

OBSTACLE EXPLORERS



PGB+

BRITISH
OBSTACLE SPORTS

OBSTACLE EXPLORERS

What is Obstacle Explorers?

Obstacle Explorers is a dynamic and engaging physical activity designed to develop physical literacy, problem-solving skills, and teamwork. It involves navigating a series of physical challenges and movement tasks that require skill, suppleness, strength, stamina and psychological elements. The activities can be adapted for environment (inside or outside), class size and skill level, ensuring all young people can participate and succeed.

Why Obstacle Explorers?

Obstacle Explorers is an inclusive activity that supports the holistic development of young people, and promotes the values of sportsmanship, excellence, courage and community. The same values that underpin British Obstacle Sports, the national governing body for obstacle course racing and ninja sport in the UK. It encourages development of:



Physical health

Improving fundamental movement skills



Mental Health

Building confidence, resilience, and determination



Social skills

Enhancing collaboration and communication with peers



Engagement

Providing a fun, creative approach to physical activity

Young people's physical health... an overview.

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Key Stage 2 activity figures:

Physical health is a crucial aspect of a child's overall wellbeing, yet many young people in the UK fall short of recommended activity levels. Understanding current statistics can help educators identify the importance of physical activity within a school setting.

- ★ **Boys:** approximately 50% meet the recommended activity levels*
- ★ **Girls:** approximately 43% meet the recommended activity levels*
- ★ **Time outdoors:** a 2023 study found that primary school children spend an average of seven minutes per pupil per week on outdoor curriculum-linked lessons, a decrease from thirty minutes in 2014**
- ★ **Mental health:** 1 in 6 children aged 5-16 experiences mental health challenges. Physical activity is proven to reduce stress and improve overall wellbeing***

Obstacle Explorers in the national curriculum for Physical Education

Obstacle Explorers aligns with the national curriculum's aims to ensure that all young people:

- ★ Develop competence in a broad range of physical activities
- ★ Are physically active for sustained periods of time
- ★ Engage in competitive and cooperative activities
- ★ Lead healthy, active lives.

It directly supports the Outdoor and Adventurous Activities (OAA) strand by encouraging teamwork, problem-solving, and risk management through physical challenges whilst supporting young people to develop an appreciation and enjoyment of the outdoors. So, young people start to recognise the outside areas as a fun and enriching place to play.

The role of youth voice in engaging young people

Empowering young people to have a voice in their physical education experiences can significantly increase participation and enjoyment. Obstacle Explorers embraces this by:

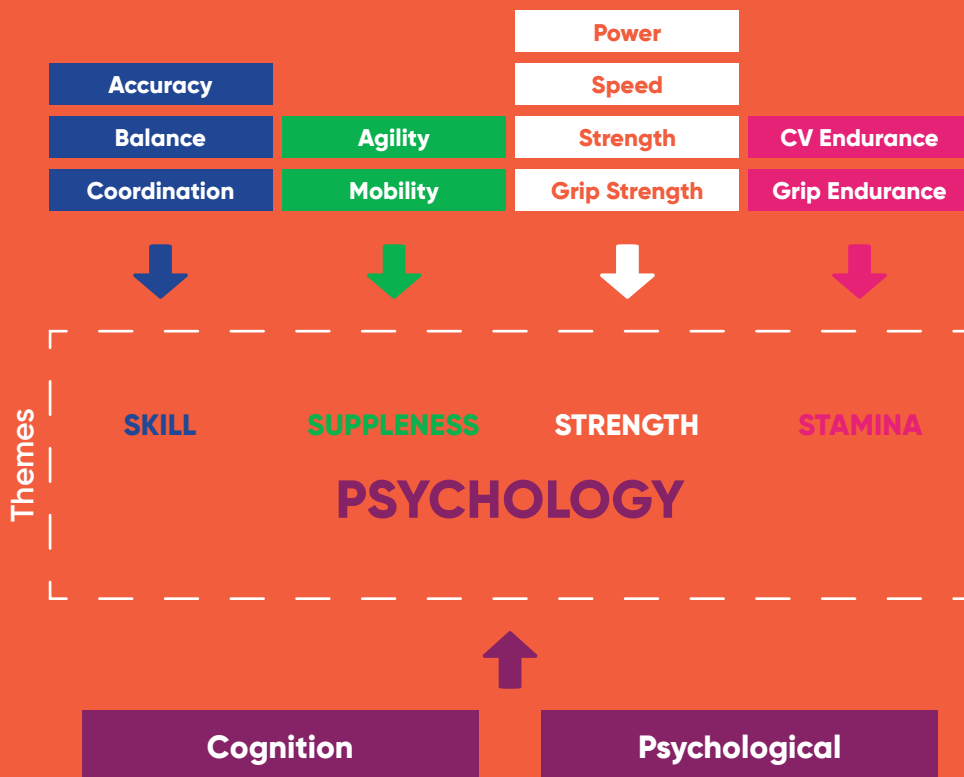
- ★ Allowing students to choose their groupings, challenges and share obstacle ideas
- ★ Encouraging collaboration in designing courses
- ★ Providing leadership opportunities through peer coaching and group decision-making.

