

# School Sports Day Guidebook





## **Introduction**

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Sports Days are one of the most eagerly awaited days in the school calendar. It is a time for all children to participate in different sporting events for fun and enjoyment. Everyone has their own particular favourite event and once the date has been set then training commences in the playground. In this time prior to the big day a lot of new skills can be introduced and learned by children of all ages. Most schools would still use the same tried and trusted games that have been fondly associated with Schools' Sports Days such as the egg and spoon race, sack race and the tug-o-war etc.

Sports' Days can also provide an ideal opportunity to introduce new games and events in a fun non-competitive environment.

Over the past year, Meath Local Sports Partnership have visited a variety of schools on their sports days, firstly to offer any help or advice but also to encourage schools to broaden their range of activities and make it more fun for teachers, children and parents. Sometimes where a school has a large enrolment or the teaching staff is limited it is difficult to organise and plan a full calendar of events for one day.

We hope that the contents of this booklet will help you to achieve the Sports Day that is more accessible, easily organised, safe, successful and above all fun!



## **Organising the Sports Day**

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### **FIX A DATE**

Try to put a date into the school calendar as soon into the year as possible.

It is always a good idea to plan ahead and sometimes a Plan B will have to come into force depending on the Irish weather. This may be in the form of rescheduling or moving to a different venue (school hall or parish hall etc).

Staff meeting time slot booked to go through the roles and organisation of the day nearer the time to aid organisation and to raise the day's profile.

### **AVAILABLE SPACE**

Look at your playground space and judge accordingly the activities that can be used. Establish how these will be marked out (to remember for setting up) on the day. Chalk is excellent!

Remember to put ball throwing / kicking activities facing away from the crowd. Consider bean bags to reduce rolling where applicable.

Make sure that there's space for teams to stand & move without knocking over equipment.

Problem solving activities should be in a quieter area.

# Sample Timetable

	Junior	Senior	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th / 6th
9.30 - 10.15	Fun Races	Tunnel Ball	Shoot Hoops	Score Goal	Obstacle Course	Rounders	Treasure Hunt
10.15 - 11	Tunnel Ball	Shoot Hoops	Score Goal	Obstacle Course	Rounders	Treasure Hunt	Fun Races
11.15 - 12	Shoot Hoops	Score Goal	Obstacle Course	Rounders	Treasure Hunt	Fun Races	Tunnel Ball
12 - 12.45	Score Goal	Obstacle Course	Rounders	Treasure Hunt	Fun Races	Tunnel Ball	Shoot Hoops
1.15 - 2	Obstacle Course	Rounders	Treasure Hunt	Fun Races	Tunnel Ball	Shoot Hoops	Score Goal
2 - 3	Treasure Hunt	Fun Races	Tunnel Ball	Shoot Hoops	Score Goal	Obstacle Course	Rounders



## **Selection of activities**

Try to have different categories of activity to better suit everyone, different ages and the space available. A Timetable is probably the easiest way to inform staff and parents of the running schedule of the day and an easy way to control the volume of children at any one event.

The timetable opposite is a simple guide to organising your day, this is using the minimum number of games but can be changed to incorporate a larger number of classes or a wider variety of games.

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PE lessons can be used to practice for the day.

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The classroom teacher stays with their class and moves with them through the day. The stations should be manned by either teachers or parents and they should have some knowledge of the activity. This guidebook can be used as a resource in this regard.

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In most cases you will need to allot at least 40 minutes per activity taking account that it will take at least 5-10 mins to move from one activity to another and set up the activity.

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It is sometimes worth considering having a session of a different kind, maybe taking a little time out from the high intensity of sport or just having a little quiet time. Let us not forget that our Sports Days are not always eagerly anticipated by all students, they are not all lovers of sports and should also be considered. It can be a welcome relief for some children to be able to participate in an indoor session like Art and Crafts, Board Games or Reading.

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**OFFERING CHILDREN A WIDE RANGE OF DIFFERENT  
ACTIVIITES BROADENS THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND  
INCREASES THEIR PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.**



## **Preparations before the day...**

Ensure that each staff member has a copy of the timetable/plan for the day.

State which station each class/group will start at and the order of their rotation(as per timetable).

