

ACE; Ambitious, Curious, and Ever-respectful

# THE HILL WEST HERALD



SPRING TERM 1 2024

ISSUE 48

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## Message from the Head Teacher

By Dr Beth Clarke



This term, we have been working together to revise and redefine our school vision so that it aligns more strategically with our school values. We have also worked on re-shaping our school aims. Our vision and aims are currently in draft format and we gladly welcome your thoughts and contributions. If you have suggestions then please email these directly to; [b.clarke@hillwest.bham.sch.uk](mailto:b.clarke@hillwest.bham.sch.uk)

## Our School Vision and Values

***At Hill West we are ACE; Ambitious, Curious and Ever-Respectful***

### ***Ambitious***

'Our school' is ambitious for EVERY child. Children make excellent progress socially, emotionally, physically and academically and thrive through loving and attuned relationships.

### ***Curious***

'Our school' encourages curiosity and an innate desire to learn. This curiosity extends beyond the curriculum and helps define the unique contribution our pupils will make in the world.

### ***Ever-Respectful***

'Our school' builds on the strong foundation established by our families so that children interact with kindness and compassion and use their knowledge, understanding and moral sensibilities to make the world a better place.

## Our School Aims

- Providing an inclusive culture to ensure all children experience equity, understanding, belonging and love.
- Imparting the joy of learning and fostering intellectual curiosity so our children succeed socially, emotionally, physically and academically.
- Inspiring confidence, self-efficacy and an intrinsic motivation to work hard and achieve.
- Developing integrity, resolve, self-knowledge, compassion, and respect for others.
- Committed to the pursuit of excellence; ever evolving our practice to meet the needs of the community we serve.
- Working in partnership with parents so 'our school' is highly regarded by all those who attend, visit and evaluate our effectiveness.

***KINDNESS, COMPASSION AND CONNECTION AT THE HEART OF 'OUR SCHOOL'***



## ATLP News

Shared by Dr Beth Clarke

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### John Willmott School is a Good School!

John Willmott's head teacher has described their first-ever Good Ofsted report as a 'pivotal moment' on its journey to becoming Sutton Coldfield's school of choice.

Over the last year the Sutton Coldfield School, which is part of the Arthur Terry Learning Partnership (ATLP), has embarked on a series of improvements designed to reinvent John Willmott, from a new, rewritten curriculum and readopted motto to a redesigned uniform and even a name change later this year – to the Royal Sutton School. And in their inspection in December 2023, Ofsted inspectors revealed the school its first ever 'Good' rating.

Head teacher Nicola Gould said: "I was delighted by this report, and very proud of our children, who really demonstrated excellence throughout and shared the journey they have been on and the pride they have in their school. The parents were overwhelmingly positive in their interactions with Ofsted too. So, I was really proud of our whole school community pulling together to help produce this result, which I think is at a pivotal moment for the school."

***"This is the first time that this school has received a Good rating, since Ofsted began operating. Now we can, as a school community, move together to the next stage quickly."***

The inspectors were impressed by the new curriculum, and how teachers at John Willmott were using it to enthuse students and drive standards up. The report said: "Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum with personal development running through its heart. 'Turning potential into reality' is the motto that staff live by. "Leaders at all levels ensure that curriculum planning is ambitious for all pupils. The school benefits from the work of the trust. Pupils' learning is carefully sequenced. Teachers have a strong understanding of their subject and the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn. Pupils experience an effectively delivered curriculum that helps them to know and remember more."

Mrs Gould said: "The report praises our teachers' subject knowledge, which is important as it enables pupils to make clear links between a range of subjects, allowing them to move on in their learning. That links to the work we have done rewriting the whole curriculum at the school – so teachers have a really comprehensive understanding of what's being taught, the students' journey and the component parts."

The culture of the school was also praised, including the set of innovative 'Moral Virtues' that have helped transform pupil aspirations and instill pride.

The report said: "The school has a set of well-established routines, including a strong focus on making pupils feel welcome when they arrive. Lessons are purposeful and clearly structured. Pupils know what to expect and generally behave well.

"They show positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils are respectful and courteous in discussion. There is a sense of pride among pupils. They can see that the school has improved rapidly in recent years."



