

# Areas of Learning

## Physical – Confident, competent creative movers



Children's physical confidence grows when they start to feel more independent and can successfully develop a physical skill that helps them achieve their desired goal. Sometimes children will lose their confidence if they feel they are not good at something or not as competent as their peers. As practitioners, it is essential that we provide children with a variety of opportunities for children to be able to challenge themselves physically and take risks. We must support children's own awareness of their physical self and provide self-reflective activities which encourage children to analyse their success and failures.

“If children and young people have experiences that feel fun, positive and give them a sense of confidence, they’re more likely to want to be active in the future.”

[www.activecornwall.org](http://www.activecornwall.org)

## Task 1

Watch the video: [What is Forest School? - YouTube](#)

With a partner or within your team discuss the benefits of the forest school approach and how this supports children become confident, competent, and creative movers.

With this in mind, reflect on your own setting and consider the following questions:

- What opportunities do you provide for children to develop the following skills: **climbing  
balancing  
building  
running  
crawling  
jumping  
pulling  
pushing**
- How do you ensure that these opportunities are promoted in a variety of different ways?
- Do children have space and freedom to develop their physical skills?
- How do you ensure children are free to choose what activities they take part in and in what way?
- Do children have opportunities to go out in all weather conditions?
- Do you encourage risk taking and opportunities to practice certain skill's such as climbing a tree or walking across steppingstones, logs tree stumps etc?

“Forest school is a child-centred learning process, providing learner, inspire, hands-on experiences in the natural environment. It’s creative and can increase a child’s confidence as they problem – solve and learn to manage risks. Forest School encourages children to explore the natural environment and learn in it”.

[www.forestschoolportfolio.com](http://www.forestschoolportfolio.com)

Let’s talk about tree climbing!

“Tree climbing is a risky play activity with several benefits for the developing child. The many benefits of a tree climbing experience far outweigh the fear of climbing and its inherent risks”.

[rhythmsofplay.com](http://rhythmsofplay.com)

## Task 2

Within your team or with a partner think of 15 benefits of tree climbing.

(Once you have done this compare your answers to the answer in the following link: [15 Reasons to Climb a Tree and other Benefits of Risky Play | RoP \(rhythmsofplay.com\)](http://15 Reasons to Climb a Tree and other Benefits of Risky Play | RoP (rhythmsofplay.com)))

## Task 3

Next, read the descriptions of 2 separate outdoor nursery environments:

**Setting1:** The outdoor environment consists of a small area covered with artificial grass, plastic wooden blocks and a permanent climbing frame and slide. Children can only go on the climbing frame 1 at a time and are only allowed to go down the slide, not climb up it. Each day practitioners decide on what boxes of toys are to be set out such as dolls and cars. When it's raining, children are not allowed to run on the grass at the back of the garden and cannot play in the mud kitchen in case they slip or get covered in mud.

**Setting 2:** The outdoor environment has a planting area with large shovels, spades, and watering cans. Open ended natural resources are accessible for children to play with such as wood planks, buckets, ropes, sticks, bark and step ladders. An outdoor tap is accessible for the children to use. A tyre swing is tied to the branch of a tree and large rocks are used as stepping stones. Children are encouraged to climb the Oak tree under close supervision. When it is raining or wet, children are encouraged to put on their wellies and mud suits.

Answer the following questions:

- Does setting 1 and setting 2 support children to become competent, confident, and creative movers? If no, why? If yes, why?
- How does setting 1 and setting 2 compare to your own outdoor provision?
- Finally, how do you know when a child has become a competent, confident creative mover?

## **Useful links:**

[Healthy Movers – Active Cornwall](#)

[Core strength and co-ordination - Help for early years providers - GOV.UK \(education.gov.uk\)](#)

[Outdoor Activities Toddlers | Forest School - YouTube](#)

<https://www.earlymovers.org.uk/about>

[2.4 - Explain how Forest School promotes self-esteem and emotional intelligence - Forest School Portfolio](#)

[15 Reasons to Climb a Tree and other Benefits of Risky Play | RoP \(rhythmsofplay.com\)](#)

[Physical development - Help for early years providers - GOV.UK \(education.gov.uk\)](#)

[Activematters - Dedicated to children's early years physical development and activity](#)