

Term 4 – Monday 1st August to Sunday 9th October 2022.

## Overview of weeks 5 to 8

Each week our gymnasts will visit two different pieces of equipment either in the blue gym or red gym (the colour refers to the colour of the carpet) using rotations allows our gymnasts to experience all the apparatus within our four-week timetable.

### **Blue gym**

**Beam** – Over the past four weeks we have been working on different jumps and leaps on the beam, our gymnasts are all very confident at performing these jumps and leaps on the floor but as your gymnast will tell you it is very different when standing on top of the high beams. Our gymnasts have been working hard on improving the height of their jumps and building confidence by jumping over beam bags placed on the beam. We like to give them the challenge of making it to the end of the beam without knocking any of the bean bags off! For some of our more confident beam workers we have moved on to joining more than one jump or leap together for more of a challenge.

**Floor** – on the blue floor (this is our sprung floor) our gymnasts have been working on their Handstands. We have found that a lot of our gymnasts can kick up to a handstand but very few can hold the handstand without crashing over the top, this is usually due to a lack of strength, mainly core strength which we aimed our side stations at. The gymnasts don't particularly enjoy the strength stations so we made them more fun by holding a plank shape on a wobble cushion and for holding a front support shape (plank with hands not elbows) and throwing bean bags to a hoop, which our gymnasts really seemed to enjoy. On each apparatus we normally have a coach supported station and on here was a full handstand, the focus here for our coaches was to remind the children to grow as tall as they could in their handstands to create a straight body and to try and remove the banana shapes we often see in handstands.

**Air floor and trampette** – This is the apparatus you may have seen as you look through the door! There is a small trampette set up on one side and an air floor on the other. Here we have been working on our cartwheels and for those who can some round off work. One of our side stations has been a real hit with our gymnasts, for their leg strength we have been sitting on a slider and pushing off the wall with their feet and seeing how far they can slide which they have loved. Progress has been made with our gymnasts round off's with many now landing with their feet together and adding the rebound jump at the end which is pleasing for the coaching team to see.

**Strength and flexibility** – The gymnasts always moan when we tell them they have this station because it can be hard work and some find it boring, so to make it more fun all the work was based around our rainbow air track. Four of the stations were strength work involving shuttle runs, sit ups, press ups and jumping on and off the track and the flexibility stations involved bridge hold, shoulder stretch, pike fold and box splits on a line. For once the gymnasts seemed to enjoy the work and tried really hard on the stations, they loved the jumping station.

## **Red gym**

**Floor** – This is our non sprung floor and we have been working on backward rolls, many of our gymnasts find these tricky and struggle with pushing off both hands resulting in rolling sideways. Some of the side stations worked on our gymnasts arm strength to help with this problem and for others we used wedges of different sizes to help speed up the rolls. For those who could already backward roll we challenged them to roll with straight arms which is much harder. It has been lovely to see the smiles on the faces of those who thought they couldn't roll but by the end of the lesson most can now roll down at least the wedges in a straight line if not on the floor.

**Bars** – For the last four weeks we have looked at the straddle undershoot skill which is a dismount off the bar. This has been a brand new skill to most if not all our gymnasts and they all have loved the challenge. This skill involves standing on the bar with their legs wide and swinging under the bar with feet still on the bar and then letting go to stand up. To make this less scary on two of our stations we had the gymnasts climb on the bar and floor bar and fall backwards to sit down on mats which they have found very fun and all our different age gymnasts have been able to achieve. On our coach supported station we have helped the gymnasts climb on the bar to swing underneath which has been a real hit.

**Vault** – The focus here was the squat on and squat through vault. Lots of hand apparatus was used for the side stations which in my opinion made the gymnasts work harder as it was clearer what they had to do and they could remember the tasks set. We used bean bags in our shuttle runs and high tuck jumps in hula hoops to help the gymnasts with their leg strength. On the vaulting table some of our gymnasts managed to squat onto the vault while others managed to climb on but they all enjoyed jumping off at the end. For some of the gymnasts using the springboard to get onto the vault correctly can be a challenge, so to help with this I like to give the gymnasts a carpet square on top of the springboard to remind them where they need to jump which is improving with each session we spend on the vault

**Tumble** – This apparatus combines our fast track (long trampoline) and air track (long bouncy castle) together and here we have been looking at handstand flat backs and for those who can already, some handspring work. Our side stations concentrated on the shape of the handstand and making sure we see a straight shape and not an arch shape (we like to call a banana shape) in their backs. No matter what is planned on here our gymnasts always look forward to the work set as they love to jump on the tracks. We have worked on stepping into a handstand shape staying straight and falling onto their backs onto the cloud mat which they have loved and for those who can, changing this to a handspring onto the cloud.

For the last two weeks of every term we have our ‘fun weeks’ sessions which are a little less structured with the work planned still including lots of gymnastics but also more fun and games!

Thank you for reading.

Our next sessions report will be appearing after the first four weeks of term 5 on monday 7th of November