## Navigating the Digital Waters: Reflecting on Safer Internet Day 2024

By Ms. Kelly Bailey

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In an era where the internet plays an integral role in our daily lives, ensuring a safer online environment is more crucial than ever. This year, on 7th February, our global community celebrated Safer Internet Day 2024.

This annual event aims to raise awareness about online safety and promote responsible use of digital resources, which remains a high priority in our school since our launch of 1-2-1 devices. Safer Internet Day (SID) is organised by the joint Insafe/INHOPE network of Safer Internet Centres in Europe, with the support of the European Commission 2, each February to promote the safe and positive use of digital technology, especially among children and young people. Celebrated on the second day of the second week of the second month, each year on Safer Internet Day millions of people unite to inspire positive changes online, to raise awareness of online safety issues, and participate in events and activities across the globe.

As always, Safer Internet Day aims to create both a safer and a better internet, where everyone is empowered to use technology responsibly, respectfully, critically and creatively. The campaign seeks to reach out to children and young people, parents and carers, teachers, educators and social workers, as well as industry, decision makers and politicians, to encourage everyone to play their part in creating a better internet. By celebrating the positive power of the internet, the Safer Internet Day slogan of “Together for a Better Internet” encourages everyone to join the movement, to participate, and to make the most of the internet’s potential to bring people together.

At Hill West, we are deeply committed to the well-being of our children, and we have actively participated in Safer Internet Day initiatives over the years. Our engagement in these events has facilitated open discussions on online safety, digital literacy, and the responsible use of technology. Previous years have seen workshops, assemblies and collaborative activities aimed at equipping our children with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the internet safely. During this month, in honour of Safer Internet Day 2024 and to continue our great work, we will be launching a competition, asking our children to create a short video or presentation around key themes.

To further our commitment to ensuring our children receive the right support and advice regarding online safety, we also utilise ProjectEvolve to support our curriculum. ProjectEvolve provides us with up to date interactive modules designed to address the evolving challenges of the digital landscape. Using ProjectEvolve, we ensure that our children are educated on topics such as online privacy, cyberbullying, and digital citizenship, fostering a proactive and informed approach to online safety. Children regularly take part in diagnostic quizzes to inform the direction of the lessons as we know that we need to be both proactive and responsive to the needs of each class individually.

Parents and guardians also play a crucial role in fostering a safer internet environment for our children by being digital role models. Ensuring that you have open communication about online activities, setting reasonable limits on screen time and encouraging responsible online behaviour are essential steps parents you can take to protect your children in the digital realm.

We recognise the valuable role that the Safer Schools England app plays in supporting parents. The Safer Schools England app offers resources, tips, and updates. It empowers you to stay informed and actively engage in your children's online experiences. We highly recommend that you download the app if you haven't already. Safer Internet Day, “Together for a Better Internet”, reminds me of the necessity for us to all work together in our community to echo the same positive messages regarding online safety, for us to continue to make it a safe and welcoming place for all.

Together for a  
better internet



## 100 Days of Learning Futures in Early Years at Hill West

By Mrs. Lisa Pardo

What an exciting time for Hill West!

Reception were thrilled to unbox their brand new iPads. The children delved into a world of digital exploration with the arrival the exciting devices. The air was filled with anticipation as children eagerly unboxed their sleek gadgets, ready to embark on a journey of learning like never before.

We didn't waste any time – the children quickly explored how to turn on the iPads and use the camera facility to take photographs of themselves, their friends and classroom objects of interest. The children embraced the technological marvels with enthusiasm.

As part of our Literacy curriculum, we used our key text of Little Red Riding Hood and the repeated refrains, to inspire some absolutely wonderful work. Using the Chatterpix App seemed the perfect way to promote independence, digital photography and voice recording. For this, the children had to: successfully navigate the Chatterpix App; take a photograph; record their repeated refrain; and play back their final video. The children found the replays very amusing. What a great way to develop oracy!

We used the Freeform App to support fine motor control and drawing faces with features. They practised using a new app with all its many clever features - the witches produced were certainly superb.



The children then used Google Earth to explore Antarctica and its environment. The immersive exploration facilitated by the iPads provided them with a firsthand glimpse of contrasting environments, enhancing their understanding of geographical concepts.

