

### **Physical Development**

Physical development represents a huge area for human functioning. When children run around outside they are doing an awful lot more than just letting off steam. Young children develop their thinking by literally exploring the physical space in which they find themselves. A baby establishes a concept of distance is by reaching for a toy which has rolled away. Young children make repetitive movements to develop ideas of shape and space, of time and position, of motion and balance. With a limited vocabulary, gestures are a vital part of children's communication methods. This prime area is divided into two different aspects. These are: Moving and Handling and Health and Self-Care

### **Moving and Handling**

We often take for granted the way we move about in a crowd avoiding all the people around us yet young children have to learn skills such as walking, balancing and not bumping into things. There has to be a link between sight (and other senses) to the muscles in order to become more coordinated. From this early start children develop confidence which encourages them to want to push a car along a track, ride a scooter or jump in a puddle. As well as developing the gross motor skills required to move about children also need to develop control of all the smaller muscles which move when we pick something up or put it down – these take time to develop and come through using and playing with objects such as spoons, sand, cars, blocks, playdough and construction sets. As children develop control and coordination they eventually learn how to handle items such as a felt pen, a pair of scissors or a paint brush.

### **Health and Self Care**

Through Health and Self-care children find out about the effects of life style on their bodies. This includes all the factors that affect healthy development such as making choices in relation to food. We also examine the influence of activity on heart rate and breathing. Children start to manage their personal needs, such as dressing, when it is appropriate. Becoming independent in using a toilet is something which children typically learn between the ages of two and four.