



Supporting Your 4 - 5 Year Old Child in

# Physical Development

Parent Advice Booklet


# What Is This Guide?

What do we mean by 'physical development'? In the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (known as EYFS), there are some expectations laid out for how children generally develop in the ways they move around and gain better control of their bodies. This guide can help you understand what that development might look like for your child and how you can help them.



This guide breaks down the EYFS framework into sections and statements, providing you with simple explanations of what physical development typically looks like for this age group. Each area has ideas for supporting your child through fun and engaging activities, whether your child is only just beginning to experiment with moving in different ways or they are becoming increasingly independent with using simple tools effectively.

Rather than a list of must-do activities, you can dip in and out of these prompts and ideas based on your child's current interests and appropriate stage of development.


You can visit the **parent section** of the Twinkl site for even more resources to support your child in physical development, as well as all other areas of learning. Either search for keywords used in this guide or explore more in the early years section.




Physical development is a prime area within the early years framework. This is split into two aspects: **moving and handling** and **health and self-care**.




**Moving and handling** refers to the skills that enable children to have good control and coordination of both small and large movements, as well as handling tools and equipment effectively and with increasing control.



**Health and self-care** teaches children the importance of a healthy lifestyle and promotes making healthy choices in relation to food and exercise. It also highlights the importance of independence in regards to toileting and getting dressed.



Read this guide for practical ideas and advice on how you can further support your child within the different aspects of physical development at home.



# Gross Motor Skills

Gross motor skills are the movements a child makes with their entire body, including their arms and legs. These are big movements such as running, jumping and throwing. Through physical development sessions, your child may be encouraged to take part in activities which increase the use of these kinds of movements.

**At 4 - 5 years old, your child may be working towards...**

**To support this, you could...**

experimenting with different ways of moving.

encourage moving in different ways to music, modelling alternative movements such as hopping, skipping and sliding.

jumping off an object and landing appropriately.

encourage your child to land with both feet when jumping off an object such as a step or bench.

negotiating a space successfully, changing direction and speed, when necessary, during chasing games.

play a game such as 'tag' or 'stuck in the mud' in a large open space, encouraging making quick turns.

travelling with confidence and skill, over, under, through, balancing and on climbing equipment.

provide a play space which has lots of different levels, in which your child can safely navigate in a variety of ways.

showing increasing control over an object, pushing, throwing, catching and kicking.

spend some time visiting the park and playing games such as basketball, football or bat and ball to support the development of these skills.

# Gross Motor Skills

How is your little one progressing with their gross motor skills?



Physical Action Cards

Wide open spaces are perfect for encouraging large and fast movements, such as racing, throwing or kicking balls, climbing, crawling and balancing.

Pop-up tunnels, planks of wood, plastic crates and chunky tires are all great obstacles to create a fun area which promotes moving in different ways.

Skipping ropes, hula hoops, bean bags, small and large balls, bikes and roller skates can further develop your child's hand-eye coordination, balance and spatial awareness.

Have any moments stood out to you as a special memory?



Superhero Gross Motor Skill Prompts


# Fine Motor Skills

Fine motor skills are the precise movements a child makes with their hands, often involving their thumb and index finger. These are small movements which refer to the grip and control of tools such as scissors and pencils. Throughout their school day, your child may be encouraged to take part in activities that increase the use of these kinds of movements.




At 4 - 5 years old, your child may be working towards...

To support this, you could...




showing a preference for a dominant hand.

observe which hand your child prefers to use during activities such as drawing and painting. If left-handed, they may need more support with pencil grip as well as left-handed scissors.




handling tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control.

encourage your child to use a range of tools including scissors, rolling pins and child-safe knives to build strength and control.



using simple tools to effect change to materials.

explore playdough as a great way for encouraging your child to manipulate materials and use a range of different tools.




making anticlockwise movements and retracing vertical lines.

model drawing or painting different shapes and patterns, encouraging your child to have a try too.



forming recognisable letters.

encourage your child to practice tracing letters in sand, paint and water.



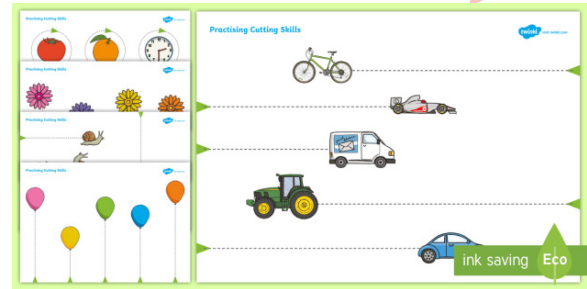
using a pencil, holding it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.

provide your child with a range of different coloured and sized pencils, modelling how to hold a pencil correctly and encouraging activities such as name writing.



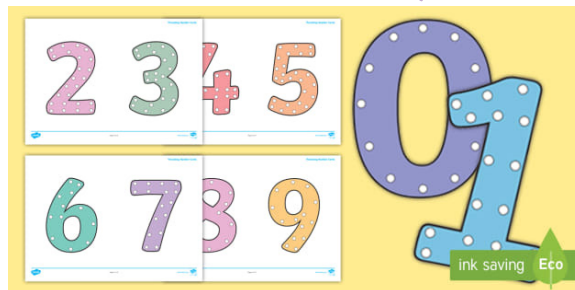
# Fine Motor Skills

How is your little one progressing with their fine motor skills?