Continuing their digital odyssey, the children delved into the cultural tapestry of China and its New Year festivities. They used the iPads to generate a Google search of key words and discovered fascinating facts about the capital, continent and were amazed how long The Great Wall of China is!

Our iPads are used for sharing videos, stories and key learning information. This is one of the best ways to enable the use of technology to bring stories that are read in class to life. During the Summer term we will be working alongside our Year One colleagues to ensure that the transition to Year One is smooth, including preparing all children for when they receive their own personal iPad - exciting times!

This term we are excited to be working with the Arthur Terry Learning Partnership and their Learning Futures Lead in order to further develop our EYFS Learning Futures curriculum offering. As the journey unfolds, Hill West remains committed to fostering a culture of curiosity, creativity, and collaboration, ensuring that every child is equipped with the tools they need to thrive in an ever-evolving world.



# First 100 days of iPads ... Year 1

By Miss Anjali Parekh

Year 1 were very excited to receive their iPads on roll out day! Once received, Year 1 began by learning how to use the basic functions of the iPad. These included the lock button, swiping up and down and how to enter apps. Furthermore, we practised the classroom expectations of the iPads. Our routine includes iPads face down in the middle of our tables when we have finished using them. In Year 1 the more confident children became iPad monitors who helped others on their tables to navigate their iPads. The children were fantastic at throwing themselves into this new technology and after just a few weeks, all the children could easily navigate through their iPad by seamlessly swiping and locking away.

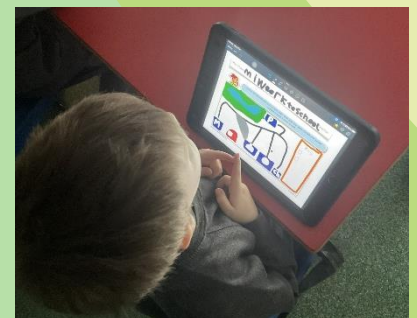
Moving on, the children learnt more difficult steps such as how to turn our Airdrop on and how to navigate Showbie. Showbie has proved an excellent app for children to be able to access their learning more independently, particularly in Maths, where children can represent and write their answers. This is vital in children showing their understanding of Maths concepts. They have also been explaining their Maths reasoning using the voice note feature on Showbie. We are really proud of the children of year 1 who have used their metacognitive skills to learn how to use the Showbie app every day and consequently, using it is now second nature to them.

Once children were accustomed to using Showbie in Maths, Year 1 teachers broadened their use of Showbie by utilising it in other subjects such as Science, History and Geography. With the advances of Showbie, children could really explore History such as taking virtual tours of the Grace Darling Museum.

Recently, Year 1 have been exploring maps. Using a split screen on the iPad, children were able to navigate Google maps and use Showbie to create their own mini map of their walk to school. It is a real pleasure to see children with the tools to be independent explorers and to be able to build upon their embedded knowledge of navigating the iPad and Showbie, to learn even more iPad skills.

The children have enjoyed using the 'Sketch' app on their iPad during Computing lessons to learn how we can be creative and artistic with technology. This involved using their stylus to utilise different types of pens, rulers and rubbers on the Sketch app. The children blew us away with the art they produced using these tools!

We are so proud of Year 1 children who have taken on the challenge of integrating iPads into their learning which has resulted in them now using them to advance their learning and further grow their independence. We are looking forward to learning about other apps we can use on the iPads!





## First 100 days of iPads ... Year 2

By Miss Kerry Lynch and Mrs. Farzana Walele



This year, the introduction of iPads has been a revolutionary for Year 2 pupils and learning has been significantly more engaging for the children. We consider ourselves extremely fortunate to have such advanced equipment available in our school.

The children have swiftly adapted to using iPads, demonstrating impeccable behaviour both in their learning approach and in utilising the devices themselves. During Mathematics lessons particularly, having the questions readily accessible on the iPads has enabled immediate interaction with investigations and learning materials. The integration of online digital tools has not only enhanced the children's grasp of basic calculations but has also fostered a deeper understanding of problem-solving and reasoning skills.



The convenience of having learning materials directly in front of them has greatly appealed to the children, offering clarity and facilitating quick access to additional support from teachers with just a simple flick and swipe. This seamless integration has effectively kept the children focused and has accelerated their learning progress.

