



## HEALTHY EARLY YEARS LONDON

### Monkey Puzzle Golders Green

### Physical Activity Statement

**Date: April 2019**

**Date to be reviewed: Dec 2021**

#### **Aims**

As a Healthy Early Years London setting we want to ensure that we promote the health and well-being of the whole setting community through encouraging physical activity and providing consistent messages to children, parents and staff.

#### **We are aware that children of all ages should be active**

Being active is important for children under five because it helps them build and maintain a good level of health; physical activity is critical to optimal growth and development. Children under five need time to play and master their physical environment and fundamental movement skills; the early years are also an important time to establish habits relating to physical activity.

The Chief Medical Office provides guidance on how much physical activity children under five should be doing:

#### **Physical activity guidelines for infants (under 5s) who are not yet walking:**

1. Physical activity should be encouraged from birth, particularly through floor-based play and water-based activities in safe environments.
2. All under 5s should minimise the amount of time spent being inactive/sedentary (being restrained for example in walking aids or baby bouncers or sitting for example in infant carriers or seats) for extended periods (except time spent sleeping).

#### **Physical activity guidelines for infants (under 5s) who are capable of walking:**

1. Children of pre-school age who are capable of walking unaided should be physically active daily for at least 180 minutes (3 hours), spread throughout the day (most UK pre-school children currently spend 120–150 minutes a day being physically active, so achieving this guideline means adding another 30–60 minutes each day).
2. All under 5s should minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary (being inactive, restrained or sitting) for extended periods (except time spent sleeping) by reducing screen time (e.g.. watching TV, using a computer, tablet or smart phone) and reducing time spent in a pushchair or car seat.

#### **Physical activity programme**

Our planning for both indoor and outdoor physical activities is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each programme of activity supporting physical development is planned, reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis.

For children who cannot yet walk we plan opportunities for them to move freely on their tummy or back. For example: treasure basket to encourage children to reach/grasp, tummy time activities, outdoor play twice a day, walkers, climbing frame/play gym. If children need extra support in their physical development, we seek advice from Physiotherapists via the local authority to ensure children get the best support, for example specific equipment has been purchased for some children including a gym ball, environment readjustments. For children who are capable of walking, we provide free space to move and play imaginatively either inside or outside. Children have free access to the outdoor area in pre-school and younger children are taken outside twice a day as part of their daily routine.

We also provide Forest School teachings once a week which involve taking children to local parks and we run activities that encourage an appreciation of the natural environment, walking, gross motor skills, road safety and a sense of exploration.

We also have external clubs who provide 'Stretch and Grow' exercise classes to the whole setting once a week and a Sports Club for pre-schoolers provided by Challenge Sport and Fitness.

We provide equipment to facilitate play, e.g. play gyms in the under twos area and a custom made all weather garden with climbing equipment and ample running space. We have a range of regularly updated resources including sporting equipment, natural resources like barks, mud and tyres, hoola hoops, balance bikes, blocks, spades, boxes, dens etc. We regularly run structured activities that encourage movement, e.g. action songs, races, balance challenges, parachute games etc

### **We have a supportive environment**

We endeavour to provide an environment which promotes physical activity throughout each day including travel to and from our setting. We ensure that outdoor activities are planned and children can access these on a daily basis as mentioned above.

### **We are thinking sensibly about health and safety**

We are aware that in order for children to learn about managing risks associated with physical activity, we need to offer stimulating and challenging environments; through these environments children are supported to explore and develop their own abilities and understanding. Alongside this we aim to manage the level of risk so that children are not exposed to unacceptable dangers. We conduct risk assessments and establish suitable arrangements for off-site visits to encourage children and their families to take advantage of the range of physical activities available within the local community. Our pre-schoolers are involved in doing risk assessment to develop an understanding of safety from the start.

### **We minimise the amount of time children spend being sedentary for extended periods (except time sleeping)**

In the Early Years spending time sedentary (being inactive, restrained or sitting) limits the opportunities that children have to move. Sedentary behaviour is any low-energy activity that takes place while sitting or lying down. We avoid using restraining equipment (buggies/chairs/car seats) for long periods of time, unless for reasons of safety. We only use sitting devices for children who cannot sit upright safely and independently. Children are only required to sit when eating and can sit when involved in activities if they wish. We interact regularly with every child to encourage movement.

### **We provide suitable physical activities for all**

All of our children, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are entitled to a comprehensive programme of physical activity opportunities that allows all children to improve their skills of co-ordination, manipulation, control and movement and to develop positive attitudes towards physical activities including sports. Our provision is also fully inclusive of children from different cultures and religions. All staff are aware of the need to be sensitive to individual beliefs about what is acceptable in relation to physical activity. Our resources reflect physical diversity such as dolls, books, videos and displays will be representative of people with different physical abilities.

### **Working with families**

Staff are confident in giving out advice to parents and carers in relation to families adopting healthy lifestyles and being physically active. We encourage parents to walk, scoot or cycle with their children for part or all the way to the setting. We facilitate this by providing somewhere safe to leave buggies or scooters. We regularly promote/hold special events for the children, which promote physical activity such as treasure hunts, walking to nursery for sports day, inviting parents to volunteer with external events and field trips, obstacle courses, stay and play etc.

We have developed a range of outings that our children can walk to. This supports children's and families' knowledge of places of interest in the local environment that are easy to reach on foot. These include regular trips into the local community that help us integrate with the local community as well. These include trips to the local post office, libraries, supermarkets, train stations, parks and religious institutions.

## **Health and Self Care**

Under the Early Years Curriculum, Self Care forms part of the Physical Development Goal. For this, we encourage independence in children from a young age such as baby led weaning, using cutlery for toddlers and self-serving/laying table etc for pre-school. Our planning regularly reflects self-care and activities are planned to support independence, hygiene and personal health such as dental hygiene, nose wiping stations, water stations and accessible sinks and aprons.

Children are toilet trained in partnership with parents as toddlers, in preparation for pre-school. Toilet training information and support is given to parents and we work closely with families to mirror home and nursery toilet training schedules.

We also contact local schools to assess what they require from pre-schoolers at Reception and ensure that by the time the children leave the setting for school, they can feed themselves, use the toilet, put on and take off their jackets and shoes and ask for help if needed.