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## West Somerset Healthy Movers Case Study: Dunkery Pre School

July 2019

## Introduction

Dunkery Pre-School is located in the rural area of Wheddon Cross in West Somerset. In 2018, the Pre-School was invited to be part of the West Somerset Healthy Movers project, which aimed to work with practitioners and parents to develop physical literacy in children. Healthy Movers was delivered by the Youth Sport Trust (YST), on behalf of the West Somerset Opportunity Area.

## Background

Dunkery Pre-School is located on the same site as Cutcombe First School and is open three days a week. In total, 15 children aged two to four years old attend the Pre-School across the week. The children at the Pre-School have lots of energy and are very exuberant. They are typically very active and frequently enjoy playing outside in the garden.

The latest Ofsted Report<sup>1</sup> for Dunkery Pre-School rated the setting as 'good', however it noted two key areas for improvement: to maximise opportunities to extend children's learning and develop their thinking skills; and to ensure that planned activities are sufficiently adapted to ensure that children of different ages are engaged and challenged as much as possible. Ofsted found that the staff monitor children's progress well but Jennie, the Pre-School Assistant, did acknowledge that whilst they do lots of positive activities with the children, they don't always make the links with how the work they are doing contributes to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

## Activities

Jennie, the Pre-School Assistant at Dunkery, attended the Healthy Movers training in 2018. Initially Jennie was quite sceptical about the training as they had received a lot of training recently. However, Jennie spoke highly of the training, particularly rating the tutors, along with the fun and practical delivery style.

After the training, the YST Healthy Movers staff visited the Pre-School on a regular basis to offer further support and mentoring. This support was particularly valued by Jennie, who has not had this ongoing support from any other courses she has attended. The visits from the YST Healthy Movers staff helped to maintain the momentum after the training and provided an opportunity to share ideas; without the support of the YST Healthy Movers staff, Jennie feels that it would have been unlikely that she would have embedded the Healthy Movers activities in her delivery.



**"I found the help from the YST Healthy Movers Staff invaluable. I have someone to bounce ideas off and someone who can give me constructive feedback."**

*(Jennie, Pre-School Assistant)*



<sup>1</sup> Ofsted (2018) Dunkery Pre-School Ofsted Report

Healthy Movers activities are now delivered every day in the Pre-School. The Healthy Movers resource cards are used to support the delivery. Jennie likes the simplicity of the resource cards, the fact that you can easily adapt the activities to suit children of different ages and abilities, and that the activities can easily be adapted to their setting.

They have also delivered two Stay and Play clubs, where they invited parents to attend. Typically, they had approximately six parents at each club. The children have also taken Healthy Movers rucksacks home, which contain resource cards to support activities at home, along with some simple equipment, such as balls.

## Benefits

### Benefits to the practitioner

The biggest benefit of Healthy Movers for Jennie was an increased understanding of the reasons why physical activity is important for children's development and how the activities support children's progress against the Early Years Development Goals. The project has also helped to give her new ideas to deliver effective physical activities for children of differing abilities and has given her a reason to justify why the children should take part in physical activity.

**"Before Healthy Movers, I didn't realise where the literacy came into it [physical activity]. The Healthy Movers training ignited that understanding and is something I do think about now. We now have a reason for the children to be active."**

*(Jennie, Pre-School Assistant)*

### Benefits to physical activity delivery

**"We do Healthy Movers every day that the Pre-School is open – it's just part of what we do."**

*(Jennie, Pre-School Assistant)*

Dunkery Pre-School delivers Healthy Movers activities every day that they are open. Initially, the visits from the YST Healthy Movers staff encouraged the staff to deliver the activities but it has now become a habit and the staff write the Healthy Movers activities into their planning every day. The staff use the Healthy Movers resource cards to plan the activity but then adapt them to suit the children and their themes for that week. Whilst only one member of staff at the Pre-School attended the Healthy Movers training, with the support from Jennie and the resource cards, all staff in the Pre-School deliver the Healthy Movers activities.

