

Blog

December 2025

Katie Keating, Childminder

Finding the Movement Moments

INTRODUCTION

Katie Keating is an experienced childminder based in Nottingham, with a rich background as a secondary school teacher and professional dancer. Her passion for movement and child development shines through her practice, where she integrates physical activity into everyday routines to support holistic growth.

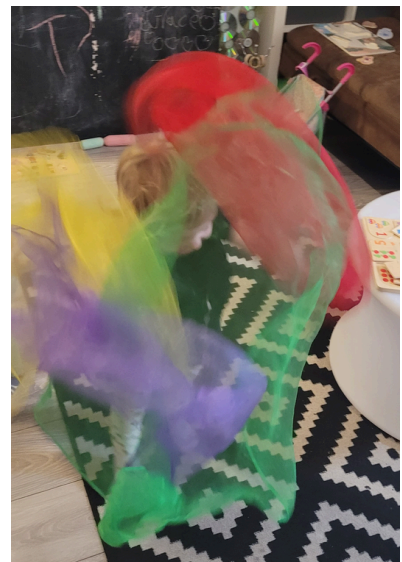
This blog is aimed at early years practitioners who want practical, evidence-informed strategies to enhance physical development in their settings.

WHY IS MOVEMENT SO IMPORTANT?

Research quoted by Music and Movement, a UK-based organisation focused on early childhood development, suggests that 91% of children under four are not meeting recommended physical activity levels in the UK. Katie believes that we are more likely to be effective when tackling this shocking statistic, if we understand that physical development isn't just about sport. It includes gross motor skills, fine motor skills, core strength, and emotional regulation.

In Katie's setting, they make movement part of the daily routine: crawling upstairs, walking to school, and dancing indoors. As Katie says, "No opportunity is a wasted opportunity."

"It's all about mindset", Katie reflects. 'If we see everything we do through the lens of physicality, we can keep children active in so many ways.'



HOW CAN WE EMBED PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT INDOORS?

You don't need expensive equipment or a sports background. Simple resources like scarves, ribbons, and pom-poms can spark imagination and language development. Linking movement to themes—such as fireworks for Diwali—brings cultural relevance and literacy into play.

Real engagement is more likely to be effective when activities are integrated into everyday routines, not just during “outdoor play” slots. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) highlights that structured and purposeful play supports self-regulation and communication skills (EEF, 2024). Noticing when opportunities arise or provision needs refining to embrace these aspects of development, is part of being present and effective as practitioners:

‘We’ve just invested in quite a small trampoline for the corner of the room because we found one of the children was constantly jumping on the sofa, which wasn’t really safe. He’s now redirected to the trampoline. He’s loving it and it’s really helping his emotional regulation.’

WHAT ABOUT OUTDOOR OPPORTUNITIES?

Outdoor play is vital, but it doesn't have to mean big budgets. Katie's setting uses hammocks, small trampolines, and DIY obstacle courses with planks and tyres. Parachute games, hoops and throwing bean bags into targets – all easy cheap and engaging activities, where children embed cross curricular learning, alongside a focus on physicality.

Other outdoor resources recommended by Katie are:

- Mini trampolines
- Peanut balls
- Seat spinners
- Wobble boards
- Ride-on toys and scooters



WHAT NEXT?

According to EEF, physical development is closely tied to cognitive and social outcomes. Embedding movement throughout the day, rather than limiting it to set times, can help close gaps in school readiness and support children with additional needs.

So, start small. Audit your setting for “wasted opportunities” and turn them into movement moments. Whilst preparing snack/lunch they can have a dance to music or move to a YouTube video. Could the school run become a walking adventure? As Katie reminds us, “You just need enthusiasm and a few resources to spark imagination.”

When children move, they thrive.



REFERENCES



Katie Keating
Childminder, Dynamique
Childcare

Early Years Toolkit

A summary of the best available evidence on key areas for learning and development.

Watch the Toolkit explainer

Read our guide to using the Toolkit

Social and emotional learning

Moderate impact for very low cost based on moderate evidence

Implementation cost [?]

£ £ £ £ £

Evidence strength [?]

🔒 🔒 🔒 🔒 🔒

Impact (months) [?]

+3 months

What is it?
Key findings
How effective is the approach?
Behind the average
Closing the disadvantage gap
Applications and approach >
Technical Appendix



Education Endowment Foundation (2024) [Early Years Toolkit](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/toolkit). Available at: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/toolkit> (Accessed: 15 December 2025).



Education Endowment Foundation (2024) [Social and Emotional Learning](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning). Available at: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning> (Accessed: 15 December 2025).



Music + Movement (2019) [Why Move! – Children’s Physical Activity](https://www.musicandmovement.org.uk/why-move/). Available at: <https://www.musicandmovement.org.uk/why-move/> (Accessed: 15 December 2025).