

Kesh Community Nursery

Physical Development and Movement Policy



Ratified by Board of Governors in:
October 2023

Signed:

Chairman of Board of Governors

Next Review:
October 2025

Signed:

Principal

Kesh Community Nursery Policy for Physical Development and Movement

“When there is motor and physical activity, you can see a more important kind of education, a kind of education that takes the force of life into account. This education is not driven by its own wisdom, but by another superior wisdom which lays down the law that, if we do not take the vital force into account, we miss the best part of education. ”

Maria Montessori ([The 1946 London Lectures](#), p. 77)

‘The physical exercise and emotional stretching that children enjoy in unorganized play is more varied and less time-bound than is found in organized sports. Playtime—especially unstructured, imaginative, exploratory play—is increasingly recognized as an essential component of wholesome child development.’

Richard Louv (co-founder and Chairman Emeritus of the Children & Nature Network)

Physical development helps children to gain confidence and self-esteem as they discover what they can do, and it enables them to feel the benefits of being healthy and active.

Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education (2018): Page 22

Aim:

To promote enthusiasm, enjoyment, and confidence in developing and using physical skills both indoors and outdoors. Each child will have an increased awareness of space and others.

Objectives:

The nursery will provide a balanced programme of activities to support the physical and cognitive development and well-being of the children in our care. Each child will use a wide range of large and small equipment with increasing confidence and skill.

Operating Policy: Policy Implementation

Prior to children starting nursery, with parental permission, staff gather information about the children from parents/carers, SURE START, Glendurragh Childcare Services, Little Smarties Playgroup and other feeder settings, and other professionals e.g., Health Visitors, Health Professionals in the case of medical needs, SPLT, OT etc which they consider when planning experiences to promote learning within the nursery setting.

Staff observe children at play, review and evaluate the curriculum regularly and maintain appropriate records. The information obtained will enable staff to take account of the needs of individual children, offer suitable challenges and provide for progression in play activities.

During planning the staff identify the learning they intend to promote through activities which are interesting, varied, and progressive. This is enhanced through our work with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council coaches in use of Balance Bikes, multi-sports, and football coaching. The planning is flexible and may change to follow the child's own interests, strengths, and challenges.

The programme of activities will include such areas as hygiene, healthy eating, and exercise. The activities will permeate all areas of the nursery curriculum.

Parents are encouraged to become involved in their child's physical development through participation in the Happy Healthy Kids programme. This initiative helps us to educate parents as to how they may help their child develop stamina, increase physical activity, limit screen time, and promote healthy eating habits. This entails parent workshops/meetings/ stay and play sessions and home lending packs that go weekly. This programme runs in the second and third terms encompassing a wide variety of fine and gross motor skill tasks.

Confidence, self-responsibility, enjoyment, and enthusiasm will be developed through play based learning and adult directed activities within the setting and the Nursery day with the emphasis on supporting individual progression. Provision will be made for the children to manipulate large and small pieces of equipment to develop both fine and gross motor control.

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

Equipment, indoors and outdoors, will be organised to develop an awareness of issues of health and safety and the children will be encouraged to think about, and discuss, such aspects. Areas are well defined with suitable, safe spaces for distinctive types of play e.g., wheeled toys, gardening and digging and sensory exploration where they can experiment with different ways of moving. Our children are provided with developmentally appropriate materials that reflect their interests and can be used in a variety of ways to support different types of play.

Skills of co-operation, turn-taking and team building will be developed throughout the curriculum with adult support provided where appropriate leading towards the use of three-minute sand timers to negotiate a 'turn' and later in the year, the children brokering a 'deal' verbally. This helps the children develop their social skills of trust, value, and respect of others.

If Staff identify areas of particular concern re Physical Development and movement these are recorded in our observations, added to our Actions for Specific Children for further support and

drawn to the parent's attention. Upon working further on these skills and we feel further assessment may be required we consult, with parental permission, with Physiotherapy/ Occupational therapy at RISE, Health Visitor or other medial professional and/or encourage parents to speak to GP re possible referrals to appropriate services.

Programme of work:

Programmes of work will be based upon a mixture of general and topic activities. The children may participate in such activities as an individual or as part of a group and in free play or adult directed situations.

Physical play in our nursery extends the child's gross motor skills. These skills are developed informally during planned daily physical play. The children enjoy running, jumping, climbing, skipping, hopping, balancing, kicking, striking, throwing/catching, digging, wheeling, pedalling et. These skills help the children to develop balance, core strength, control, co-ordination and an awareness of size, space, and direction.

The children also enjoy fine motor skills both indoors and outdoors. Nursery staff ensure the children have opportunities to develop their fine motor skills such as grasping, screwing, pinching, picking, holding, and threading, which are also important for hand to eye control.