## Benefits to the children

*Physical development:* The children have always been active but Healthy Movers has taught the children different ways of moving, for example instead of moving from a to b as fast as they can, the children are now developing and improving different skills. Positively, the children can be seen playing the Healthy Movers activities amongst themselves, without being led by the Pre-School staff.



*Personal, social and emotional development:* Since delivering Healthy Movers, Jennie has observed that the children are more confident. Healthy Movers has also provided the children with an opportunity to develop their cooperation and team-work skills through physical activity; prior to Healthy Movers, these skills would often be developed whilst the children were sitting still and they would not have used these skills while out playing.

*Behaviour:* Jennie has observed that the children's concentration and focus has been better and they are much calmer when she delivers Healthy Movers activities.

*Literacy and Mathematics:* Whilst it is difficult to attribute improvements in the children's writing skills to Healthy Movers, Jennie does believe that the Healthy Movers activities have helped to develop their fine motor skills and enabled them to hold the pen better. Positively, they also thread other learning into their Healthy Movers activities, for example Healthy Movers has supported the children's maths by incorporating counting and shapes.

## Benefits to relationships with parents

Prior to Healthy Movers, the staff struggled to engage parents in activities at the Pre-School. Healthy Movers has given them an opportunity to invite parents to take part in activities with their children at the setting. Positively, at each Stay and Play Club the parents actively got involved in the activities.

**“Healthy Movers helped to provide a focus to engage parents.”**

*(Jennie, Pre-School Assistant)*

## Future

Dunkery Pre-School intends to continue delivering the Healthy Movers activities every day. They also plan to do more work to engage parents in the Healthy Movers activities and encourage children to do more of the activities at home. Going forward, Jennie would value an opportunity to come together with other settings that are delivering the project to share ideas.

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## West Somerset Healthy Movers Case Study: Little Berries Pre-School

July 2019

## Introduction

In 2018, Little Berries Pre-School in West Somerset, was invited to be part of the West Somerset Healthy Movers project. The project aimed to work with practitioners and parents to develop physical literacy in children. Healthy Movers was delivered by the Youth Sport Trust (YST), on behalf of the West Somerset Opportunity Area.

## Background

Little Berries Pre-School is located on the same site as Exford Church of England First School and is open for 18 hours a week, over four days. The Pre-School has two members of staff and 15 children aged two to four years old attend the Pre-School across the week. The Pre-School is involved in a range of other projects and interventions, including one that focuses on physical activity, but unlike Healthy Movers, none of these focus on engaging families.

The children that attend the Pre-School are generally very active but they have mixed abilities in terms of their physical development and communication skills, such as their ability to concentrate and follow instructions. Vikki, the Pre-School Manager, believes that these differences are largely influenced by the extent to which children have interacted with their families and the community, such as through toddler groups, prior to starting at Pre-School. This is particularly pronounced as the area is so rural, with a very dispersed population and no toddler groups within the immediate community. Vikki also feels that some parents in the community do not know what to do or how to help their children as they have never had access to relevant support or information.

**“We can definitely see the ones that have interacted with families and toddler groups and the ones that haven’t – you can really see their abilities to concentrate, to listen and to follow instructions compared to those that haven’t.”**

*(Vikki, Pre-School Manager)*

## Activities

No-one from Little Berries Pre-School attended the Healthy Movers training but the YST Healthy Movers staff provided an overview of the training during the first visit to the setting. Little Berries Pre-School delivers Healthy Movers activities most days. Sometimes they deliver a dedicated Healthy Movers session or alternatively, they integrate Healthy Movers into day-to-day activities. For example, if the children go and wash their hands or put their name on the board they encourage them to move in different ways to get there. The staff use the Healthy Movers resource cards to generate ideas for activities but then tailor them to suit the children.

They have delivered three Stay and Play Sessions; these have been extended to include children in the reception years at the school. Vikki felt that some of these children would benefit greatly from Healthy Movers and many are siblings of those in Pre-School so she felt it would help to engage the whole family. The majority of parents have come to every Stay and Play Session so far. One of the Stay and Play Sessions was delivered in the village hall; pre-school and reception children and their families were invited, but it was also opened up to the rest of the community as well. Approximately 30 people attended.

