



Evidence-Based Intervention: Gym Trail & Finger Gym

Introduction

Gym Trail and Finger Gym are practical, play-based interventions designed to support the development of gross and fine motor skills in early years and primary-aged children. These activities enhance coordination, physical confidence, and overall readiness for learning.

Purpose of Intervention

- Boost physical development critical for learning (e.g., handwriting, concentration)
- Improve muscle strength, coordination, and sensory integration
- Encourage self-regulation and positive emotional wellbeing through movement

Target Audience

Children aged 3–7 (EYFS and KS1) who may benefit from enhanced physical development opportunities, including those with motor skill delays, sensory processing challenges, or low muscle tone.

Who Can Deliver the Intervention

- Teaching Assistants
- PE staff
- SENCOs or SEND support staff
- Trained volunteers with guidance from teaching staff

Session Structure

- **Gym Trail:** obstacle-based course including balance beams, crawling tunnels, jumping spots
- **Finger Gym:** tabletop stations with activities like threading, tweezers, playdough manipulation, and peg boards
- Begin with a warm-up → core activities → calming cool-down

Frequency and Duration

- 15–20 minutes per session
- 2–3 times per week
- Flexible structure based on pupil needs and school timetable

Key Principles

- Consistency and routine
- Encouragement and positive reinforcement
- Progressive challenge (start simple, increase complexity)
- Safe environment with clear boundaries



Training and Implementation

- Brief in-house CPD session (1–2 hours)
- Demonstration of equipment and session format
- Staff handbook or visuals to support delivery
- Observe sessions and provide peer coaching where possible

Evidence and Outcomes

- Increased pencil control and handwriting fluency
- Improved balance and coordination observed in PE
- Enhanced focus and engagement in classroom tasks
- Positive feedback from parents and carers

Feedback

- Use pupil voice: ask children which activities they enjoy most
- Gather observations and short assessments to track progress
- Periodic staff reflection to refine delivery

Further Information and Resources

- [early-years-hand-skills.pdf](#)
- Books: “The Out-of-Sync Child” by Carol Stock Kranowitz
- [Occupational Therapy Motor Skills Resource Pack](#)