Access to a wealth of resources has made learning in Year 2 immensely enjoyable. Pupils have actively participated in scientific research and experiments, equipped with the necessary information and tools to record their findings effectively.



The recent Big Bird Watching event exemplified the benefits of digital resources, with shared links and apps enabling students to identify various bird species and access related facts. This not only enriched their in-school experience but also encouraged participation from families at home, fostering a sense of community through shared videos, pictures, and even, competition entries.



The enthusiasm of students from the Kingfishers and Owls classes in sharing their home learning and extracurricular activities has been remarkable. Through connections to the main class board, pupils have been able to showcase their achievements, making the learning environment more inclusive and supportive of diverse needs.

The flexibility in homework completion methods has ensured that all students can actively participate, catering to their individual learning styles and abilities. As a result, learning has flourished in Year 2, and we are excited to witness further progress as we continue on this journey of innovation and growth.



## First 100 days of iPads ... Year 3

By Mrs. Jas Sagoo

As we step into the latter half of the academic year, let's explore the dynamic journey of incorporating iPads into our Year 3 classrooms. The impact of these technological additions has been truly remarkable, significantly enriching our learning environment and opening new avenues for exploration and growth.

In our Maths lessons, iPads have become formidable tools for interactive learning. Students actively engage with various websites, transforming abstract concepts like fractions into tangible, hands-on experiences. The dynamic nature of these apps not only deepens mathematical understanding but also sparks curiosity, making the subject more engaging and accessible.

Giving children the opportunity to further practice their times tables during the school day on their iPads has been useful in improving children's performance in Times Table Rockstars. The platform's engaging and interactive nature seamlessly turns the practice of times tables into an enjoyable and rewarding experience. Individualised feedback empowers students to track their progress, fostering a continuous sense of accomplishment and motivation in their mathematical journey.

The use of iPads has elevated writing skills in English as children benefit from drafting and spelling checks through various apps. They have played a crucial role in capturing and preserving the imaginative expressions of our young poets. Group performances in poetry have been thoughtfully recorded, allowing for review and facilitating the refinement of their artistic accomplishments. This technological integration not only makes poetry more accessible but also instils confidence and a profound sense of accomplishment among our budding wordsmiths.

Turning our attention to Computing, Year 3 students have embarked on coding adventures using the app Scratch. iPads serve as dynamic canvases for their coding endeavours, providing an innovative platform to create, experiment, and bring digital creations to life. This hands-on experience goes beyond acquiring coding skills; it's about cultivating problem-solving abilities and unleashing the inherent creative potential within each child.

Venturing into the fascinating world of Science, iPads have become indispensable tools for experimentation. The slow-motion feature has been astutely harnessed to capture thrilling moments during various scientific experiments. This not only offers students a closer look at the wonders of the world around them but also fosters a deep-seated curiosity that extends beyond the confines of traditional learning.

In conclusion, the first 100 days of iPads in significantly enhancing academic achievement continue to navigate this eagerly anticipate growth, embracing possibilities that to our students' experiences.

Year 3 have been transformative, engagement, creativity, and across various subjects. As we technological journey, we further exploration and the endless technology brings educational





## First 100 days of iPads ... Year 4

By Miss Sarah Mooney

In year 4 the introduction of learning futures has been an exciting opportunity to develop our learning. As teachers, we have thoroughly enjoyed learning alongside the children on how to navigate through this new resource, and we can all say with confidence the iPads have definitely changed our perspective on how lessons can be taught. From screen mirroring, recording podcasts, using Showbie to researching information, the children have embraced learning futures. Their engagement with this change has been fantastic. Well-done Year 4!

### Unwrapping Day

The 21st September 2023 was a very exciting day for our children when the iPad's arrived at Hill West. We can safely say we have come a long way from that first day when Miss Mooney and Ms. Whelan could not work out how the cases went onto the backs of the iPads! The children, despite being excited, were incredibly patient and helpful when it came to unboxing and setting up their new devices. As a class we were able to explore the different functions on the iPads and immediately began to log into our favourite apps. Year 4's favourite was certainly TT Rockstars!

