The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) introduced in September 2012 named Physical Development as a **Prime** area of learning and development. There are 3 prime areas in the EYFS (the other two being Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication and Language).

Characteristics of Effective Learning

* Playing and exploring
* Active learning
* Creating and thinking critically

Every child develops in the context of relationships and the environment around them. This unique to each family and reflects individual communities and cultures. Children relate to people and things through the Characteristics of Effective Learning. These underpin learning and development across all areas and support children to remain effective and motivated learners.

Physical Development

Young children learn by being active and Physical Development takes place across all areas of learning and development. Physical Development supports children in gaining confidence in what they do. It enables children to feel the positive benefits of being healthy and active and helps them develop a positive sense of wellbeing.

Physical learning and development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive developing their co-ordination, control and movement. Children need to be supported in making healthy choices in relation to eating, sleeping and hygiene.

The two aspects of Physical Development are: **Moving and Handling** and **Health and Self-Care.**

**Moving and Handling –** Children develop good control and co-ordination in gross and fine movements. They grow in confidence to move in a range of ways, safely negotiating space, travelling under, over and through, balancing and climbing equipment. Children develop skills in handling equipment and tools effectively, including mark making tools.

**Health and Self-Care-** Children develop an understanding of the importance for good health including physical exercise and a healthy diet. Children work towards managing their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently.

Effective Planning and Practice for Physical Development

We provide a range of enjoyable, meaningful and play-based experiences and opportunities for children to explore, enjoy, learn, take risks, practice and communicate their understanding of physical development. Staff support children’s learning and development of PD through:

* Providing a wide range of stimulating equipment and resources to encourage children to be active such large plastic play equipment, large and small balls, wheeled toys, large wooden blocks.
* Supporting and modelling children to play collaborative physical games such as playing catch with a ball, hide and seek or parachute games.
* Giving children time and space to enjoy energetic play.
* Supporting children in negotiating space successfully when playing and talking about why they need to take care when moving freely.
* Planning activities where children can practice moving in different ways such as dancing with ribbons, completing an obstacle course or catching and throwing balls or bean bags.
* Providing opportunities and interesting materials for children to practice manipulative skills such as playing instruments, clay, play dough or painting.
* Providing a range of quality construction and small world play resources.
* Teaching skills needed to use tools and materials effectively and give them opportunities to practice skills, such as using scissors or screwdrivers.
* Providing appropriate support and equipment for children with physical difficulties to meet their individual needs.
* Providing sufficient resources and materials for children to share.
* Encouraging and modelling the vocabulary of movement and manipulation, such as skip, slither, squeeze, poke.
* Teaching the skills needed to use equipment safely and talking about the importance of safe handling of equipment.
* Providing a variety of stimulating materials in all areas to encourage children to make marks such as diaries/note pads in the home area, large chalks outside, clip boards in the brick area.
* Encouraging children to notice and talk about the changes in their bodies after exercise.
* Promoting health awareness by talking to children about the positive effect exercise can have on their bodies.
* Encouraging children to think about their own needs and wellbeing and react accordingly such as ‘I’m feeling hot I need to take my jumper off, I’m thirsty I need to get a drink of water’
* Supporting children’s growing independence and acknowledging their efforts in managing personal needs such as putting on coats, going to the toilet and washing hands.
* Encouraging and talking about the importance of good hygiene such as washing hands with soap.
* Giving children the opportunity to talk about what they like and dislike eating, while reinforcing messages about healthier choices.
* Providing opportunities for children to try healthy foods during snack times, lunch times and small group time cooking activities.
* Encouraging children to drink water throughout the day if they are thirsty, modelling how to use the water cooler so they can help themselves independently.
* Being aware and sensitive to varying family expectations and life patterns.