The Pre-School children have also taken Healthy Movers rucksacks home, which contain resource cards to support activities at home, along with some simple equipment, such as balls. These have been very well received by both the children and parents; the children have loved showing their parents what they do through Healthy Movers.

## Benefits

### Benefits to physical activity delivery

Healthy Movers has given the Pre-School staff different ideas to support children with their physical development. It has also encouraged them to build a variety of physical development activities into their daily routine; something Vikki believes would not have happened as much without Healthy Movers. Prior to Healthy Movers, some children required dedicated one-to-one support to develop their physical skills, however Vikki found that Healthy Movers was so easy to adapt to cater for different abilities that she can now deliver activities for all children to take part in together.

**“Healthy Movers has made me think about different ways they can move, rather than just walking somewhere.”**

*(Vikki, Pre-School Manager)*



**“Healthy Movers has given me different ways to interact with the children to get them to enjoy healthy lifestyles.”**

*(Vikki, Pre-School Manager)*

### Benefits to the children

*Physical development:* A lot of the children will do the Healthy Movers activities in their own play, without being led by the Pre-School staff. For example, the children will help themselves to bean bags during free play and can be seen balancing the bean bag in different places like they do in Healthy Movers. Vikki believes that incorporating the Healthy Movers activities into day to day activities rather than delivering dedicated Healthy Movers sessions has encouraged children to do the activities in their own free play rather than just in time allocated to Healthy Movers. As a result of Healthy Movers, the children now have a better understanding of their physical development and they are more interested in physical activity and moving in different ways. All the children are improving their fine motor skills, which Vikki believes will support their literacy. Some of the less physically able children are also showing signs of being stronger and improving their balance.

#### Fred's Story

Fred is two years old and has a sibling that attends the Little Berries Pre-School. He attended the Healthy Movers Stay and Play Sessions with his family. He cried through the whole of the first session and did not take part in any of the activities. The family continued to do Healthy Movers activities at home, and at the second Stay and Play Session, Fred actively took part in all the activities. Vikki, the Pre-School Manager, has since observed improvements in his speech, ability to engage with others, and his confidence.

*Note: A pseudonym has been used for this story.*



*Communication and language:* The children are talking more about how they can balance and move, and using the words that they have used in Healthy Movers. Vikki has observed that since doing Healthy Movers, the children have also demonstrated better listening skills and their engagement at the Pre-School has improved.

### Benefits to families

Healthy Movers has given the staff at the Pre-School ideas for ways to engage parents and the community. Vikki believes that one of the biggest benefits of Healthy Movers is engaging the parents through the home packs and the Stay and Play Sessions – prior to Healthy Movers, they found it hard to explain the benefits of physical activity to parents whereas Healthy Movers has helped them to clearly communicate and demonstrate the benefits. Vikki believes that the Stay and Play Sessions have been particularly instrumental in engaging parents and encouraging them to support their children with activities at home; principally because the YST Healthy Movers staff have been able to explain the benefits to parents, and they have been able to actively take part and experience the activities.

Healthy Movers has also helped to bring parents and families together, which is particularly important in such a rural area. In addition, it has given parents ideas of activities they can do at home that will benefit their children.



**“We’re in a society where parents feel the pressure that they are doing their children a disservice if they haven’t done things with them. Giving them information and the chance to come and do fun things with their children through Healthy Movers will help them so by the time their children come to school and need help with their homework, parents will be able to engage better.”**

*(Vikki, Pre-School Manager)*

### Future

Little Berries Pre-School intend to continue delivering Healthy Movers activities; by building them into their day-to-day activities, they believe it will be very easy to continue the activities. The Pre-School staff are particularly keen to engage more children from the community who do not attend the Pre-School; they believe that supporting children at a younger age, before they attend Pre-School, will be key to supporting their development and ensuring they are ready for Pre-School, and then School.

