
This first chapter outlines the principles by which nursery programmes should be based, focusing particularly on the development of children's fundamental motor skills. These guiding principles will lead to children's progression and maximise their own potential.

Guiding Principles

When developing your programme of nursery activity it is important to remember the MAGIC principles. These principles are outlined and explained in more detail below.

The MAGIC Principles

- M** – Motivational
- A** – Age-appropriate
- G** – Growth
- I** – Individualised
- C** – Child-centred



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|--------------------------|---|
| Motivational | Children will be motivated to participate if the activities are varied and fun. |
| Age - appropriate | Activities must be appropriate to the developmental level of each child. |
| Growth | Activities must take into consideration the progress of each child. They must be carefully pitched at the appropriate level so that they are neither too difficult nor too easy, but ultimately provide a challenge to the child's ongoing development and growth |
| Individualised | Activities must target all ability levels. |
| Child-centred | Activities should allow all children the experience of playing in a variety of playing positions. |

Children follow a specific continuum of progression in the development of their individual motor skills. The progression occurs from simple to complex. We refer to these simple skills as FUNdamentals.

The development of FUNdamentals are of paramount importance, particularly for children between four and seven years of age. As such, activities should be almost entirely focused on the introduction of these FUNdamentals for four and five year olds (Active Start). For children aged six and seven movement patterns and sport-related skills and activities should be refined.

What are FUNdamentals?

FUN – Vital

DA and the **MA** – Chief educators

MENTAL – Attitude/enthusiasm

FUNdamentals are often referred to as basic motor skills or ABC of movement and with the RJT of athleticism these underpin all physical activity.

FUNdamental movement skills provide the building blocks to develop more sports specific skills. Just as we would hardly expect children to read without first knowing letters, we should not expect a child to play a physical activity without mastering the ABC. These skills should be developed in a structured way with FUN the central theme.



ABC

The ABCs of athleticism includes:

- Agility – The ability to change direction quickly and control movement of the whole body e.g. Tail tag.
- Balance – The ability to maintain a stable body position e.g. Walk the line.
- Coordination – The ability to move different body parts at the same time (e.g. Hands & Feet) e.g. Chest pass.

RJT

The RJT's of athletics includes:

- Running – Zig Zag runs.
- Jumping – Tuck jumps.
- Throwing – Toss the bag.

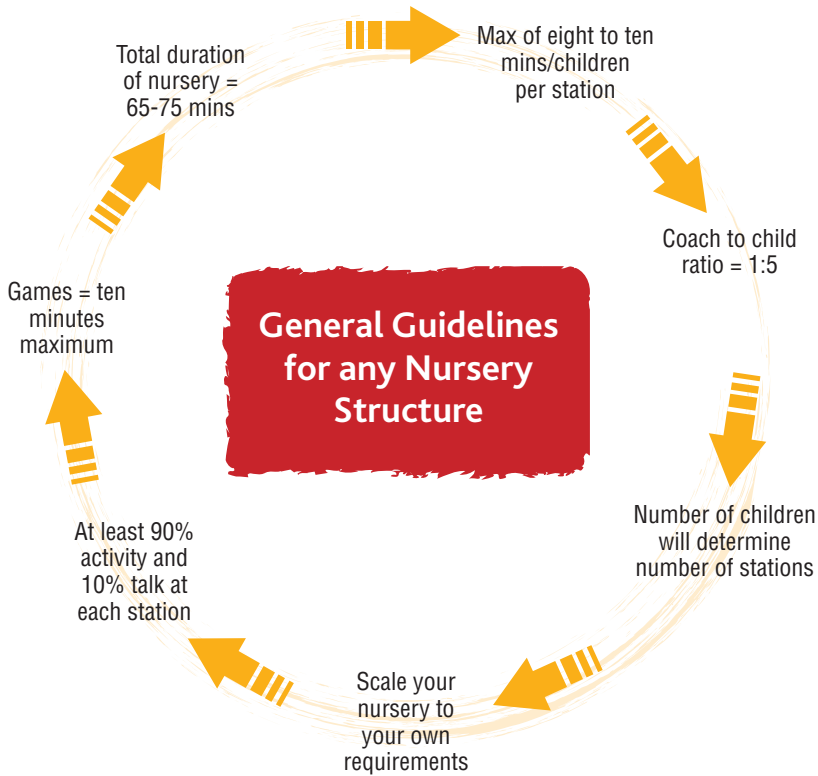
CKS

The CKS's of Gaelic Games include:

- Catching – Scoop pick up.
- Kicking – Punting.
- Striking – Ground striking.

Structure Guidelines

The diagram below outlines the general guidelines for the structure of a nursery programme.



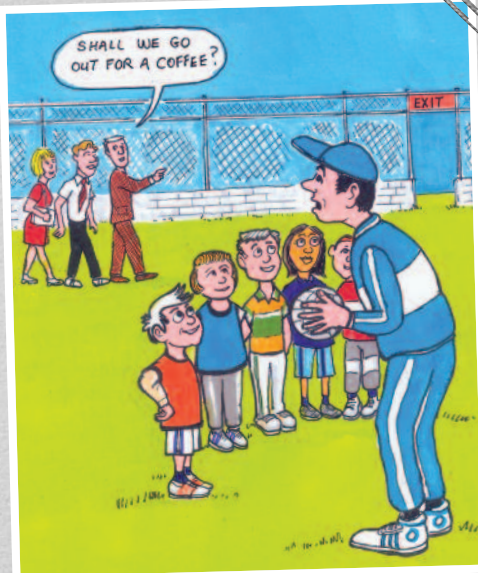
Type of Nursery Models: Hurling and Football

There are several different models that a club may adopt when designing a nursery programme. The programme chosen will depend on the type of nursery being set up and its specific needs. The various models are listed below:

1. The Nursery within a Nursery.
2. The Combined Rotation.
3. Total Change Over.
4. Half and Half Swap Over.
5. Football and Hurling Only.
6. Setting and Progression Level.

The Importance of Coach Recruitment in a Nursery

- The assistance of volunteers – mainly current coaches, parents, underage or adult players – is necessary to ensure the smooth running of the nursery.
- Recruitment should primarily target parents of children that are currently playing in the nursery.
- Current coaches are hugely beneficial in assisting new recruits, in co-ordinating activities and using their experience in organising groups of players.
- Current underage and adult players provide a link to older teams and give young players a great sense of importance, as they are being coached by the clubs 'star players'.



Top Tip

- Most parents are only too willing to assist in nursery level coaching.

The key is to ask them directly for their help and then promote training and encouragement.