

Fundamental Movement Skills

FMS are the basic building blocks of movement and are an essential part of everyday life and recreational activity. It is only when these skills are mastered that a child can go on to develop specialised movement skills, which will allow them to reach their potential in sports-specific endeavours.

Typically, FMS are divided into three main categories, each of which is then subdivided into a variety of skills.

Locomotor Skills Transporting the body in any direction from one point to another	Stability Skills Balancing the body in stillness and in motion	Manipulative Skills Control of objects using various body parts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking • Running • Hopping • Skipping • Jumping for height • Jumping for distance • Dodging • Side stepping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing • Landing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catching • Throwing • Kicking • Striking with the hand • Striking with an implement

Figure 2: Categories of FMS

This categorisation of skills is not intended to be a definitive list. These skills have been selected as key baseline movements for a wide range of culturally appropriate activities in Ireland.

While many children develop good physical skills on their own by trial-and-error, there are many who do not. Research suggests that these skills can be developed through explicit instruction highlighting the important role that the teacher can play in developing FMS.

To become physically literate, children need to master fundamental movement skills through a series of developmental stages.⁸ This resource identifies these stages for each FMS and provides the teacher with information and teaching points needed to guide pupils through their development.

- In the **exploring stage**, pupils make a concentrated effort to learn the movement. Activities for this stage enable pupils to explore and discover for themselves what is involved in performing a particular movement skill.

- In the **developing stage**, pupils become more efficient and refined in their performance of the movement skill through repetition and practice in a variety of contexts.

- In the **mastering stage**, pupils use more automatic movements than in the developing stage. They can apply movement skills in a variety of ways and combine other movements in more complex games and activities.

Some information below highlighting the importance of fundamental movement skills (FMS) & why we are incorporating them into our lessons:

Research suggests that children who are competent in FMS are more likely to enjoy sports and activities and to develop a lifelong commitment to physical activity. Children who have achieved proficiency in FMS have been found to have better self-esteem, social skills and a more positive attitude towards physical activity. Research indicates that the improvement in self-esteem and confidence in performing FMS has a flow-on effect to other areas of a child's education. For

example, improvement in confidence in physical coordination has been found to help develop proficiency in reading and writing.