safety	Level	Examples	Comment
An organisation that balances health and safety considerations against the children's need to develop their own risk taking skills			
4 Excellent	The organisations health & safety policy incorporates this consideration. The organisation understands the need for graduated opportunity for children to take risks and they provide for this.		
3 Good	The organisations environment offers some graduated opportunity for children to take risks		
2 Basic	The organisation is aware of children's need to develop their own risk taking skills. The organisation are trying to develop graduated opportunities for this to happen		
1 Starting	Safety is the organisations main concern, but children have some limited opportunity to assess minor risks in controlled activities.		
0 Absent	Safety takes precedence over everything else. Children do not get opportunity to develop their own risk taking skills.		
An organisation that actively ensures children are safe from physical harm	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	The organisation carry's out and records regular and thorough risk assessments on the environment and activities and always carry out all the agreed measures to counteract potential harm.		

	The organisation discusses these on a regular basis		
3 Good	The organisation carry's out and records regular risk assessments on the environment and activities and carry out the agreed measures to counteract harm		
2 Basic	The organisation carry's out risk assessments on specific activities to ensure they are safe		
1 Starting	The organisation uses some standardised risk assessments that are part of our health and safety policy		
0 Absen	The organisation has not risk assessed all areas of their provision.		
Enjoy and Achieve	Level	Examples	Comment
An organisation where the play setting changes in line with children's needs			
4 Excellent	The organisation understands children's needs. The children are allowed to adapt the environment to suit their own needs.		
3 Good	The organisation regularly changes the environment in line with the children's observed needs for new experiences		
2 Basic	The organisation changes the environment from time to time in order to offer new experiences		
1 Starting	The organisation plans a range of different things which sometimes requires the environment to be changed		
0 Absent	The organisation organises the setting into areas into which they plan activities.		
An organisation where children are supported in creating and achieving their own goals	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	The organisation provides a stimulating environment. The organisation also provides opportunities for children to extend their own chosen skills and abilities where appropriate.		
3 Good	The organisation is aware of children's play and supports them where deemed to be necessary to achieve their own goals		
2 Basic	Children are involved in planning the		

	provision which takes account of their goals		
1 Starting	Children are consulted about what they want to do at the provision		
0 Absent	The organisation plans a programme of activities with specific outcomes in mind.		
An organisation that creates an environment offering opportunities for exploration, experimentation, repetition and thinking.	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	The organisation provides an environment and a regularly updated, wide variety of materials that will stimulate children to explore and experiment if they wish to. Their time is their own to use how they like when they are in the setting.		
3 Good	The organisation provides materials that are freely available for the children to explore and experiment and repeat things with. Thinking time is freely available.		
2 Basic	The organisation activities are planned to allow for exploration and experimentation and these can be repeated. Thinking time is freely available.		
1 Starting	The organisation offers an environment that has limited opportunity for exploration and experimentation. Some things can be repeated depending upon resources. Thinking time is usually available.		
0 Absent	The organisation offers an environment that is boring and does not offer opportunity for exploration, experimentation, repetition and thinking.		
An organisation where children appear happy and confident in the setting	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	All children have a sense of ownership of the provision.		
3 Good	Children appear happy and confident most of the time in this setting.		
2 Basic	The organisation responds to the perceived needs of children. Most of the		

	children grow in confidence over time.		
1 Starting	The organisation tries to help children to feel happy in the setting. Some children are more confident than others.		
0 Absent	It appears that the organisation feel this is not part of their job to help children feel happy. Over confident children are difficult to deal with.		
Make a positive contribution	Level	Examples	Comment
An organisation where children are encouraged to expect and show respect for themselves and others			
4 Excellent	All the children show respect to each other and to adults in the provision irrespective of other factors.		
3 Good	Children are encouraged to show respect to others and to themselves and the staff model self respect		
2 Basic	The organisation expects the children to show respect to others and to themselves.		
1 Starting	The organisation goes through the rules with children and these include the need to show respect for others.		
0 Absent	Many of the children there are disrespectful. They do not show respect to the staff.		
An organisation where children are given opportunity to take responsibility	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	Children can take responsibility for a whole range of things within the provision. It is their choice. They are not expected to be responsible.		May not be relevant for non staffed provision
3 Good	Children can opt for a limited range of responsibilities if they choose to do so.		
2 Basic	The children are allowed to choose responsibility, for certain aspects of the provision, as a reward for their commitment to the provision		
1 Starting	The organisation choose children to give		

