

Magdalene preschool – Physical activity statement

At Magdalene Preschool we are committed to providing enabling environments so children can gain the most out of physical activities. We will promote positive attitudes to physical activities, so children can develop their fine and gross motor skills freely and confidently.

The Early Years are when children need time to develop their fundamental movement skills and gain physical mastery over their environment. This cannot be accomplished in one hour per day but requires ample time spread throughout the day to reflect the sporadic activity patterns of young children. It is known that physical activity levels decline from early to late childhood. If the recommendations for children under 5 years are the same as for older children (60 minutes) then there is a great chance that those pre-school children who are meeting the recommendation in the Early Years will no longer be meeting it in primary school as a result of the natural decline in their activity levels upon transition to primary school.

Children of pre-school age who are capable of standing and walking unaided need recommendations that incorporate all types of activity especially unstructured, physically active or energetic play. This is the main form of physical activity in the Early Years, and has many social, emotional and cognitive benefits.

Children of pre-school age who are capable of walking unaided should be physically active daily for at least 3 hours. Physical activity should involve translocation of the trunk (movement of the trunk from one place to another).

Physically active play typically will include activity that involves trunk movements and involve more exertion than the minimal movement required to carry out simple everyday tasks such as washing, bathing, dressing, or activities such as playing board games or other passive play (such as craft activities, drawing, dressing up, playing at a sand table).

Activities which involve movements of all the major muscle groups, i.e. the legs, buttocks, shoulders and arms, and translocation of the trunk (movement of the trunk from one place to another)

Yoga

Energetic play e.g. climbing frame or riding a bike

Energetic bouts of activity e.g. running and chasing games

Informal, unstructured or free play with no rules (apart from safety) and little input or direction from parents/carers.

Walking to shops, a friend's home, park or to and from a school

Swimming (play or learning to swim)

Adult-led play (facilitating, prompting, stimulating or focusing) can provide at least some of the recommended physical activity (e.g. through adults leading games like Simon Says), as could non-play activities (e.g. learning to swim, gym and dance lessons with qualified instructors).

Similarly, children might also lead their own activities but at times participate in those planned by adult carers (e.g. in day care settings or to fit family circumstances).

Adults might contribute some structure or formality or facilitate play by providing enabling environments within which children can be stimulated to play more constructively and generate their own physically active games and play, e.g. a designated play area with a range of equipment and challenges and a lay out that children can use as a starting point.

May 2019

Revised Nov 2020

Signed.....Date.....

On behalf of the management committee