

Physical Development – P.E. (Development Matters 2021)

Physical activity is vital in children’s all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child’s strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

3 – 4 Years Old

Continue to develop their movement, balancing, riding (scooters, trikes and bikes) and ball skills. Go up steps and stairs, or climb up apparatus, using alternate feet. Skip, hop, stand on one leg and hold a pose for a game like musical statues. Use large-muscle movements to wave flags and streamers, paint and make marks.	Encourage children to transfer physical skills learnt in one context to another one. Suggestion: children might first learn to hammer in pegs to mark their Forest school boundary, using a mallet. Then, they are ready to learn how to use hammers and nails at the woodwork bench. Encourage children to paint, chalk or make marks with water on large vertical surfaces. Suggestion: use walls as well as easels to stimulate large shoulder and arm movements. These experiences help children to ‘cross the mid-line’ of their bodies. When they draw a single line from left to right, say, they do not need to pass the paintbrush from one hand to another or have to move their whole body along.
Start taking part in some group activities which they make up for themselves, or in teams. Increasingly be able to use and remember sequences and patterns of movements which are related to music and rhythm.	Lead movement-play activities when appropriate. These will challenge and enhance children’s physical skills and development – using both fixed and flexible resources, indoors and outside. Model the vocabulary of movement – ‘gallop’, ‘slither’ – and encourage children to use it. Also model the vocabulary of instruction – ‘follow’, ‘lead’, ‘copy’ – and encourage children to use it.
Be increasingly independent as they get dressed and undressed, for example, putting coats on and doing up zips.	Encourage children by helping them, but leaving them to do the last steps, such as pulling up their zip after you have started it off. Gradually reduce your help until the child can do each step on their own.

Children in Reception

Revise and refine the fundamental movement skills they have already acquired: • rolling • crawling • walking • jumping • running • hopping • skipping • climbing	Provide regular access to appropriate outdoor space. Ensure there is a range of surfaces to feel, move and balance on, such as grass, earth and bark chippings. Give children experience of carrying things up and down on different levels (slopes, hills and steps). Provide a choice of open-ended materials to play that allow for extended, repeated and regular practising of physical skills like lifting, carrying, pushing, pulling, constructing, stacking and climbing. Provide regular access to floor space indoors for movement. Ensure that spaces are accessible to children with varying confidence levels, skills and needs. Provide a wide range of activities to support a broad range of abilities. Allow less competent and confident children to spend time initially observing and listening, without feeling pressured to join in. Create low-pressure zones where less confident children can practise movement skills on their own, or with one or two others. Model precise vocabulary to describe movement and directionality, and encourage children to use it.
Progress towards a more fluent style of moving, with developing control and grace.	Provide children with regular opportunities to practise their movement skills alone and with others. Challenge children with further physical challenges when they are ready, such as climbing higher, running faster and jumping further. Encourage children to conclude movements in balance and stillness. Allow for time to be still and quiet. Suggestion: looking up at the sky, or sitting or lying in a den.
Develop the overall body strength, co-ordination,	Encourage children to be highly active and get out of breath several times every day. Provide opportunities for

balance and agility needed to engage successfully with future physical education sessions and other physical disciplines including dance, gymnastics, sport and swimming.	children to, spin, rock, tilt, fall, slide and bounce. Provide a range of wheeled resources for children to balance, sit or ride on, or pull and push. Two-wheeled balance bikes and pedal bikes without stabilisers, skateboards, wheelbarrows, prams and carts are all good options.
Combine different movements with ease and fluency.	Create obstacle courses that demand a range of movements to complete, such as crawling through a tunnel, climbing onto a chair, jumping into a hoop and running and lying on a cushion. Provide opportunities to move that require quick changes of speed and direction. Suggestions: run around in a circle, stop, change direction and walk on your knees going the other way. Encourage precision and accuracy when beginning and ending movements.
Confidently and safely use a range of large and small apparatus indoors and outside, alone and in a group. Develop overall body-strength, balance, co-ordination and agility.	Encourage children to use a range of equipment. These might include: wheeled toys, wheelbarrows, tumbling mats, ropes to pull up on, spinning cones, tunnels, tyres, structures to jump on/off, den-making materials, logs and planks to balance on, A-frames and ladders, climbing walls, slides and monkey bars.
Further develop and refine a range of ball skills including: throwing, catching, kicking, passing, batting, and aiming. Develop confidence, competence, precision and accuracy when engaging in activities that involve a ball.	Provide a range of different sized 'balls' made from familiar materials like socks, paper bags and jumpers that are softer and slower than real balls. Introduce full-sized balls when children are confident to engage with them. Introduce tennis balls, ping pong balls, beach balls and balloons. Introduce a range of resources used to bat, pat and hit a ball, modelling how to do this and giving children plenty of time for practice. Introduce children to balls games with teams, rules and targets when they have consolidated their ball skills.

ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive

Children at the expected level of development will: - Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher; - Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs; Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music.

ELG: Gross Motor Skills

Children at the expected level of development will: - Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others; - Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing; - Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

ELG: Fine Motor Skills

Children at the expected level of development will: - Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases; - Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery; - Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.