	responsibility to as a reward for good behaviour		
0 Absent	You cannot trust children to take responsibility for anything.		
An organisation that creates an environment to facilitate play	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	The organisation take a long term approach to the design of the play environment, involving children at every step		
3 Good	The organisation listen to the needs of children when designing play environments, give feedback and explain their approach		
2 Basic	The organisation listen to the needs of children when designing play environments		
1 Starting	The organisation know what works best based on their experience		
0 Absent	The organisation have a standard design for playgrounds that they use for most sites		
Economically viable	Level	Examples	Comment
An organisation that creates provision that is affordable for the children who use it			
4 Excellent	The organisation do not charge so that the provision is accessible to children		
3 Good	The organisation charge a nominal sum (less than £1) for children to participate		
2 Basic	The organisation charge a basic sum (less than £2) for children to participate		
1 Starting	The organisation charge at a minimal rate (less than £10/day) for all activities		
0 Absent	The organisation charge at a market rate for all activities		
Led by the children	Level	Examples	Comment
An organisation where children make decisions about their own play and these decisions are respected			
4 Excellent	Children are in control of the 'what, why		

	and how' of their play in this provision. Adults do not try and impose their adult ideas on the children.		
3 Good	Children choose what they play. The how is limited by the environment and available materials.		
2 Basic	Children have choices about what they play within the scope of what is available. The how is controlled by the staff.		
1 Starting	Children are given a limited amount of input into planning for the provision		
0 Absent	We expect all children to participate in our planned activities.		
An organisation where children are given choices related to most aspects of the provision	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	The provision is based on reflective practice and informal observation. In this way children's choices are known and understood. The organisation also provide a range of other ways in which children can participate and make their preferences and choices known.		
3 Good	A wide range of participation techniques are used in order to gauge the children's choices related to most aspects of the provision.		
2 Basic	Children are given choices related to their play, materials, snack and rules.		
1 Starting	Children choose what they want to do from the opportunities available at any particular session		
0 Absent	It is not possible for children to have choices in this provision.		
An organisation where children are involved in creating rules where they are needed	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	Rules and boundaries are minimal, flexible and negotiated. They do not prevent the children from playing in their own way, but are there to enable everyone to have a good time and feel safe. They are reviewed as and when necessary.		

3 Good	The children are involved in negotiating the rules with the adults. They are regularly reviewed with the children		
2 Basic	The adults ask the children what sort of rules there should be and then these are written up by the adults to suit the requirements of the provision		
1 Starting	Children are shown the rules, which are devised by adults and asked if they want to add to them.		
0 Absent	The rules are devised by adults and are imposed on the children		
Leadership	Level	Examples	Comment
An organisation where staff apply principles of play work to the provision they offer			
4 Excellent	The staff clearly apply the new principles of play work to the organisations provision and shows a high level of skill in play work.		Not relevant for non staffed provision
3 Good	The staff apply most of the new principles of play work to the provision and shows skill in play work		
2 Basic	The staff apply some of the new principles of play work to his or her provision and shows some skill in play work		
1 Starting	The staff apply the old values of play work to their provision and shows skill in play work.		
0 Absent	The staff do not apply the principles of play work in their provision and does not show skill in play work		
An organisation where staff use good leadership skills to lead the service they offer	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	The staff use good leadership skills to lead the work of the team. The staff are confident in their roles and know what they are doing.		Not relevant for non staffed provision
3 Good	The staff use many good leadership skills to lead the work of the team. Most staff know what they are doing.		
2 Basic	The staff are beginning to use good leadership skills to lead the work of the team and the play work is improving		

1 Starting	The staff try to use good leadership skills to lead the play work team.		
0 Absent	The staff do not use good leadership skills to lead the play work team.		
An organisation where staff use team work skills to create a good team	Level	Examples	Comment
4 Excellent	The staff use teamwork skills and have created a good team. There is an empathetic, co-operative and friendly relationship between all the staff.		Not relevant for non staffed provision
3 Good	The staff use many teamwork skills and have created a team of staff who are working together.		
2 Basic	The staff are beginning to use teamwork skills to create a good team and the staff are beginning to bond.		
1 Starting	The staff try to use teamwork skills to create a good team. These are not yet working.		
0 Absent	The staff do not use good teamwork skills to create a good team.		