The app feature Showbie on all the children's iPads is a staple app which we have come to use daily. The children are able to access our planning and lessons using the device and interact with online learning resources and activities. Our English lessons have been transformed using Showbie as we can transfer our class texts onto the iPad and the children can read along, highlight and add notes as we go. This work gets automatically sent to teachers and we can see exactly how the children are progressing and developing. Maths and our Maths On Track lessons have also been upgraded using Showbie. We can send the children online manipulatives as well as having the physical resources out on tables to scaffold the children with their calculations.

### Podcasts

One of the highlights of using the iPads so far this year has been the excitement of the children to create their own podcasts using them. The children were able to plan, resource and practice their own podcast of any topic in small groups. They could then record and perform these using their devices. Some children were able to edit their performances to add a jingle to their introductions. Watching pupils explore and use the different functions on the iPads was mesmerising.

Moving forward with Learning Futures, we are exploring as many different features the iPads have to offer. A collective goal for Year 4 as we move forwards is to work on transforming our wider curriculum lessons. For example, adding augmented reality features to our History lessons so the children can see and explore inside a WW2 Anderson shelter or a Roman Villa. In Geography, the children can see the location of a river or find depictions of the animals on the island of Madagascar.



## First 100 days of iPads ... Year 5

By Mr. Joel Clarke

Year 5 have thoroughly enjoyed the launch of iPads across the school and have used the devices on a regular basis to maximise and enhance their learning. The children have enjoyed using these devices to carry out research on various aspects of the curriculum.

An example of this is our Geography learning, where we have used our iPads to research various parts of the United Kingdom and complete our own activities. We have created our own fact files about a British city of our choice, complete data activities about the British climate and even used our findings to complete retrieval questions on a variety of Britain-based topics. Our success regarding the completion of activities has also been enhanced by our use of Showbie to access resources. It has been used to upload and save links and documents. This has allowed us to not only return to pages and save learning time, but it has also allowed us to share a great variety of materials, allowing everyone to benefit from extra resources.

Showbie has also been used very effectively and successfully during our core subjects. Our 'CanDo' Maths activities have been uploaded on a consistent basis and the children have been able to make their own annotations. This has been very important as it has enabled us to enhance our understanding of numerous mathematical concepts and help us complete various activities. The children have also benefitted from having access to key definitions and the ability to refer back to different modules.

English has also benefitted hugely from Showbie being a regular part of our learning. The children have access to key vocabulary and writing concepts that are essential to improve the writing of the cohort. From fronted adverbials to parenthesis, the children have been able to access key learning and writing techniques, which has augmented their capabilities without the added difficulty of storing paper resources. We have also made the most of the voice-recognition facility to assist us with spelling and grammar. This has allowed all children to access the writing curriculum and enjoy success, regardless of ability.



The children have benefitted from Showbie and iPads across all areas of the curriculum, including home learning, where they have been able to access their learning on the iPads and even complete and upload their completed activities. This is beneficial as it has added more variety to outcomes and reduced the pressure on homework books. Having this has enabled us to have a more versatile approach to home learning and make it more accessible to many children and their families.

We are very much looking forward to enjoying the benefits of the iPads in the second half of the year.





## First 100 days of iPads ... Year 6

By Mrs. Alison Downes

Anticipation filled the air in Year 6, as pupils eagerly awaited a monumental moment in their educational journey: the distribution of their very own iPads. Before the exciting moment when we would go to the KS1 hall and collect them, we reflected on the historic moment we were involved in with technology reaching such heights that we were all about to receive our own device.

Unboxing was great fun and the children were eager to try out some of the features of the device. We started with our cameras and learned how to take photos. Then we used Mark Up to alter and add details to them. We had great fun turning ourselves in to superheroes!

Using Airdrop for the first time, everyone received their pledges, detailing the responsibilities of using the device sensibly and safely in class. Each pupil then signed their pledge and delivered it back to their teacher. Within days, the iPads had become a vital part of learning, allowing everyone access to information easily and replacing the need for paper photocopies. There are so many benefits to having iPads in lessons: information is at the children's fingertips; the children can control the pace of their own learning; and recording results and learning is really easy.

In DT, we recorded a video of Mrs Lampitt completing a tricky stitch for our Christmas tree decorations. Unlike other years, when countless demonstrations had to be provided, everyone had access to the video and could follow it at their own pace – this meant that success with the stitching was much quicker this year. If only the iPads could thread needles too...

