

SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH COORDINATION DIFFICULTIES

Does your child struggle with self-care tasks such as brushing teeth or tying laces or find riding a bike a challenge?

Do they seem clumsy, get upset easily or seem to tire more easily than other children?

Children with coordination difficulties can be supported through a range of resources or strategies.

How do we support children with coordination difficulties at school?

At school we support children by providing daily **Fun Fit** sessions. These help to improve gross motor skills and co-ordination including postural stability and balance in a fun, enjoyable way.



In these sessions we use a range of resources including **balance boards**. These help children develop balance, core strength and flexibility. These skills are important for general body awareness and posture.

We can refer children for specialist assessment to determine if they have **dyspraxia** - a form of developmental coordination disorder (DCD), which impacts on fine and/or gross motor skills and can affect speech. These children can benefit from specialist support from an Occupational Therapist.

How can you support your child at home?

Professionals who support children with coordination difficulties advise:

- Promote good sleep habits. For example, don't let your child play computer games near bedtime
- Prepare for school the night before.

If your child struggles to ride a bike, try lowering the saddle so they can put both feet on the floor to help them develop balance and confidence.



If your child finds taking part in traditional sports frustrating, if possible provide opportunities to take part in activities that will help them develop strength, stamina and physical fitness such as swimming, hiking or yoga. Older children may enjoy tai chi or golf. These have the advantage of being 'life-style' sports that can be continued into adulthood.

For more information:

See: www.boxofideas.org

Dyspraxia Foundation helpline: 01462 454986. Monday-Friday 9am-5pm.

The book '**Dyspraxia: The Hidden Handicap**' – by **Amanda Kirby** Includes chapters on helping children to acquire everyday skills; coping with growing up; and gaining independence as an adult.

