### ( Cool Kids Programme

for Nursery and Reception Classes

### Contents

	Page
Foreword	1
Building Blocks & Developmental Co-ordination	2
Introductory Notes	3
Session 1 with Assessment Method & Charts	4
Class Teacher, Child's & Parents Assessments	7
Sessions 2 - 25	11
The Theory	31
Specific Activities to help the children	35
Acknowledgements	53
Bibliography	54

### Foreword

Cool Kids developed out of years of experience as an occupational therapist working with children and giving advice to parents and teachers. Bentley West Primary, Walsall, approached me in 2002 to draw up a teacher-friendly exercise programme to support underachievers in school. Wolverhampton LEA supported the introduction of the programme in schools across the borough in 2003. The use of Cool Kids expanded from junior school underachievers to encompass nursery and reception classes, infants, junior and high school pupils. The programme has been flexible enough to be used successfully in special schools and units. A class of children with severe learning difficulties took part in a daily exercise group for a year, based on the first three weeks of the programme. Their teacher reported improvements in their ability to settle into class, in paying attention and in cooperation during dressing and other care activities.

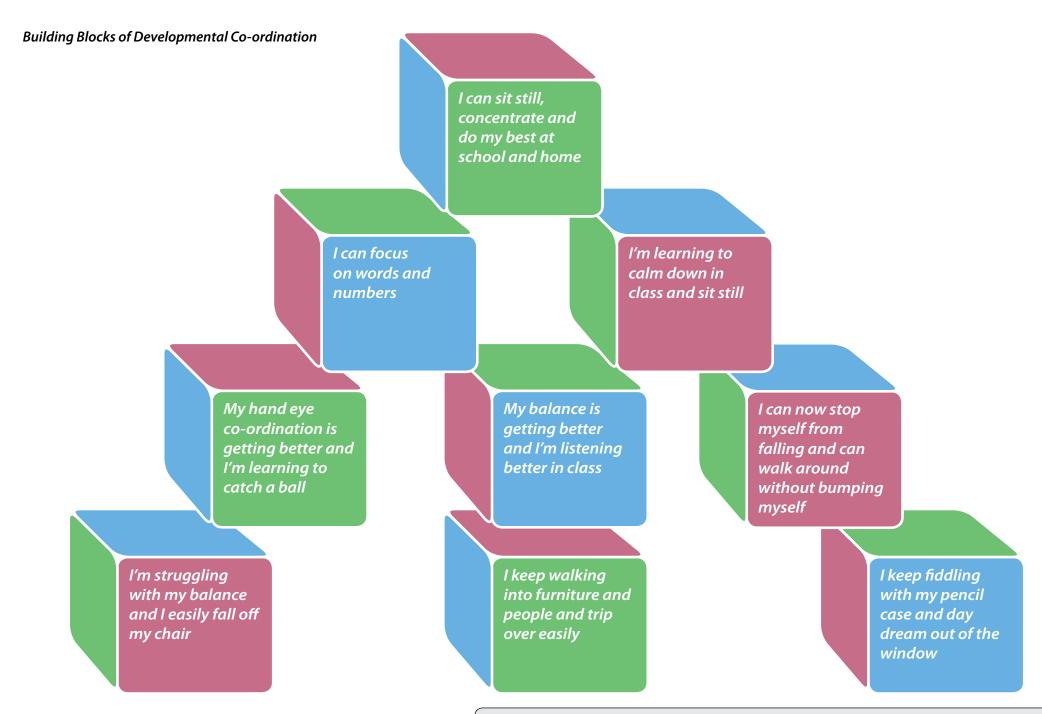
My thanks to the many children and teachers in Walsall and Wolverhampton, who have used the programme and reported back on the fun element of the exercises, as well as the changes it helped to achieve for the children. Education staff and parents reported improvements in motor ability, confidence, concentration and academic learning.

The programme is available for anyone who wishes to use it. Royal Wolverhampton Hospital NHS Trust, Wolverhampton City NHS Trust and Wolverhampton LEA should be acknowledged along with myself as developers of the programme.

It is very pleasing to know that children are still benefiting and enjoying being Cool Kids!



Joy High BScOT, MPhil



### Cool Kids Nursery and Reception Class

### Introductory Notes

- Please use these notes as lesson plans. They form a structured course which takes the children through the stages of development, starting with working on their backs (supine), tummies (prone), sitting, kneeling and then standing. With some children progress to the next stage may take longer than for others. Do not be afraid to repeat activities from previous sessions. From then work is done on balance, bi-lateral movement (crossing over from their left to right sides, and vice versa) and co-ordination.
- 2 Please take your time in working through this programme go at the pace of the slowest in your group of children there is no rush.
- 3 Please do not underestimate the assessment. Schools who do the assessments are able to see children's progress and this re-iterates the importance of this routine. Schools have also been able to use these results to attract funding to help pay for TA salaries to run the sessions.
- 4 Each lesson is organised into 3 sections: warm up time (using 'In the Pond, On the Bank', Simon Says, etc), focus for the session which is work on a specific area, (middle section) and ending with a relaxation session.
- 5 Lots of schools use music for their Cool Kids sessions and find it helps the children with their sense of timing and hence co-ordination. Music can also help to keep sessions fun thereby holding children's attention for longer! Suggestions for the warm up are T Rex, We Love to Boogie; Abba, Dancing Queen and Madness, Baggy Trousers.
- 6 Relaxation is easily skipped through to move the children on to their next lesson. Please give them time to relax fully (not something many children do easily in their busy and exciting lives). Lots of children need relaxation strategies to help them when they get stressed or cross to help them to calm themselves down. Many schools use relaxing music for this part of the session. One suggestion of a suitable CD is 'Body & Soul Music to Balance your Life', from 'unionsquaremusic.co.uk', relax 007. (We bought our copy from HMV.)
- 7 Please feel free to contact us at the Gem Centre should you need any more ideas, support, training or more Cool Kids Information for Schools / Activity Leaflets. Telephone: 01902 446302/3 or email Rosalind.Roscoe@wolvespct.nhs.uk.

### Assess the children:

- Consider videoing the assessment as the best way to record the base-line and to look at future change.
- Read the section on scoring systems (page 5).
- You may wish to create your own chart to allow whatever amount of space you need for jotting down what you see. An example is shown on page 6.
- It may be easier to have a small number of children each day to get a good picture of their ability and behaviour.
- Read the relevant section of "The Theory", starting on page 31 e.g. prone (on tummies) position page 39, rolling page 40 or crawling page 42 to see what difficulties the children may display.

### Suggestions of Activities to Use for Assessment:

- 1 Roll across a mat like a sausage roll one by one, note whether they can roll straight or not, note what they do instead.
- 2 Creep across the floor on their tummies (commando crawl). See who can pull themselves along by their arms, or arms and legs reciprocally. Who can move easily and who needs to watch others before they can do it. Watch for asymmetry.
- 3 Crawl on hands and knees across the floor, is it even, smooth, do any collapse?
- 4 Crawl in reverse gear. Who can do it?
- 5 Jumping 2 feet together in a smooth even pattern for 6 jumps.
- 6 Who can jump backwards and still land on both feet at the same time? More able children can be asked to jump 2 feet together in a zig zag pattern and then do in reverse.
- 7 Relax lying on back for a minute. Who can stay still and who twitches? Note the number of seconds before movement comes in. Can all lie comfortably on their backs?
- 8 Note :
  - ability to listen to instruction

- ability to get their arousal levels right having fun or are they getting wildly excited with something new / or with movement.
- ability to sort out the space needed for a task.

### Cool Kids Scoring System :

5 = correct for age / 4 = one error / 3 = two or more errors / 2 = unable to complete task / 1 = unable to perform

### Academic Assessment:

- All school children are monitored for academic progress by means of national scoring systems such as the National Curriculum scores and the SATS results, and by means of local systems such as the Early Years Profile. The best way to show the change made by children doing the Cool Kids programme would be by using these standard measures of development in comparing children on the Cool Kids programme with their peers who are not on the programme.
- Teachers are asked to predict the progress that a specific child may make in an academic year. This prediction could be compared to actual progress to see if the Cool Kids programme has had an impact.
- Longitudinal studies, such as Woodfield's follow –up of nursery children through to year 2, would give much better view of the long term affect of the programme.
- Any of the above must take into account other initiatives within the school that may have had an impact on the academic development of the children.
- There would be value in separating the results of children with motor difficulties from those with purely behavioural difficulties.

### Behavioural Assessment:

Change could be identified by means of :

- Feedback from staff parents and the children.
- Informal recording of behaviour such as notes made by teachers.
- Scores on Early Years Profile or P -scores.
- Formal behavioural scoring systems.

