

## Patterns of motor proficiency in autism

This project is being carried out at Goldsmiths University in London and is aiming to investigate movement skill in children and adolescents aged 6 to 14 years who have been diagnosed with autism or developmental co-ordination disorder (DCD\*).

We are aiming to recruit children and adolescents diagnosed with autism or DCD aged between 6 and 14 years, who have no other identified diagnoses, and who can understand, are comfortable with, verbal instructions in order to complete tasks.

Children will be asked to complete a number of tasks focusing on their movement skills. The main task will be to complete the 'Movement-ABC', which assesses movement skills in three areas: balance, ball skills and manual dexterity. Children will also be asked to complete further tasks focusing on their movement, which require different levels of planning to complete.

Previous research has indicated that children who have been diagnosed with autism may experience difficulties with movement, yet currently the precise extent and type of these problems has not been fully investigated.

The project will investigate whether children diagnosed with autism experience specific difficulties with movement and the extent to which movement skills in this group are influenced by the level of planning required to complete a task.

All participants will be matched using measures of general cognitive ability and language ability to children of the same age who have not been diagnosed with autism or DCD. This will help the research team to assess if differences in movement skills are apparent across the two groups.

If you feel that you may be interested in taking part, or would like further information, please contact Michelle Pratt on the contact address, e-mail address or telephone number below.

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\*For a child to be diagnosed with DCD, motor/movement difficulties must be experienced that are not in line with a child's general development and intellectual ability, or linked to any known medical condition such as cystic fibrosis (American Psychiatric Association, 1994).