

# Planning healthy and safe indoor and outdoor environments and services essay samp...

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Environment has immediate effect on the quality of the children's learning and development therefore it should be comfortable, interesting, attractive and appropriate for child or children who use it. There are a number of important factors to be considered while planning for safe indoor and outdoor environment but the most important 'Every Child Matters' i. e. everyone is an individual and may have particular needs. These different needs depend on their age and abilities. A suitable environment for a baby will be different from suitable environment for a three or four year old although some features will be the same. Age and abilities are the major factor while planning room layouts e. g. a baby room having a lot of toddlers will require different equipments and resources or areas as compared to the room with babies only. Therefore the resources used should be age and stage appropriate should carry the safety marks. There must be specialist equipment for children with specific needs.

'Every Child Matters: Change for Children' recognises that children's performance/learning and well being go hand in hand: they cannot learn if they do not feel safe or health problems are allowed to create barriers. Some children may have specific needs such as sensory impairment or allergic to some of the foods (sometimes they are so allergic to food item that they are not even allowed to touch it). So while planning activities health conditions or any other special need should be considered e. g. visual aid or sign language for children with hearing impairment. Placing pictures of hands being washed near the toilets, showing picture where it is made clear that you walk not run etc. Children should always be within the sight of the adult whilst also allowing them to enjoy their environment.

The needs of carers and parents like what are their views and understanding about risk and risky play/activities should always be considered. If any equipment is adapted for the benefit of child, parents must be informed or it should be asked from parents if they are using any adapted equipment for the child outside the setting as it would make them feel that their child's needs are being fully met/considered. Information on health and safety should always be given to them as sometimes they cannot read or attend other meetings. For those where English is not their first language, information should be written in their home language.

All the activities should be held in appropriate environment i. e. the environment should be right for the activity. Whether indoor or outdoor, there should be enough space to carry out the activity. An example of appropriate planning would be in the instance of a climbing frame or balance beam. When setting up this activity factors such as is the equipment near any obstruction, is the equipment appropriate for age and needs. There should always be enough room for children to move freely around the learning environment and they should be able to access resources safely without risk to themselves or others.

The duty of care (obligations and responsibilities that people in authority have for those in their charge) of a setting to children, parents and carer is a legal obligation. It is always very important to maintain adult child ratio all the time. Vigilance and attention keeps children safe. The carers should make sure that all the doors and gates are locked properly, all the toys are put away at the end of every day in a dry place so that the outdoor toys do

not get wet such as sand pit has a lid on it, all areas and equipments are checked every day before and after children have played with them making sure nothing is broken. Safety and welfare should be uppermost in mind when planning.

Most activities should have clear aims and objectives that are based around outcomes linked to their age. The desired outcome of activity should always be the primary focus with clear aim and objectives being clearly shown for that particular child. We have developmental milestones for children which tell us the approximate age at which most children are likely to develop certain skills and ways they are expected to behave but there should always be provisions in planning for any kind of learning difficulties or a physical difficulty and hazard e. g. an eight month old baby will be expected to pick up objects within their reach and put them to their mouth so when planning a safe environment for them it will be important to keep small objects that present a choking hazard out of their reach.

Everyone employed in a setting has a responsibility for the health and safety of children and staff but there should be a clear reporting responsibility. All the works like outdoor safety, food safety, first aid, hygiene maintenance etc should be divided among the members of the staff and everyone should be aware of who should be reported in any need. All the members of the staff should be aware about the health and safety policy of the setting and also the procedure to be followed when the need arises. They must be aware about emergency evacuation procedure. The setting must have appropriate

fire detection and control equipment in working order. Fire exits must be clearly identifiable and free from obstructions.

Thus any setting should have clear policies and procedure about all the aspects of health and safety which includes identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents hazards and faulty equipments and these should be taken care while planning environments and services for children. Duty of care is not only moral but legal obligation for any setting therefore all the above mentioned factors should be given appropriate consideration.

## References

1. Every Child Matters: Change for Children in School available at <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFES-1089-2004>.
2. Statutory Framework for the Early Year Foundation Stage (2012), Department for Education.
3. P, Tassoni, K. Beith, K. Bulman and S. Griffin, “Children & Young Peoples Workforce”, Heinemann, Part of Pearson Publication, 2010.