### **The Taylor Family's Story**

Clare is a mum to two children. One of whom was born prematurely and has struggled with her physical development.

Prior to Healthy Movers Clare had low self-esteem and tended to keep herself to herself. However, Clare attended all of the Stay and Play Sessions and gained new ideas for activities to do with her children at home.

Prior to Healthy Movers, her four year old would have needed dedicated one to one support at the Pre-School to help develop her physical skills but Vikki, the Pre-School Manager, has found that Healthy Movers is very easy to adapt so she can take part in the activities with all the other children. She now enjoys physical activity more and is actively taking part in the activities.

*Note: Pseudonyms for the family have been used for this story.*

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**West Somerset Healthy Movers Case Study**

## **Little Horseshoe Nursery: Embedding Healthy Movers into Daily Practice**

March 2020

## Introduction

In 2018, Little Horseshoe nursery in West Somerset, was invited to be part of the West Somerset Healthy Movers project. The project aimed to work with practitioners and parents to develop physical literacy in children. Healthy Movers was delivered by the Youth Sport Trust (YST), on behalf of the West Somerset Opportunity Area.

## Background

Little Horseshoe nursery is located on the same site as St Peter's First School in the village of Williton. The nursery has a team of seven staff that all work in the setting across the week. There are currently a total of 51 children on roll which is split into two groups consisting of under 2's and 2-4 year olds. The 2-4 year olds are all together in a mixed ability group.

The nursery have actively been involved with a range of physical activity interventions, including wake and shake and the Daily Mile. They have found that Healthy Movers has been most successful to date as it is easy to embed into their current practice.

The Nursery Manager, Rebecca, feels that she has seen a decline in the motor skills and speech development of children coming into the setting. They have also observed an increase in established poor eating habits. Less children are walking to the setting which has led to a decline in the levels of physical activity of the children, with some children being particularly lethargic in the mornings. Alongside starting Healthy Movers, the setting have also set up a project with a dentist to help increase awareness around healthy eating more generally. They were particularly interested in taking part in Healthy Movers because of the Home Backpacks and the potential they saw them for increasing parental engagement.

## Activities

Little Horseshoes have fully embedded Healthy Movers into their daily practice and run sessions sometimes twice daily. They run the activities as short 10-15 minute activities adapting the resource cards where needed.

All staff in the setting are involved with the delivery of Healthy Movers. The Healthy Movers Champion who initially attended the training has since moved on, however due to all the staff being involved with the sessions the new Champion felt confident to take on the role.



Children at Little Horseshoes particularly enjoy the hide and seek card and the use of music has been effective at engaging the children in the activities.

The most effective part of Healthy Movers is how the setting has been able to develop the way they run the sessions over the course of the project. They value how simple, easy and flexible Healthy Movers is, and it is a result of this that they have been able to embed it into their daily practice so easily. Over the course of the project they have worked closely with the YST staff

*'for 10 minutes, let's just have a*

*'children get so animated with  
the music'*

*(Rebecca, Nursery Manager)*

to continually improve their offer and trying out new ways of delivering Healthy Movers. This has also helped them to constantly be revising and refreshing the sessions to maintain engagement for the children.

### Parental Engagement

The Home Backpacks as a resource helped to initiate parental engagement and let them know that Healthy Movers was running in the setting. They were also a great incentive to encourage parents to participate in any sessions. As Little Horseshoe's is a small nursery they have struggled to find the space to run regular parent stay and play sessions. They have managed to hold a couple of these sessions during the holidays, where they do not have as many children in the nursery. For example, they held a Healthy Movers sports day and invited parents to attend. They had never held a sports day before, but found it was a great success with high engagement from parents, children and staff.

*'we have never done a sports day before; I already am looking forward to next year's HM sports day. Look at the staff in there, they are absolutely buzzing! they were so nervous but loved it so much'*

*(Rebecca, Nursery Manager)*

### Benefits

#### Impact on physical activity levels

Healthy Movers has supported Little Horseshoe to embed physical activity into their daily routine. It has given them ideas and resources to use engaging activities that encourage all children to join in and have fun. Both the children and staff have fun and enjoy the sessions.