Adults promote learning by ensuring that:

- there is sensitive adult participation and adequate supervision to ensure children's safety *whilst allowing children to take risks and develop problem solving skills/strategies suitable for their own stage of development*
- children are actively engaged and involved in outdoor play
- use of space is planned so that it can be used in different ways and for different purposes throughout the year with equipment altered or rearranged to provide challenge and progression
- play is planned carefully to sustain interest, offer challenge and balanced activities that provide for individual needs and abilities, ensuring that children develop their skills progressively. *There must also be opportunities for children to explore freely - not be confined by what adults have 'planned' therefore allowing for spontaneity*
- materials reflect the experiences and cultures of the children in the setting and promote diversity in unbiased ways
- equipment and tools are positioned to be used imaginatively
- children are involved in the planning of these areas and encouraged to carry appropriate equipment safely; for e.g., wheelbarrows, using the hose/water butt, using spades appropriately
- children are taught safety rules and encouraged to keep them
- appropriate risk assessments are regularly carried out

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

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS:

As stated in the Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education (2018):

'Outdoor play can provide space and freedom that would be difficult to find indoors. It has an important role in the emotional development of children, providing them with the freedom to run, shout and play exuberantly within appropriate boundaries. Outside they can experience a wide range of emotions, for example the challenge of climbing high or the joy of running and jumping. They can begin to experience the satisfaction of solving physical challenges and problems that arise when playing with others.'

Therefore, as a nursery we utilise our outdoor area, alongside our classroom, to enhance the skills we have been developing indoors but on a larger scale and encourage self-modulation for e.g., children are taught 'walking feet indoors, running feet outdoors' and 'we use our small voices inside and out big voices outside'.

- Outdoor play using variety of equipment e.g., slides, climbing frames, play trail, parachute games etc.
- Opportunities to run, jump, climb and hop to include group games
- Moving and responding to music/rhymes/songs
- Play with wheeled toys e.g., push-along trucks, tricycles, bicycles, a go-kart and a variety of two and three wheeled scooters
- Balancing activities and games
- Developing skills in kicking, throwing, and catching and rolling large and small balls
- Aim and throwing skills using beanbags, small items etc
- Sports coaching through Omagh and Fermanagh District Council

FINE MOTOR SKILLS:

- Sand play
- Water play
- Opportunities to pour, build, screw off and on lids/bolts etc, poking, patting, rolling, twisting, and pinching
- Modelling with play dough and clay
- complete simple tasks such as buttering bread, putting on their own coat/apron/gilet and pouring milk
- Painting, drawing, and colouring to include working at different heights and surfaces and attach appropriately e.g., blu tack, pegs to easel/clothesline etc
- Removing backing from sticky name labels for artwork etc
- Peg games and jigsaws
- Threading
- Weaving
- Tearing
- Cutting with scissors - developing preference of hand and realise they need different scissors dependant on hand they use
- Removing tape from dispensers, using variety of types of staplers
- Dressing-up, buttoning clothes, doing up zips, putting on aprons etc.
- Dressing of dolls
- Use of small construction toys (stickle bricks, mobile etc.)
- 'Reading' books - page turning and holding appropriately
- Mark making with a wide range of mark making implements e.g., paintbrushes, pencils/pens, crayons, natural materials such as herb paintbrushes, sticks, pinecones, etc.
- Collaging and other pasting activities using both glue sticks and liquid glues developing skill appropriate to each media.
- Use of the nursery iPad (only when all internet access has been blocked), digital camera, walkie talkies and where possible the laptop keyboard and mouse/touch pad

By the end of their preschool year, it is hope that most children will:

- demonstrate age-appropriate gross and fine motor skills
- show an awareness of space and of others and begin to use space imaginatively
- move confidently with increased control and co-ordination

- use a wide range of large and small equipment with increasing confidence and skill including pedalling trikes, moving on balance bikes
- use tools and equipment appropriately and safely
- understand simple safety rules within the setting and outdoors e.g., wheeled toys in designated areas, no throwing sand, no pushing on the slide, no running indoors

Planning, recording and assessment:

Topic planning takes place monthly. Activity planning occurs on a weekly or daily basis depending on where our child-led/child-centred approach leads us. It is ensured that Physical Development and Movement is considered in all our planning.

Staff can observe the children informally and records of such observations are made in our digital observations (Seesaw Learning Journal) and paper 'post-its' (which are photographed and uploaded to Seesaw later in the day), shared in the daily evaluation meetings. Any issues/concerns are added to our fortnightly 'Actions for Specific Children' sheet for our daily attention.

This means that assessment of each child is ongoing through mixture of informal observation, interactions with the child, the use of our information sheets and discussion during regular staff meetings. The information gathered is then used for our future planning of activities for each child.

Information gained through recording and assessment will be shared with parents, other school staff and outside agencies as appropriate.