



Be a star... ...and make a difference

In 2016, 14 of Bertram Nurseries' settings across Manchester, Liverpool and Telford established a Physical Development Stars network to support children's physical development. Ursula Krystek-Walton introduces the programme and outlines its benefits

So, what is the PD Stars network? The Physical Development Stars (PD) network is a community of practice at Bertram that meets regularly to improve their knowledge and skills, share best practice, problem-solve and develop ideas for making us physically fitter and healthier.

Members include a representing champion from each setting, myself as Bertram early years manager and Sharon Skade, the lead trainer for under-fives at Manchester-based GreaterSport, which has an outstanding record for getting adults and children up and active. We also welcome guest speakers as well as

regional managers, who support the excellent work that individuals are doing in their settings.

The PD Star role

Every setting has a PD Star, whose role is to ensure that the children are moving for a minimum of three hours per day. To make this happen, they must first ensure the whole staff team has the underpinning knowledge and understanding of the key role that activity plays in children's development and wellbeing and how to implement it in the daily routine.

When the first of our settings joined the network, we discussed

how to engage the rest of the staff team, parents and children, and it was agreed that sharing information was going to be the most important way of embedding this programme.

The first task was to report back what we had learnt from training to the staff team at staff meetings, in small groups or one to one with practitioners – whatever felt more comfortable. This would be further embedded through displays, fact sheets and leaflets.

The PD star then helps their nursery to develop their own ideas for incorporating movement into their daily routines and spends some time with the different age groups, role-modelling and demonstrating where more activity is needed.

Why is it important?

While we have always known physical development is important to health and wellbeing, it is often distinct from other areas of learning and its function as the foundation for learning is not generally recognised.

However, by making it a prime area in the EYFS, the DfE raised awareness of the role of physical development in preparing for learning at school and beyond. And this year, its importance has been strengthened, as there is a reference to the chief medical officer's guidance on physical activity following the government's obesity strategy, *Childhood Obesity: A Plan*



The PD Stars in Bertram's third PD Stars network

