



KENT COLLEGE  
CANTERBURY

# EARLY YEARS IN FOCUS

<http://kentcollege.com/early-years>



ACTIVITY OPEN MORNING  
'FUN FOR FIVES AND UNDER'  
EVERYONE WELCOME

SATURDAY 18TH JUNE

09:30 - 12:00

BRING ALONG A FRIEND MEET SOME OF THE ANIMALS  
FROM OUR FARM.

HAVE YOUR FACE PAINTED  
ENJOY THE REFRESHMENTS

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:  
OUTDOOR ADVENTURE, MESSY PLAY, MUSIC & DANCE,  
STORIES & PUPPETS, MINI BEAST HUNT. SOFT 'TUMBLE'  
EQUIPMENT AND MUCH MORE...

*In the previous issue, Mrs. Carter wrote about the many informal ways in which all parents help their children's development of physical skills. Here, Chris Sweet, Head of Physical Education, introduces us to the more formal approaches that can be used in the school setting to build upon these foundations.*

## Speed Agility and Quickness (SAQ)

Movement in children develops from generic movement patterns to increasingly specific and specialised actions. It is between the ages of 2 and 7 that children lay down the foundations needed to acquire and refine the basic skills of stability, locomotion and manipulation upon which later abilities and sporting skill are built.

Through a **SAQ** programme children can develop multidirectional footwork and body control, hand to eye co-ordination, agility, balance, running and jumping. These are the keys for children to access and enjoy numerous physical education and sporting experiences that will be available to them.





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**Speed** means the maximum velocity a child can achieve and maintain, usually over a short distance. Children thoroughly enjoy the sensation of running fast! To improve this ability it's important to cover ground efficiently and economically over the first few metres and then open stride length and increase stride frequency to cover a longer distance.

**Agility** is the ability to change direction without the loss of balance, co-ordination, strength, speed and body control. To train agility all these areas need to be practised. Games such as 'tag', 'tails', 'British bulldog' and 'it' are great for improving random agility, as the children have to quickly react to other children's movement.

**Quickness** is the act of acceleration that takes the body from a static position to movement in a fraction of a second. **SAQ** training concentrates on improving the neuro-muscular system that impacts on this process, so that initial movement – whether lateral, linear or vertical – is automatic, explosive and precise. Trying to get from one point to another over a short distance will improve this aspect. Different starting positions such as sitting down, kneeling and lying down before exploding into action and sprinting to the finishing point, will develop their quickness as well.





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Initially, in the early years, the children are introduced to dynamic flex, the first phase of the **SAQ** continuum. This is where they perform exercises that gradually warm and stretch muscle groups in preparation for physical activity. It combines co-ordinated, rhythmic and graceful motions throughout a range of movements. A variety of skips, jumps and running actions, are the most appropriate. As they progress, gaining experience and confidence in their movements, they proceed to the second and third stages of the **SAQ** continuum. Stage two is 'mechanics,' which will improve the quality of movement by learning 'how' to move. Finally, stage three is 'Innervation', which increases the quickness and speed of movement. This is where the children will learn various foot patterns moving through ladders in different directions, twisting and turning and stopping and starting.

We take for granted that we can move, but the reality is, that along with everything else it is something that we need to learn and practise. With the aid of the **SAQ** programme children from a very young age can make strides in the right direction, in order to benefit from a healthy and active lifestyle.

Article written by Mr Chris Sweet



## 'FUN FOR FIVES AND UNDER' : ACTIVITY OPEN MORNING SATURDAY 18th JUNE 09:30 - 12:00

We warmly welcome you to join us at our Activity Open Morning on Saturday 18th June. Come along and experience for yourself what Kent College can offer your little one and family. We look forward to welcoming you and exploring together the array of enjoyable learning opportunities both indoors and outdoors. Click on 'Fun For Fives and Under - Activity Morning' to register your interest.