

As they progress

Free Spots

Let's 'Play to Learn'

- Children set up several spots/markers in a space
- One child (the spotter) moves around the play space, keeping out of everyone else's 'bubble' whilst the others (the spot keepers) move on a spot or around a spot or away from a spot and back to it, either with or without a piece of equipment. Refer to other Spot Activity Cards. Encourage all children to move in a variety of ways
- On a signal from one of the spot keepers, all the children stop. The spot keepers move quickly to a spot but the spotter must wait. When all the spot keepers are on a spot, move to the free spot
- On another command they move off that spot and move around the space until they hear the command to stop again



Key words

- control, coordination, balance
- look, search
- free, space, bubble, busy spot, spatial awareness
- run, walk, crawl, crawling soldiers, foxes, jump and land, hopping, jumping over, giant steps, tiny steps
- forwards, backwards, sideways, slowly, quickly, on, over, around, away from, towards
- down low, medium, up high

Opportunities to:

- start and stop on command
- begin to develop spatial awareness

Resources

- Throw-down markers, bean bags, a variety of small equipment
- A range of equipment to make signals/sounds

Questions

- What are you doing when you stop?
- What are you looking at when you are moving around the space?
- How have you moved around the space?
- How do you stop yourself from bumping into other children?
- Why is it important not to bump into anyone?

Safety & organisation

Ensure:

- the surface is clean and free from obstructions
- markers are non-slip and well spaced out away from walls/equipment
- children work in small groups, with each group in their own 'garden'
- children avoid one another by keeping out of another child's 'bubble'
- children agree signals and who will make the signals
- children swap over frequently to ensure all children have a go at being the spotter

Can you see the child?

- Starting and stopping on command
- Beginning to develop spatial awareness

sometimes

most of the time

- Partner the child to help them find the free spot
- Reduce the number of children playing at any one time
- Practise starting and stopping on command
- Encourage the child to walk so that they can negotiate objects and other children safely
- Ensure the spots are well spaced out

- Move as quickly as they can to the free spot
- Change the commands so they react to different signals/commands
- Put other obstacles into the space to negotiate

Rich opportunities

- PSD, WB&CD: Social development – sharing space and equipment
- Developing thinking across the curriculum: Plan – choose from given options what to do and how to do it; Reflect – review process and method