In PE, Year 6 were able to access the fitness program (which had been uploaded onto Showbie) and a timer. They could then complete each exercise and record their results. These can be accessed easily each time we do the activity and therefore the children can chart their progress and fitness levels over time. In Gymnastics, they could access the routine easily and at their own pace. They then recorded themselves completing the routine and individual moves to assess their performance and coach themselves to better success.

In French, it has been exciting to use the iPads to search for additional vocabulary, hear it spoken and use it in conversations. Their conversations can be recorded and played to the teacher. If participants aren't feeling confident enough to perform live in class, they can play back the recorded version, which is not so daunting. We have used the iPad in countless situations in class and admired their usefulness. Although we always still use our books and write much down, it is handy for our learning to not always have to write out activities and be able to access questions quickly. Being able to upload homework easily is another great benefit for everyone.

Credit is due to the pupils whose responsible use of their devices underscores their adaptability and maturity. Their seamless transition into incorporating iPads into classroom activities is a testament to their readiness to navigate the digital age with confidence and competence. As Hill West continues to embrace innovation and adaptability, the journey forward promises to be one characterised by limitless possibilities, where technology serves as a catalyst for transformative learning experiences.



# Physical Education at Hill West; An Update

By Miss Sophie Beardmore

We have a new scheme of work for our Physical Education curriculum and EYFS Physical Development area.

Our PE lessons are planned using the Get Set 4 PE platform, which aligns with our core values, our whole child approach to PE and the objectives laid out in the National Curriculum. Get Set 4 PE is planned so that progression is built into the scheme which ensures our children are increasingly challenged as they move up through the school.

The curriculum planning in PE is carried out in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short term). The long-term plan maps out the PE activities covered in each term during the key stage. The PE subject leader works this out in conjunction with teaching colleagues and pupils in each year group. Together we create a broad and balanced curriculum that is exciting for our children to learn through. Our medium-term plans give details of each unit for every half term. These schemes of learning provide an overview of the unit, links to other areas of the National Curriculum and assessment criteria for that unit. The short-term lesson plans provide opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in each activity area.

In the EYFS, we encourage the physical development of our children in the nursery and reception class as an integral part of their work. As these classes are part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the physical development of the children to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five years of age. We encourage the children to develop confidence and control of the way they move and the way they handle tools and equipment. We give all children the opportunity to undertake activities that offer appropriate physical challenge, both indoors and outdoors, using a wide range of resources to support specific skills.



**Progression Journey: Body Management** through yoga and gymnastics

These units link to the following strands of the NC:  
 KS1: master basic movements as well as developing balance, agility and co-ordination.  
 KS2: develop flexibility, strength, technique, control and balance.

EYFS	1	2	3	4	5	6
Create shapes showing a basic level of stillness using different parts of their bodies.	Perform balances making their body tense, stretched and curled.	Perform balances on different body parts with some control and balance.	Complete balances with increasing stability, control and technique.	Use body tension to perform balances both individually and with a partner.	Show increasing control and balance when moving from one balance to another.	Combine and perform more complex balances with control, technique and fluency.
Begin to take weight on different body parts.	Take body weight on hands for short periods of time.	Take body weight on different body parts, with and without apparatus.	Demonstrate some strength and control when taking weight on different body parts for longer periods of time.	Demonstrate increasing strength, control and technique when taking own and others weight.	Use strength to improve the quality of an action and the range of actions available.	Demonstrate more complex actions with a good level of strength and technique.
Show shapes and actions that stretch their bodies.	Demonstrate poses and movements that challenge their flexibility.	Show increased awareness of extension and flexibility in actions.	Demonstrate increased flexibility and extension in their actions.	Demonstrate increased flexibility and extension in more challenging actions.	Use flexibility to improve the quality of the actions they perform as well as the actions they choose to link them.	Confidently transition from one action to another showing appropriate control and extension for the complexity of the action.
Copy and link simple actions together.	Remember, repeat and link simple actions together.	Copy, remember, repeat and plan linking simple actions with some control and technique.	Choose actions that flow well into one another both on and off apparatus.	Plan and perform sequences showing control and technique with and without a partner.	Create and perform more complex sequences of actions with a good level of quality, control and technique with and without a partner.	Plan and perform with precision, control and fluency, a sequence of actions including a wide range of skills.