Rebecca and the team have found the flexibility of Healthy Movers key to helping the setting really embed physical activity into their practice, especially as the setting has a mixture of ages.

The training and resources have increased the range and specificity of physical activity in the setting, helping to develop the children's physical literacy and widening their opportunities to be active.

Over the course of Healthy Movers staff members confidence and self-esteem to deliver physical activity sessions in a fun and engaging way has increased. The support from the YST staff has been particularly effective at helping with this.

As Healthy Movers became more embedded within the setting, the engagement of the children in the activities has also increased. Children's physical literacy skills are continually improving and the staff feeling more confident to identify and record this for their EYFS assessments.

*'we now have the confidence to let the children move the activity along'*

*(Rebecca, Nursery Manager)*

### Children's confidence

A key benefit observed by practitioners has been an increase in the children's confidence, and in particular, confidence to join in and be active. Healthy Movers has provided an additional opportunity for older children to be role models for younger cohort. In the afternoon, they talk about the morning Healthy Movers session which provides the children with the chance to speak in front of the group which is good for recall and self-esteem.

### Children's communication and language

Both practitioners and parents reported that they felt the children's listening skills has increased since they had been involved with Healthy Movers. This has helped develop their school readiness.

### Benefits to families

Healthy Movers has encouraged staff to think of new ways to engage with parents, the sports day was a new event that they had not held before. The Home Backpacks particularly helped to engage the parents in the beginning. In the future they are thinking of ways to expand on this further, for example, getting parents to send pictures of their children doing the activities at home.

*'We do enjoy it and it's something I know we will continue to do'  
(Healthy Movers Champion)*

### Future

Little Horseshoe intend to continue delivering Healthy Movers activities as part of their day-to-day activities. They are keen to encourage the children to begin to take more ownership of the activities and to use their imaginations to suggest new ideas or ways of doing some of the activities. Little Horseshoe also plan to continue building the parental engagement and explore different ways of encouraging them to participate in Healthy Movers at home.

### Henry's story

When Henry joined the setting, he didn't have much confidence to talk to adults he didn't know. He had long hair that covered his eyes and he mostly sat and watched. Healthy Movers has been a key activity he has begun to engage with, having the whole group join in with the activities has helped him feel less self-conscious and see that they are all learning together. Over time the practitioners have seen his confidence, speech and language develop, and they now feel confident that he is ready for school in September, something they were previously concerned would not be the case.

*Note: Pseudonyms for the family have been used for this story.*

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## West Somerset Healthy Movers Case Study: Teddy Bears Nursery

July 2019

# Teddy Bears Nursery

## Introduction

In 2018, Teddy Bears Nursery in West Somerset, was invited to be part of the West Somerset Healthy Movers project. The project aimed to work with practitioners and parents to develop physical literacy in children. Healthy Movers was delivered by the Youth Sport Trust (YST), on behalf of the West Somerset Opportunity Area.

## Background

Teddy Bears Nursery is located in the village of Washford and is a feeder nursery for Old Cleeve C of E First School. The Nursery has two staff members and runs a three-hour session ten times a week for up to 22 children aged 3-4 years old. Prior to Healthy Movers, the children took part in some free-flow physical activity but Alison, the Nursery Teacher highlighted that many children did not want to run around outside in free play. Structured physical activity sessions were typically limited and many children were reluctant to join in group physical activities.

**“If we don’t start now, by the time they start school they will be reluctant to do anything. We need to get them motivated at a young age to want to do physical activity.”**

*(Alison, Nursery Teacher)*

**“Healthy Movers is a great idea. Anything that encourages children to be active is great, instead of being on their iPads.”**

*(Parent)*

## Activities

Alison attended the Healthy Movers training. She spoke very highly of the training, and particularly emphasised the enthusiasm of the tutors, the interactive delivery and how easy it was to learn how to deliver the activities. The resource cards have also provided a helpful reminder of the activities when Alison is back in the Nursery.

