

Freegrounds Infant School

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Who are you working with?

We have introduced and followed the Balanceability program with our EYFS cohort of 90 children (4 to 5 year olds). This program has been running for 2 years in our school. The team of 8 members of staff within the EYFS team have undergone relevant training at various points throughout the years and are now able to teach, enhance and engage the children in their learning using the Balanceability program.



The Impact

The impact is shown through many different areas of the KS1 curriculum and across the seventeen areas of development we follow in EYFS. It can be seen from the children's risk taking along with their confidence



to ride and put on their own helmets. An increase in independence has also been evident with this independence being demonstrated through children attempting other challenges within our environment. The children have also shown high levels of pragmatism as they work through the varying activities to develop their skills from gliding to pedalling all whilst never giving up. It has been a pleasure to see the children's gross motor skills and thus fine motor skills improving during this program too. Since running the Balanceability program we have noticed an improvement in the children's handwriting and levels of success when completing funky finger or tricky fine motor jobs. When observing the trend in data, since Balanceability started it can be seen that the 'Moving and handling' area has improved from 57% at Baseline to 95% in exit data. This is above the national average. Alongside reaching our Lunchtime Mark, Balanceability has worked hand in hand to support the children to have healthier and more active lives too. Freegrounds Infant School has used Sports Premium Funding to purchase Balanceability training and equipment to ensure the school meets the governments target of ensuring all children take part in at least one hour of physical activity each day. Over the previous two years we have been able to support 88 out of 90 (98%) children to ride and within the 2018-2019 cohort by early July we already have 75 out of 81 (93%) children who can do so with confidence. Those who found riding a bike a little tricky, we are continuing to support in our direct teaching sessions.



How you have gone about doing it? / What you do?

Julie Rigby, a member of the EYFS team pioneered the Balanceability program and enabled our environment to have the bikes out for the children to access and practice during their child initiated Discovery Time. We also run a direct teaching session, once a day where ten children undertake a set program which is supported by an adult to progress through the steps and become brilliant riders. When they have completed the sessions, the



children receive a highly sought after certificate in Celebration Celebrative Reflection. The children's cycling is shared with parents on Tapestry with an overwhelmingly positive response.

Future considerations

We are always looking at ways to enhance and change our Balanceability program based on the current cohort of children and their needs. This has meant ordering helmets and bikes suitable for the children especially our newest snazzy cycle bike which the children can celebrate by riding when they have first learnt how to. We are looking into how we can celebrate the children's amazing cycling with the parents, not just on Tapestry but with possibly a celebration cycle around our playground to showcase the children's fantastic learning.



School/children enjoyed it?

The school have hugely enjoyed implementing the Balanceability program and have seen the huge improvements in so many areas of learning because of it. We have been seeing the benefits shown visible in KS1 too. It is an honour to be able to support the children to achieve such a necessary skill needed in life and one which makes them keen to be active and shows the love and thrill of cycling.



Teacher and Children quotes

"My favourite part of the program is seeing the children lift there foot off onto the pedal and cycle for the very first time" Hannah Jones EYFS member of staff

"I love the conversations and support the children give each other in their pursuit to cycle and when they can do it, we all yeeeha!" Debbie Taylor (EYFS member of staff)

"I love the moment that the children can cycle, all their hard work and effort and you can see the joy on their faces" Marie White (EYFS ember of staff)

"I really enjoy seeing the children's self-confidence growing when they are on a bike" Julie Rigby (EYFS member of staff)

"It's a brilliant outcome that our previous cohort we had 88 out of 90 (98%) children and currently we already have 75 out of 81 (93%) children that can cycle and encouraging their families to cycle too" Angela Giles (EYFS member of staff)



"I love how fast I can go and weave in and out of the obstacles" Child in Yellow Class

"I really like how I can challenge myself to use my brakes and not my feet" Child in Red Class

"I can ride a lot now and I go out at weekends with my family to ride super speedy" Child in Blue Class



"The staff clearly love teaching the children how to cycle and I hear so many comments and the pride in their voices when I overhear them telling parents and other staff members how they have helped the children achieve their independence and cycle on their own. At the new entrants meetings each year we are proud to tell our families "your child will learn many things when they come to school and one of those will be how to ride a bike." Nikki Riches Headteacher