GROSS MOTOR GROUP

Critical Markers in this group

15 Gross Motor

Includes the following indicators to inform a holistic judgement:

- Walks upstairs one foot to a step (alternate feet)
- Walks down stairs one foot to a step (alternate feet)
- Climbs ladders and frames, hands and feet moving alternately to show bilateral movement
- Jumps from a step, box or similar (40cm high) and lands on two feet, with bent knees
- Walks a narrow line: on the ground one foot in front of the other (toe to heel)
- Balances on right foot for 3 to 5 seconds
- Balances on left foot for 3 to 5 seconds
- Hops forward on preferred foot for 3 to 5 metres
- Throws a beanbag underarm in a stipulated direction, (at least a metre) using one hand
- Uses two hands to catch a beanbag that has been thrown from at least a metre
- Kicks a stationary ball in a stipulated direction (e.g. small soccer ball)
- Moves around equipment purposefully and quickly without bumping or tripping
- Can support their own body weight, hanging by their arms for at least 5 seconds.

Specific information for each Critical Marker in this group is provided in KDC documentation on the website.

General assessment information

Movement plays a critical role in a child’s physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. As children move they become more kinaesthetically aware and more adept in the control of bodily movement.

They develop awareness of the place they occupy in space and begin to make directional and spatial judgements. Ultimately they create mental images of objects and can visualise rotating or moving these images of objects around in space. This is a skill that children need to develop in order, for example, to estimate size, location or position, and to read maps and plans.

Young children should be physically active for a considerable part of the day in order to develop their motor and perceptual skills. Opportunities should be provided for them to walk, run, jump and climb on equipment, and each child should take part in as many of these activities as possible each day.

Children who are guided and provided with challenging programs should progress rapidly during their Kindergarten year, becoming increasingly proficient in the use and control of their body. They will learn basic movement skills that enable them to act independently and adequately in their indoor and outdoor activities.

During the earliest months of their lives children are exploring the environment and gaining sensory feedback in order to develop basic control of their bodies.

There is a focus on the development of the kinaesthetic ability. As children grow, they develop conscious control of limbs, balance and hand/eye coordination. They develop an awareness that the body has two sides, left and right, and that it can be moved in different directions – up, down, forwards, sideways. They develop increasing spatial awareness in relation to their own bodies and to
external objects, enabling judgements to be made about the location, speed and direction of moving objects. Muscle strength and control are developing, resulting in greater control of limbs and posture.

During the first years of school there is evidence of further conscious awareness of their physical abilities as children process relevant information from the environment. This takes place whilst the child is learning about the importance of managing timing, cause and effect, and the orientation of self in space. For example, in order to catch a moving object there is a need to understand the situation, process the visual messages of speed and direction, and coordinate the body to be in the right place at the right time.

Children who are delayed in achieving motor skills often display ineptness in large or small muscle control. These children need lots of practice in locomotor activities such as rolling, crawling, hopping, skipping, galloping, running and leaping.

In the early stages children should be involved in activities where they are almost completely grounded, or close to the floor. Some activities require the child to use the skills of weight transference, balance, spatial awareness, visual perception and proprioceptive awareness.