

SECOND EDITION

# Developing Physical Health and Well-being through **Gymnastic Activity**

**5-7**

**A SESSION-BY-SESSION APPROACH**



MAGGIE CARROLL AND JACKIE HANNAY

# Developing Physical Health and Well-being through Gymnastic Activity (5–7)

A session-by-session approach

Second edition

*Maggie Carroll  
and Jackie Hannay*



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# Developing Physical Health and Well-being through Gymnastic Activity (5–7)

How can you make gymnastics activity fun, lively and inclusive?

How can you improve the health and well-being of all your children?

How can you ensure progression over time?

This practical and easy-to-use teacher's guide is the brand new edition of the popular workbook *Movement Education Leading to Gymnastics 4–7*. It takes a session-by-session approach to teaching physical development and well-being through gymnastics for the 5–7 age range.

Fully updated with the most current schemes of work to use at Key Stage 1, it sets out a series of 40 sessions over the two year span, to give you planned and logical progression of both content and advice.

This one-stop resource includes 20 session plans per year group, which you can follow as a complete course or dip into for ideas and inspiration. It also includes a Specific Skills Guide to help you support children in developing the correct techniques.

Each session plan includes:

- Learning objectives
- Apparatus needed
- Warm-up and cool-down activities
- Step-by-step session content
- Teaching approaches
- Assessment criteria
- Health and Safety considerations.

The companion volume, *Developing Physical Health, Fitness and Well-being through Gymnastics 7–11*, follows the same format and together these user-friendly books provide a progressive programme of work from Years 1–6. If you are a practising or student teacher, this guide will give you all the confidence you need to teach gymnastics in your school!

**Maggie Carroll** retired from her post as Head of the School of Education at the University of Brighton, UK in 2004. Since this time she has worked in a freelance consultative capacity, in addition to her role as Associate Lecturer in Education Studies at Brighton.

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*Children:* Rodmell Church of England Primary School, East Sussex



# Preface

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Jackie Hannay and I were delighted when asked to write new editions of my original teachers' gymnastics workbooks for primary school teachers and students. (The first series was co-authored by myself and Bob Garner, and the second by myself and Hazel Manners.)

The need for this new edition became self evident for two reasons:

- 1 The success of the series and its format, as evidenced by ongoing testimonies from teachers and students on its usefulness and clarity.
- 2 Inevitable changes to the primary curriculum over time have necessitated our re-evaluation of the principles underlying the teaching of gymnastic activity. Many of these still pertain but, additionally, we have focussed more of the work on children's well-being, and on how it also supports access to broad learning across the curriculum.

We have retained a similar format and approach as in the original versions because teachers have told us how this has made their planning and assessment straightforward and manageable.

We welcome this opportunity to share with teachers and students this contribution to a crucial aspect of young children's development.

*Maggie Carroll  
Jackie Hannay  
University of Brighton, September 2010*

# Foreword

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The updating of this book is very welcome. It has always been a most valuable resource for the primary school subject leader, experienced teacher and, especially, the non-specialist. The lesson outlines have a clear structure with a good range of activities that, when sequenced, help learners to develop specific sets of skills and apply them appropriately. The units are well designed with development of core skills, specific techniques and compositional concepts and the ideas central to them. In addition, there is a very clear section in each lesson that helps teachers to know what to look for in terms of specific learning outcomes. The authors also make excellent use of the core tasks developed as part of Curriculum 2000 and, subsequently, the PESSYP strategy.

Carroll and Hannay have skilfully updated the materials in order to reflect both the most recent curriculum developments in physical education and the most up-to-date thinking about teaching and learning. Whatever happens to the National Curriculum, the books will provide a very strong starting point for the development of positive learning experiences in this area of physical education. For subject leaders, they provide an excellent resource to support the development of schemes of work and a 'feel safe', clear set of ideas that can be turned into lesson plans for the non-specialist. For those who use the resource well, it will enable high quality curriculum learning experiences and

teaching to be provided for all learners. This will offer the settings in which children, whatever their ability, can develop their:

- physical competency;
- confidence in themselves as physical beings;
- creativity and performance skills; and
- knowledge and understanding of aspects of personal health and well-being, and healthy lifestyles.

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# Introduction

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Physical skills develop from the moment children are born. It is during the early years of children's lives (3–7) that physical education (PE) is primarily concerned with physical development. Young children need to be provided with opportunities to explore a range of physical movement and equipment through structured and exploratory play in order to develop and master key motor skills.

Development of these skills will only occur through regular activity during the early, middle and later primary school phases. Whatever form a national curriculum might take for young children, concern for physical development, health and well-being must predominate, and, as such, is vital for children's development as confident individuals. It provides the foundations for long-term well-being and contributes to children's all-round development.