Prepare a box for each station with the equipment needed: balls, bean bags, pens / pencils and markers.



## **On the day...**

Ensure all students are wearing suitable shoes and clothes.

Encourage children to apply sun cream.

Encourage everyone to cover up with t-shirts, hats and sunglasses.  
(if necessary)

Put up signs for activity stations, direction of movement etc. Arrows up if possible.

Ensure you have setting up time before the start! Include an area for parents to watch activities.

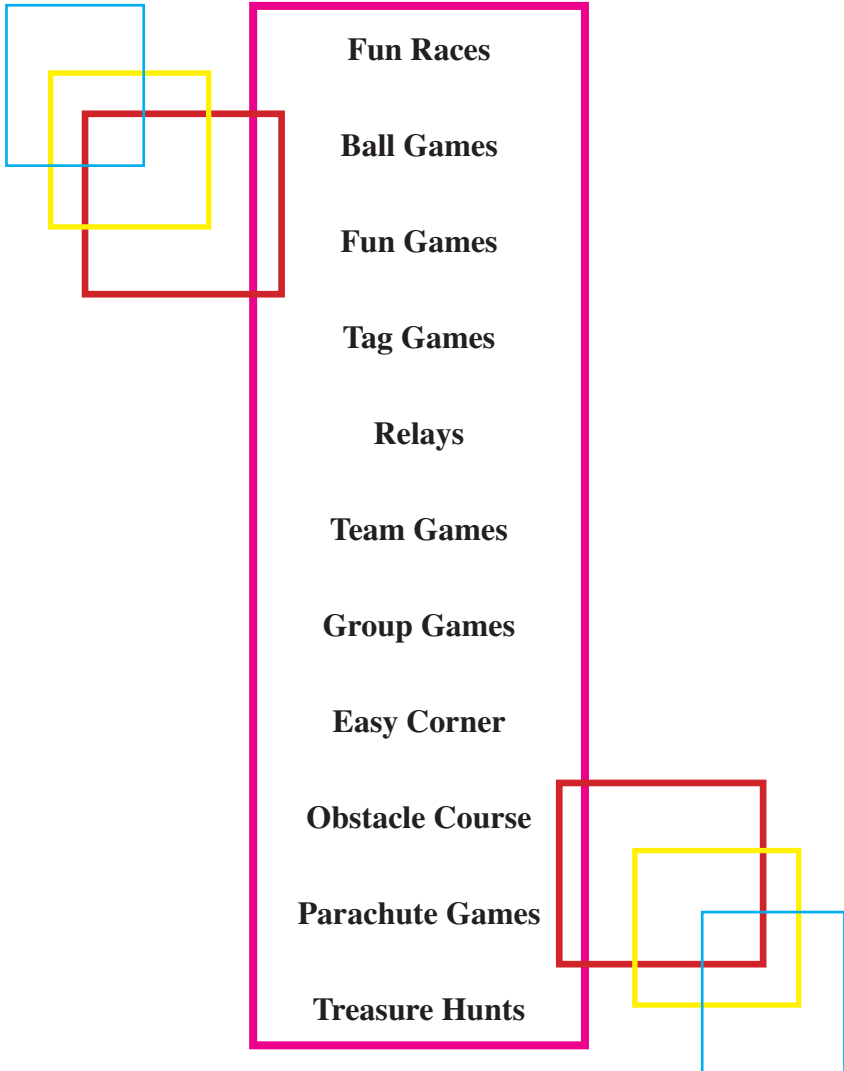
Advertise and hand out information on related sports clubs in your area.

Make any notes regarding the day whilst it is still fresh in your mind – this will be really helpful come next year (what worked well, what should to be changed, organisational tips, etc.)

# Activities

There are so many games and events that can be used for team building, learning a new skill or just for fun on your Sports Day. Here are some old favourites and also some new games for you to consider.

**Activities are broken up into the following:**



# Fun Races

## **Egg and Spoon**

Balancing potato on spoon – if it falls off one must go back to start.

## **Racket and Ball**

Balancing ball on racket and running to finish line.

## **Sack Race**

Step into a sack and run to finish line.

## **Shoe Race**

Shoes are midway mixed up, race to find matching pairs and put them on and run to finish line.

