

Physical Activity Statement

Date of last review: October 2016

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Date of next review: October 2017



Introduction

There has been a growing concern in recent years about a lack of physical activity and increased sedentary behaviour among young children. Children under five have not previously been included in UK public health guidelines and those devised for the 5-18 age group are neither suitable nor appropriate for most under fives. This has led to the development of physical activity guidelines for infants who cannot walk unaided and preschool children who can walk unaided. These guidelines are as follows:

Physical activity guidelines for infants (under fives) who are not yet walking:

- Physical activity should be encouraged from birth, particularly through floor-based play and water-based activities in safe environments.
- All under fives should minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary (being restrained for example in walking aids or baby bouncers, or sitting for example in infant carriers or seats) for extended periods (except time spent sleeping).

Physical activity guidelines for infants (under fives) who are capable of walking:

- Children of pre-school age who are capable of walking unaided should be physically active daily for at least 180 minutes (3 hours), spread throughout the day (most UK pre-school children currently spend 120–150 minutes a day in physical activity, so achieving this guideline would mean adding another 30–60 minutes per day).
- All under fives should minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary (being restrained or sitting) for extended periods (except time spent sleeping) by reducing time spent watching TV, using the computer or playing video games and reducing time spent in a pushchair or car seat.

Staff at Ambler Children's Centre believe that it is important to establish a high level of activity at the earliest age, in order to provide the best start to encourage activity patterns and habits later in childhood that are sufficient to benefit long-term good health. All children are encouraged to take part in a range of age appropriate physical activities as part of their day and parents/carers are given the opportunity to take part in a range of physical activity sessions alongside their children. Every effort is made to raise awareness about its importance for both children and adults.

This physical activity statement and the practice within the centre has been co-ordinated by Ambler's leadership team. Staff, parents/carers and the Governing Body are committed to this statement.

Aims

The main aims of our physical activity statement are:

- To increase activity levels of children and their families through the provision of a supportive environment conducive to the promotion of physical activity.
- To raise awareness of the need to be physically active in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Activities provided at Ambler Children's Centre encourage a range of basic skills in accord with national and local contexts such as Islington Healthy Children's Centre programme, where both indoor and outdoor physical activity is supported to ensure that children within our centre are active.

The Centre is also aware of local and national requirements to reduce childhood obesity via key pieces of legislation and research such as the Healthy Child Programme and the Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: a call to action on obesity in England.

The Every Child Matters five outcomes are threaded into all aspects of the physical activity provision and at Ambler Children's Centre each child is given opportunities to reach their full potential and ability, with further provision for enhancing all round development. **This includes:**

- Being healthy: children take part in regular physical play, both indoors and outside
- Staying safe: children are secure and well supervised in a clean, well-maintained environment

- Enjoying and achieving: children are happy, settled and enjoy a range of play experiences
- Making a positive contribution: develop positive ways of behaving
- Achieving economic well-being: children develop lifelong skills

Equal opportunities

All children at the Centre, including those with special educational needs, are entitled to a comprehensive programme of physical activity opportunities which allows everyone to improve their skills of co-ordination, manipulation, control and movement to develop positive attitudes towards physical activities, including sports.

Our Centre is also fully inclusive of children from different cultures and religions. Staff are aware of the need to be sensitive to individuals' beliefs about what is acceptable in relation to physical activity.

Physical Activity Programme

Planning for both indoor and outdoor physical activities is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage. The Centre is developing outings that our children can walk to. This supports children's and families' knowledge of places of interest in the local environment that are easy to reach on foot.

The Centre is able to provide on-site a comprehensive range of experiences on site which promote physical activity such as visiting our forest area, accessing the primary school outdoor space and the use of more challenging climbing structures

Each programme of activity supporting physical development is planned, reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis. Our EYFS Co-ordinator ensures that children have the key elements of fitness implemented within the core offer of physical activity, which relates to endurance, strength and flexibility.

The Supportive Environment

The Centre endeavours to produce an environment which promotes physical activity throughout each day. All staff are trained to conduct risk assessments and establish suitable arrangements for off-site visits to encourage children and their families to participate in the range of physical activities on offer within the local community.

Although managing risk specifically refers to play provision, there are elements of risk associated with physical activity. Staff at Ambler Children's Centre are aware that in order for children to learn about managing risks associated with physical activity, the provision needs to offer a stimulating and challenging environment. Through this environment children are enabled to explore and develop their own abilities. Whilst providing these types of situations, the Centre aims to manage the level of risk so that children are not exposed to unacceptable dangers.

Working With Families

The Centre provides a range of information workshops, activities and parenting programmes that support parents' understanding of the importance of being physically active and on children's development. Staff are confident in giving out advice in relation to children adopting healthy lifestyles and being physically active.

Encouraging staff to be physically active

It is important for Ambler Children's Centre to encourage staff to be physically active. We do this by encouraging staff to consider their own health in relation to physical activity. For instance, our participation in the Cycle scheme allows LBI staff to claim a discount off the cost of a bike.

Staff also benefit from special promotional rates to join the Borough's leisure centres and other sports facilities in Islington that offer a wide range of activities and classes.