

Physical Development – Prime Area

Introduction

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

Aim

At Glebe Trust we aim to promote enthusiasm, enjoyment and confidence in developing and using skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. Also becoming independent and healthy, through using the following Early Learning Goals as guidance:

Gross Motor Skills

Fine Motor Skills

Objectives

- To provide a balanced programme of activities to support the physical development and well-being of the children.
- To provide sufficient space (indoors and outdoors), time and resources to allow effective physical development.
- To provide time, opportunity and support for children with motor impairments or physical disabilities to develop their physical skills. If appropriate this will include working with outside agencies such as physiotherapists.
- To provide resources that can be used in a variety of ways to support specific skills.
- To ensure children are encouraged to be healthy and make independent choices.

Operating Policy

The programme of activities will include such areas as hygiene, healthy eating and exercise. The programme of activities will permeate all areas of the curriculum. Confidence, self-responsibility, enjoyment and enthusiasm will be developed through structured free play and adult directed activities with the emphasis on supporting individual progression.

Provision will be made for the children to manipulate large and small pieces of equipment in order to develop both fine and gross motor control.

They will be encouraged to respond physically and verbal, auditory and visual stimuli such as music, stories, pictures etc.

The equipment will be organised in order to develop an awareness of issues of health and safety and the children will be encouraged to think about and discuss such aspects.

Skills of co-operation, turn taking and team building will be developed throughout the curriculum with adult support provided where appropriate.

Staff providing these experiences will help children move towards the following Early Learning Goals:

Gross Motor Skills

- 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.

Fine Motor Skills

- 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.

Programme of Work

Programmes of work will be based upon a mixture of children's interests and adult led activities. The children may participate in such activities as an individual or as part of a group and in free-play or adult-direct situations.

The programme will aim to include some or all of the following types of activity:

Movement

- Group games involving running, jumping and hopping.
- Group games involving movement followed by stopping.
- Moving to music.
- Balancing activities and games.
- Play on a range of landscapes (e.g. flat/hilly) and surfaces (e.g. grass/sand).

Sense of Space

- Role play activities giving children the opportunity to create pathways.
- Giving the children the opportunity to create their own spaces (e.g. a tent from blankets).
- Group games that involve following or imitating.
- Encourage games and activities that involve sharing resources with other children.
- Discussions about body parts and bodily activity.
- Singing action songs (e.g. Head, shoulders, knees and toes).

Health and Bodily Awareness

- Discussions about keeping safe, fit and healthy.
- Discussions about eating a healthy diet.
- Encouraging children to make decisions by choosing between different types of food.
- Making and eating food from a range of cultures that can form part of a healthy diet.
- Providing opportunities for children to talk about health issues, including oral hygiene.

Using Equipment

- Outdoor play using a variety of equipment e.g. slides, climbing frames.
- Play with wheeled toys e.g. push-along trucks, tricycles, bicycles.
- Practising kicking, throwing and catching large and small balls, bean bags, quoits.
- Practising walking, climbing, rolling, balancing etc using benches, mats, wall bars, small and medium box.

Using Tools and Materials

- Sand play.
- Water play.
- Modelling with playdough and clay.
- Painting, drawing and colouring.
- Peg games and jigsaws.
- Threading.
- Cutting with scissors.
- Dressing-up, buttoning clothes, doing up zips etc.
- Dressing of dolls.
- Use of small construction toys (duplo, stickle bricks etc.).
- Making 'junk' models.
- 'Reading' books – page turning.
- 'Writing' with pencils, chalks and crayons etc.
- Collage and other pasting activities.
- Use of the computer keyboard.
- Funky finger exercises

Planning, recording and assessment

Individual targets and activity planning occurs on a daily, weekly or half termly basis. Weekly plans and activity planning sheets used by the setting are laid out to identify each of the areas of learning in the EYFS principles. This ensures that Physical Development is considered whenever a topic or activity is planned.

Staff are able to observe the children and records of such observations can be made on the children's personal profile sheets or on activity record sheets.

Samples of the children's work which relate to Physical Development are kept in the child's individual folder as appropriate.

Assessment is carried out through a mixture of informal observation, interaction with the child, the use of the information on record sheets and discussion during regular staff meetings. The information gathered during the assessment process is then used for future planning of activities for each child.

However assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, staff draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement and should not be required to prove this through a collection of physical evidence.

Information gained through recording, assessment and professional judgement will be shared with parents, other school staff and outside agencies as appropriate to address any learning and development needs.

Nursery children have the option to participate with informal sessions of yoga, music and movement during sessions periodically and the use of our large indoor and outdoor spaces to fully embrace the importance of physical exercise and the importance of wellbeing.

Children in the Reception class at Glebe benefit from a weekly session with specialist sport teachers.

Resources

A list of resources specific to Physical Development is located in the Resources file.

Documentation

It is available to any person who wishes to read it and pass a comment. The policy is to review and amend the above as and when appropriate, minimum period two years.

Reviewed : January 2024.