## **Three Legged Race**

Get into pairs and tie inside legs together and race to finish line.

Pyjama Race - place pyjamas midway, run to put them on and run to finish line.

## **Wheel Barrow Race**

Get into pairs, 1st child walks on hands with other child supporting their legs and runs to finish line.

## **Relay Race**

Race divided in 4 ways, each child runs one leg of race (a bean bag could be used to pass from one to another).

## **Throwing Race**

Teams of 2 or more. 1st child throws beanbag and only when it lands can 2nd child run, pick it up and throw it again towards finish line.

Winners are the first to reach the finish line.

## **Train Tracks** (see image)

One team, two mats. Teams must stay on the mat, not touching the ground and by using both mats must move from start line to finish. If mats are not available hula hoops can be used



Train Tracks

# **Ball Games**

## **Tunnel Ball (see image)**

Form two teams and put players in straight line. First person places ball over head and next player puts ball under legs and so on until it reaches the end and last player comes to front continues until original front players are back at the front again.

## **Throwing and Catching Ball**

Two teams line up, Leader of each faces the rest of team, throws ball to 1st child then they throw it back and sit down. Leader throws to 2nd child and they repeat action until all are sitting down. The leader can then be changed so that all children get a turn.

## **Shooting Hoops**

Taking turns to practice shooting ball into basketball hoop (can be adapted by using bean bag for younger age groups).

## **Scoring Goals**

Taking turns to practice kicking ball into goal, you can have teams and format like a relay counting the scores to make it more competitive.

## **Welly Throw or Ball Throw**

Child stands at base line and throws ball or welly as far as they can, the object is to see who can throw the furthest.



Tunnel Ball

# **Fun Games**

## **Sea, Ship, Shore**

Place markers in three different areas, one for Sea, one for Ship and one for Shore. Group stands together and when the leader calls for Ship players must run to ship and last player to arrive is out, very popular reaction game for all ages.

## **Rats and Rabbits**

Form two rows of players one facing one about 2 metres apart and draw a line about 4 metres behind both lines. Name on one line Rats and the other line Rabbits. When the leader shouts “Rats”, the rats have to run back to the line closer to them without being caught by the Rabbits.

## **Dishes and Domes**

Two teams, equal amount of markers are used. Half are placed facing down on the ground as Domes and half are placed upwards as Dishes. Time 30 seconds for each game. Team A tries to turn all domes into dishes while Team B tries to turn all dishes into domes. Markers are counted at end of game to see which team has most dishes or domes.

## **Circle Chase (see image)**

Form a circle and number players 1,2,3. Leader calls out a number e.g.2 and all the 2s run around the circle in the same direction trying to catch the child in front until they get back to their own spot again. Game can be adapted to be difficult by participants only being allowed to hop across space etc.



