

## Ways to support your child starting school

# Gross Motor Skills

### What is gross motor?

Gross motor skills are skills that require balance and co-ordination and include a variety of big movements in play, such as running, jumping, hopping, crawling, climbing, kicking, pushing and pulling. Gross motor skills are important for children to practise because they help them to learn how to coordinate and control their body movements.

### Science behind gross motor skills

Gross motor skills like climbing and crawling are cross lateral, both hemispheres of the brain are developed and strengthened through this movement, which encourages the growth of neurons. Gross motor skills support children to have good co-ordination and balance as well as helping them to focus for longer and be less clumsy with their bodies. Gross motor skills feed into fine motor skills and support children to become good writers.

In order to develop these skills, try some of these activities:

\* Playing on playground equipment such as swings, climbing frames and merry-go-rounds. \* Jump on a space hopper or trampoline. \* Funny walks e.g. wriggle like a worm, walk like a crab, soldier or pirate, hop like a frog. \* Sing songs or rhymes and add actions and dance. \* Create different obstacle courses for play that require walking along a line, on stepping stones, over, under and through objects, hopping, jumping or walking in a crouched position. \* Play with balls or beanbags whilst your child is sitting, kneeling, half-kneeling, squatting and standing to practice throwing and catching. \* Draw whilst laying on the floor or in an 'all fours' position to develop strength.



