



**Project Title:** *Early Years Educators assessments of pre-school children's motor skills and associated learning at the beginning and end of the pre-school year*

**Supervisors:** Veronica McTaggart, Simon Stephens

**Keywords:** Fine motor skills; gross motor skills; pre-school children; Early Years Educators; social and emotional behaviour.

**Project Summary:**

There is a gap in existing published research regarding the development and impact of motor skills for the pre-school aged child, and in relation to how these skills develop in different pre-school environments. The overall aim of this study is to explore this gap, by capturing Early Years Educators perspectives of pre-school children's motor skills development and its impact on other areas of learning within different pre-school environments. This study will provide valuable information about pre-school children's motor development and associated learning in the pre-school year.

**Research questions:**

**RQ1** What are Early Years Educators perspectives of Pre-school children's motor skills upon entering pre-school, and again after term three of the pre-school year?

**RQ2** Are there any significant differences between pre-school children's motor skills within pre-schools that offer outdoor education in addition to indoor education?

**RQ3** Do motor skills have an impact on children's social and emotional behaviour?

**RQ4** Does a relationship exist between motor skills and pre-school children's achievements?

The successful candidate will be required to initially undertake a literature review and thereafter design an appropriate methodological approach to answer the four key research questions. The student will collect data over two-time intervals, within Early Years Settings in Co. Donegal. Upon final data collection, the student will be required to score, and analyse the data in order to interpret their research findings. Research findings will then be disseminated at an LYIT seminar and in appropriate academic publications.

**Candidate Qualifications/Requirements:**

Candidates must be qualified to undertake a Master Degree with a minimum 2:1 Honours Bachelor Degree in Early Childhood Care, Health and Education or a related discipline.

Applicants will be recruited via interview.

Upon commencing the Masters, the successful candidate will be required to undertake taught modules on research practice and integrity training within LYIT.

The successful candidate will undergo Garda Vetting.