**Trafford Children’s Therapy Service**

**PRIMARY SCHOOL - GETTING READY TO CATCH AND THROW**

**Ball skills are a combination of many different elements such as:**

* **Timing –** to predict where and when the ball will land
* **Tracking with the eyes** as the ball moves through the air
* Ability to **use hands together** smoothly
* Ability to **judge distance, speed and direction**
* Making **postural adjustments** to be in the right place at the right time
* Ability to **grasp and release** at the right moment

Ball skills require a lot of practice and repetition. Here are some suggestions to develop these skills.

**CATCHING A BALL**

* Prepare the hands for catching by rubbing the hands together. This gives feedback to the catching area of the hands.
* Start by throwing larger to smaller balls as the child’s skills develop.
* Start by standing closer in distance to each other and increase the distance between them as the child’s skills develop.
* Start by throwing straight to the child and as skills develop throw slightly to one side. Start by using objects that are easier to catch for example a bean bag, koosh ball or balloon.

**THROWING A BALL**

To encourage the child to throw and develop their skill in directing the ball, try the following:

* Use balls of varying sizes and weights.
* Start with a target close to the child and gradually increase the distance.
* Start with games involving rolling a large ball towards targets (for example skittles / target games).

(IF THE STRATEGIES IN THIS SECTION ARE TOO DIFFICULT FOR YOUR CHILD PLEASE USE THE EARLY YEARS ADVICE SHEET ON GETTING READY TO THROW, CATCH AND KICK A BALL)