# **More Fun Games**

## **What Time is it Mr. Wolf**

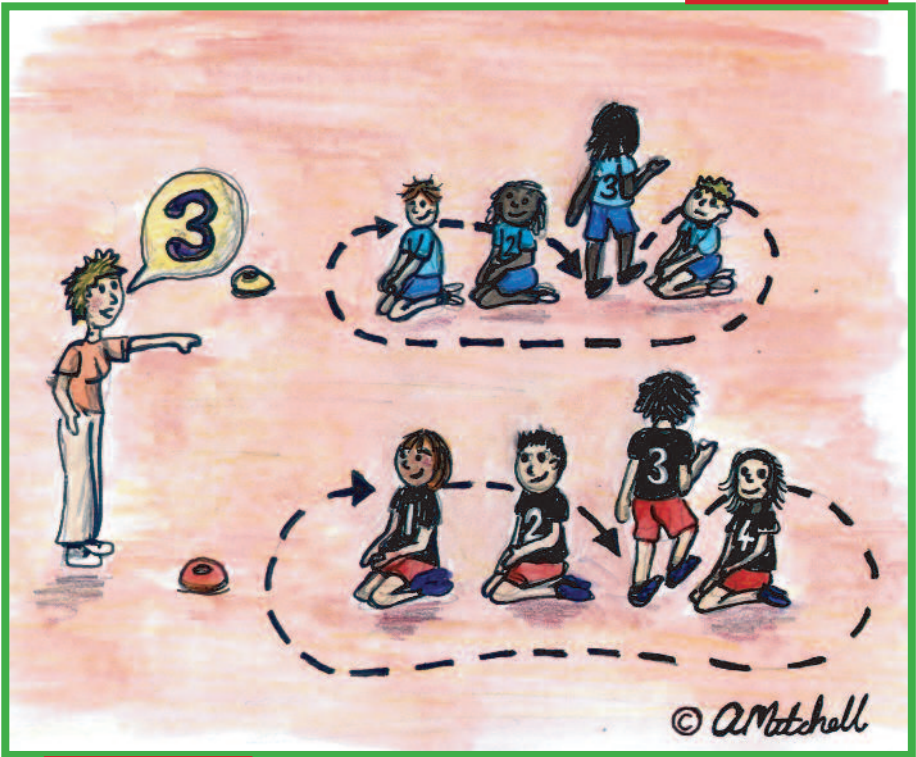
All children line up against one wall. One child is selected as Mr Wolf who then walks to the middle of the room. The children's objective is to reach the far wall. Mr Wolf's objective is to eat the children. In a loud voice the children shout out "What time is it Mr Wolf? Mr Wolf then shouts back the time. The time can be anything from 1 to 12 o'clock. The children then take the corresponding steps. At any time Mr Wolf instead of saying its ... o'clock can say "Its dinner time". All the children run back to the wall they lined up from and if Mr Wolf catches one child that child then becomes the new Mr. Wolf.

## **Lapper**

Team A is on base line and Team B is in field. First child in Team A throws or bats ball out to pitch and then runs a lap around the rest of the team, counting each lap they complete, meanwhile Team B tries to catch the ball and then line up and pass the ball overhead to each member. When last member gets the ball he runs to top of line and shouts Freeze, that's when Team A have to freeze and count up their laps. Game can be timed or continue until each person in each team has a turn. Team with the most laps wins.

## **Ladders (see image)**

Two teams sit opposite each other, each team member has a number, when the leader calls a number the player must get up and run around their team and get back to their place before their opponent. This can be progressed into a relay with team members tagging each other.



Ladders

# **Tag Games**

## **Sun and Snowballs** (see image)

One player has Yellow Bean Bag (Sun) another player has Blue Bean Bag (Snow). When the snow catches someone they turn to ice and must stay still until the Sun comes and melts them, only then can they rejoin game.

## **Cross the Space**

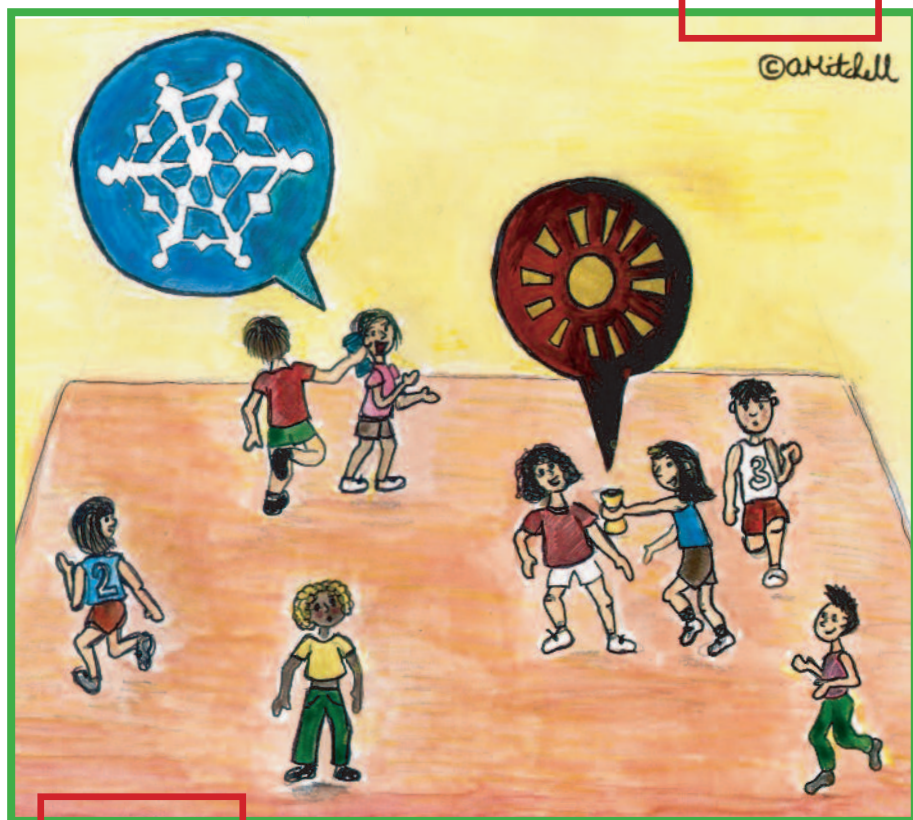
Mark a line on the left side of room and mark a line on the right side of room, players line up on one line and they must try and cross the space without being tagged by the tagger who is in between the two lines. Last one left is winner.