This workbook sets out to ensure that gymnastic activities, as part of a balanced PE programme, offer opportunities for children to acquire aspects of:

- physical skill acquisition and performance that is improved through practice (they will become competent in the control and dexterity of their movements, and will use these abilities creatively and with commitment);
- generic skills so that they can move in controlled ways and in a range of different contexts; and

- broader learning across the curriculum, often related to their personal, emotional and social development.

Therefore, PE in the early years needs to enable children to develop generic skills such as running, throwing, catching, climbing and balancing. From this, they will learn to increase their agility, coordination and strength, and test and challenge themselves, all the time learning what their bodies can do.

They will begin to master natural actions of rolling, climbing, running, jumping and sliding, combined with controlling the weight of the body while moving. These form the basis of a ‘gymnastic environment’ in which children can progress from moving hesitantly to performing competently with understanding and awareness. They will learn sequences that they are able to replicate and develop towards an optimum performance. They will learn to cooperate and solve problems.

Furthermore, PE sessions focussing on gymnastic activities provide the ideal context for children to develop social skills such as communicating, negotiating, taking the lead and sharing ideas. Also, they will be able to challenge themselves by developing a deepening knowledge of good work. All of this needs to be planned for, and its development supported. For example, to be able to give feedback to another is a sophisticated skill that needs to be nurtured and developed to ensure that it is given in a positive manner, and that it benefits the receiver.

Through the mastery of skills and through achievement, children will be able to develop their sense of worth and well-being. This, combined with the knowledge and understanding of matters such as nutrition, hygiene, sleep and the importance of achieving a balance of these, will allow them to make informed choices and engage in a healthy lifestyle. Children’s engagement in gymnastic activities will, in part, provide a framework for them to gain this knowledge and expertise.

Links can be made to other areas of the curriculum in order to enhance children’s learning, but these should not be contrived. Indeed, certain

areas of PE may lend themselves more appropriately to cross-curricular work, especially in the outside learning environment.

Gymnastic activities develop children's strength, balance, speed, suppleness, stamina and core body skills, as well as posture. These have importance for other areas of the PE programme. For example, to be successful games players, children need to have many of these attributes.

The use of information and computing technology (ICT) has a key part to play in teaching gymnastic activity. In the later section, 'So what about assessment?' (page 6), ICT is considered to be an essential assessment tool that can be used with the children to enable the teacher to capture performances. Together with the teacher, the children will be able to evaluate and celebrate their achievements.

## **What is involved in gymnastics?**

Definitions are often difficult and imprecise. A definition of gymnastics is not necessarily helpful – yet it is necessary to know what characterises the work. It would seem that whatever form gymnastics takes (for example, Olympic, rhythmic, educational, sports, acrobatics, vaulting and agility), certain kinds of attributes give the work its name.

Gymnastics is normally characterised as having components such as:

- physical (strength/flexibility);
- skill (with/without apparatus);
- aesthetic (shape/line/finish);
- creative (choosing/movements);
- cognitive (understanding what the body is doing); and
- psychological (perseverance/courage/determination).

This list, however, need not deter teachers. They do not need to be gymnasts themselves, nor have detailed knowledge of complex gymnastics skills. At Key Stage 1, children should be developing their physical and motor skills through exploring basic movements such as



jumping, balancing, travelling, rolling and so on. They should be developing their knowledge of their own physical development, their health and their well-being. In doing so, the characteristic components of gymnastics will gradually emerge as children progress through primary school.

If these characteristics need to be present for the activity to be called ‘gymnastics’, and if the work is to happen in school, a teaching approach must be adopted throughout that will, on one hand, generate the development of these essential characteristics, and, on the other, will be a relevant educational experience. Children should, therefore, be able to demonstrate bodily skill on the floor, on apparatus, on their own and with a partner, with the ultimate aim of creating a performance.

## **How do teachers achieve this aim?**

It is here that the individual needs of the developing child must be considered. The early phase school child is using ‘gymnastic’ activities to explore a range of movements – and, in the early stages of development, these are often uncoordinated or uncontrolled, and lacking in dexterity. The role of the teacher, at this stage, is to intervene to make the children *conscious* of what they are doing, so that they are both *moving* and *knowing*. Further to this, the teacher is also developing the children’s knowledge of the criteria that they need to consider in order to improve and achieve the desired outcome.

As the children develop through the three phases of development in the primary school years (early, middle and later), the teacher should seek to develop more stylised, skilled bodily actions that have a clearer resemblance to recognised gymnastics forms. By the end of Key Stage 2, children should be capable of demonstrating a range of skilled, controlled and refined body actions combined in a sequence, which they have achieved through selection and a combination of movements (with consideration of levels, speed and direction), assessment and refinement. Through this cycle, children will work towards achieving their ultimate performance.

