**Background Information**

**Learning, development and welfare requirement:**

**Educational programmes must involve activities and experiences for children: Physical Development – involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive: and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity.**

* This policy has been informed by recommendations from Gov.uk physical guidelines from the chief medical officer this states that children should be active for 180 minutes per day, with at least 60 mins of vigorous active play, this will help benefit and develop the whole child in all areas, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-guidelines-early-years-under-5s>

Please visit <https://www.ncsem-em.org.uk/get-active/guidelines/early-years-physical-activity-guildeines/> for more detail. Please also see policies for; Health and Safety, Suitable wear, Outdoor play, Outings and trips.

The named person responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented, monitored and evaluated is Jo Spake – Physical Play and Activities lead. This policy forms part of the Healthy Early Years Award in Southampton - <https://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/family.page?familychannel=9-16-2> and has been developed through consultation with parents of the setting, immediate staff and our Board of Directors. This has been shared through an information letter setting out the rationale behind the HEYA award and then a draft of the proposed policy, we welcomed any contributions.

**Aim**

To provide varied developmentally appropriate physical activities for all children to enjoy regularly throughout the course of every day. This is because being physically active is vital to improve our health, wellbeing and helps us to live longer. If children are active from the earliest months it will establish a positive pattern for their whole lives and will help benefit the whole child’s development.

**Objectives**

* For staff to be positive role models to all children. Staff plan physical activities, both inside and outside and demonstrate/model physical activity through joining in all physical activities; from dancing inside to splashing in the muddy puddles. By demonstrating fun, exciting physical activities staff are able to encourage children to take part and enjoy this essential part of their development.
* To ensure that all children are encouraged and provided opportunities to meet the national guidelines in respect of physical activity of 180 minutes a day pro-rata to the time spent in our care, whilst considering varying abilities. At Ladybirds, we have taken the steps to remove chairs from the play areas (apart from snack) which enables children to strengthen their muscles, wriggle if they need to at an activity and reduce sedentary (mainly sitting or inactive) behaviour, sedentary behaviour is when children are sitting or are inactive for a period of time, at Ladybirds as well as not having chairs (apart from snack) we do lots of action songs at gathering times, wake up shake up etc, so even if children have not been as physically active as they could be, they have this time to do some physical activity.
* To provide age-appropriate resources for active play. Outside we have a very large and spacious garden in addition to a variety of resources inside and outside which include;
* a variety of bikes in sizes and skill level (pedals, no pedals, double bikes, balance bikes) in a designated bike area.
* A large mud kitchen
* Football goals and balls
* A spacious sand pit
* Obstacle courses
* Fine motor activity walls
* Builders yard area for digging
* An indoor movement area with mats and resources/Soft play furniture

Through detailed planning we ensure a variety of skills are stimulated during activities; pulling, pushing, jumping, throwing, catching, kicking etc. Our activities take place in a variety of environments; inside the preschool playroom and in our preschool garden. To provide opportunity for all children to practice a wide range of physical activity co-ordinating and using both fine and gross motor skills (fine motor skills are small movements that use small muscles e.g. fingers and toes. Gross motor skills involve bigger muscles and bigger movements e.g. jumping and running). We enhance each of our areas to ensure all children (whatever age/developmental stage) can access the equipment. E.g. Left handed/Right handed and easy grip scissors, as well as normal scissors, small paper and large paper for mark making, big/small buckets and spades, variety of fasteners on dressing up clothes, large puzzles with grips to small pieced sets etc.

* To encourage increased activity and active travel both within the preschool and amongst families through community activities such as a picnic at the local park, walks to local areas, sports days, walk to preschool weeks etc. Families are regularly consulted with through our Parent Forum to share ideas and tips on we could help to support and encourage physical activity for everyone.
* To encourage and ensure opportunity exists for both indoor and outdoor play daily. This is achieved by a free flow setting and outside being available for approximately 2 hours of a three-hour session. We have welly boots, waterproofs, hats, gloves, spare coats, summer hats to cater for all weather. This includes appropriate clothing for staff members also so they are actively promoting indoor and outdoor play for all children.
* To allow children to be independent when playing and to take reasonable risks to allow them to develop their physical skills.

**Ethos and environment**

Our preschool provision and planning considers how indoor and outdoor spaces can support and enhance children’s experience and opportunity for active play and allow children to move freely between both environments. Our routine and deployment of staff allows a free flow environment for the children to explore, alongside opportunities to dance, sing and explore movement as a group or individually.

**Resource provision and facilities**

We ask that parents provide their children with suitable clothes for all weathers, however in addition we have full waterproof suits and welly boots for all children and hats (including sun hats) and gloves for colder weather so all children can go outside whatever the weather. Outside we create canopies that can provide shade when it is very hot. Inside we provide physical opportunities for the children to explore different movements and skills. We have ‘wake up shake up’ as part of our welcome each day and initiatives such as Drop Everything and Move.

**Early years curriculums/frameworks**

This policy supports the following requirements:

* National guidelines on physical activity levels and levels of sedentary (mainly sitting or inactive) behaviour, issued by the Chief Medical Officer.
* Early Years Foundation Stage welfare requirements. This states that we should provide opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement (1.5 pg. 8) Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food. We should also have regard to the published guidance on physical activity and that children aged 0-5 years should have 3 hours of physical activity a day. www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-physical-activity-guidelines
* Safeguarding and promoting children’s welfare
* Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS)
* Movement Environment Rating Scale (MOVERS)
* British Heart Foundation Early Movers Resource Packs

**Community links**

We have strong local community links and utilise these for to arrange visits and outings which involve physical activities e.g. walking to Bishops Road community centre for Christmas singing with the residents, and holiday activity events such as our ‘Going On A Bear Hunt’ at Victoria Park. Throughout the year we have other professional visitors who deliver additional physical activities such as School of Chill for yoga, and Superstar Sports. We plan a yearly sports day for families of children to join us and family joining in sessions throughout the year.

**Active travel**

Active travel is practiced whenever possible and is promoted to families as best practice for increased physical activity. This involves walking, riding or scootering to school instead of using cars or other transport means.

**Assessment/recording/reporting and working with parents**

Children’s progress is assessed, recorded and monitored and progress relayed to parents through the use of our daily observations, planning and home learning sheets and regular parent consultations in addition to informal daily chats. We aim to work together to support each child’s development. We will also link with other professionals that can offer support or advice, including Health visitors, doctors, and Surestart.

We use the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) and Movement Environment Rating Scale (MOVERS) to ensure the setting is providing all the activities/resources to meet the children’s physical needs and that we are developing good practice. We use this to monitor the environment/staff and the setting to improve our Physical Activity. This also highlights any staff training needs and the setting expectations of role-modelling and joining in will be covered in all staff induction programmes.

**Consultation**

Families are consulted on physical activity practice and needs of their child. Families are informed of any up-dates on the Physical activity guidelines. We do this through regular questionnaires and updates on our website/newsletter, Facebook page and inviting parents in to learn more about the importance of physical activity and what they can do at home as well through recommending home learning activities that the children and families may enjoy.

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