

2026

Physical Development Policy



**Woolgrove School,
Special Needs Academy**
Live, Laugh and Learn
Together

Owner: Headteacher
Authored by: Deputy Head
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Our Intent

“A whole school approach to Physical Development and Physical Education”

At Woolgrove School we believe that physical development (PD) and physical education (PE), experienced in a safe and supportive environment, are vital and unique in their contribution to a pupil's physical and emotional development and health. Our curriculum aims to provide for pupils' increasing self-confidence, enthusiasm and enjoyment in developing and using the physical skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. PD and PE link explicitly to ALL areas of our curriculum but with a particular focus on our life skills curriculum.

Our aim is therefore:

- **To promote the health, safety and wellbeing of all pupils through the joy of movement.**
- **To excite, stimulate and motivate all pupils to learn and develop physically.**

What is Physical Development (PD)?



Physical development is how babies and young children gain control of their bodies, but it also includes how children learn about keeping themselves active and healthy and how they learn to use equipment and materials successfully and safely.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, Physical Development follows the EYFS Birth to 5 matters and is broken down into two aspects:

- **Moving and Handling**: development of key skills related to large (gross) movements such as walking, balancing and negotiating space and small (fine) movements e.g picking things up, using and playing with objects/toys, development of early mark making/writing skills.
- **Health and Self-Care**: children find out about the effects of a healthy life style on their bodies. This includes all the factors that affect healthy development including making healthy choices in relation to food. It also includes managing their personal needs, such as dressing, when it is appropriate.

Supporting the development of Fine Motor Skills

Fine motor skills are smaller hand and finger movements such as picking up small objects, using pencils using a pincer grip and threading thin pieces of string. These fine motor skills are essential for children in order to develop skills related to self-care e.g. putting on clothes, tying shoe laces and to be able to begin to form letters and write once they are ready. Opportunities to develop fine motor skills are planned throughout our curriculum in the following ways:

- Construction, e.g. clay, lego, threading and puzzles, wooden blocks and small world
- Toys
- Threading, stacking and screwing toys, peg boards, puzzles
- Clay, dough, cooking and woodwork activities, drawing/painting/collage/modelmaking
- Materials and tools, wind-up and mechanical toys
- Sand play
- Water play
- Modelling with playdough and clay
- Painting, drawing and colouring
- Peg games and jigsaws
- Threading
- Cutting with scissors
- Dressing-up, buttoning clothes, doing up zips, etc
- Dressing of dolls
- Making 'junk' models
- 'Reading' books - page turning
- 'Writing' with pencils and crayons
- Collage and other pasting activities
- Use of the computer keyboard

Supporting the development of Gross Motor Skills: What is Physical Education (PE)?



Physical education (PE) relates to lessons/activities that develop pupils' physical competence and knowledge of movements and safety in relation to key skills, and their ability to use these to perform in a wide range of activities associated with the development of an active and healthy lifestyle and traditional sport.

Implementation

“How we teach our pupils”

At Woolgrove, all of our pupils have the opportunity to engage in activities to develop PD and PE skills across the curriculum on a daily basis. Many pupils start at Woolgrove having had negative experiences of PE e.g. noise in the hall, large groups of pupils, embarrassment at not being able to engage, issues related to getting changed. At Woolgrove we place an emphasis on creating a safe, happy and exciting environment where pupils feel confident to engage.

Pupils receive a weekly PE lesson focused upon the development of key skills related to physical development and traditional sport. Pupils also have the opportunity to engage in activities both inside and outside the classroom e.g. daily walks, outside workouts, activities at playtimes or through physical activities linked to other curriculum areas. Pupil may also receive targeted intervention (e.g Rebound Therapy, Lego Therapy, Sensory Circuits) depending on their individual needs.

What do we teach?

At Woolgrove we have a specific sport focus each half term. These include activities to develop skills in: Invasion Games (football, rugby, basketball), Gymnastics, Dance (creative and traditional), Net and Wall Games (bats, balls and tennis), Striking and Fielding (Cricket and Rounders), Athletics and Outdoor and Adventurous activities e.g. as part of our Year 6 Activity/residential week.