Skills and themes for Obstacle Explorers

British Obstacle Sports (BOS) and Pentathlon GB (PGB) have determined thirteen key skills that are essential for Obstacle Course Racing. With Obstacle’s inclusion in the Los Angeles Olympics 2028, now is a prime opportunity to engage a nation in the unique opportunity that Obstacle sport presents, providing opportunities for individuals to push their limits, build confidence, and achieve extraordinary things

This resource has been developed around these thirteen key skills, which have been grouped into five themes, skill, suppleness, strength, stamina and psychology, essential for a well-rounded physical education experience in Obstacle Explorers. It has been created to provide you with the flexibility for use in curriculum, or extra-curricular time spread over a half, or full-term, delivered outside, or inside with youth voice at its heart.

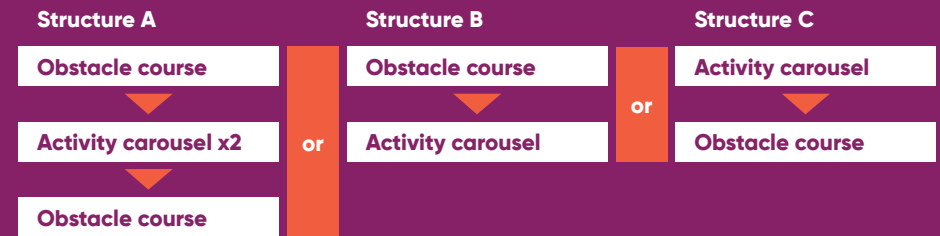
Activities have been created based on one of the four themes, skill, suppleness, strength and stamina – with all activities underpinned by psychology.



How to use Obstacle Explorers in curriculum time

Set up your lesson: Choose from one of the following lesson structures:

- Choose A, if you’ll deliver Obstacle Explorers in a half term, and want to cover all themes
- Choose B, or C if you’ll deliver Obstacle Explorers over a full term and can spend more than one lesson on the same theme.



Activity carousel: Where learners experience a variety of activities within one session and move around from one activity to another swiftly and easily. The activities are designed to support learners to develop skills required to improve their performance on an obstacle course.

Obstacle Explorers can be delivered across a full or half of term see below:

1/2 term plan (6 weeks)		Full term plan (10 weeks+)	
Week 1	Skill	Week 1 - 8	Develop confidence and competence in the four themes to develop skills required to compete
Week 2	Suppleness		
Week 3	Strength		
Week 4	Stamina		
Week 5	Obstacle course design	Week 9	Obstacle course design
Week 6	The Finisher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sprint • Furthest fastest • Personal best 	Week 10	The Finisher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sprint • Furthest fastest • Personal best

Week 5: Obstacle course design: Challenge each team to get creative. Using the Obstacle Wall Planner invite each team to create their own section of an obstacle course. Give time to create, test and refine before they choose their final design. Ensure teams consider how their section leads into another. If time allows, get each team to test other teams’ obstacles.

Week 6: The Finisher: This is the culmination of weeks of activity. Allow your young people to decide whose section of the course is at the beginning in the middle or at the end. Now it’s time to race. Who will be the fastest individual, team or get the furthest fastest?