If gymnastics is about bodily skill (as it undoubtedly is) and we want our children to be proficient in using skilled bodily movement in answer to various kinds of tasks, the style of teaching must operate fully along the methodological continuum of ‘open – ended (process) – closed (product)’. It makes sense that some activities require direct teaching, whereas others, particularly in the early years, lend themselves to an experimental approach. Sometimes, the teacher will set tasks that tightly constrain what the children may do (for example, ‘run and stop’). At other times, children may need to demonstrate understanding of a movement concept in their performance, and so the task will be of a different order (for example, ‘find ways of travelling with your feet together’). There are also many other stages in between that are fairly constraining.

Ultimately, for children to succeed, they need to enjoy gymnastic activities. This can only be achieved by ensuring that every child experiences success, and, therefore, teachers need to cater for individual needs. Children usually respond positively to challenges, and so these need to be built into the sessions to ensure that they are achievable and celebrated. Opportunities to share successes may be extended to outside the class through performing to other classes, in assemblies, to parents and within the community.

Creating a positive ethos in sessions will optimise children’s learning. If children feel that their abilities are recognised, that their ideas have been valued and that they are safe, they are more likely to experience a smooth transition to the next Key Stage of their schooling. Gymnastics sessions are well suited to promoting such an ethos.

## **The place of skill in the early years**

Children aged 5–7 are flexible, agile and inquisitive. Through gymnastics activities, we want to channel these traits in the children so that they become skilful in managing their bodies in a variety of situations. Thus, the emphasis is on skilful control of the actions the child has chosen rather than mastery of gymnastics skills chosen by the



teacher. The focus will be on the individual children's needs within the class, where there will be, inevitably, a wide ability range. This may mean that one child is still at the early stage of development whereas another is at the later developmental stage. Some children will be ready to focus on work that is more characteristically 'gymnastic', and this is where the 'Specific skills guide' (in the final section of this workbook, page 169) will be useful to teachers. In order to extend the children's capability, there are some specific skills included in the later sessions.

In their classes, teachers may have a few children who have been taught gymnastics skills at a club. These children may be very skilful in this respect, and teachers may be apprehensive about safety factors, or worry that other children may emulate them. This is why most of the content of the sessions in this workbook calls for individual, inventive responses (very different from the way gymnastics clubs operate). However, the more able children can often be a source of inspiration for others and, especially, will be able to share ideas and demonstrate good quality.

Teachers may have to explain this to the children who just want to perform their skills and, additionally, encourage them to be inventive by trying other ways of answering the set tasks. If teachers use the ideas outlined in the sessions, they will be able to broaden children's movement vocabulary and develop their performance capabilities.

Where tasks relate to teaching specific skills, reference should be made to the 'Specific skills guide' (page 169). For information on teaching further skills, see *Developing Physical Health and Well-being Through Gymnastics (7–11)*, as it is most important that this whole programme of gymnastics sessions is seen as a progressive learning package.

## **So what about assessment?**

Assessment *for* learning and *of* learning should be integral to gymnastics sessions. Teachers will need to assess the children's physical competence and also the extent to which there is increasing development of their

understanding of health, well-being and cross-curricular aspects of learning (concern for others, safety, giving and receiving feedback, and so on).

In addition to teacher assessment, the children should be encouraged to engage in self-assessment and peer-assessment. Examples of these will be found in the session plans that follow.

In the sessions, children will be trying out movements, thinking about them and then refining them. As such, they will need to learn about the kinds of criteria against which they will be able to assess themselves and others and, in doing so, begin to take responsibility for their own development and learning. The teacher can use different strategies to achieve this:

- modelling and demonstration of good practice;
- mini plenary sessions to reinforce expectations; and
- reviewing performances with focussed feedback.

Children should be encouraged to discuss and evaluate their work at the end of each session in preparation for the next. These opportunities can happen in the classroom after the lesson.

Judiciously planned use of ICT will also help the children and the teachers in this process as they record, observe and assess themselves in action.

# The approach

In order to facilitate teachers' selection of session content and its presentation to the children, this workbook is written in a session-by-session format (called *the session plan*) for the two years of Key Stage 1.

The sessions can be adapted, developed or used for consolidation, dependent on the time and resources available and/or the children's ability levels.

The individual sessions are preceded by an *overall plan* that will give teachers an overview of the programme to be taught during each of the two years.

## The overall plan

The overall plan sets out the focus, aspects for consolidation and learning objectives for each of the sessions in Years 1 and 2, and, in this way, shows the progression that has been built into the whole two-year programme.

This pattern should continue from Year 2 into Year 3 to support the transition process and avoid regression in the children's learning (see *Developing Physical Health and Well-being Through Gymnastics (7–11)*).

Inserted into the overall plan are pages specifically intended for teachers' ongoing comments and notes.