



# Physical Development (PD) – Intent, Implementation and Impact

## Context and Rationale (Why Physical Development matters here)

Physical Development is a prime area because it supports children's all-round development, enabling them to lead happy, healthy and active lives. It provides an essential foundation for learning, wellbeing and later achievement.

Children enter Nursery and Reception with varying levels of core strength, balance, coordination, fine motor control and independence.

National outcomes typically show stronger gross motor development than fine motor development. This strengthens our focus on building secure gross motor foundations that directly support fine motor control and readiness to write.

Our PD curriculum ensures children become physically confident, coordinated and ready to learn, with the stamina, control and self-belief to access the wider curriculum, including early literacy and mathematics. Through PD, children learn to be Respectful in shared spaces, Resilient in practice and improvement, and Ready for the physical demands of learning and writing.

## INTENT (What we want children to know and be able to do)

At Rugeley John Taylor School, our intent is that all children develop the physical skills, habits and confidence they need to participate fully in school life. We explicitly develop both gross motor and fine motor competence, alongside independence and healthy routines.

### A. Gross Motor Competence (strong bodies; ready to learn)

- Core strength, stability and posture for sitting, concentrating and working at a table.
- Balance, coordination, agility and spatial awareness through varied movement experiences indoors and outdoors.
- Confidence and endurance for sustained activity: running, jumping, hopping, skipping, climbing and navigating obstacles safely.

### B. Fine Motor Precision (hands ready to write; hands ready to learn)

- Hand and finger strength and control for accurate mark-making and early writing.
- Safe and effective tool use (e.g., scissors, tweezers, pegs, brushes, cutlery).
- Increasing precision, care and control in drawing, making and early writing tasks.



### **C. Writing-readiness foundations (Get Ready to Write approach)**

We organise writing readiness around core physical foundations so that children build control in the right order: strong bodies support strong hands. We develop the movement and stability children need before expecting sustained writing outcomes.

#### **Gross motor foundations**

- Core stability
- Upper body/shoulder strength
- Crossing the midline
- Bilateral coordination

#### **Fine motor foundations**

- Finger isolation and finger strength
- Wrist mobility
- Pincer grip control
- Tripod grip development

These foundations support the Early Learning Goal expectations for strength, balance and coordination and for pencil and tool control.

### **D. Whole-child outcomes (healthy, confident, resilient)**

- A positive self-image and confidence in what their bodies can do.
- Resilience and motivation: practising, persevering and improving over time.
- Healthy habits and independence that support wellbeing and readiness for learning.

## **IMPLEMENTATION (How we teach and embed Physical Development)**

Our implementation combines high-quality continuous provision, direct teaching and modelling, structured movement opportunities, regular assessment and targeted support. Physical skills develop incrementally and require frequent practice over time, with adults providing feedback and adjusting challenge so activities are not too easy or too hard.

### **1) Daily provision: “Move, Play, Repeat”**

#### **What children do**

- Movement play: running, jumping, climbing, balancing, dancing and rhythmic movement.
- Bikes/scooters, obstacle courses, ball skills, games and teamwork activities.
- Explore space, direction, speed, distance and positional language through play (linking to maths and the wider curriculum).



- Build stamina, coordination and confidence through repeated practice.

#### **What adults do**

- Plan environments that promote core strength, stability, balance, coordination and agility.
- Model safe movement, demonstrate skills and give feedback that improves control and technique.
- Increase challenge gradually and adapt tasks to meet individual needs and starting points.

### **2) Structured gross motor teaching (including Reception programme)**

In Reception, we use a structured programme alongside daily provision to ensure consistent progression in key movement skills. This supports coordinated development in agility, control, balance and stamina, and strengthens the physical foundations needed for writing posture and concentration.

- Core stability (posture, balance, stamina)
- Upper body/shoulder strength (supporting writing posture and endurance)
- Crossing the midline (supporting reading/writing fluency and coordinated movement)
- Bilateral coordination (two-handed control, scissor skills, catching and throwing)

### **3) Fine motor and writing-readiness provision**

We build fine motor control through small tools, small world play, arts and crafts, puzzles, construction, dough strengthening activities and carefully designed “hands ready” challenges. Fine motor is taught in meaningful contexts so children understand the purpose of their skills.

#### **What children do**

- Manipulate tools: scissors, tweezers, pegs, threading, hole punches, brushes and cutlery.
- Develop control and precision in mark-making (lines, shapes, patterns and early letter-like forms).
- Practise grip development gradually (pincer → tripod) and build wrist mobility and finger strength.
- Apply skills in meaningful contexts across the curriculum (e.g., drawing maps, labelling, tallying, writing in role play).

#### **What adults do**

- Teach and model efficient movement: shoulder stability → wrist control → finger control.
- Coach correct grip, posture and tool handling with timely feedback.
- Avoid pushing writing before physical readiness; instead strengthen the components needed for control and stamina.

### **4) Health, self-care and independence**



Physical Development is embedded through everyday routines that build independence, coordination and confidence.

- Dressing and undressing (zips, buttons)
- Toileting and hygiene routines
- Healthy eating routines
- Safe risk-taking outdoors

### **5) Supporting attention and “ready to learn” behaviours**

We use movement to support focus, attention and self-regulation. Children practise stop/go games, following instructions, rhythmic movement and patterned sequences, and we use movement breaks to support successful transitions through the day.

### **6) Assessment and monitoring (baseline → termly → EYFSP)**

- Baseline assessment on entry and early in the year (gross and fine motor).
- Termly checkpoints aligned to strength, balance, coordination and tool control, including writing-readiness foundations.
- Ongoing observation across indoor/outdoor play, routines and home contributions.
- Reception end-of-year judgements aligned to the Gross Motor Skills and Fine Motor Skills Early Learning Goals.

### **IMPACT (What difference does this make?)**

As a result of our Physical Development curriculum, children leave Reception physically confident, increasingly independent and ready to meet the demands of Year 1.

#### **Physically capable and confident**

- Move with increasing control, coordination, balance and agility.
- Negotiate space safely and take appropriate risks in play.
- Participate positively in games and rhythmic movement.

#### **Ready to write and ready to achieve**

- Improved finger strength, wrist mobility and grip control.
- Confident and accurate use of a range of small tools.
- Hold a pencil effectively and show accuracy and care in drawing and early writing.

#### **Positive impact on learning, wellbeing and self-image**

- A stronger “can do” attitude and resilience when faced with physical challenge.
- Improved readiness to learn: stamina, attention, engagement and willingness to practise.



- A confident transition into Year 1, physically prepared for handwriting and wider curriculum expectations.

**Impact measured through outcomes and progress**

- Baseline and termly PD assessments.
- Observation of independence and self-care routines.
- Work scrutiny for mark-making and tool control.
- EYFSP outcomes at the end of Reception.