## **Scarecrow Tag**

One tagger. When a player is tagged they must stand like a scarecrow with arms out wide and they can only join in game when someone runs under their arm.

## **Rugby Tag**

Tagger holds rugby ball and tags players by tipping them with the ball, last one to be tagged is the winner



Sun and Snowballs

# **Relays**

## **Simple Relay**

Divide into team and run a simple relay

## **Medley Relay**

Using different ways to travel, e.g.: run, jump, skip, hop

## **Action Relay**

Add an action to simple relay, when a player reaches the cone he must pick up ball and dribble 5 times

## **Gather Relay** (see image)

Two teams. Player 1 runs and picks up a piece of equipment and comes back and hands equipment to player 2, player 2 must then run and pick up another piece and hands both on to player 3 and so on.

## **Together Relay**

Two players bring a piece of equipment between them e.g.: holding a ball from hip to hip or knee to knee

## **Double Relay**

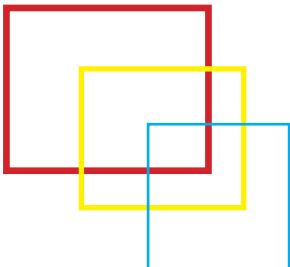
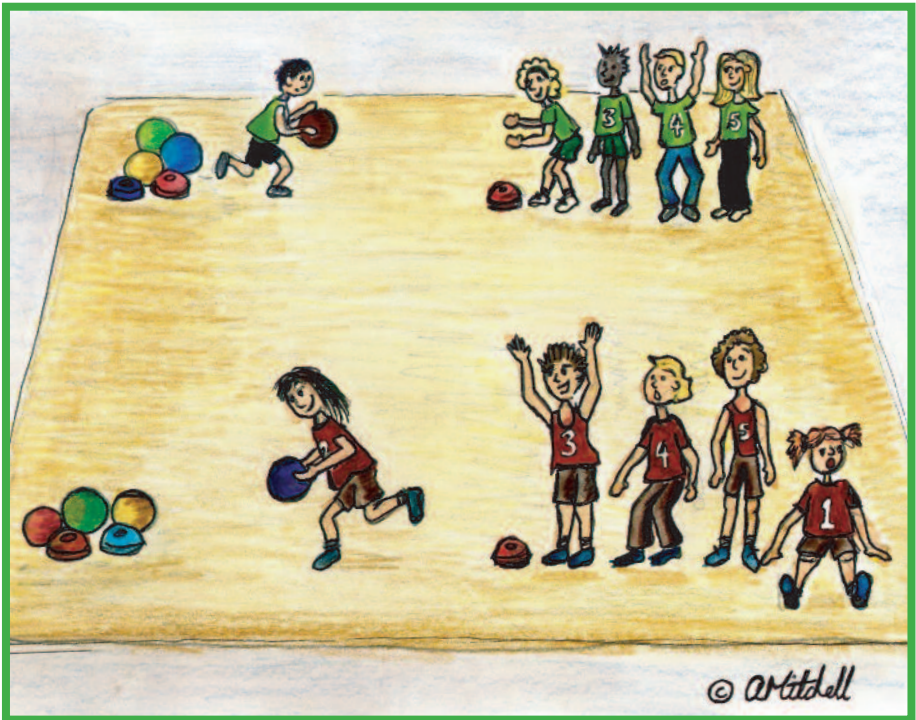
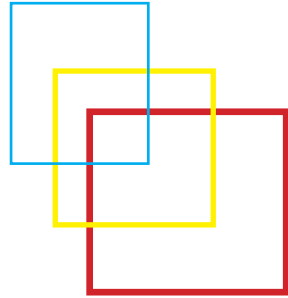
Two teams, one team performs a simple Relay and one team Tunnel Ball