Activity	Score	Points to Look For
Rolling	5	Smooth, organized, straight
	4 & 3	<ul> <li>Errors:</li> <li>* Flexion, early reflexes</li> <li>* Squiff, early reflexes, watch for self correcting</li> <li>* Body awareness – space – unable to position self</li> <li>* Rhythm, stopping &amp; starting</li> </ul>
	2	Starts but doesn't complete
	1	Cannot roll

Activity	Score	Points to Look For
Creeping (commando crawl)	5	Smooth, organized, straight – head up, legs straight. Bilateral – arms do the pulling, legs straight Reciprocal movements – arms and legs moving rhythmically
	4&3	Errors : * Flexion; bum up or head down, early reflexes * Asymmetry * Lack of rhythm * Unable to position self, body awareness /space
	2	Starts but doesn't complete
	1	Cannot creep

Activity	Score	Points to Look For
Crawling	5	Crawls reciprocally and symmetrically on hands & knees Rhythm smooth
1	4&3	<ul> <li>Errors:</li> <li>Cannot assume or maintain position</li> <li>Uses arms to move and "bunny hops " legs to catch up</li> <li>Asymmetry</li> <li>Lack of rhythm</li> <li>Unable to position self, body awareness /space</li> </ul>
	2	Starts but doesn't complete
	1	Cannot crawl

Activity	Score	Points to Look For
Jumping – 2 feet together	5	Smooth, even, rhythmic 2 feet together jumping
	4&3	Errors : * Unable to keep feet together when jumping * Loses rhythm * Loses balance
17	2	Starts but doesn't complete
-	1	Cannot jump 2 feet together

### Cool Kids Assessment

Class	Date	Assessment done by

Name	Rolling	Creeping	Crawling	Reverse Crawling	2 Foot Jumps	Reverse 2 Foot Jumps	Following Instructions	Arousal Levels	Ability to Find a Space	Relaxation

Date

Dear Parent / Carer

### **Re: Cool Kids Club**

Wolverhampton and supported by Smestow School Sports Partnership. Its aim is to enhance children's learning expected progress in handwriting, written work and reading. piloted in 2004 with whole classes and the results were very encouraging as children made more than their by improving co-ordination, motor development, organisational skills and concentration. The programme was Cool Kids is an exercise programme produced jointly by the Education and Occupational Therapy Departments in

Teacher's comments from participating schools were as follows that the children:

- enjoyed the activities
- listened for longer and their concentration improved
- displayed more confident behaviour
- had better poise
- fidgetted less and kept 'on task' for longer
- developed better motor control.

Several of our staff have received Cool Kids training and we will run this programme for all children in Reception / year 1 / year 2.

day more focused and alert. many schools have reported that another of the outcomes of the programme is that children start their school As the programme will take place before the school day, children will not miss any of the curriculum. Indeed

25 weeks and we will inform you of the date of the last session closer to the time The first session will begin on (date) at (time) and will run on (list days of the week). The programme will run for

child to participate in Cool Kids. If you have any queries, please see (member of staff). I should be grateful if you would complete the attached form and return it to the school office, agreeing for your

Yours sincerely

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photographs to be taken by school staff during the sessions To attend the Cool Kids club on (days of week) from (time slot) beginning on (date chosen), and am happy for

Signed Parent / carer Date...

### Parent's Assessment, Child's Name

# Cool Kids Club / children working towards being Calm, Confident and able to Concentrate

Would you help us by providing the following information relating to your child on a 'before' and 'after' basis. Please circle a number of where you feel your child belongs, 5 being excellent and 1 being poor.

	Before Cool Kids	Now
Arousal Levels		
Being able to calm themselves ready to concentrate on a task, ie homework, family mealtimes and sit quietly when required.	54321	54321
Concentration		
Sustained when reading, completing homework, playing board games etc.	54321	54321
Co-ordination		
Dressing / undressing, laces/ties, playing games, ie football, basketball (hand / eye co-ordination) throwing/catching etc.	54321	54321
Fine Motor Control		
Any changes in holding a pencil / pencil pressure/handwriting, drawing etc.	54321	54321
Confidence		
Ability to complete any task with increasing confidence in own abilities, speaking / listening, PE/games etc.	54321	54321
Any Other Comments		

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire and we hope your child has enjoyed the sessions.

### Cool Kids Programme

## Child's Assessment, Child's Name .

# Cool Kids Club / children working towards being Calm, Confident and able to Concentrate

you can see how you have changed by doing the exercises. Please fill in this questionaire at the beginning of the run by cool kids session, and then at the end of them, so

אסת רמון אבב ווסאי אסת וומגב רוומווקבת הא תסוווק נווב באבורוזב: אסת רמון אבב ווסאי אסת וומגב רוומווקבת הא תסוווק נווב באבורוזב:	בורוטבט.		
How I move around the room Can I calm myself ready to concentrate on an	):	():	(:
dctivity either in school or at home?	No I struggle	Often I can	Yes I can do
Can I walk around the classroom quietly and	with this		
calmly?			
Can I sit quietly when required without fidgeting?			
How do I concentrate	•	•	3
Can I sustain concentration during lessons	5	I	
(listening and completing work correctly)?			
Can I sustain concentration when reading	NO I STRUGGIE	Utten I can	res i can do
at school / at home and when completing	with this		
homework?			
Getting changed before and after PE	3	3	3
Can I dress/undress myself, tie my shoelaces or tie	Q	([	(
for PE/games at school or when getting ready in a	No I struggle	Often I can	Yes I can do
morning?	with this		
<b>Throwing and catching</b> Can I throw and catch a ball?	):)	:)	:
Can Loontrol a ball with my feet?	(	(	(
	No I struggle	Often I can	Yes I can do
My writing	$\mathbf{O}$	)	)
Can I hold my pen/pencil correctly?	Q	Ľ	C
Can I form my letters correctly and is my	No I struggle	Often I can	Yes I can do
Can limber inches to describe the	with this		
Can I use a lighter touch to draw/sketch?			
How do I feel after Cool Kids	:	:)	3
Has my confidence increased? eg in my own	Q	(	(
abilities during speaking / listening activities	No I struaale	Often I can	Yes I can do
In school during PE / games using equipment,	with this		
Your Comments			

### Cool Kids Programme

### Class Teacher Assessment. Child's Name \_

# Cool Kids Club / children working towards being Calm, Confident and able to Concentrate

Would you kindly complete the following questionnaire relating to each child in your year group who attended Cool Kids, on a 'before' and 'after' basis.

Ρ

Modulation of Arousal Levels		
Can he enter/leave/walk around a room calmly/settle to a task quietly/sustain focus on an activity without fidgeting or daydreaming.	54321	54321
Concentration		
Sustained focus during lessons/listening/ completing work correctly.	54321	54321
Agility	54321	54321
Balance	5 4 3 2 1	54321
<b>Co-ordination</b> Gross motor incl PE/games, hand/eye (throwing/catching) ball skills (control), dressing/undressing (laces/ties)	54321	54321
Fine Motor Control Pencil grip/pressure on paper/hand writing/drawing/scissor work etc.	54321	54321
<b>Confidence</b> Is he able to complete any task with increasing confidence in his own abilities, speaking/listening, PE/games etc?	54321	54321
Any Other Comments		

Aim - Body awareness. Work with children lying on their backs (in supine)

Activities	Watch for	Equipment
1. Warm up	Quality of	
Ban all means of moving around the room except for e.g. crawling, shuffling in long sitting and	movement.	
creeping in prone during the session.		
<ul> <li>Names around the circle - how many start with A , B etc.</li> </ul>	Ability to move	
Sing 'Heads, shoulders, knees and toes'.	one limb without	
	the rest of the	
2. Focus for the session	body following.	
Activities for children to do lying on their backs (in supine):		
Roll the head from side to side.	Ability to lie flat.	
Lift head to look at toes.		
• Move limbs on the floor (Angels in the Snow) : move limbs on command ensuring that	Ability to listen.	
limbs stay in contact with the floor – e.g. one arm, both arms – later include left and right		
commands.		
• Move arms raised above the body e.g. in a circle / touch together / touch body parts (e.g.		
knees, hips, shoulders) / touch floor at side / above head /next to hips.		
Move legs raised off the floor:		
Lift one leg up to right angle		
lower straight		
<ul> <li>touch the floor on the same side</li> </ul>		P
<ul> <li>touch the floor on opposite side</li> </ul>		M 1
<ul> <li>bend the knees and straighten.</li> </ul>		
<ul> <li>Lift both legs –open/close, pedal a bike.</li> </ul>		
<ul> <li>Flex knees, grasp with both arms and roll side-to- side.</li> </ul>		
Hold toes: rock side-to side and head-to-bottom.	at the	
Walk around the hall on heels	1926	
3. Relax – lying on backs aim at 30 seconds		and the second s

Aim - Body awareness, work on their tummies (in prone)

Watch for	Equipment
Quality of movement.	Beanbags Rings
Ability to move one limb without the rest of the	Balls
body following.	
Ability to lie flat.	
Ability to listen.	
	Quality of movement.Ability to move one limb without the rest of the body following.Ability to lie flat.Ability to listen.

Aim - Body awareness, work on their tummies (in prone)

Activities	Watch for	Equipment
<ul> <li>Decide on the methods of movement allowed today.</li> <li>1. Warm up <ul> <li>Passing the ball with names – children lie on their tummies in a circle to pass beanbags, a ball or ring from hand to hand of a named child.</li> <li>Superman position : lying on tummies lift arms &amp; head together.</li> <li>Be seals or caterpillars by doing commando crawl across the floor.</li> <li>More of the games lying on backs :</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Any difficulty in lifting head and shoulders off the floor. Any asymmetry.	Balls Beanbags Rings
<ul> <li>2. Focus for the session</li> <li>Move legs raised off the floor: <ul> <li>Lift one leg up to right angle</li> <li>lower straight</li> <li>touch the floor, on the same side</li> <li>touch the floor, on opposite side</li> <li>bend the knees and straighten.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Lift both legs –open/close, pedal a bike.</li> <li>Flex knees, grasp with both arms and roll side - to - side.</li> <li>Hold toes: rock side-to side and head-to-bottom.</li> </ul> Use hoops, loops of elastic, lengths of rope or string etc in the child's hands to keep the hands moving together: <ul> <li>Up and down length of body</li> <li>Touch the floor above head, side to side</li> <li>Lying on tummies, move over, under or through any obstacles your room or hall has to hand, such as mats, gym benches, tables or cardboard boxes.</li> <li>Jumping two feet together along a line.</li> </ul> 3. Relax		

Aim - Body awareness, work in lying and rolling

Activities	Watch for
1. Warm up Game : 'In the Pond, On the Bank'	Quality of movement.
<ul> <li>Children stand beside line (use skipping rope) on the floor.</li> <li>Leader commands 'in the pond' → all jump over line.</li> </ul>	Rolling: is it straight and even?
<ul> <li>Leader commands 'on the bank' → all jump back over line.</li> <li>When all can perform the above - Leader gives incorrect commands 'in the bank', 'on the pond'</li> </ul>	Commando crawl: body flat on floor?
or 'in the pond' when they are already there $\rightarrow$ children should not move.	Ability to listen.
Please do not eliminate the children who make errors – we want them to have plenty of practice at following commands correctly and also do not want to increase their feeling of failure.	
<ul> <li>Focus for the session</li> <li>Rolling with beanbags. Children roll with arms outstretched above head, or arms folded and</li> </ul>	6
<ul><li>clasping a beanbag or a chosen toy.</li><li>Rolling along a series of mats individually or as a relay to fetch or deliver beanbags or a toy.</li></ul>	
<ul> <li>'Angels in the Snow' patterns: move limbs on command- ensuring that limbs stay in contact with the floor – e.g. one arm, both arms, later include left and right commands.</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>Listen to instruction and do : commando crawl under the rope, over the rope, roll under, put one hand over, one hand under, hand and leg over or under</li> <li>Swim across the floor, be a seal</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>Rolling games. Roll around, between, over, under obstacles such as mats, parachutes, soft play shapes, cardboard boxes or cones.</li> </ul>	
3. Relax	

Aim - Body awareness, postural control in lying and sitting

Activities		Watch for	Equipment
1. Warm	ו up	Quality of	Rope
	v my leader: gives plenty of opportunities for watching other people move and to with own body.	movement.	Beanbags or chosen toy
	rcle: each has a turn to do an action (say the words along side "touch the floor", "turn	Praxis : ability to	
	d", "touch my head" and then all copy. Each has a turn to say what the next action	sort-out how to do	
	e, then do it and all copy. A set rhythm such as "stamp, stamp" or "clap, clap"	a new action i.e.	
	e the action words and action helps the flow of the activity. se whispers; sitting in a circle so everyone can see the original action.	motor plan.	
<ul> <li>Progressitting</li> </ul>	essive action : one person performs an action and is copied by the person standing/ next to them. (Starting the next action before the first has completed the circuit to the complexity and hilarity of this game.)	Ability to listen.	
	s for the session		
	e forwards, backwards, sidewise in long sitting.		
-	g & commando crawl with rope stretched across floor – held by 2 adults or one end ed and an adult in charge of the other end, and children moving under and over.		
	on backs –beanbag or chosen toy in hand - move arm on floor from side to above		
	and back to side, move leg - out and back, move both arms or both legs.		
	ither 'Head, shoulders, knees and toes' or 'Hokey Cokey' or 'On the Bank/In the Pond'.		
3. Relax			

Aim - Body awareness, postural control in lying and sitting

Activities	Watch for	Equipment
1. Warm up	Ability to use	Beanbags
'Simon Says' in sitting: Hands on heads, one hand on one knee	two sides of the	
Animal walks: snakes, spiders, snails (keeping close to the floor)	body together	
• Move around freely - changing according to command including forwards or backwards	symmetrically.	
A suggestion for a song to accompany this free movement comes from Warstones	Follow commands	
Primary School, Wolverhampton:	quickly.	
I came to school this morning, and I walked like this, (normal walking)		
Walked like this, walked like this – all on my way to school.	Keep the sequence of	
I thought I saw a soldier, and he marched like this, (marching)	movement going.	
Marched like this, marched like this – all on my way to school.		
I saw a posh lady, and she walked like this, (walking tall, head up)	Praxis- motor	
Walked like this, walked like this – all on my way to school.	planning.	
I saw a big frog, and he jumped like this (squat down & jump up)	-	
Jumped like this, jumped like this – all on my way to school.	ALC: NO	
I saw an old man, and he walked like this (slow gait, bent over a little)		
Walked like this, walked like this – all on my way to school.		
I saw a bird flying and he flew like this (imitate a bird flying)	1 A	
Flew like this, flew like this – all on my way to school.		
I heard the school bell ringing, and I ran like this (run hard on the spot)		
Ran like this, ran like this – all on my way to school.		
2. Focus for the session		
Animal walks to collect a beanbag to send to the next child – relays.		
Follow my leader with creeping, crawling, animal walks.		
3. Relax		

Aim - Body awareness and bilateral coordination

Activities	Watch for	Equipment
1. Warm up	Ability to use two sides	Skipping rope
Game: 'Simon Says' or 'Hokey Cokey'	of the body together	Ball
<ul> <li>Children lying on tummies in a circle, passing the ball around, across the circle, then arrange children in rows and pass ball between the rows.</li> </ul>	symmetrically.	Bat
• Children in pairs lying on tummies and give them a bat each & ball between them and ask them to bat ball in a controlled way to each other.	Follow commands quickly.	
	Keep the sequence of	
<ul> <li><b>2. Focus for the session</b></li> <li>Animal walks :</li> </ul>	movement going.	
Bears – in crawling, right hand and right knee move simultaneously, then left hand	Sort out the motor	
and left knee.	planning to go backwards.	
Bunnies – on all 4's, hopping:		
in relays to fetch beanbags		
follow my leader		
<ul> <li>along a line painted on hall floor or skipping rope laid out.</li> </ul>		
Cats & dogs - crawling on all fours		
Mice - scuttling around quickly		
Elephants - move slowly and ponderously		
3. Relax		THE P

Aim - Body awareness, bilateral heavy work and bilateral co-ordination

Activities	Watch for	Equipment
1. Warm up	Ability to use two sides	Hoops
'Simon Says', 'Hokey Cokey', 'Heads, shoulders, knees and toes'.	of the body together symmetrically.	Ball / beanbag
<ul> <li>Angles in the Snow – legs and arms.</li> <li>2. Focus for the session <ul> <li>Lying on backs with hoops in hands (hands moving together) :</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Keeping the sequence of movement	Long skipping rope
<ul><li>up and down length of body</li><li>touch floor above head and side to side.</li></ul>	going.	
<ul> <li>Lying on backs, lift one leg up to a right angle :</li> <li>lower keeping it straight / touch floor on the same side</li> <li>touch floor on opposite side / bend knee and straighten.</li> </ul>		
<ul> <li>Still lying on backs, lift both legs up and pretend to pedal a bicycle – go slowly (u hill), then speed up (whizzing down hill).</li> <li>On backs, flex knees, grasp with both hands &amp; roll from side to side.</li> </ul>	o a	
<ul> <li>With children lying in a circle on tummies (in prone), ask them to pass a ball or beanbag around. Repeat with children lying on their backs, (in supine).</li> <li>Jumping over stationary rope or line.</li> </ul>		
<ul> <li><b>3. Relax</b></li> <li>Imagine each child is a block of ice, thawing out slowly, limb by limb.</li> </ul>		

### Session 10 (page 1 of 2)

Aim - Body awareness, Lying on tummies and on backs

Activities	Watch for	Equipment
<ul> <li>1. Warm up</li> <li>Thousand legged worm All the children except one form a circle, with the one remaining child standing in the centre. As the verse is sung, the circle moves round in one direction and the lone child moves round in the other direction. When they reach the chorus, both the circle and the single child stop, and she faces whoever she is opposite and they BOTH hop on one leg while they (and everyone else) sings the chorus. Then the child who was selected joins the first child in the centre and everyone carries on singing, moving round in opposite directions. At the end of the repeat, BOTH children choose someone to hop in front of, and the song carries on thus, the inner circle increasing and the outer decreasing until everyone is hopping! (Try it, it's fun!) I'm a thousand-legged worm and I've lost a leg Has anyone seen that leg of mine? If it can't be found I will have to hop around On the other nine-hundred-and-ninety-nine (Chorus) Ninety Nine! Ninety Nine! On the other nine-hundred-and-ninety-nine! If it can't be found I will have to hop around On the other nine-hundred-and-ninety-nine! (Repeat until everyone has joined in the hopping) See clip on You tube for setting the words to the tune.</li></ul>	Ability to use two sides of the body together symmetrically. Follow commands quickly. Keep the sequence of movement going. Motor planning.	

### Session 10 (page 2 of 2)

Aim - Body awareness, Lying on tummies, on backs and rolling

Activities	Watch for	Equipment
<ul> <li>2. Focus for the session</li> <li>Selection of animal walks : <ul> <li>In prone: move like worms, crocodiles, slugs, seals, crabs and swim across the floor.</li> <li>Two-feet together: move like bunnies, frogs, kangaroos.</li> <li>Feet reciprocal: waddle like ducks, or hens (hold ankles whilst crouched down).</li> <li>Bears crawl with leg hand and left leg moving together.</li> <li>Crawling : dogs / cats Mice – scuttle around Elephants move slowly and ponderously</li> <li>Monkeys : on hands and feet (rather than knees).</li> <li>Inchworms move hands step by step as far as possible forwards and then legs move forward to catch up.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<ul> <li>Ask children to lie on their tummies (in prone):</li> <li>Lift arms and legs into 'superman' position.</li> <li>Move arms in patterns on the floor, forwards, backwards, round in circles.</li> <li>Move across the floor in the following ways : <ul> <li>Use arms to pull the body forward and push body backwards</li> <li>Commando crawl, reciprocal movement of arms and legs, keeping tummy on the floor.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Playing games of "move and freeze" – allow either free movement or in a particular manner such as arms and legs while lying on back, as bunnies, crawling or fluttering like butterflies. Commands "Move" or "Start" to get them going and "Freeze" or "Stop " for immediate cessation of movement and holding of the position until the next command.</li> </ul>		

### 3. Relax

Aim - Body awareness and postural control in sitting

Activities	Watch for	Equipment
<ol> <li>Warm up Game: 'Simon Says', 'Hokey Cokey', 'Heads, shoulders, knees and toes'.</li> <li>With children in pairs, kneel up facing each other and ask them to do pushing</li> </ol>	Ability to use two sides of the body together	Hoops - 2 children per hoop Bean bags Obstacles
and pulling games, such as 'row the boat' or 'tug of war' with a hoop. Encourage firm sustained pulling and pushing rather than a jerky movement or shoving. The challenge is for both to stay up for as long as possible.	symmetrically. Keep the sequence of movement going.	Balls
<ul> <li>2. Focus for the session</li> <li>Animal walks, on / through obstacles/ over rope, along rope, relays with bean bags.</li> <li>In long-legged sitting : <ul> <li>In a circle: pass a large ball, balloon in a pillowcase, smaller ball or beanbag around the circle using two hands, ask children to rotate their trunks.</li> <li>Later (for year 1 upwards) increase the challenge by passing using right-hand or left-hand only and then in more complicated patterns (ask children to sit on, or put behind back, the hand not being used).</li> <li>Legs apart - roll a ball to others in the circle – call name of the recipient before rolling the ball. This helps to focus the aim.</li> <li>In pairs - roll the ball and move back a small amount after each successful catch.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Relax</li> </ul>	Praxis motor planning.	

Aim - Body awareness and postural Control in sitting

Activities	Watch for	Equipment
<ol> <li>Warm up Selection of animal walks:         <ul> <li>In prone: move like worms, crocodiles, slugs, seals, crabs or swim across the floor.</li> <li>Two-feet together: move like bunnies, frogs, kangaroos.</li> <li>Feet reciprocal: waddle like ducks, or hens (hold ankles whilst crouched down).</li> <li>Bears crawl with leg hand and left leg moving together.</li> <li>Crawling : dogs / cats Mice – scuttle around Elephants move slowly &amp; ponderously.</li> <li>Monkeys : on hands and feet (rather than knees).</li> <li>Inchworms move hands step by step as far as possible forwards and then legs move forward to catch up.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	Balance in sitting. Ability to use both sides of body together symmetrically and reciprocally.	Ball, balloon in a pillowcase or beanbag
<ol> <li>Focus for the session         <ul> <li>In long-legged sitting:</li> <li>Stretch fingers towards toes, try to keep knees on floor.</li> <li>Tap fingers all along outstretched legs and along to toes.</li> <li>Shuffle forwards, backwards, sideways in long sitting.</li> <li>In a circle: pass a large ball, balloon in a pillowcase, smaller ball or beanbag around the circle using two hands - rotating trunk.</li> <li>Legs apart - Roll a ball to others in circle – call name of the recipient before rolling the ball. This helps to focus the aim.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Relax</li> </ol>		

Aim - Body awareness and praxis

Activities	Watch for	Equipment
<ol> <li>Warm up Selection of animal walks:</li> <li>In prone: move like worms, crocodiles, slugs, seals, crabs or swim across the floor.</li> <li>Two-feet together: move like bunnies, frogs, kangaroos.</li> <li>Feet reciprocal: waddle like ducks, or hens (hold ankles whilst crouched down).</li> <li>Bears crawl with leg hand and left leg moving together.</li> <li>Crawling : dogs / cats Mice – scuttle around Elephants move slowly &amp; ponderously.</li> <li>Monkeys : on hands and feet (rather than knees).</li> <li>Inchworms move hands step by step as far as possible forwards and then legs move forward to catch up.</li> </ol>	Smooth symmetric movements. Straight rolling. Ability to listen to instruction and respond quickly.	Rope Beanbags
<ul> <li>2. Focus for the session</li> <li>Stretch ropes out across the room to form a track.</li> <li>Ask children to commando crawl, roll or move their backs around track.</li> <li>Could add obstacles to make obstacle track to add to challenge</li> <li>Beanbag games prone and sitting.</li> <li>Put children in groups of 3. Two children hold rope and third child commando crawls under it. Children to take in turns to hold / crawl.</li> <li>3. Relax</li> </ul>		

**Aim -** Body awareness and postural control in sitting and standing

Activities	Watch for	Equipment
<ol> <li>Warm up         <ul> <li>Rolling ball with children sitting in a circle – before throwing ball to child, their name is said first.</li> <li>In a line: pass the ball over heads, roll or pass it down the side to the next child.</li> <li>Pass the ball around the circle using feet only.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Focus for the session         <ul> <li>Progressive action in sitting, such as children in a circle: each has a turn to do an action (say the words along side "touch the floor", "turn around", "touch my head" and then all copy. Each has a turn to say what the next action will be, then do it and all copy. A set rhythm such as "stamp, stamp" or "clap, clap" before the action words and action helps the flow of the activity.</li> <li>Games that include naming of body parts and what they are doing e.g. Simon Says and action songs such as Hokey-Cokey, Heads and Shoulders.</li> <li>Two foot jumping.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Relax</li> </ol>	<ul> <li>Ability to use two sides of the body together symmetrically.</li> <li>Follow commands quickly.</li> <li>Keep the sequence of movement going.</li> <li>Praxis motor planning.</li> </ul>	Balls

Aim - Body awareness

Activities	Watch for
. Warm up Hokey- Cokey	Ability to use two sides of the body togethe symmetrically.
Focus for the session Being as small as possible, as wide as possible, as long as possible (while down on the floor.) Follow my leader games, such as Simon Says, or 'I came to school this morning', as follows:	Follow commands quickly. Praxis (motor planning).
came to school this morning, and I walked like this, (normal walking) Valked like this, walked like this – all on my way to school. thought I saw a soldier, and he marched like this, (marching) Marched like this, marched like this – all on my way to school. saw a posh lady, and she walked like this, (walking tall, head up) Valked like this, walked like this – all on my way to school. saw a big frog, and he jumped like this (squat down & jump up) umped like this, jumped like this – all on my way to school. saw an old man, and he walked like this (slow gait, bent over a little) Valked like this, walked like this – all on my way to school. saw a bid frog, and he jumped like this (slow gait, bent over a little) Valked like this, walked like this – all on my way to school. saw an old man, and he walked like this (imitate a bird flying) lew like this, flew like this – all on my way to school.	Keep the sequence of movement going.
heard the school bell ringing, and I ran like this (run hard on the spot) an like this, ran like this – all on my way to school. . Relax	

Aim - Body awareness, praxis and bilateral control

Act	tivities	Watch for	Equipment
1.	Warm up	Ability to use two sides	Obstacles
•	Animal walk with obstacles e.g. tunnel and benches	of the body together symmetrically.	Different balls – size, texture
2.	Focus for the session		
•	Ask children to sit with legs out in front of them and shuffle forwards, sidewise, backwards on command.	Follow commands quickly.	Balloons
•	Ask children to lie on tummies and commando crawl on command, a	Keep the sequence of	
•	couple of 'steps', then stop, then a bit further and stop. Lying on tummies (in prone) to roll the ball to someone across the circle	movement going.	
	or opposite in a line – try different balls – size, texture, balloons.	Praxis.	
3.	Relax		

Aim - Body awareness, praxis and bilateral control

Ac	tivities	Watch for	Equipment
1. •	<b>Warm up</b> Animal walks – follow my leader, go around, under, over mats, cones.	Ability to use two sides of the body together symmetrically.	
2. •	<b>Focus for the session</b> Sit to toss a balloon in a pillow case to the person next to you or someone across the circle. A crawling game, such as 'The thousand Legged Worm':	Follow commands quickly. Keep the sequence of movement going.	
-	<b>Thousand legged worm</b> All the children except one form a circle, with the one remaining child standing in the centre. As the verse is sung, the circle moves round in one direction and the lone child moves round in the other direction. When they reach the chorus, both the circle and the single child stop, and she faces whoever she is opposite and they BOTH hop on one leg while they (and everyone else) sings the chorus. Then the child who was selected joins the first child in the centre and everyone carries on singing, moving round in opposite directions. At the end of the repeat, BOTH children choose someone to hop in front of, and the song carries on thus, the inner circle increasing and the outer decreasing until everyone is hopping! (Try it, it's fun!)	Praxis.	
	I'm a thousand-legged worm and I've lost a leg Has anyone seen that leg of mine? If it can't be found I will have to hop around On the other nine-hundred-and-ninety-nine (Chorus) Ninety Nine! Ninety Nine! On the other nine-hundred-and-ninety-nine! If it can't be found I will have to hop around On the other nine-hundred-and-ninety-nine! (Repeat until everyone has joined in the hopping)		
	See clip on You tube for setting the words to the tune.		
3.	Relax - count slowly together with eyes closed.		$\sim$

Aim - Body awareness, bilateral heavy work and bilateral co-ordination

Activities	Watch for	Equipment
<ol> <li>Warm up</li> <li>'In the pond, on the bank' or' Hokey Cokey'.</li> <li>Simon says : Hands on heads, one hand on one knee</li> </ol>	Ability to use two sides of the body together symmetrically.	Beanbags Rope or line on the floor
<ul> <li>2. Focus for the session</li> <li>Animal walks/ crawling <ul> <li>Move around freely - changing according to command including forwards</li> <li>or backwards</li> <li>Relays with beanbags</li> <li>Follow my leader</li> <li>Move along the line</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Follow commands quickly. Keep the sequence of movement going. Praxis.	
3. Relax		

Aim - Body awareness, bilateral heavy work, bilateral coordination, postural control in crawling

Activities	Watch for	Equipment
<ol> <li>Warm up "In the pond, on the bank" as frogs.</li> <li>Focus for the session         <ul> <li>Animal walks : Elephants and horses.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	Ability to use two sides of the body together symmetrically & alternating. Follow commands quickly.	
<ul> <li>Forwards, backwards : birds, bunnies, frogs, ducks.</li> <li>Crawling position games such as ask the children to push a ball to partner using head only (hands stay on the floor).</li> </ul>	Keep the sequence of movement going.	
• Passing the ball around the circle, across the circle or between two rows in prone or in long sitting or in crawling position. Ask child passing ball to say name of child it's intended for first.	Sort out the motor planning to go backwards.	
3. Relax		

Aim - Body awareness, bilateral heavy work and bilateral coordination

Ac	tivities	Watch for	Equipment
1.	Warm up	Ability to use two sides of the body	Ball
•	Angels in the snow - 1 or 2 arms, 1 or 2 legs.	together symmetrically & alternating.	
			Rope or line on the floor
2.	Focus for the session	Follow commands quickly.	
•	Go back to supine and prone games.		3
•	Animal walks .	Keep the sequence of movement	
•	Passing the ball in sitting/standing -one person up, one person	going.	
	down.		
•	Jumping over stationary rope or line on the floor try to get 2-feet	Sort out the motor planning to go	
	landing at the same time.	backwards.	C.L.
			Comments of the second s
3.	Relax		

### Beyond this your programme will depend on your group and their ability, progress and age – don't feel you have to push them along

- Repeat previous games and activities that the children want more of or you do not feel they have achieved
- Add in clapping games
- Add in more balancing games walking in different patterns along a line forwards, backwards, sideways
- Add in more jumping over a line, along a line, forwards, backwards, sideways, zigzag
- Add in more catching and throwing at targets with beanbags, balloons, balls
- Add kneeling and standing activities

### Cool Kids Programme - The Theory

### Children working towards being Calm, Confident and able to Concentrate

The Cool Kids programme was devised principally as an opportunity for children with poor motor ability to catch up on foundation skills. This seems to be possible throughout infants and junior school and into secondary school. The programme has successfully been used for whole classes of Nursery and Reception children, who are developing their basic motor skills before the introduction of more complex movement. Adaptations of the programme are also being developed for special school application.

### All children need exercise:

- Getting fit and keeping fit is high on the national agenda, both for children and adults. 20 30 minutes per day has been suggested.
- Avoiding obesity is a national target
- Motivation and concentration is also linked to exercise.

### Some children find fluid movement difficult

- All main stream schools have children who under achieve, with special schools and units also catering for such pupils. These children may have learning difficulties and/or motor difficulties, with diagnoses such as dyspraxia, autistic spectrum disorders, attention deficit disorders, difficulties with speech and language, dyslexia, learning difficulties. Others have no "label" but just do not perform as well as expected or are somewhat lacking in concentration, motivation and application. These children may not achieve well in PE and games and often try to avoid these activities or misbehave in these lessons.
- These children may well have difficulty with writing, drawing, listening and staying still.
- These children may not be ready for complex exercise regimes such as aerobics or country dancing, and would view these activities as another area of failure.

The Cool Kids programme is aimed at building up the motor skills of under achievers so that they can develop in physical activity and improve their ability to modulate their arousal levels. This would be seen in their ability to calm down and concentrate and thereby become achievers rather than under achievers. There are indications of academic improvement including handwriting.

### The programme is based on the following principles:

### **Body Awareness**

- A picture of our body and where it is in space is essential for the development of smooth, organised gross and fine motor control.
- This picture is made up of information from joints, muscles (proprioception) and skin (tactile), letting us know which limbs are where and how much space we are occupying.
   The brain interprets proprioceptive information (regular repetitive muscle use through organised activity) developing a natural sense of space etc as an essential base for movement. Playing games such as "Move & Freeze", jumping or limb and trunk contact with the floor increases this awareness.
- If a child is not receiving sufficient proprioceptive information, he is likely to try to watch his limbs to ensure that they are doing what he wants them to do.
- Laterality: the understanding of "left and right", on self and others, is based on a good body awareness.

### Developmental sequences to put the foundations of movement into place:

- In normal development postural control begins with head control. The child learns to lift his head in prone and begins to focus on objects of interest. Back, neck and eye muscles learn to work together. All our primary school children have been "Lie them on their back" babies, which is done to prevent cot death, but may not have given them enough opportunity to strengthen their back muscles.
- The sequence is: Lying, sitting, four point (crawling), kneeling, standing.
- The children are encouraged to develop postural control by lying in prone (on their stomachs) and supine (on their backs) before working in sitting etc.
- They are encouraged to commando crawl and wriggle on their stomachs, to roll and crawl on all fours in order to:
  - 1. develop control over early reflex patterns which will help with postural control in sitting and standing
  - 2. improve their postural control (static and dynamic balance) as a foundation for the ability to sit still
  - 3. weight bear on their arms and thereby develop stability of shoulder, elbow and wrist in preparation for writing.

### Praxis

- Planning new motor actions is dependent on sensory feedback. We rely on proprioception (joint and muscles sense), tactile and vestibular (sense of balance from the inner ear), vision and hearing to tell us if we're getting it right and exactly what adjustments we need to make.
- Children with poor motor planning (praxis) can often perform practiced actions reasonably well, but find new, novel actions much more difficult to master. They need plenty of variety and challenge within their capability e.g. use a variety of weights and size of balls in games. Moving forward might be enough of a challenge to start with, but later moving in reverse may add to the challenge.
- These children may have great difficulty in regulating muscle tone; they throw too hard or too gently. They need lots of practice throwing a beanbag at a target or a ball to another child. To achieve smooth actions; simplify the activity, let them work lying down with objects that are easy to handle. Also give them a variety of weight and size of ball, balloon or beanbag to play throw and catch. In general; make it easier for them by increasing the size of the object, decreasing the speed and noting that objects moving across the floor rather than through the air are easier to track and catch.
  - Remember that some children may also have difficulty with ideation (being able to see the play potential of equipment).

- Some children may have difficulty with motor execution (interference with their ability to move) for various reasons:
  - 1. due to damage to the nervous system such as cerebral palsy
  - 2. due to congenital orthopaedic problems such as club foot (known as talipies) or congenital dislocation of the hip
  - 3. due medical problems such as painful or arthritic joints.

### Bilateral and Sequencing

- Actions such as skipping, hopping and catching a ball require timing, sequencing and rhythm and the ability to use the two sides of the body together symmetrically and/or reciprocally i.e. the child's movements are smooth and fluid not awkward and jerky.
- Children need to learn the motor skills of childhood e.g. ball control and skipping, if they are to have the self confidence to take part in their peers' games in the playground.
- Self confidence comes from knowing "I can" and then being motivated to try something even more difficult.

### Modulation

- We all adjust our arousal levels to the demands of the environment we find ourselves in, and most of us are reasonably successful most of the time. When we get it wrong we talk about being over the top or not being awake enough for the present activity. We use words like"paying attention" and "concentration" to describe this ability, and its result could have a baring on our motivation for performing certain activities or being in certain environments.
- Underlying our ability to modulate our arousal levels is our reaction to the sensory world. Each of us has our own individual pattern of comfortable levels of sensory input and what we would find as uncomfortable. For example: each of us would be able to identify sounds that jar our nerves and others that sooth and calm us. We could all cope with some of the jarring sounds for a limited period of time, but would each have a point at which we need to escape.
- Children are no different. We need, however, to consider the child whose nervous system is set in such a way as to over react or under react to sensory input, by comparison to his/her peers. This child may well react differently to his/her classmates and be more easily distracted, anxious, wound up or not "with it'. We then talk about them having poor concentration and often poor motivation.
- These children need modulating sensory input. Proprioceptive input is our best modulator, so these children need controlled movement in heavy work patterns. They also need to learn to relax.
- If you want to know more about modulation and an individual child's sensory diet needs, please ask the occupational therapists.

### The programme works on the foundations of gross motor development which underlies and underpins fine motor development and the ability to pay attention. It offers the opportunities for the under achievers to practice the foundation skills before they take part in exercise programmes with the rest of the school.

### General rules for Cool Kids sessions

- Offer regular daily exercise; 15 30 minutes (make as little fuss as possible about dressing/undressing).
- Encourage plenty of big free movement; movement that offers "heavy work" and both bilateral and unilateral movement.
- Give the children enough opportunity to use big free movement in the early, less challenging balance positions.
- Use a general movement activity at the beginning of the session.
- Have a general movement activity just before relaxation at the end of the session.
- Don't worry too much at first about the children knowing their left from their right (their left wrist could be marked with a piece of wool as a reminder).
- Encourage the children to experiment with movement without criticism and not too much competition with others.
- Don't spend too much time correcting the children. We are aiming at giving them the opportunity to develop their skills. You can help them to assume the correct positions and if necessary break down the task.
- Trust the children to know what they need. Help the children to add their ideas into the exercise programme.
- Use the opportunities for developing listening and other language skills.
- Use opportunities for developing the ability to control movement and impulsiveness.
- Use the programme as a guide, but tailor it to your group.
- Don't hurry through the programme.
- Try to listen to your particular group of children, they can set the pace to suit themselves.
- Repeat activities.
- Stay with the familiar as well as gradually bringing in new challenges.
- REMEMBER THERE ARE NO FIXED RULES; experiment and share your problems and solutions with other group leaders.
- Use music and rhymes.
- Develop your own names for the games.
- The children and the staff should have fun!
- Later include these children in other ways of movement that the rest of the school enjoys: Aerobics, Brain Gym, Karate, Tai chi, Moov'n & Groov'n, country dancing, breakdancing, swimming, gymnastics.

NB: When to refer to the therapists: If a child does not make the expected progress over a period of time, there may be an underlying reason which may merit further investigation. It would be advisable to discuss the situation with parents as they will know if the child is seeing a therapist at present or in the past This may lead to a referral to physiotherapy or occupational therapy.

#### The following list of activities is designed to give an overview of what to include in your daily programme.

Suggested programme for Infant and Junior school age children is also available.

		Page
١.	Body Awareness	36
11.	Postural control in developmental sequence	37
	A. Supine	37
	B. Prone	39
	C. Rolling	40
	D. Sitting	40
	E. Crawling	42
	F. Kneeling and half kneeling	43
	G. Standing	44
	H. Zombies	45
.	Praxis	46
IV.	Bilateral actions and activities that require sequencing and rhythm	48
	Learning to skip with a long rope	49
	Ball skills	50
	Clapping games	50
V.	Modulation of arousal levels	51
VI.	Relaxing	51
VII.	Listening and language development	52

# I. Body Awareness

#### Some children will have difficulty with body awareness:

- The child may not know how to position him/herself on command/ or follow someone else i.e. "lie on tummy" and the child tries several different positions.
- The child may be very disorganised in movement and space: bumping into others and into objects.
- The child may try to watch his/her limbs to ensure that they are doing what he/she wants them to do.
- The child may find it difficult to draw age appropriate people.

#### Activities that help to develop Body Awareness:

- 1 Moving on the floor in creeping, rolling and crawling adds proprioception.
- 2. Pull/push games give extra proprioceptive input.
- 3. Heavy impact from slow firm crawling, animal walks, jumping 2 feet together, walking on heels etc adds proprioception.
- 4. Moving limbs in contact with the floor (e.g. angels in the snow or crawling) or holding beanbags, toys in hands while moving increases this awareness.
- 5. Playing games of "move and freeze" allow either free movement or in a particular manner such as arms and legs while lying on back, as bunnies, crawling or fluttering like butterflies. Commands "Move" or 'Start" to get them going and "Freeze" or "Stop" for immediate cessation of movement and holding of the position until the next command.
- 6. Games that included naming of body parts and what they are doing e.g. Simon Says and action songs such as Hokey Cokey, Heads and Shoulders, Zombies.
- 7. Laterality: Young children learn to use two sides of the bodies together symmetrically first then develop reciprocal smooth movement and then identify left and right on self, identify left and right on others, and use left and right easily and spontaneously. If the children in your group are either too young to have developed laterality or although older are still moving through this development, then allow them plenty of practice at heavy bilateral activities.

Many of the games in the programme could be used naming "left" and "right" on self and others, but can be used by just saying "hands" or "feet" or by ignoring the incorrect responses.

Wrists and ankles can be marked with wool to identify "right".

The children can also learn to orient themselves within the hall i.e. looking towards the door - the windows are on our right and the bars on the left.

# II. Postural control in developmental sequence to lay good foundations in each position: Activities include weight bearing, static and dynamic balance (rotation) and heavy work patterns.

# A. Supine (lying on backs):

This is a very early position developmentally - the floor holds you completely.

# Some children may find the supine position difficult

- They may have difficulty in sorting out how to lie down on their backs.
- Occasionally you will find a child who is uncomfortable lying flat on his/her back
  - check for physical reasons like tight ponytails or collars,
  - allow them to lie for as long as they're comfortable and then to roll on to their sides.

## Why work in supine?

- Provides plenty of tactile and proprioceptive input to build a body awareness.
- Encourages weight bearing and trunk stability.
- Encourages movement of limbs independent of body movement.

# Activities lying supine:

- 1. Roll the head from side to side.
- 2. Lift head to look at toes.
- 3. Move limbs on the floor (Angels in the Snow): move limbs on command ensuring that limbs stay in contact with the floor e.g. one arm, both arms later include left and right commands.
- 4. Move arms raised above the body e.g.
  - to circle,
  - touch together,
  - touch body parts (e.g. knees, hips, shoulders),
  - touch floor at side,
  - above head,
  - next to hips.
- 5. Do the above with a beanbag, hoop or toy in hand to emphasise the movement.
- 6. Point the toes straight or towards the ceiling watching them and without looking.

- 7. Move legs raised off the floor:
  - lift one leg up to right angle
  - lower straight
  - touch the floor on the same side
  - touch the floor on opposite side
  - bend the knees and straighten
  - lift both legs open/close, pedal a bike
  - flex knees, grasp with both arms and roll side to side
  - hold toes: rock side to side and head to bottom.
- 8. Use hoops, loops of knicker elastic, lengths of rope or string etc in the child's hands to keep the hands moving together:
  - up and down length of body
  - touch the floor above head, side to side
  - hook feet through and wiggle hoop/loop up to head.

# B. Prone (lying on stomach):

#### Some children may find working in the prone position difficult

- Some children will find it difficult to sort out which way up to lie.
- Low muscle tone and weak muscles would mean that children may find this position hard work and may need to build up their tolerance, by only using this position for short periods at first.
- Some children will find this position difficult because they are still "ruled" by their baby reflexes and will tend to become flexed when in prone i.e. knees may bend, hips may bend this may become more marked when they start moving in prone.

## Why work in prone?

- Provides plenty of tactile and proprioceptive input to build body awareness.
- Strengthens back and neck muscles.
- Combines visual focusing with neck muscle extension.
- Promotes weight bearing on arms.
- Promotes symmetry.
- Develops balance in this foundation position.
- Encourages the integration of early reflexes. These children need plenty of opportunity to move in this position, encourage them to stay flat on the floor, but do not over emphasise this.

## Activities in prone

- 1. Lift arms & head superman position.
- 2. Lift arms, head and legs.
- 3. Move arms in patterns on the floor forward, backwards, round in circles.
- 4. Move across the floor in prone:
  - use arms to pull the body forward
  - use arms to push the body going backwards
  - try the above on an old towel or curtain
  - commando crawl reciprocal movement of legs and arms, tummy on the floor
  - swim across the floor or move as seals, worms, crocodiles.
- 5. Lie in prone in a circle to pass beanbags, rings, balls, hand to hand, (when the children need more challenge ask them to pass I to I or r to r mark right wrists with wool).
- 6. Hold a rope (two adults) on the floor and ask the children to listen to instruction and: Commando crawl under the rope, over the rope, roll under, put one hand over, one hand under, hand and leg over or under ....
- 7. Move in prone "over", "under", "through", "between".. obstacles: mats, cardboard boxes, gym benches.
- 8. Play ball games in prone in a circle or in pairs using two handed bats.

To make a two handed bat: you need two large plastic pop bottles. Cut the bottom ends off. Fill one with crunched up coloured paper. Insert this bottle into the base of the other one and tape firmly to ensure they stay together and have no rough edges.

# C. Rolling

## Some children may find rolling very difficult

- They may feel dizzy after only one or two rotations and may not know to call this discomfort "dizzy".
- They may have difficulty positioning themselves to start rolling.
- They may have difficulty staying flat (legs tending to bend at hip and knee).
- They may predominantly "lead" with head, shoulder or with legs and this will make them tend to go in circles or at least to find rolling straight a real problem.
- They may seem very"wooden" in their rolling, lacking flow and ease of movement.

# Why use rolling?

- Provides plenty of tactile, vestibular and proprioceptive input to build up body awareness.
- Helps to integrate early reflexes while in contact with the floor.
- Brings in rotary movement while staying on the floor.

# Activities using rolling

- 1. Rolling across the floor, along a series of mats, along a line on the floor individually or as a relay to fetch and deliver beanbags, toys etc.
- 2. Use a rope stretched across floor (held by 2 adults or one end attached and adult in charge of the other end) roll along, under, over.
- 3. Try rolling with arms outstretched above the head or arms folded or clasping a beanbag or toy, or arms at the sides.
- 4. Use different parts of the body to"lead" the roll: Hold a toy between the knees and lead with knees. Hold the beanbag against shoulders ......against hips, between feet, etc.
- 5. Roll up in an old towel or curtain (some children will not want their faces covered, give them the choice) and continue rolling. This helps to get the child rolling as a whole.
- 6. Roll "around", "between", "over", "under" obstacles such as mats, parachutes, soft play shapes, cardboard boxes or cones.

# D. Sitting:

# Some children find sitting difficult

They may have difficulty in sitting upright with legs stretched out flat on the floor. They may sit with the spine curved and seem to bend the base of the spine in under themselves, called "sacral sitting". This is often caused by the muscles on the back of the legs being "tight" and in need of gentle stretching by means of the exercises following. If this pattern persists in a child please speak to the parents about referring the child to the physiotherapists or occupational therapists.

• They may have balance difficulties i.e. they fall over easily especially when rotation of the head or trunk is required or tend to"fix "themselves in odd ways: using tight, awkward looking movements or positions. They may use protective extension of limbs much more quickly and in more exaggerated movements than seen in their peers.

#### Why use sitting?

- Provides plenty of tactile, vestibular and proprioceptive input to build body awareness.
- Provides the next step in the developmental pattern of balance i.e. sitting gives better stability for desk top activities in classroom e.g. writing.
- Provides opportunities to integrate early reflexes.
- Provides opportunities to move arms while stabilising the trunk.
- Provides opportunities to weight bear on arms and strengthen arm muscles.
- Provides opportunities for rotary movement while staying on the floor.

#### Activities using sitting

In long legged sitting:

- 1. Stretch fingers towards toes, try to keep knees on floor.
- 2. Tap fingers all along outstretched legs and up to toes.
- 3. Shuffle forwards, backwards, sidewise in long sitting.
- 4. In a circle: pass a large ball, balloon in a pillowcase, smaller ball or beanbag around the circle using two hands rotating trunk.
- 5. Later (for year 1 upwards) increase the challenge by passing with right hand or left hand only and then in more complicated patterns.
- 6. Legs apart: Roll a ball to others in circle, call name of the recipient before rolling the ball. This helps to focus the aim.
- 7. In pairs: Roll the ball and move back a small amount after each successful catch.
- 8. Sit in a row with first child facing forwards and the next facing backwards. Pass the ball over head or stretching forwards to next child. Last child jumps two feet together, hops, walks on heels or any other mode of movement other than walking / running to get to the front of the line with the ball.
- 9. In a line: pass the ball over heads, roll or pass it down the side to the next child. Alternating sides would make it more complex.
- 10. Pass the ball around the circle using feet only.
- 11. In pairs: Lean back on hands and push the ball to partner using feet only.
- 12. In pairs: Lean back on hands and pick the ball up with feet to throw to partner.
- 13. In pairs: 'Row the boat' by holding onto two sides of a hoop and moving in synchrony.

Use cross legged sitting for games.

# E. Crawling

# Some children find crawling difficult

•They find it difficult to assume the posture or may find it difficult to maintain the position when moving. They drop their bottoms onto their heels and then move forward symmetrically instead of alternating limbs i.e. bunny hopping. (This is often due to early reflex patterns still holding sway over their movements, but be aware that many 4 and 5 year olds just enjoy moving this way, but can crawl properly.) They may just seem awkward and stiff in their movements. They may fall over easily (poor balance). They may not be able to crawl backwards as this requires much more praxis (motor planning).

#### Why use crawling?

Provides plenty of tactile, vestibular and proprioceptive input to build body awareness. Heavy pressure on palms while crawling is particularly good for decreasing tactile defensiveness which will impact on fine motor activities. Provides the next step in the developmental pattern of balance.

- Provides opportunities to integrate early reflexes.
- Provides opportunities to weight bear on arms and strengthen arm muscles.
- Provides opportunities for the limbs to work in reciprocal patterns.
- Provides opportunities for rotary movement while staying on the floor.
- Provides opportunities for awareness of body in space and the space needed by the body. This leads into other spatial concepts such as depth perception and figure ground perception.

## Activities in crawling

- 1. Crawl across the floor, along lines, around obstacles such as cones or along a gym bench. Fetch beanbags and carry them on back or head while crawling.
- 2. Let the children help to increase the complexity of obstacle courses.
  - Crawl through tunnels, humped up gym mats, hoops held by adults or cardboard boxes open at both ends, or under chairs.
  - Crawl between lines of chairs or cones.
- 3. In a circle or line: pass a ball /roll a ball: under tummies, across front or around self to next person.
- 4. Push the ball to partner using head only (hands stay on the floor).
- 5. Toss a beanbag with one hand to others in circle or to partner.
- 6. Make a path out of carpet squares or marker circles (need to stick to the floor to some extent), children crawl with eyes closed to feel their way along.
- 7. Crawling position in circle: To Polly Wolly Doodle sing: Oh the Thousand legged worm, Oh the Thousand legged worm, Oh the Thousand legged worm, His head can turn (children follow leader).... His elbow can squirm, His fingers can squirm, His tongue can squirm, His feet can turn etc.

# F. Kneeling and Half kneeling

#### Some children find kneeling and half kneeling difficult:

- They have difficulty with balance, wobble and fall over.
- They may find it difficult to rotate their heads and/or trunks while maintaining the position.

#### Why use kneeling and half kneeling?

- Provides a greater challenge to balance and trunk stability than the earlier positions, but still not as difficult as standing.
- Provides opportunities to work on postural control in patterns that are not as familiar as standing.

#### Activities in kneeling and half kneeling

- 1. Ball games in pairs, in a circle or line as used in all the earlier postural positions (see sitting, crawling etc).
- 2. In pairs do pulling, pushing games e.g. row the boat with a hoop or tug of war to encourage firm sustained pulling and pushing rather than jerking and shovving. The challenge is for both to stay up as long as possible.
- 3. Mirror Images.

## Children in pairs:

- One child leads slowly moving hands in symmetric patterns and second child follows with hands touching.
- One child leads slowly moving hands in symmetric patterns and second child follows with hands 3cm apart.
- Gradually bring in bigger and more complex patterns including asymmetry.
- Work on control rather than trying to catch the other child out.

## Play clapping games:

- Counting bilateral claps to rhythm.
- Clapping with one hand only.
- Clapping partner's hands and then own in a rhythm.
- Increase the complexity slowly, crossing over is more difficult.

# G. Standing

#### Some children have difficulties in standing:

Most of the children have had plenty of practice in this position. However, you may well be able to identify problems in balance and postural control when watching them move in standing, walking, running, skipping etc.

- Watch for postural control difficulties:
  - falls easily and/or is too quick to bring in protective reactions i.e. stepping to keep balance or putting hands out to stop self from falling
  - stands, walks, runs with feet apart i.e. wide base
  - uses tense stiff movements
  - has floppy trunk limbs
  - uses extraneous limb movement (more flapping, of arms and hands than average for the age)
  - blitzes around from disaster to disaster i.e. move very fast in the hope of catching up with his/her centre of gravity
  - is fearful of movement, preferring not to move too much/very cautious.
- Watch for difficulties with motor planning: hesitance / difficulty in doing new activities.
- Watch for difficulties with timing and rhythm of actions.

#### Activities in standing:

- 1. Pushing and pulling games.
- 2. Walking on toes, on heels, with stiff legs, without lifting feet off the floor.
- 3. Walking backwards.
- 4. Jumping two feet together along lines, over lines "on the bank", "in the pond" jumping zigzag patterns, jumping.
- 5. Jumping while holding a beanbag between feet.
- 6. Hopping games: along lines, in hopscotch patterns.
- 7. Skipping activities see below.
- 8. Ball games see below, plus many of the games played in earlier positions such as sitting.
- 9. Mirror image and clapping games.
- 10. Warm up games like"Heads and Shoulders", "Hokey Cokey' and Zombies.

# H. Zombies (Penguins): (Thanks to Tania Timmins at Long Knowle Primary)

Standing in a circle to sing:

Have you ever seen a Zombie come to tea? Take a look at me a Zombie you will see Zombies attention Zombies begin (Adult says and does action) Right hand (Children copy) Right hand

Have you ever seen a Zombie come to tea? ...... Adding one new action each time e.g. (Adult says and does action) Right hand (Children copy) Right hand (Adult) Left hand left hand

Have you ever seen a Zombie come to tea? ...... Right leg, left leg and so on.

# III. Praxis

## Some children have difficulties with praxis:

- The child may find planning new motor actions difficult be hesitant and/or tend to watch the other children, before attempting the activity.
- The child can often perform practiced actions reasonably well, but find new actions much more difficult to master.
- The child may learn motor skills more slowly than his/her peers and then seem to forget how to do it much more quickly (he/she needs lots of practice).
- The child may have great difficulty in regulating muscle tone.
- The child may have difficulty with ideation (being able to see the play potential).
- The child may be very disorganised.

NB: Remember that poor motor skills in some children may be due to conditions such cerebral palsy (actual damage to the nervous system), malformation of limbs or painful arthritic joints. Discuss these difficulties with the child's parents as they will know if the child is known the occupational therapists and physiotherapists.

# Activities for improving praxis

- New / novel ways of moving: e.g. animal walks, moving in a different direction i.e. backwards, sidewise, Actions that supply plenty of proprioception, tactile and vestibular: (see I. Body awareness p 30).
- Add in a variety of equipment, different weight, size, texture of ball, beanbags etc in games.
- Give the child plenty of practice and opportunities to return again and again to favourite activities.
- Give the child opportunities for planning actions and obstacle courses.

# 1. Animal walks:

- In prone: move like worms, crocodiles, slugs, seals, crabs or swim across the floor.
- Two feet together: move like bunnies, frogs, kangaroos.
- Feet reciprocal: waddle like ducks, or hens (hold ankles whilst crouched down).
- Crawl: like dogs/ cats, scuttle fast like mice or ponderously like elephants. Bears move right hand and right knee simultaneously and then left hand and knee.
- Go on hands and feet (rather than knees) to be monkeys. Inchworms move hands step by step as far as possible forwards and then legs move forward to catch up.
- In standing: butterflies or birds flutter/fly and horses gallop. Marching soldiers, light fairy and heavy giant steps (not quite animal walks, but worth doing).
- 2. Obstacle courses add to the complexity of planning and encourage the children to take part in the planning. This could extend to children designing an obstacle course on paper or on the computer for the next exercise session.
- 3. Follow my leader: gives plenty of opportunities for watching other people move and to copy with own body. Being the leader adds a different dimension.
  - In a circle: each has a turn to do an action (say the words alongside" touch the floor'"turnaround", "touch my head" and then all copy. Each has a turn to say what the next action will be, then do it and all copy. A set rhythm such as "stamp, stamp"......or "clap, clap".....before the action words and action helps the flow of the activity.

- Chinese whispers: in a line everyone standing still and facing forwards, but turning round to face the next person only when passing on the words / actions. Copying the person in front of you is more difficult than when everyone can see the original action.
- Moving in a line moving each person takes it in turn to lead around the room choosing the next mode of travel.
- Progressive action : one person performs an action and is copied by the person standing / sitting next to them. Starting the next action before the first has completed the circuit adds to the complexity and hilarity of this game.
- 4. Action songs such as Hokey Cokey, Heads and Shoulders, Zombies/Penguins.

# IV. Bilateral actions and activities that require sequencing and rhythm

#### Some children will have difficulty with bilateral actions:

- The child may tend to land in a 1,2 pattern instead of 2 feet together. The child may seem very asymmetric when creeping, rolling etc.
- The child may find it very difficult to move across the midline of his/her body e.g. touching the left ear with the right hand or placing the right hand on the left side of the paper when writing without either adjusting the trunk and head or the paper.
- The child may have difficulty using the limbs in smooth, organised reciprocal movements such as fastening buttons, tying shoelaces and using a knife and fork together.

#### Activities for improving bilateral co ordination

#### Bilateral heavy work

- 1. Animal walks requiring heavy bilateral action such as kangaroos, bunnies, frogs
- 2. Pulling, pushing self along the floor in prone, on hands and knees (squatting back on to heels). Old curtains or towels to use as boats add to the fun but do not allow the children to stand on them.
- 3. Child sitting in a cardboard box to self propel or to be pushed/pulled by other child/children.
- 4. Jumping with two feet together / skipping.
- 5. In the pond on the bank:
  - Children stand beside line on the floor.
  - Leader commands "in the pond" all jump over line.
  - Leader commands "on the bank" all jump back over line.

• When all can perform the above, leader gives incorrect commands "In the bank", "on the pond" or "in the pond" when they are already there, children should not move. Please do not eliminate the children who make errors - we want them to have plenty of practice at following commands correctly and also do not want to increase their feeling of failure.

#### Reciprocal movement / two sides working together but in different patterns;

- 1. Pulling self over surface with hands commando crawl.
- 2. Pulling self along a rope anchored to some secure point.
- 3. Hopping.
- 4. Moving the body to catch a ball or beanbag.

#### Some children will have difficulties with actions requiring sequencing and rhythm

- The child may just look awkward and jerk in the movements.
- The child may seem to lose the rhythm of the action when he/she is expected to carry on through over 10 or more repeats.
- The child may seem to lose the rhythm of the action when extra complexity is added e.g. jumping a zigzag pattern.

#### Activities for improving timing and sequencing

The child needs to improve their body awareness, postural control and praxis, and then add timing and sequencing to the actions.

- 1. Rolling smoothly across a mat.
- 2. Jumping a zig zag pattern with 2 feet together.
- 3. Maintaining the pattern to move a distance in animal walks.
- 4. Maintaining the pattern when moving around obstacles.
- 5. Learning to skip with a long rope.

#### THE ROPE NEEDS TO BE CONTROLLED BY ADULTS WHO WILL NOT SUDDENLY JERK THE ROPE AND TRIP THE CHILD

The child needs to learn to jump over a rope that is lying flat on the floor, jump forwards 2 feet together, backwards 2 feet together and sidewise two feet together.

- The child needs to learn to jump over a rope that is raised slightly above floor level, this can be raised very gradually.
- The child needs to learn to jump over a moving rope Cups & saucers is a smooth back and forth motion later snakes and ocean waves can be done rope moved more briskly. The adult can adjust the timing to ensure some success for the child.
- Jump shot: A rope with a weight on the end (quoits are easy to attach) is swung around by the adult and the children take turns to step in and jump over as it gets to them. Later several children can jump as the rope rotates.
- The child needs to stand in front of the rope (held by two adults or one adult and a fixed attachment) the rope is turned slowly over the child and he is encouraged to jump as it arrives in front of his feet.
- The child is gradually encouraged towards more rhythmic jumping.
- The child can then learn to run "through" the rope.
- Then the child can run in and jump and run out.
- Introduce songs and rhymes.

#### Learning Ball skills

Help the child to see his/her progress by keeping a tally of their personal best.

- Start with rolling a large ball to the child in prone or sitting work at catching as well as sending it back.
- Catching socks or a jumper is a good way to practise skills at home.
- Build up beanbag catching and throwing (use a variety of weights and textures of beanbag).
- Skid the beanbag across the floor to the child to catch (prone, crawling or sitting).
- Throw and catching in prone, sitting, crawling, kneeling and standing.
- Throw beanbag into a box, hoop etc in prone, sitting, crawling, kneeling and standing.
- Move up the balance positions lying (is easiest) to sitting, kneeling, standing.
- Bounce a large ball to the child, to pat back or to catch and bounce back.
- Mark a cross on the floor in front of the child's feet and help him to drop the ball onto it and catch it on rebound (children often throw a ball at an angle or far too hard for the possibility of catching it again).
- Bouncing the ball off a wall allowing it to bounce before catching it.
- Bouncing a ball off a wall and catching without a bounce.
- Introduce a variety of challenges 2 bounces, ball thrown under a leg to the wall etc.
- Balloon tapping work at the number of taps before losing control.
- Use a smaller ball for all the above; moving from two handed to one handed catching.
- Bouncing the ball can now have many more challenges: how many with right hand, with left hand, alternating left and right throws and catches, walking forward while bouncing and catching.
- Use a bat/tennis racket to bounce the ball up, down on to the floor, onto the wall.
- Throwing a ball at a target is a different skill and usually best achieved by over arm throwing. Use a big ball and then a smaller one.

#### Clapping games

- Clap own hands to music or rhythm.
- Slap own legs, knees, shoulders, hips, elbows to music or rhythm.
- Two steps e.g. clap own hands, slap thighs.
- Two step sequence: clap own hands x2, slap thighs x2...
- Three step sequences. Left hand slaps left thigh, right hand slaps left thigh, clap...
- Cross the midline: clap, cross arms and slap thighs ....
- With a partner start with simple symmetrical patterns.
- Introduce traditional songs and games.

# V. Modulation of arousal levels

#### Some children have difficulty with modulating their arousal levels:

- The child may over or under react to the sensory world in ways that are out of keeping with his/her peer group. He/she may seek some inputs and avoid others. He/she may have issues about noisy spaces like halls and corridors, range of food that is acceptable, people coming into his/her personal space or touching them lightly.
- The child may be a blitz around child or may very easily become wound up when the noise level goes up, with increased movement or simply every time there is a change in activity.
- The child who has difficulty keeping with the activity and tends to go off into a dream (space cadets).
- The child may avoid contact with the floor and walk up on tip toes as soon as they take shoes off or crawl on finger tips rather than flat hands.

NB : If you want to know more about modulation please ask the occupational therapists. If you have concerns about a particular child's sensory needs and difficulties, please discuss these with the child's parents. They will know if the child is known to the occupational therapists and physiotherapists. Referral to occupational therapy may be appropriate.

#### Activities to help the child to modulate his/her arousal level:

These children need modulating sensory input such as proprioceptive and firm tactile input:

- 1. Heavy work and movement close to the floor (as above). Crawling and weight bearing on hands is important.
- 2. Controlled movement: moving slowly in heavy work patterns e.g. being bears or inchworms.
- 3. Stopping mid movement and holding the position ("Go" and "Freeze" or "Stop"!).
- 4. Learning to relax.

# VI. Relaxing

#### Use some form of relaxation at the end of every session

- 1. The group lie still in prone for 30 to 60 seconds using music or the adult counting quietly can help.
- 2. The children tense their limbs (like a wooden toy) and go floppy (like a rag doll) and then lie still.
- 3. The children curl into a tight ball (frozen in blocks of ice) and gradually uncurl as they thaw.
- 4. Get them up quietly, a few at a time adult says who can get up next, for example everyone whose name starts with B etc. .... or all who are 6 years old...

# VII. Listening and language development

#### Some children may have difficulties with listening and language development:

Which maybe due to difficulties with arousal levels and concentration or have a hearing loss or speech and language difficulties.

The child may have difficulty understanding the instructions or may take a while to process the information.

#### Activities to improve listening and language skills

- 1. Multi sensory learning opportunities are implicit in movement sessions. While the child is moving he/she is receiving proprioception, tactile and vestibular input. This is a good time for auditory and visual learning to occur.
- 2. Make use of opportunities for encouraging listening and speeding up reaction to commands.
- 3. Make use of opportunities using movement words such as "crawl", "jump", "stay still" and spatial words such as "under", "over", through", "between".

# This programme has been devised by Joy High, Children's Occupational Therapy, Wolverhampton City NHS

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# Academic Assessment:

- All school children are monitored for academic progress by means of national scoring systems such as the National Curriculum scores and the SATS results, and by means of local systems such as the Early Years Profile. The best way to show the change made by children doing the Cool Kids programme would be by using these standard measures of development in comparing children on the Cool Kids programme with their peers who are not on the programme.
- Teachers are asked to predict the progress that a specific child may make in an academic year. This prediction could be compared to actual progress to see if the Cool Kids programme has had an impact.
- Longitudinal studies, such as Woodfield's follow up of nursery children through to year 2, would give a much better view of the long term affect of the programme.
- Any of the above must take into account other initiatives within the school that may have had an impact on the academic development of the children.
- There would be value in separating the results of children with motor difficulties from those with purely behavioural difficulties.

# Behavioural Assessment:

#### Change could be identified by means of:

- Feedback from staff parents and the children.
- Informal recording of behaviour such as notes made by teachers
- Scores on Early Years Profile or P scores.
- Formal behavioural scoring systems.

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