

player can replace her bag and become 'it' in her place.

MOVING CO-OPERATIVELY

The playground provides sufficient space for class-size groups to engage in activities where they can experience co-ordinated movement. The important learning here is that the effectiveness of the movement is lost unless everyone plays their part. We are all important cogs in a larger wheel.

Hosepipe

The class forms a line, holding hands. The leader leads the line around the grounds, wheeling this way and that to trace out shapes, like a hosepipe being shaken. All the players in the line must follow in the steps of the leader, not taking shortcuts.

Spiral

Here the leader takes the line out into a large circle and gradually leads it into increasingly smaller loops, so that a Swiss-roll shape is formed. When the leader reaches the middle he turns to his left and leads the line out between the incoming spirals. The spiral will eventually unwind. No short cuts must be taken. This immensely satisfying trail can only be made if everyone follows in the steps of the leader and no one lets go of their neighbours' hands.

Whirlpool

Here the leader leads the line into a big circle. When this is formed, the last member of the line goes directly into the middle and stands

Activities involving co-ordinated movement help to develop co-operation.



still. The leader continues leading round, and the entire line will be wound around the person in the middle, rather like soap bubbles being drawn into a bathtub whirlpool. When the line has been fully wound the player in the middle leads out in a straight line, going under the linked arms of the players on the way out. When she is clear of the whirlpool, she traces out a large circle while the rest of the whirlpool unwinds. When the large circle is complete, a new person goes to the back and the process can be repeated.

Dealing with bullying – developing good relationships

Bullying is something that most communities will have to learn to deal with. By its very nature, bullying is a covert activity, and in schools, the grounds have often been the site for much bullying. Often it occurs when adult supervision is light and there is little to do, as at playtimes and the periods before and after school. Data collected by the Schools Health Education Unit suggests that up to a third of school pupils report being afraid of going to school at least 'sometimes' for fear of being bullied. More girls than boys report fear of bullying and it can be useful to discuss the differences between the way boys and girls bully one another.

The PSHE curriculum allows discussion of relationship matters, and also teaches the skills of communication, empathy, relationships and assertiveness that help to diminish the prevalence of bullying. The activities described in this book can contribute to an ethos where bullying is seen as a negative option for all the participants – bully, victim or stander-by. The aim is to work on aspects of the bullying phenomenon in class time so that pupils are empowered to make anti-bullying choices when they are not being supervised. The example and ethos engendered in PSHE will contribute to this, especially when the activities are experienced in the school grounds, which can then be viewed as a potentially safe environment, rather than a place to be feared.

There are simple, proactive ways in which bullying can be reduced at playtime. Many schools have introduced 'zoning', where areas are designated for particular activities – some

active, some passive. Careful design of the school grounds can ensure that these zones contain appropriate structures: quiet areas need comfortable, sheltered seating, for example. LTL has much evidence that demonstrates how such strategies have reduced bullying, boredom and vandalism, simply because the children have plenty of interesting things to do and there are safe places for groups to meet together.

Tolerance and diversity

HAVE A 'NO PUT DOWN' RULE.

This is essential to the success of all the activities in this book, and is also something that can be applied more widely to decrease the tendency towards teasing, excluding and bullying. It opens the door for behaviour which tends towards tolerance and the celebration of diversity, rather than highlighting differences as a reason for exclusion. Put-downs, such as sarcasm, mocking laughter and name-calling are destroyers of trust. The activities described in this book will simply not work in an atmosphere where people are likely to be put down for taking risks and experimenting with different behaviour. The teacher must model inclusive behaviour by never putting down pupils' efforts, and by showing appreciation and gratitude towards her pupils, even when they get things wrong. The teacher must then challenge the group to follow her example by interrupting put-downs, not by scolding the perpetrator, but by examining the feelings surrounding the incident.

EXPERIMENT WITH THE RULE 'YOU CAN'T SAY "YOU CAN'T PLAY" '.

In her book of the same name, Vivien Gussin-Paley recounts her experience of working with her kindergarten class to institute the rule 'You can't say "You can't play" '. Some of the cruellest exclusions occur when a child is told by another child or a group that they are not welcome as a playmate. This information is commonly delivered in a shrill voice or chorus that marks the recipient out as defective, often accompanied by pointing and a sneer. Children learn this formula at an early stage in their school career, and very effective it is at making other children feel bad.

Challenge the class to keep to the rule.

Discuss all the possible exceptions, e.g. 'But we already had enough players', 'But he's no good at that game', 'But she wouldn't play the part we gave her'. Remind the class that in the activities in this book a role is always found for everyone. Pose it as a problem-solving exercise to deal with issues without resorting to exclusion. Make time in circle times to discuss how the rule is working.

HAVE A SCHOOL GROUNDS INCIDENTS BOX.

This works in the same way as a bully box. Have a rule that the school grounds are there for everyone to enjoy, and no one has the right to spoil that enjoyment. Anyone noticing or experiencing behaviour that contravenes the rule should make a written report of it and place it in the box. Younger children can be helped to write their report by nominated older pupils. The report should be anonymous and not name any of the transgressors. The reports are then collected and discussed in circle time. The discussion should be structured along the lines of a joint-concern or no-blame approach, where everyone has the responsibility for suggesting workable solutions without blaming or punishing those involved.

There is no reason why a class should not discuss an incident that none of their members was involved in, at least on this particular occasion. Alternatively, teachers may intuitively judge which incidents may most profitably be discussed by their own class, or the reporter may be invited to nominate which groups should discuss the incident. It might seem that this process would be too time-consuming, but experience shows that an investment of time in the early stages actually saves much time in the long run. As the group learns the skills of negotiation and problem-solving, the rate of incidents decreases. Additionally, the teacher is saved from having to deal with tattling and counter-accusation, which is very time consuming and also very wearing.

ENCOURAGE THE USE OF SKILLS LEARNED IN PSHE.

Many of the skills learned in PSHE, such as co-operation, building relationships, listening, empathy, expression of feeling, assertive responses and conflict resolution, are precisely the same skills as those needed to counter

Council of All Beings

You are invited to represent one of the living beings of the world at a very special Council meeting!

First you must choose who you will represent. Which animal or plant calls to you? Or maybe you feel you would like to represent a mountain, a stream, a cloud or some other part of this world. Sit quietly and see which being comes into your mind.

When you have chosen, you must make a mask for yourself so that you can become that Being. Here are some ideas for mask-making:



While you are making your mask, think about the things you are going to say at the Council meeting. To help you do this, consider the following questions:

- Where you live, what you eat, what you like to do best.
- What is happening to where you live?
- What are the humans doing to you or to where you live?
- What do you think of the humans?
- What can the humans do to make life better for you?
- What can you do to make life better for the humans?

Your teacher will guide you through putting on the mask and 'becoming' the Being.

Go to the Council as your Being. Try to act and think like whatever it is you are representing. Speak clearly and with feeling as your Being, so that the humans will hear you.