**“The resource cards are fantastic; I absolutely couldn’t do without them. They are so clear and straight forward; they are brilliant.”**

*(Alison, Nursery Teacher)*

**“The YST Healthy Movers staff is absolutely amazing. Her enthusiasm makes me have the confidence to do it.”**

*(Alison, Nursery Teacher)*

The Healthy Movers sessions are delivered for half an hour in the afternoon, two or three times a week. Both members of staff at the Nursery are able to lead the Healthy Movers activities. They have focussed on the activities that are different to what the children might have done before, for example they had never used scarves in an activity before, and the equipment has really helped to engage the children in the activities.

They also deliver a Stay and Play session once every half term, which parents are invited to. They did find that some children whose parents did not attend struggled to see other children taking part with their parents so for the Stay and Play sessions, they now tend to just engage the children whose parents have attended. They also photocopy the resource cards so parents can take part in the activities at home with their children, and the children have been given rucksacks which contain resource cards to support activities at home, along with some simple equipment, such as balls. In

addition, the Nursery shares photos with the parents of the children taking part in Healthy Movers and in some cases, parents have posted pictures of the children doing the Healthy Movers activities at home.

## Benefits

### Benefits to the practitioners

Healthy Movers has given Alison the confidence to deliver the activities with the children. At the start, she lacked confidence in delivering the activities in front of the parents at the Stay and Play sessions but the YST Healthy Movers staff, the resource cards and the positive engagement from the children has given her the confidence to do it.

**“I am a lot more relaxed when I do the activities with the children and it’s helped my mindset with the children.”**

*(Kirsty, Nursery Nurse)*

**“Hand on heart, I wouldn’t have done anything like this without Healthy Movers. Although it’s very basic, it’s just things I wouldn’t have thought of.”**

*(Alison, Nursery Teacher)*

### Benefits to the children

*Physical development:* The children are enthusiastic to take part in the Healthy Movers activities; the diversity of the activities and the equipment has really supported their engagement. The Nursery staff have also observed the children doing the Healthy Movers activities in their own play. Staff reported that the children’s coordination skills have noticeably improved, along with their balance. They believe that children who had lower physical abilities at the start have shown the most improvements, for example moving their bodies in different ways and improving their core strength. Kirsty, the Nursery Nurse, also explained how the Healthy Movers activities have encouraged some of the quieter children to get involved; the activities have been more directive for them and they are able to learn from the other children because they are all taking part in the same activities together. Several parents highlighted that they had also seen improvements in their children’s physical skills, such as catching, throwing, kicking a ball, balance and coordination. One of the parents also mentioned that their child has been doing the Healthy Movers cards at home, with help from his older siblings – “the cards have given them ideas for play they can do on their own.”



*Personal, social and emotional development:* Some children were very reluctant to take part in the activities at the start and were very self-conscious doing the activities in front of their peers but the activities have helped to improve their confidence and they can’t wait to show off their new skills.

*Communication and language:* Overall, the children’s listening skills, focus, and ability to follow instructions have improved, particularly as they are keen to hear what they Healthy Movers activity they are going to do next. For one child, her listening skills have improved considerably, and the staff have now noticed that her language is starting to improve as a result of this.

**“The children have just loved doing it.”**

*(Alison, Nursery Teacher)*

**“I have noticed improvements in his catching, throwing and coordination. He is more confident in this now.”**

*(Parent)*

**“The children love the activity with the scarves. It helps them to focus and to calm down.”**

*(Kirsty, Nursery Nurse)*

### Clare’s Story

Clare attends Teddy Bears Nursery and prior to Healthy Movers, she struggled with her physical development. Healthy Movers has given her the opportunity to take part in activities with different equipment; it has helped her learn how to hold the equipment and move with it in different ways. As an example, prior to Healthy Movers, she would not have been able to grip a scarf but now she has a much more solid grip. She is also much more engaged at Nursery, for example sitting to listen to instructions, and not fidgeting as much. She is always eager to try out the next piece of equipment and the next Healthy Movers activities.

