



Physical development - gross motor skills – information for parents

Dear parents,

The educational programme in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework states:

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.

The Government also states that we must enable all the children in our setting to access 3 hours of active play a day. This does not have to be 3 hours of solid exercise... it should be spread through the day and all movement counts. You can find out more information here –

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/physical-activity-guidelines-children-under-five-years>.

Exercise is important because it helps build children's muscle strength and overall fitness and develops physical skills such as balance and coordination. Research tells us that children who are physically active when they are young are more likely to maintain a healthy active lifestyle as they get older. This is important as an active lifestyle reduces the risk of illness in later life, because bones are built stronger.

We want your child to enjoy exercise, so we plan lots of activities through the week to encourage them to, for example: music and movement, outside movement games, walks in the local area and active games inside and outside. We also read books to inspire exercise. We encourage your child to think about how they feel during and after exercise, have a drink to refresh themselves and get to know their bodies better.

We also want your child to learn more about the importance of exercise, so we talk about how to stay healthy and how food and movement work together to help keep us healthy. We ask the children to help plan our menus and share information with you about the food and drink we provide for your child.

If you have any questions about how we support your child's gross motor skills development or you have concerns about your child's progress, please ask. Thank you.