



## PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2024

Last year we tried out a number of specific games with the cohort and could see the impact on the children attending' development. This academic year, from September until half term, we have spent time getting to know the children and embedding our daily routines, and now since the half term holiday, we have been introducing a selection of small group games to support the children's learning and development.

We introduce these games in small groups first, to ensure that all children understand the concept and purpose of the game. We then use these games during the general session alongside introducing new games within the small groups again. It would be great if you could ask your child about these games to see if they can remember them and perhaps play some at home!

Here is an outline of those games: -

### **A listening moment (Tuning into sounds)**

*This very simple game develops children's listening skills and an awareness of the different sounds that we hear in the environment. We usually have a "listening moment" on route to the Hive before a small group time.*

We stop and consider the following questions: -

1. How do we listen? (Be quiet; be still, eyes looking, ears open)
2. Why is it important to listen?
3. What sounds can we hear?
4. Where are the sounds coming from?
5. Can you make the same or similar sound?

A listening moment can happen anywhere and can become a listening walk, to hear a wider variety of sounds in the environment.

## The sound box game (Listening and remembering sounds)

*This game, like the “listening moment”, further supports listening skills, and children’s development of vocabulary, identification and recollections of the differences between sounds. All of which are necessary skills needed to support children’s future learning of phonics in school.*

We begin by showing the children a small selection of everyday items, i.e., keys, cello tape, a sheet of paper, a squeaky toy.... Familiar items that all make a different sound. After naming each item and listening to the sound it makes the adult place the items into a box with the open end away from the children. The adult handles an item in the box, to make the sound of it.

1. Can the children recall which item is making the sound?
2. Can they make the sound?
3. How does it sound different to another item in the box?

Once the children understand the concept of the game, they can play it within the general session with or without an adult.

## Describing game (Developing vocabulary)

*This game gives an opportunity for children to develop descriptive language. This supports children’s comprehension of spoken and written language; increases vocabulary; develops creativity in play and storytelling; critical thinking; problem solving and giving clear instructions.*

We start by setting up familiar small world toys like a farm and animals. The adult describes what one of the animals looks like...

1. Can you guess which animal I am describing?
2. What noise does it make?
3. Can you make the same noise?

When children are familiar with the game and vocabulary, each child has a turn at describing a different animal. The game can be extended by providing a selection of random items to introduce additional vocabulary.

## Roll the ball game.

*This game supports confidence; taking turns; the ability to ask questions and respond to questions appropriately. It also helps the children learn the names of others!*

This very simply begins with the children forming a circle and sitting down by singing our 'make a circle song', which goes like this, to the tune of "Frère Jacques"-

**"Make a circle, make a circle,  
big and round, big and round,  
no-one in the middle no-one in the middle,  
now sit down, now sit down."**

The adult begins by saying a child's name and rolling the ball to them, then asking a question.

1. What is your favourite colour/song/book/food...?
2. What don't you like?

After answering the question, the child says the name of a different child, rolling the ball to them and asking a question.

## **Barney Bear**

*Another simple circle game in a small or large group that supports confidence, taking turns, making friendships and using a repetitive song.*

Children form a circle, sitting down, with one child standing in the middle of the circle. As the child walks around the inner circle, we sing:

**"Barney bear is walking, walking, walking; Barney bear is walking, walking to the park..."**

The child then chooses another child to join them in the circle, holding hands and dancing as we sing:

**Barney bear has found a friend, Barney bear has found a friend, Barney bear has found a friend playing in the park."**

The first child sits down, and the second child repeats the beginning of the game, this continues until all children have been offered a turn. For variety, the children can choose to skip, hop, walk or jump within the circle.

## **The cone game (Up to six children)**

*This is an outdoor game to support physical development; listening and attention; following instructions; being aware of space and others; adjusting speed; memory and colour recognition.*

A selection of coloured cones are positioned randomly in the play space, in no particular colour order. Children stand in a row, each on their own colour spot. The adult holds up a cone, asking if the children recognise the colour. Children then wait for adult to say Ready Steady... Go! Before going and tapping every cone of said colour, ensuring they do not bump into each other, before returning to their spot. The adult then adds another colour, (up to five colour's) on to each turn to provide more challenge.



## Spot-to-Spot (Up to 8 children)

*This game supports physical development and learning how to move in different ways; spatial awareness; listening and attention; following instructions; number recognition and counting.*

Children stand on a coloured spot, with the corresponding-coloured spot, opposite them, a short distance away. An adult or child chooses a move i.e., walking, running, hopping... The children go to their corresponding spot opposite and back again, doing the said move. This continues until different types of moves have been used. For additional challenge, each child has a turn to roll the large dice, count the dots one to one, and then carry out the chosen move, the number of times shown on the dice back and forth as above.

## Singing

***It is well known that young children learn so much through singing Nursery rhymes and we use them throughout the day to support our routine such as at the end of a play session we use a tambourine and sing “1,2,3 come to me!”, and the children come and line up! They will tell you they need to line up in case there is a fire! or we use “1,2,3, sit with me!” to get a group together for a story etc. or “1,2,3, look at me!”, the children will give you their attention. It’s pretty amazing at how well this works.***

We also sing songs at various times of the day. This term we use: -

- ABC song...
- 1,2,3,4,5 once I caught a fish alive...
- Old Macdonald...
- Twinkle twinkle...
- I had a little turtle...

We may sing them whilst we are waiting for others to wash hands before meals, before we give out the lunch boxes.

We do sing other songs using our song bag, but these ones are repeated throughout the day.

At the end of the day, we sing our goodbye song: -

“Goodbye, goodbye, it’s time to go now,

I must say you’ve made my day!

Goodbye, Goodbye, Gooby!!

I hope this all gives you an insight into your children’s day! The team work really hard throughout the week to engage and encourage children to listen, participate and develop their confidence as well as develop their language and vocabulary, in an age-appropriate way.