- Pick a lesson theme to focus on: Skill, Suppleness, Strength or Stamina
 - Gather the obstacle course resource cards and choose one to set up – or ask your young people to create their own. This is used for whole class warm up, and finisher lesson activity.
 - Gather the activity cards relevant to your chosen theme and choose two – the aim of these is to develop the specific skills required to improve obstacle course performance. These activities are the bridge between the warmup and the finisher. Give enough time for all young people to experience both activities in a carousel, and to have a go at bettering their previous attempt.
 - Collect equipment required for all activities chosen, encourage your young people to set up the activities and be ready to start.
- Define your learning outcomes: make them appropriate for your young people, lesson theme and environment.

SKILL	SUPPLENESS	STRENGTH	STAMINA
Learning outcome:			
Young people will improve accuracy, balance, and coordination by hitting a target with control, staying steady, and moving smoothly, while staying focused and solving problems.	Young people will enhance their agility and mobility by improving their ability to change direction quickly and move joints freely while staying focused and solving problems effectively.	Young people will build strength by developing power, speed, and the ability to lift and hold objects effectively, while staying focused and solving problems during physical challenges.	Young people will enhance their stamina by improving cardiovascular endurance and grip endurance, enabling them to stay active and maintain effort over time, while demonstrating focus and problem-solving skills during physical activities.
Young people will develop:			
<p>Accuracy: The ability to use your limbs to hit a target with control and precision.</p> <p>Balance: The ability to stay steady and keep control of your body position.</p> <p>Coordination: The ability to use different body parts together smoothly and effectively.</p>	<p>Agility: The ability to move quickly and change direction without losing balance.</p> <p>Mobility: The ability of joints to move freely and easily.</p>	<p>Power: The ability to use strength quickly, like in jumping or sprinting.</p> <p>Speed: The ability to move all or part of the body as fast as possible.</p> <p>Strength: The ability of muscles to push, pull, or lift against resistance.</p> <p>Grip strength: The ability to squeeze or hold objects using the hand and forearm muscles.</p>	<p>Aerobic fitness: The ability to keep moving and stay active for a long time without tiring.</p> <p>Grip endurance: The ability to keep holding or gripping (on to) something for an extended time.</p>

Underpinned by:

- Cognition:** The ability to think, solve problems, and make decisions.
- Psychology:** The ability to stay focused and determined when facing challenges.

Further ways to engage your young people:

- Invite your students to choose who they want to work with. Aim for four equally sized groups, that stay consistent week to week
- Ask each group to wear something to show their identity, i.e. a coloured bib, a headband, a coloured sticker etc
- Invite the group to contribute ideas for obstacles/challenges to include in the obstacle course section
- Invite your students to choose the carousel activities they want to try each lesson, (within the theme), and ask them to set them up, have a go and dismantle once finished
- Encourage your students to set personal goals as individuals, and/or in their groups.

Using Obstacle Explorers for extra-curricular activities

Obstacle Explorers can be used for:



Breakfast/Lunchtime clubs:
Quick, engaging activities to boost physical activity. Simply use the activity cards, or obstacle cards for inspiration.



After-school events:
Structured obstacle courses that build physical competence. Either run these sessions like the proposed lesson structure outlined above or invite your students to get creative with the design of their own obstacle course.



School events:
Whole-school obstacle events promoting teamwork and healthy competition. Either run these sessions like the proposed lesson structure outlined above or invite your students to get creative with the design of their own obstacle course.

By embedding Obstacle Explorers in both curriculum and extra-curricular time, schools can provide an inclusive, engaging experience that supports physical and personal development for all young people.

Where to participate next?

If your young people have enjoyed Obstacle Explorers, signpost them to British Obstacle Sports and Pentathlon GB where they can discover more ways to get involved in the sport.

References:

- Sport England*** <https://www.sportengland.org/news-and-inspiration/childrens-activity-levels-hold-firm-significant-challenges-remain>
- NatureScot Research Report**** <https://www.nature.scot/doc/naturescot-research-report-1313-teaching-learning-and-play-outdoors-survey-provision-scotland-2022#Main+findings>
- National Health Service***** https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2023-wave-4-follow-up?utm_source=chatgpt.com