*Note: A pseudonym has been used for this story.*

### Benefits to parents

Feedback from parents who have engaged in Healthy Movers has been very positive. The home packs were very well received and parents that attended the Stay and Play sessions had enjoyed taking part. Consultations with a sample of parents highlighted that Healthy Movers has given them ideas of different activities that they can do with their children, particularly if they are indoors. Going into the Nursery has also given parents the opportunity to get to know the staff and to meet some of the other parents. Feedback from parents also highlighted that the children loved their parents coming into the Nursery to take part in activities with them, and similarly the parents enjoyed being part of the activities.

**“It is important to do things outside but Healthy Movers has given us ideas to do in the home, for example when it’s raining.”**

*(Parent)*

**“The Healthy Movers cards reminded me that I could do other things with my son, not just the run-of-the-mill things that you get into the habit of doing, like running and cycling. It gives you some other ideas that you forget about.”**

*(Parent)*

### Future

The Healthy Movers activities will continue next year and the staff are already starting to think about how they can build on the activities, for example by encouraging the children that have already taken part this year to show the new children some of the activities.

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**YST RESEARCH**

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**West Somerset Healthy Movers Case Study**

## **Watery Lane: Building Confidence and Developing School Readiness**

March 2020

## Introduction

In 2018, Watery Lane pre-school in West Somerset, was invited to be part of the West Somerset Healthy Movers project. The project aimed to work with practitioners and parents to develop physical literacy in children. Healthy Movers was delivered by the Youth Sport Trust (YST), on behalf of the West Somerset Opportunity Area.

## Background

Watery Lane pre-school is located on the same site as St Michael's C of E First School in Minehead. The pre-school takes children from aged 2 to 4 years old, with 36 children currently attending over the week. The older children attend the morning session and then the afternoon session includes the younger children. The setting uses a free flow approach to activities, with children free to choose the types of activities they want to do.

The pre-school has benefited from local funding to renovate their outside space and so before Healthy Movers, they included many outdoor physical activities into their programme. They also provide a Forest school session once a week for the older children. The Healthy Movers Champion, Jo, had experience delivering tumbling toddlers before joining the setting and so was keen to get involved with Healthy Movers and increase the amount of structured physical activity provided in throughout the day.

## Activities

Within Watery Lane they aim for each member of staff to take responsibility for an area that they are interested in and so Jo attended the Healthy Movers training for the setting. She found it really useful and informative. She particularly felt that it widened her knowledge base about the importance and impact of children becoming more physically active. Jo was able to cascade the knowledge to the other staff in the setting which the other staff fully embrace as they take part in the sessions, modelling to the children throughout. Jo runs Healthy Movers sessions most days and often twice a day so that the children in the afternoon also get a chance to be involved. She has worked her way through most of the resource cards and has set up folders for each story book with chosen activities for ease.

Watery Lane have committed to delivering monthly parental Stay and Play sessions. Each month around 9 parents attend. As a setting they have good engagement from their parents who are very supportive of the work that they do. The Stay and Play sessions are held in a room next door to the nursery where the children eat their lunch which means Jo can set these sessions up and run them in an open space big enough for parents and staff to join in.

The pre-school children have also been given Healthy Movers Home Backpacks, which contain resource cards to support activities at home, along with simple equipment. These have been very well received by both the children and parents. Some of the parents have reported using the resources at home during the holidays and how having the resource cards makes the activities feel more credible and exciting.



*'When you have it in card form it becomes exciting for them, not just mummy thinking it up.'*

*(Parent)*

## Benefits

### Benefits to physical activity delivery

Healthy Movers has really developed Jo's and the other staff's knowledge and understanding of the importance of developing children's physical literacy. It has provided an impetus for more structured physical activity to be incorporated into daily life at Watery Lane. It has also enabled the setting to gain a wider range of resources and equipment to support all children to engage with the activities at the same time. The Healthy Movers resource cards have supported other staff to help lead the sessions.

