

## Significant Aspects of PE- "If You Don't Use It You Lose It".

Many concepts are interchangeable within the competencies but in order to clarify our thinking we have intentionally reduced our statements wherever possible.

### 1. Physical Competencies-

#### Kinaesthetic awareness

This is about knowing where your body is in relation to space and time.

Therefore maintaining good posture and practising movements such as stretching is important to enable you to use your body smoothly. We can focus on movement e.g. when in the hoist or even when skiing or carriage driving.

Kinaesthetic awareness can be enhanced by bilateral integration. We can also develop a sense of touch e.g. by painting with fingerprints or via oral exploration.

#### Balance and control

An aligned body is crucial for good bone density, good digestion and effective respiration.

Balance and control can be enhanced by optimum positioning and using the best equipment e.g. you can practice improving your posture by sitting on a therapy bench. You can practice keeping your body in midline by sitting on the trampoline; correcting your position to prevent rolling back.

Head control is important for maintaining visual attention, making eye contact and communicating by eye pointing. Head control is also a crucial part of good balance.

### Coordination and fluency

This would be using one or more body parts simultaneously e.g. Using head and hand(s) in a smooth co-ordinated movement e.g. fixing gaze on then reaching out to grasp an object such as a spoon when eating.

This would also concern the transfer of skills across similar or different activities.

### Rhythm and timing

These can be incorporated into body awareness activities, enhanced by music e.g. tapping different beats on different body parts during dance. Rebound therapy offers opportunities to explore timing and numeracy. Timing can also be explored as part of the daily classroom routine e.g. experiencing signifiers which promote anticipation.

## Gross and fine motor skills

Practising such skills will minimise the impact of contractures and encourage interaction with the environment. Optimum positioning can improve the quality of motor skills.

We use fine motor skills to grasp objects e.g. finger feeding. We encourage these skills by manipulating fingers, opening and closing hands or presenting objects for exploration.

We use gross motor skills to move limbs. We encourage these skills using games, hydrotherapy, rebound therapy and encouraging pupils to participate during personal care.

## 2. Cognitive skills

### Problem solving

For example how to interact with a resource e.g. an item hung on an A frame then exploring textures or the uses of the item (cause and effect).

### Focus and concentration

Attending to and maintaining interest in an object /situation using visual or auditory skills or other senses. This can be enhanced by developing the ability to block out minor distractions.

## Decision making

This involves making choices / following instructions and can be enhanced by using vocal prompts, signs, symbols, gestures, objects of reference.

## Creativity

Intensive interaction is a great vehicle for exploring creativity e.g. playing with vocalisations and body movements, with the adult copying then extending the pupil's actions.

Creativity may also involve using an object in a different way (painting with elbows, experiencing vibrations via mouth or creating random patterns e.g. visually or with sound).

### 3. Physical fitness

#### Stamina

For our pupils this may mean the ability to remain alert and participate in activities. These could include physiotherapy programmes e.g. maintaining posture, tolerance of equipment. Stamina can also be built up by repetitive movements during PE games. Mental stamina is also an important level of fitness for our pupils as they have to work harder in order to achieve even the minimum of tasks.

#### Speed

Rebound therapy offers the opportunity to experience different speeds, as does movement in a wheelchair, dynamic stander and water. This can be further enhanced and extended using rhythm and timing from the physical competencies (see above).

#### Core stability and strength

Pupils can practice core stability by being facilitated to maintain an aligned position when bench sitting, floor sitting and on the trampoline e.g. maintaining a sitting position and correcting position during deeper and higher bounces, sitting up from lying position etc. Pupils can work on strength by lifting different sizes of objects or equipment during games.

## Flexibility

Passive / active bending, lifting and stretching limbs helps to reduce pain, muscle spasms and contractures. High tone can be improved by working in the pool or the trampoline. Hand / finger flexibility can be enhanced by finger / hand massage and tasks such as squeezing, patting etc.

## 4. Personal Qualities

### Motivation

Motivation e.g. to attend to an object / situation can be enhanced by encouragement, praise and maintaining a fun atmosphere. Pupils can be motivated by what interests them e.g. when eating and drinking, a pupil may stretch out their hand to touch an adult's hand to physically request a piece of food.

It is recognised that different pupils have different learning styles e.g. some prefer exploring visually whilst others may prefer to explore by touch etc. This is encouraged and extended through appropriate pace and challenge in all lessons.

### Confidence and self esteem

Pupils are encouraged to initiate interactions (e.g. intensive interaction), "have a go" and volunteer to take turns. Confidence and self esteem are promoted through working on a one to one basis, paired, trio and group play. Success is celebrated by showcasing work to peers. Staff are familiar with pupils so are aware when pupils communicate about their feelings of personal safety i.e. if they don't enjoy / feel safe doing an activity then support them accordingly.

### Determination and resilience

These can be enhanced by verbal / physical prompts.

This may involve practising a skill such as repeatedly reaching out to an object or moving it.

It's about "having a go" or "trying again"

This could also mean the ability to cope during transitions e.g. lesson to personal care, change of routine or staff.

Another aspect may involve building up tolerance e.g. to positioning equipment, to new toys, to new situations or even tolerance to being encouraged to use a different learning style e.g. touch instead of auditory.

### Responsibility and leadership

This begins with an awareness of self and of others. Self awareness and peer awareness can be developed through paired / trio play and team games e.g. follow the leader, volunteering for turns, choosing teams. This can then enrich social skills.

Leadership can be enhanced by intensive interaction. Responsibility can be evident by responding to support e.g. co-operation during personal care. Taken together, these promote independence wherever possible.

### Respect and tolerance

Again related to resilience...building up tolerance to new situations or people. The ability to work in a group with its requirements to allow others to come close, to share, to wait for others to get a turn



## Communication

This can be developed via intensive interaction i.e. how to lead a familiar adult in an interaction e.g. playing with the patterns of sound, body movements. Group play also extends opportunities to practice these skills e.g. how to get attention or reaction from a peer. Responding to objects and relaying choice using eye contact, eye pointing, facial expression, vocalisation, body language or by using a BIGmack, using actual objects, signifiers, objects of reference or photos