Scissor Cutting Skills

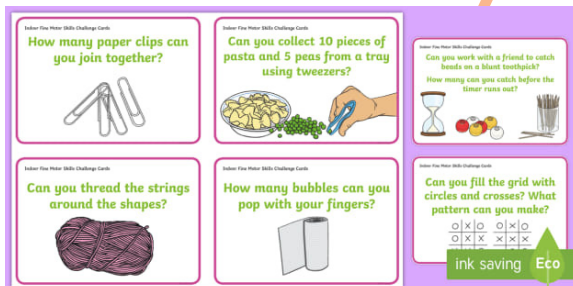
Pegs, chopsticks or child-friendly tweezers can promote good grip and squeezing to build up the muscle strength in your child's hands. Have a race to see who can pick up the most pom poms, small toys or spaghetti strands in a minute.



Fine Motor Skills Threading Number Cards

Try something new when writing and drawing; why not paint on huge pieces of paper or some old bed sheets? Use twigs or pencils to make marks in sand, shaving foam or mud!

Have any moments stood out to you as a special memory?



Fine Motor Skills Challenge Cards

# Health and Self-Care

Health and self-care involves teaching children about the importance of good health, including being physically active and making healthy food and drink choices. As your child enters an educational setting, there will be an expectation for them to become more independent with managing their own personal needs such as toileting, eating and dressing successfully.

At 4 - 5 years old, your child may be working towards...

To support this, you could...

eating a healthy range of food and understanding the need for variety in food.

talk about what you eat and why, the benefits of certain foods and encourage trying new and different types of foods.

usually being dry and clean during the day.

ensure your child knows to go to the bathroom when they feel the need.

showing some understanding of the positive impact of exercise, sleep, healthy eating and good hygiene.

promote health awareness by talking about things such as exercise, hand washing and healthy choices and the effect they have on our bodies.

understanding the need for safety and considering and managing some risks.

discuss potential dangers to be aware of around the home such as hot ovens, sharp kitchen equipment and electrical sockets.

showing some understanding of how to transport and store equipment safely.

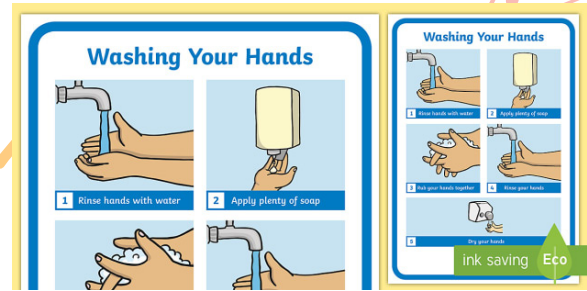
provide opportunities to transport different objects which may be delicate, a little heavy or which might spill in order to get your child used to understanding how to handle objects appropriately.

practicing some appropriate safety measures without direct supervision.

observe and give praise when your child practices a safety measure independently, e.g. not getting too close to an open flame or touching something potentially harmful.

# Health and Self-Care

How is your little one progressing with their self-care?



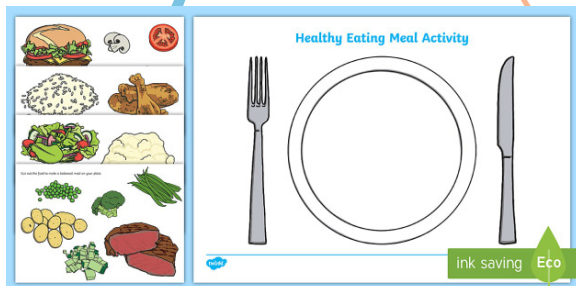
Washing Your Hands Display Posters

You may find a visual timetable helps your child better remember everyday routines, such as brushing teeth, washing hands or brushing hair.



'Is It Safe?' PowerPoint

Giving your child ownership over their food is a great way to promote healthy choices; could they help you make a shopping list or plan and prepare a meal?



Healthy Eating Meal Activity

Have any moments stood out to you as a special memory?



# Support and Challenge


After reading this guide and trying out some of the activities with your child, you may find that they require more support with some activities than others. This is perfectly OK; some concepts are more difficult than others and with more practice, your child should begin to make more progress. On the other hand, if your child is able to do most of these activities easily, then perhaps they need a challenge?

The previous parent advice booklet in this series, A Parent Guide to Physical Development for Ages 3 - 4, may be more suitable for your child if they aren't quite ready for some of the activities in this guide.

If your child seems to be beyond the activities and skills in this guide, why not encourage your child to take up a new hobby? Dance, swimming, gymnastics and football are all great sports which could help further support your child's physical health and strength, control and coordination while encouraging them to take a risk and try a new experience.





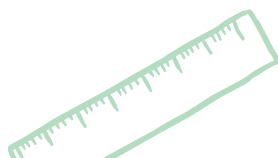

# Explore and Discover More





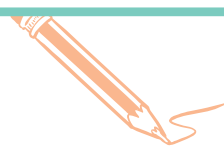
Twinkl Go! is a digital platform, hosting interactive content such as videos, games, audiobooks and more. Twinkl Go! enables digital content to be streamed to your computer or mobile device.



twinkl  
Go!



Twinkl Kids' TV is our wonderful YouTube channel dedicated to fun and informative video-style resources full of new and creative activities you can try at home!



Twinkl Originals are engaging stories written to inspire children from EYFS to KS2. Designed to encourage a love of reading and help curriculum-wide learning through accompanying resources.

