

Regularly engages in gross motor activities

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy, and active lives. Gross motor experiences support development of a child's strength, co-ordination, and positional awareness. 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. People know about the five senses but there are two other senses that help us make sense of all the information we receive. These are our sense of movement and body awareness. The development of motor skills is a crucial part of a child's overall development and difficulties in this area have a wide-ranging impact.

Typical development

3 to 4 year olds will be learning to:	While children may progress at different rates, the following are some of the common milestones your child may reach in this age group: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Runs and jumps easilyWalks upstairs unassistedRides a tricycleHops and stands on one foot up to five seconds
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How can practitioners support building children's physical play?

- Do children have lots of opportunities to go outside in setting and at home?
- Do you have conversation with parents about how children increase their independence at home?
- Do you provide a variety of activities for play outdoors in larger areas, such as parks and spaces in the local area, or through Forest school?
- Do you give children resources to create obstacle courses?
- Do you allow children to take risks outside? For example, climbing a tree.
- Do you have active stories? For example, children stomping through mud for going on a bear hunt story
- Do children have good core muscles? Children need a stable base or core from which we can perform tasks. On a bodily level our head, shoulder girdle and trunk are referred to as the core.
- Co-ordination difficulties may be a result of a physical disability, a learning disability or a global developmental delay. Alternatively, the child may not have had the opportunity to develop their co-ordination because of social difficulties or cultural expectations.

Useful resources

[Physical activity guidelines: early years \(under 5s\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-guidelines-for-early-years-under-5s)

[The Benefits of Physical Play in Early Childhood \(thesector.com.au\)](https://thesector.com.au/the-benefits-of-physical-play-in-early-childhood/)

[Taking risks - Early Education \(early-education.org.uk\)](https://early-education.org.uk/taking-risks/)

Book recommendations:

