Progression of Water Play

Term	Water Play focus:	What could this look like? Adult input/modelling	Resources/Ideas:
1	Gross Motor & Sensory:	1. Adults talk to the children about where to find the water play and how to prepare to play with water. Model – rolling sleeves up, putting on a coat/apron 2. Adults to model pouring water from large pots into other containers using jugs etc. 3. Adults to model how to empty a container of water. This could be shown through different equipment e.g. emptying water through a sieve/water spinner 4. Adults to model water painting: Use water and brushes on walls or paper for mess-free, large-scale actions	Water – provided for the children Large tubs Jugs Sieves Aprons? Paint brushes Water tubs
2	Imagination & Role Play:	1. Adults to model how to use guttering and tubing to create pathways for water flow from one place to another. Look at how changing the hight of the guttering can affect the water flow 2. Use enhancements to model how water can push objects along the guttering. Ducks/boats/balls 3. Adults to model washing Station: Provide kitchen items (pots, plastic cutlery) for washing and talking about "cleaned" items (thinking out loud explain the difference) 4. Adults to model potion making: Mix coloured water with flowers, petals, and leaves in pots.	Tubing Guttering Stands Jugs Plastic cutlery/pots/pans 'clean' zone Water colours Leaves pots
3	Early Science & Problem Solving:	1. Model the use of the vocabulary 'Float' and 'Sink': Test collected natural items and explore (leaves, stones) in a clear container.	Leaves Stones Clear containers Outside toys

		2. Model how water can 'freeze' and 'melt' Ice Exploration: As a class leave some items in water to freeze overnight. Revisit the next day 3. Adult to model how colour mixing: Use food colouring in water bowls to see colours blend when mixed together 4. Adults to introduce sponges and cloths to introduce how water can be absorbed and the 'squeezed' out.	Water colours Sponges cloths
4	Fine Motor & Concentration:	1. Adults to introduce droppers/pipettes to transfer water from one container to another. Link back to potion making and how these can aid their play 2. Adults to introduce spray bottles: Squeeze different types of bottles (ketchup, spray) to compare spray patterns. 3. Adults to model how to use a funnel in order to fill smaller containers, trying not to spill the water 4. Water to be positioned in a big bucket away from the water tray adults to model how to carefully transfer the water	Droppers Pipettes Spray bottles Squeezy bottles Funnel Containers Large bucket/container
5	Creative Construction:	1. Adults to model how to use Sand & Water: Combine water with sand for castle building and moat digging. 2. Model how to use buckets and spades to build sand castles 3. Adults to model how to make Pool Noodle Boats: Make boats with foam sails and race them. 4. Linking to the maths adults to model how to use numbered jugs to measure out water. Looking at volume and capacity	Sand Buckets/spades Pool noodles Measuring jugs
6	Gardening	1. Model how water is needed to care for our world. Fill and pour a watering can	Watering can

Progression of Block Play



Term	Block Play Stage focus:	What could this look like?	Resources/Ideas:
1	Carrying/stacking	1 Children hold one block in each hand exploring shape and size. Children carry the blocks from place to place. 2 Children have a need to build rows and towers repeatedly – they do this before moving on to build other structures. 3 Children can haphazardly stack blocks until they fall. 4 Children can line blocks up, pushing them into an even line, building rows and towers.	• Children play adult supported games such as 'jenga' • Encourage children to make towers • Pictures of towers to be put in the block play area.
2	Bridging	• This is illustrated by children bridging or roofing the space between two upright blocks – the upright blocks need to be placed the correct distance apart to support the bridging block or the bridging block needs to be long enough. • Children can become confused at this stage if they place the upright blocks at either end of a base block and then the bridging block is not long enough when they have considered them all to be the same size. • Children who are persistent at this stage will be successful quicker than those that go back to the previous stage of building towers. • When a child has learned how to bridge they repeat it over and over again.	• Print pictures of real bridges and bridges made out of blocks to inspire the children • Have conversations with children about the distance between the 2 pillar blocks and the length of the bridging block – they have to be the right distance apart Provide pictures of bridges, block constructions and other designs for them to try and copy or modify to their own plan.

			Add paper,pens,clipboardsto help plan out and construct their idea.
3	Enclosures	1 Children use blocks to enclose space. They need to have a cognitive understanding of knowing which direction to turn the blocks to enable this to happen. Otherwise, they place the blocks end to end like a road. 2 Children need to practice to enable them to take four blocks and create an enclosure in the shape of a square. 3 When children can successfully do this they repeat it over and over, making many enclosures. 4 Children then begin to experiment with the size and shape of them and begin to connect one to the other extending size of connections from 4 to 6 ……Adult to model how to make different shapes.	• building enclosures – pictures of examples of these • Talk with children about how they need to rotate their blocks to create an enclosure. • Consider adding small tables and platforms of different levels to create stages and specific building areas. I often use pallets, tyres, mats, low to ground tables, wooden spools, tree stumps, flat boulders, wood cookies.
4	Building Complex Structures	1 Children are fascinated with balance and patterns – they use the blocks to form patterns adults model symmetrical designs. 2 Children use the blocks to express their creativity – the building techniques they have learned in the other stages are evident in their structures. 3 Children use a larger number of blocks – they incorporate towers, rows, bridges, enclosures and patterns in the same structure. 4 Children have mastered the basics of construction and design using blocks. Give their structure a name.	• Now add into the block corner pictures of real buildings – police station, school, church, castle • Stop and ask children what they are building, can they tell you how they have done this?
5	Dramatic Play with Complex Structures	1 Children tell you what they are going to build before they start – this illustrates that children have a plan for their play with the blocks being used to set the scene. 2 The buildings children make resemble familiar structures. 3 The design features of the building represent the actual structure, for example, windows or a drawbridge.	• Easy access to dramatic play props like kitchen utensils, material, saucepans, tins, recycled plastic containers, felt pieces. • Make blocks available both indoors and outdoors and allow children to

		4 Children create and add their own accessories to the structure, recycled materials (loose parts) supporting the dramatic play and their interpretation of how the world works.	select and add materials to the construction area. • Ensure there is plenty of room to build, create, extend and investigate. Think about ways you can record and display the hard work even after it needs to be packed away – consider not packing away if possible for a few days so the children can continue to revisit and extend upon the play. • Add props for road play including cars and trucks of different sizes, road signs, plants, road carpets, masking tape to make lines, velcro pieces, chalkboard blocks, figurines and people, boxes for garages. • Add props for filling, tipping and carrying. We love handbags from the op shop, small baskets, cardboard boxes (shoe boxes and tissue boxes are a fantastic size!) cars, trucks, cardboard tubes.
6	Complex structures	1 Children will start to replicate a specific structure they have seen, like a school, garage, or post office. 2 They will engage in symbolic play as they use the blocks to represent things such as planes, cars, and trains. 3 Building with blocks stimulates imaginative play, and now their structures become part of the pretend play story. Creating a show to present to others. 4 Their cooperative play is also developing, and you will often find them discussing what to build, how to build it, and who will play what role.	

Progression of Large Construction (Outdoor play)



Term	Outdoor Play (large/loose parts) Stage focus:	What could this look like?	Resources/Ideas:
1	Carrying/stacking	• Children explore the resources using their senses – they examine them closely and touch them. Discover what materials they are made out of. • Children carry the resources from place to place. • Model how to build in lines/rows/towers e.g. crates one on top of the other. • Children can haphazardly stack blocks until they fall. Adults Model they can fall and why.	• Crates • Gutters • Planks • Coloured plastic large blocks **Link to maths- count a row of resources 0-3**
2	Bridging	• This is illustrated by children bridging or roofing the space between two upright towers – the upright blocks need to be placed the correct distance apart to support the bridging block or the bridging block needs to be long enough (netting/tarpaulin) • Children can become confused at this stage if they place the upright blocks at either end of a base block and then the bridging block is not long enough when they have considered them all to be the same size. Adult model how to build a base. • Children who are persistent at this stage will be successful quicker than those that go back to the previous stage of building towers.	• Tarpaulin • Netting Build bridges, dens/stable, roads/paths/journey (without cover)

		• When a child has learned how to bridge they repeat it over and over again	
3	Enclosures	• Children use outdoor resources to enclose space. They need to have a cognitive understanding of knowing which direction to turn the resources (crates, planks) to enable this to happen. Otherwise, they place the blocks end to end like a road. • Children need to practice to enable them to take a number of resources. Adult model how to use 4 planks to create an enclosure in the shape of a square. • Children then begin to experiment with the size. Adult model e.g. 4 planks to 8 planks to make a square and different shapes of them • Children begin to connect one shape of an enclosure to the other. Adult model to add 2 squares together.	• building enclosures – pictures of examples of these • pallets tree stumps • Shape pictures? Could chalk onto the floor? • Talk with children about how they need to rotate their parts to create an enclosure.
4	Building Complex Structures	• Children are fascinated with balance and patterns – they use the resources form patterns and adult model symmetrical designs. • Children use the resources to express their creativity – the building techniques they have learned in the other stages are evident in their structures. • Children use a larger number of resources – they incorporate towers, rows, bridges, enclosures and patterns in the same structure. • Children have mastered the basics of construction and design using blocks. Give their structure a name.	• pictures of real buildings – police station, school, church, castle • Stop and ask children what they are building, can they tell you how they have done this? • Rods • Cable reels
5	Dramatic Play with Complex Structures	• Children tell you what they are going to build before they start –have a plan for their play to set the scene. • The buildings children make resemble familiar structures. • The design features of the building represent the actual structure, for example, windows or a drawbridge. • Children create and add their own accessories to the structure, recycled materials (loose parts) supporting the dramatic play and their interpretation of how the world works.	• play props like kitchen utensils, material, saucepans, tins, recycled plastic containers, • Add props for road play including cars and trucks of different sizes, road signs, figurines and people, cardboard boxes for garages.

6	Complex structures	• Children will start to replicate a specific structure they have seen, like a school, garage, or post office. • They will engage in symbolic play as they use the resources to represent things such as planes, cars, and trains. • Building stimulates imaginative play, and now their structures become part of the pretend play story. • Their cooperative play is also developing, and you will often find them discussing what to build, how to build it, and who will play what role.	

Progression of Sand play

Term	Stage focus:	What could this look like?	Resources/Ideas:
1	Exploration & Sensory Play	• Explore dry and wet sand using hands. • Fill, empty, scoop, pour. • Develop vocabulary: soft, dry, wet, smooth, full, empty. • Build confidence in using the sand area.	• **Sand** • **Pots/jugs**
2	Simple tools and cause and effect	• Use scoops, cups, funnels, sieves, spoons. • Investigate what happens when sand is poured or mixed with water. • Introduce positional language: in, on, under, beside. • Begin turn-taking and sharing resources.	• Sand • Pots/jugs • People figures to put ' on' 'in' 'under' etc
3	Construction and Imaginative Play	• Make sandcastles and simple structures. • Use moulds and containers. • Create small-world environments (e.g., animals, vehicles). • Develop storytelling and role-play language.	• Sand • Buckets • Spades • Small world objects
4	Mathematical Investigation	• Compare quantities and capacities. • Count scoops and containers. • Explore concepts of more, less, equal, heavier, lighter. • Introduce simple measuring tools.	• Sand • spoons • Ladles • Jugs

			• Balancing scales
5	Problem Solving and Inquiry	• Design and build roads, tunnels, habitats. • Test which structures stay up or collapse. • Introduce challenges: "Can you build a bridge?" • Encourage prediction and reasoning language.	• sand • mages of tunnels/various habitats/bridges
6	Independent Projects and Collaborations	• Plan and create large-scale sand constructions collaboratively. • Combine sand with loose parts, natural materials, and small-world resources. • Record ideas through drawing or discussion. • Demonstrate sustained concentration and cooperative play.	• sand • Clipboards/paper pencils • Tools for building

Progression of Small World Play

Term	Stage focus:	What could this look like?	Resources/Ideas:
1	Exploring	Explores resources independently. Acts out familiar experiences (home, school, family). Uses single figures and vehicles. Simple actions and sound effects.	• Mini mes • 'buildings' – house, school, church
2	Making links	Begins to retell familiar stories and experiences. Uses figures purposefully. Starts to link events together. Plays alongside peers.	• Traditional tales • Character puppets
3	Storytelling	Creates simple narratives with a beginning and end. Uses small world resources to represent real-life events and favourite stories. Begins to assign roles.	• Dolls house and furniture
4	Imagination	Develops imaginative storylines. Combines resources creatively. Introduces fantasy elements and adapts known stories. Engages in cooperative play with peers.	• Fabrics • Fairies/dinosaurs
5	Adding and adapting	Creates detailed environments and scenarios. Sustains play over longer periods. Uses topic-specific vocabulary and incorporates knowledge from learning themes.	• 'Work in Progress' signs
6	collaboration	Invents original narratives independently and collaboratively. Creates complex story worlds, characters and problems to solve. Uses language to explain, negotiate and reflect on play. Demonstrates sustained shared thinking.	•