The ideas for progression on the cards has helped the setting to develop children's physical literacy over time. In addition, the opportunity to share good practice with other settings alongside the YST staff has helped Jo and the team to adapt the activities further.

### Benefits to the children

**Confidence:** Both parents and practitioners feel that children have grown in confidence since the beginning of Healthy Movers. More confident to join in with the story and shout out the responses and ideas during the physical activities.

**School Readiness:** Jo has noticed changes over and above the increased physical activity with children in the setting more likely to sit for the whole story. She has also noticed that after the session the children are more likely to want to sit down at the tables and engage in activities such as writing. This is good preparation for those children transitioning to school in September. Physical development is helping the children to prepare for more formal PE lessons at school too.

**Physical development:** A lot of the children attending the sessions have been seen repeating Healthy Movers activities during free play at the setting as well as at home when reading the same stories with parents. Parents feel that using familiar stories has helped them to embed some concepts into their home life too.



*'I love reading stories so having that and then the ideas to move onto the physical side it's been really interesting.'*

*(Healthy Movers Champion)*



*'he has grown in confidence'*

*(Parent)*

### Ralph's Story

Ralph first attended the Healthy Movers Stay and Play sessions with his mum because his older brother was part of the morning pre-school group. Ralph attended the afternoon session at the pre-school. For the first few sessions Ralph would just watch and wouldn't join in, even though his mum and brother were. Over time as a result of taking part in Healthy Movers during his afternoon pre-school sessions he has developed in his confidence and has begun to join in during the Stay and Play sessions. Ralph has had some challenges communicating but his communication skills have gradually improved and now he joins in with the story book as well as with the sessions.

*Note: A pseudonym has been used for this story.*



## Benefits to families

The parents of children at Watery Lane were already well connected with the setting, however, Healthy Movers has given the staff at the pre-school ideas for new and different ways to engage parents and the community, as well as how to adapt their existing engagement work to include Healthy Movers. The Stay and Play sessions have increased parental engagement with Healthy Movers and provided an opportunity for Jo to model what Healthy Movers could look like at home. It has given parents ideas of activities they can do at home that will benefit their children. Providing regular monthly Stay and Play sessions has really helped to continue the momentum of the programme from initially sending the Home Backpacks home at the start.

*"I feel I can ask Jo anything, especially for advice on Healthy Movers and for suggestions of how we can incorporate it more at home"*

*(Parent)*

*'I've been to as many parent Stay and Play as I can, it's really nice to spend time with my child and I enjoy the sessions'*

*(Parent)*

### The Brown Family's Story

The Brown family are generally quite an active family, getting out every day to walk their dog. However, being involved with Healthy Movers has helped them to see the additional ways and skills to get the family moving. At home they have started to use some of the Healthy Movers resources. They have found it really helpful that Watery Lane use popular story books that the family have at home. This means they can easily replicate the activities so even story time at home becomes active. The resource cards have also given them new ideas to use at home as well as helping the children understand the importance of being active and healthy as well as how much fun it can be!

*Note: Pseudonyms for the family have been used for this story.*

## Future

Watery Lane intend to continue delivering Healthy Movers activities during their everyday sessions as well as continuing with their monthly Stay and Play parent sessions. They feel that the support they have received from the Youth Sport Trust staff along with the resources and equipment has provided them with a really good platform to continue building Healthy Movers in their setting.

## YST RESEARCH

The Youth Sport Trust (YST) is a national children's charity passionate about creating a future where every child enjoys the life-changing benefits that come from play and sport. YST Research offers research, analysis, insight and evaluation services to organisations with an interest in the wider children and young people's sector. Our research expertise is focussed on improving the wellbeing of children and young people through sport and physical activity.

Our specialisms include:

- Education, PE and school sport
- Community sport / clubs
- Early years settings
- Life skills and employability
- Activism and volunteering
- Health (physical, social and emotional)

By working with us, you are supporting us to achieve our mission to improve children's lives and their future.

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