

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Physical Development is one of the three prime area of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. It is divided into the two key areas of Gross Motor skills and Fine Motor skills. Gross motor skills relate to a child’s whole body movements such as running, jumping, balancing, negotiating space or for example, using their arms to hang from monkey bars or to do large-scale painting. Fine Motor skills involve a child developing their dexterity (control over their hands and fingers) and making use of tools or writing equipment such as scissors, cutlery, paintbrushes and pencils.

*Educational Programme 2020 (from the Statutory Framework for the EYFS): 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.*

Homerton Curriculum Goal 4 particularly relates to this policy

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| **GROSS MOTOR****We will support children to be able to:**Negotiate space and obstacles safelyDevelop their strength, balance and co-ordinationMove energetically **Children will have opportunities to:*** Practise movement skills in a range of environments – the classrooms, the gardens, the Old Orchard, the Rainbow Room and occasionally the park.
* Move freely in a range of ways, enjoy being physically active and have opportunities to practise and challenge own abilities by walking, running, jumping, slithering, crawling, climbing, swinging, sliding etc.
* Develop spatial awareness by moving between objects and playing games which involve racing and chasing, such as **What’s the Time Mr. Wolf**.
* Learn how to assess risk and safety, and to keep themselves, and others, safe whilst learning or practising new skills.
* Collaborate with others to manage large items, such as ladders, large blocks or long guttering or planks.
* Build up shoulder and hip strength and stability through activities such as swinging or climbing on the monkey bars, painting with large brushes and water, using streamers in the wind, bouncing on space hoppers, digging in mud or sand in the garden, or at the allotment, and riding bikes, trikes and scooters.
* Build up balancing skills by e.g. walking along our low walls and jumping off them, using scooters, using the little ladders in the garden, balancing on the balance board or standing on one leg to use the ball launchers.
* Develop ball skills and hand eye coordination by throwing, catching and kicking a ball, either when playing with another person, or at targeted equipment e.g. a goal.
* Develop bat and ball skills by practising using a bat and ball, or balloon, both alone and with a partner.
* Enjoy dancing, either individually or collectively e.g. at our Christmas party, to celebrate cultural events such as Lunar New Year or during music and movement sessions in the Rainbow Room.

**FINE MOTOR:****We will support children to be able to:**Develop their control over a range of small tools such as cutlery, chopsticks, scissors, paintbrushes, pencils and pens.**Children will have the opportunity to:*** Explore continuous provision and focused activities encouraging fine motor muscle development and control through activities such as building with Lego, small world play, using peg boards, doing puzzles, drawing and painting, sewing, using tweezers, threading beads, collage etc.
* Use one handed tools and equipment e.g. scissors, brushes, glue sticks.
* Play with malleable materials such as clay, playdough, shaving foam and a range of other messy play materials which help to develop, and strengthen, hand and arm muscles.
* Use pens, pencils and other mark making equipment to start to mark make gradually leading to being able to draw recognisable images such as faces, as well as forming recognisable letters.
* Practise their self-help skills such as taking off and putting on own shoes and socks, putting on gloves and hats, doing up their coats – all of which require fine motor skills.
 | **To support the development of children’s gross motor skills the adults at Homerton will:** * Set up an enabling environment where continuous provision gives children the opportunity to explore moving freely in a range of ways e.g. climbing up steps to slide for hip strength development, monkey bars for developing upper body strength, sandpit wall for jumping or balancing, building obstacle courses with blocks for strength and general physical development, riding trikes and bikes for hip stability and strength.
* Provide opportunities for children to enjoy and learn how to be physically active through a range of both taught and free choice activities daily through garden time, trips to the park next door, adult led Rainbow Room physical sessions, trips to the allotment and Old Orchard.
* Teach essential skills e.g. how to use a bat and ball or how to throw and catch a ball.
* Join in with and encourage children’s interests by providing a role model and having fun with children e.g. playing football, playing hide and seek, climbing the steps to go down the slide, balancing along the raised walls, or enjoying digging and planting projects in the sandpit, or at the allotment.
* Provide challenge to children e.g. in an obstacle course asking ‘Can you go from here to here without putting your feet on the ground?’
* Teach children to assess and work within safe boundaries both for themselves, and others, providing explanations as to why and how things need to be done so children can enjoy challenging themselves physically whilst also keeping themselves and others safe.
* Demonstrate to children the sense of fun and well-being that can be experienced when being physically active.
* Provide opportunities to dance and move in response to music or other sounds.
* Encourage cross-body movements to build coordination & balance, develop spatial awareness and promote both sides of the brain working together.
* Encourage creativity in children’s movements.
* Promote use of active travel opportunities to and from school where possible for families, i.e. biking, scooting or walking and specifically promote **Walk to School Week**.
* Use vocabulary related to movement, e.g. skip. gallop, slither.

**To support the development of children’s fine motor skills the adults at Homerton will:** * Model key skills to children for holding one handed tools and equipment and achieving desired effects with pens, scissors etc at their individual levels e.g. holding pen with a palmar or tripod grip.
* Teach children how to use equipment safely giving explanations as to why this is important e.g. scissors, knives, hammers etc.
* Ensure a variety of activities are on offer and all areas both indoors and outside are well resourced, and regularly changed, to provide interest and different opportunities to learn from creative activities using making table resources etc.
* Provide different kinds of scissors on offer depending on individual children’s skill levels, as well as their developing preference for right and left handedness.
* Offer opportunities to draw, paint, mark make and write on a large, and small, scale using different mediums and sizes of paper and pens.
* Offer opportunities to experiment with a range of writing and painting equipment indoors, using the easel, writing table, large paper on the carpet area and outdoors in writing areas and on ground with chalks / pens or on fence when painting.
* Provide resources which allow children to develop muscles, strength and control in their fingers, hands, wrists and arms such as tweezers, pipettes, clay, playdough and a range of other messy play materials.
* Ensure access to continuous provision with a wide range of different objects for children to grasp, hold and explore.
* Offer opportunities at snack times and meal times to use cutlery, pour drinks and cut food where appropriate.
* Support children to develop their self-help skills and encourage them to learn how to do up their own zips, buttons, Velcro etc.

In addition, adults will observe whether children need further support to build up e.g. their core strength or fine motor skills and provide targeted opportunities to help them do so. |

Reviewed by Mitali Peckham & Alex Pearson February 2025. Next Review February 2028