



Gym Trail is the ideal opportunity to follow occupational therapy programmes that your child may have been issued with. For further information please see:

<http://www.cecic.co.uk/Page.aspx?ID=568>

**Mrs Kneeshaw, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) can be contacted via the school office on 01255 502416 with any concerns regarding your child and Special Educational Needs and Disability at Chase Lane.**

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# Gym Trail

at

## Chase Lane Primary School and Nursery



### What is Gym Trail?

A **gym trail** is a circuit of motor co-ordination activities carried out on a regular basis to support pupils with movement and co-ordination difficulties. Selected children are invited to attend five sessions per week to build upon existing skills in the following key areas:

Motor skills – gross and fine; crossing the mid-line; balance; coordination; bilateral exercises and motor planning and sequencing.

Children with difficulties in some or all of these areas are likely to find some tasks in life difficult. Attending Gym Trail helps children improve these skills that directly help in the learning environment and throughout their lives.

### Who is Gym Trail for?

Pupils of primary age who exhibit motor coordination difficulties have been shown to benefit from participating in gym trail.

These difficulties include:

- Poor posture and gait
- Weak spatial awareness
- Co-ordination difficulties in PE
- Difficulty in planning and carrying out a motor activity
- Difficulties developing hand dominance
- Immature drawing skills
- Slow, inaccurate copying/writing skills
- Poorly presented work

- A mismatch between general understanding and the ability to record information
- Difficulty dressing and doing fastenings
- Poor organisational skills
- Pupils with a diagnosis of developmental co-ordination disorder (DCD can also be known as dyspraxia)
- Weak listening and attention skills
- Problems remembering instructions
- Difficulties with processing language
- Immature social skills
- Low confidence and self-esteem

### What are the benefits of Gym Trail?

At Chase Lane, we recognise many benefits for children attending gym trail regularly.

Developing gross motor skills improves a child's ability to become more independent, i.e. changing for P.E. or putting their coat on. Working on fine motor skills might mean they are able to manage fastenings on their own, opening their yoghurt at lunchtime or confidently manage tools in the classroom, such as, pencils, scissors and glue sticks.

Crossing the mid line is the ability to cross the body's mid-line with arms and legs. This allows children to cross over their mid line and perform a task on the opposite side, for example, drawing a horizontal line across the page without having to switch hands in the middle.

Coordination helps children achieve objectives quickly. Hand-eye coordination is the ability to track the movements of the hands with the eyes, thus enabling the eyes to send important signals to the

brain about hand movement. Poor hand-eye coordination can greatly compromise your ability to exercise and can also affect everyday tasks such as writing.

Being able to coordinate both sides of the body together enables many daily tasks, such as, during handwriting, one hand writes, the other should stabilise the paper. During cutting, one hand operates the scissors, the other manages the paper. Planning and sequencing is important to enable a child to perform many everyday tasks such as walking, running, playing on a playground and playing sports.

Motor planning and sequencing is defined as the ability to organise the body's actions: knowing what steps to take, and in what order, to complete a particular task. For example, a motor plan for getting dressed would include knowing that putting socks on comes before stepping into shoes. Also, knowing which shoe goes on which foot etc.

We understand that all key areas in Gym Trail are linked and overlap within exercises and games.

Children are able to build on existing skills, developing independence in a fun and relaxed way. Children can build confidence, resilience and self-esteem which in turn, improves their daily school life.