

Curriculum delivery in Early Years

Physical development is one of the three prime areas of learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage. These three areas are described as being 'particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive'.

The EYFS Developmental Matters document explains that:

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

There are 2 aspects of Physical Development:

Moving and handling: children show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements. They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.

Health and self-care: children know the importance for good health of physical exercise, and a healthy diet, and talk about ways to keep healthy and safe. They manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently.

The children in Early Years classes encounter daily opportunities to pursue and be supported in play based activities that include a focus on physical development. We recognise that all areas of learning and development are important and interconnected and physical development is integrated across the curriculum both inside the classroom and outside in the playground. The EYFS documentation emphasises that:

'learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity.'

Children's personal physical developmental needs are met in lessons which incorporate their IEP for physical development or independence, therapy programmes such as physiotherapy stretches, and other multi-disciplinary input such as sensory integrations programmes or work with a movement therapist or yoga.

One PE session a week is planned for a group of children from nursery and reception classes. Independently mobile children (not necessarily walking) attend a session in the hall where specific skills can be developed. There are opportunities for moving in different ways and negotiating space in a larger

environment are provided through gross motor play and some adult led games and activities.

Less mobile children take part in sessions aimed at developing body awareness and opportunities for different movement experiences through co-active movement with adults and the use of equipment.

Some children in Early Years classes have specific sensory integration programmes which take place in the classrooms or in the sensory circuit.

All children in Early Years classes are offered a swimming session every week which develops their confidence alongside their physical skills. Specific hydro-therapy goals may be carried out following the advice of a physiotherapist.