

## GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

Gross motor (physical) skills are those which require whole body movement and which involve the large core muscles of the body to perform everyday functions, eg. standing, walking, running, and sitting upright. These also include eye-hand coordination skills such as ball skills throwing, catching, kicking.

### WHY ARE GROSS MOTOR SKILLS IMPORTANT?

Gross motor skills are important to enable children to perform every day functions, such as walking, running, skipping. They are required for playground skills (e.g. climbing) and sporting skills (e.g. catching, throwing and hitting a ball with a bat). These are also crucial for everyday self-care skills like dressing (where you need to be able to stand on one leg to put your leg into a trouser leg, without falling over).

Gross motor abilities also have an influence on other everyday functions. For example, a child's ability to maintain table top posture (upper body support) will affect their ability to participate in fine motor skills (e.g. writing, drawing and cutting) and sitting



upright to attend to class instruction, which then impacts on their abilities to be able to upright at a desk in the classroom environment.

It is important to remember that children learn about the world, develop language and mathematical skills and social skills through quality learning experiences and play.



Each and every child develops at a different pace. Your child is an individual. Offer them encouragement and support and praise at each stage of their development.



Please remember learning should be **FUN!** Please remember your child does not need to know how to write letters, their name or have a knowledge of letter sounds as they will quickly learn this at school with the correct foundations and early years skills in place.

*If we can help you with anything in this booklet please feel free to ask any of the staff in the Early Years team. We are very happy to support you in this exciting time!*

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# KING'S PARK EARLY YEARS

How can you help your child prepare for school

**Going to school is a very busy and exciting time for the whole family. You can help your child prepare for this in lots of simple ways.**



## EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL PREPARATION

- Meeting and playing with other children.
- Encourage turn taking and game playing and allow them to play independently. *Remember* let them loose it's not the end of the world and helps them in the long run!
- Help them develop their concentration skills. Give them a task to complete, such as a drawing activity, or ask them to help you with a task
- Encourage them to dress and undress themselves.
- Independently put on their own coats, do zips and change their shoes.
- Tidy up their toys at the end of the day.
- Encourage them to be toilet independent.
- Spend time away from them to help them when it comes to separation at school.
- Encourage good sitting at the table for mealtimes, this is also good for social interaction as well as preparing them for school expectations.
- Help them understand their emotions.

## COMMUNICATION

- Encourage your child to listen to and follow simple instructions e.g. Go and get your coat and put on your shoes.
- Allow your child time to talk to you and other adults/children.
- Read books together. Point out parts of the book (cover, title, first page) Help your child turn the pages correctly. Talk about the pictures they see and help them understand the words and pictures tell a story.
- Have fun finding information in books. Use the local library.
- Encourage your child to make marks on paper. If they want to write allow them to experiment with this.
- If interested, encourage pencil control and grip with fun experiences. Allow your child to use scissors and playdough. These experiences build muscles in the hand and develop the control needed for writing.
- Be a good role model let your child see you reading and writing.
- Promote and encourage their curiosity. Don't be afraid to challenge them.

## MATH'S AND TECHNOLOGY

- Count during day to day activities such as going up and down stairs, building with bricks, looking at numbers in the environment.
- Be aware of and recognise colours in their environment.
- Talk about shapes: square/triangle – sandwiches, round/circle – plate etc.
- Talk about times and routines during the day eg. morning, lunch time afternoon, tea time.
- Use technology such as appropriate computer games, electronic games and books.
- Allow children a variety of tools for their use. e.g. scissors, cutlery garden tools/spades etc.
- Make and play with playdough/plasticine. This is a great activity for developing fine motor skills.