Term	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Topic	Invasion Games	Dance	Gymnastics	Games: Bats and Racquets	Bikes and Tricycles	Athletics
	SWIMMING – All classes on a rota basis					
Physical Development: Gross Motor	Development of skills and knowledge related to invasion games; football, rugby, basketball	Development of skills and knowledge related to expressive and traditional dance	Development of skills and knowledge related to gymnastics; travelling and moving, jumping, rolling and balancing	Development of skills and knowledge related to striking, striking and fielding	Development of skills and knowledge related to cycling skills; balancing, pedalling, steering, starting and stopping	Development of skills and knowledge related to Athletics; running, jumping and throwing
Physical Development: Fine Motor	<i>Fine motor skills - pen skills, cutlery pincer skills</i>	<i>Fine motor skills - pen skills, cutlery pincer skills</i>	<i>Fine motor skills - pen skills, cutlery pincer skills</i>	<i>Fine motor skills - pen skills, cutlery pincer skills</i>	<i>Fine motor skills - pen skills, cutlery pincer skills</i>	<i>Fine motor skills - pen skills, cutlery pincer skills</i>

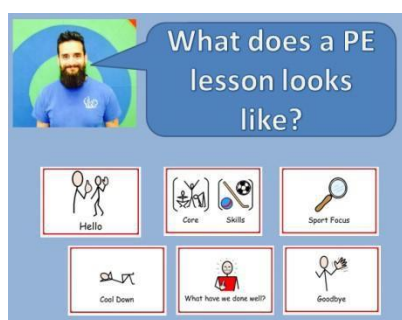
Swimming

Swimming is a vital life skill and we offer all of our pupils the opportunity to experience swimming at Woolgrove. Classes follow a rota and swim regularly throughout the school year. Lessons are held at North Herts Leisure Centre and are taught, supervised and supported by qualified Woolgrove staff.

What does a PE lesson look like?

Our PE lessons follow a familiar and consistent structure for all pupils with the emphasis on fun and engagement. Lessons involve a mixture of informal and formal learning depending on the learning pathway of the class.

EYFS	Movement activities and games to develop core skills related to physical development goals linked to EYFS Birth to 5 matters – moving and handling and health and self care.
Pre-Formal Classes	Movement activities and games to develop core skills related to physical development. Opportunities to develop skills related to a half termly focus through “play and learn” activities
Semi Formal 1 Classes	Movement activities and games to develop core skills related to physical development. Opportunities to develop skills related to a half termly focus through “play and learn” activities. Whole class/small team activities
Semi Formal 2 Classes	Movement activities and games to develop core skills related to physical development. Development of key skills related to focus topics e.g. bouncing/kicking a ball Demonstration and practice Whole class/small team activities
Formal Classes	Focus upon key skills related to topic. Individual, partner and small group activities leading to playing small sided team games. Refining skills in order to make conscious decisions e.g. moving into a space during a team game.



Structure and routine are important for our pupils! All of our lessons follow a similar and familiar structure with a mix of activities/games to suit the needs/abilities of the class.

Clubs

At Woolgrove we offer a variety of sports/activity clubs for pupils to try if appropriate. These are funded by the school, and take place during lunchtimes to enable all pupils to access.

Health and Safety

“How do we keep safe in PE?”

Keeping our pupils safe is a priority at Woolgrove. Pupils are taught to move and interact safely and about the physical and mental importance of staying healthy and active. All lessons are risk assessed and are supervised and taught by Woolgrove staff or by qualified instructors. Staff are offered CPD opportunities to upskill and refresh their knowledge and confidence in delivering physical activities to pupils. Woolgrove is a member of the North Herts Schools Sports Partnership who support us in our delivery of our PD and PE curriculum.

IMPACT

“How do we ensure pupils progress?”



Pupil progress is monitored on an ongoing basis through pupil observation (during lessons), photos and video evidence (where appropriate) which are then uploaded onto the school’s online assessment system.

Supporting our pupils to succeed

Some pupils may need a little more help than others – this may take to form of extra support/differentiation in lessons or, where appropriate, through referral for a specific intervention e.g. to develop muscle tone, balance and coordination. Some pupils are more able and may show an aptitude for a particular sport. We also have strong links to local clubs and North Herts Disability Sports Foundation and work with them to signpost clubs and extracurricular opportunities.