## **Hockey Relay**

Each player has a hockey stick and bean bag and must balance bean bag on stick and run

## **Under and Over Relay**

Same as tunnel ball



## Gather Relay

# **Ball Games**

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## **Possession Ball**

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Two teams. Passing ball from one player to another, no moving or dribbling. The ball is given to other team if ball is dropped or leaves playing area.

## **Person Ball**

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Progression of possession ball - put a Catcher at each end and Team A have to get it to their player to score a point and vice versa. Catcher must stay at base line and is not allowed to enter the court.

## **Hoop Ball**

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Same as above putting hoops at base line rather than catchers and each hoop score counts as one point. Batterball - two teams, one at either end of the court. Place ball in the middle of court and give each player a bean bag. Players must try and hit the ball with bean bag to send it over the opponent's line to score.

## **Rounders**

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Two teams, Base team and Field Team. Base team hit ball into field and run to cones marked in area, each full run back to base scores 1 point. Field team must get ball to markers or back to base to get player out of game. Teams change sides.

## **Catch Ball**

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A net is placed between two teams and the aim for each team is to hit their opponent's ground area, the ball must be passed over the net with each throw meaning you can't pass to a team member.

## **Circle Dodge Ball**

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Form two circles, one inner and one outer. The outer circle have one soft ball and must try and hit the inner circle from the knee down to get that player to join their team. The winner is the last player left in the inner circle.

# Group Games

## **Skipathon**

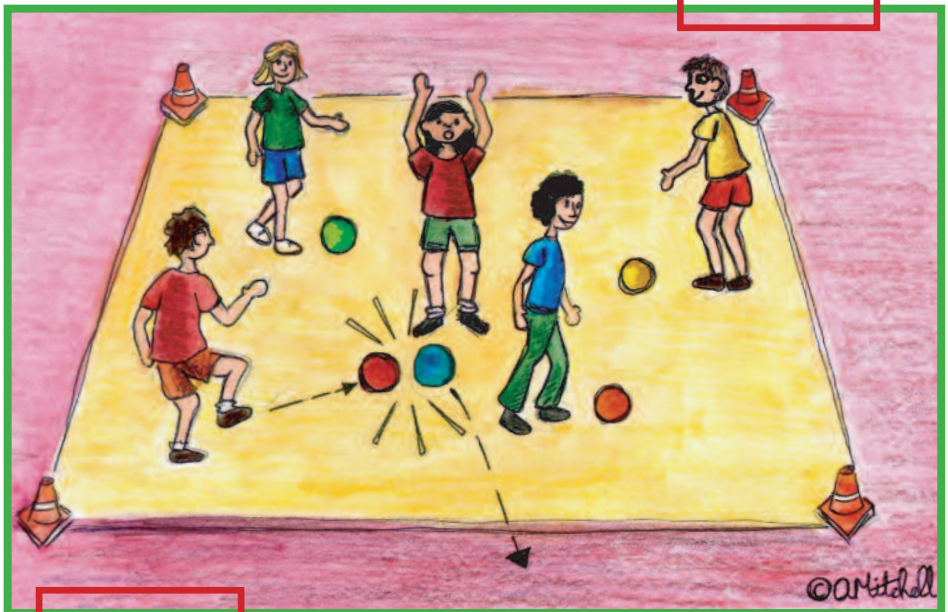
Time limit – pass on to next child.

## **Tug o War**

Two teams. Object is to pull the other team across the line.

## **Dribble and Knockout**

Players in marked area. Each player has a football and must dribble own ball and try to knock out opponent's ball. If ball is knocked out then player must leave court. Last one out wins. Can also be played with basketball, hockey stick and ball.



**Dribble and Knockout**

# Easy Corner

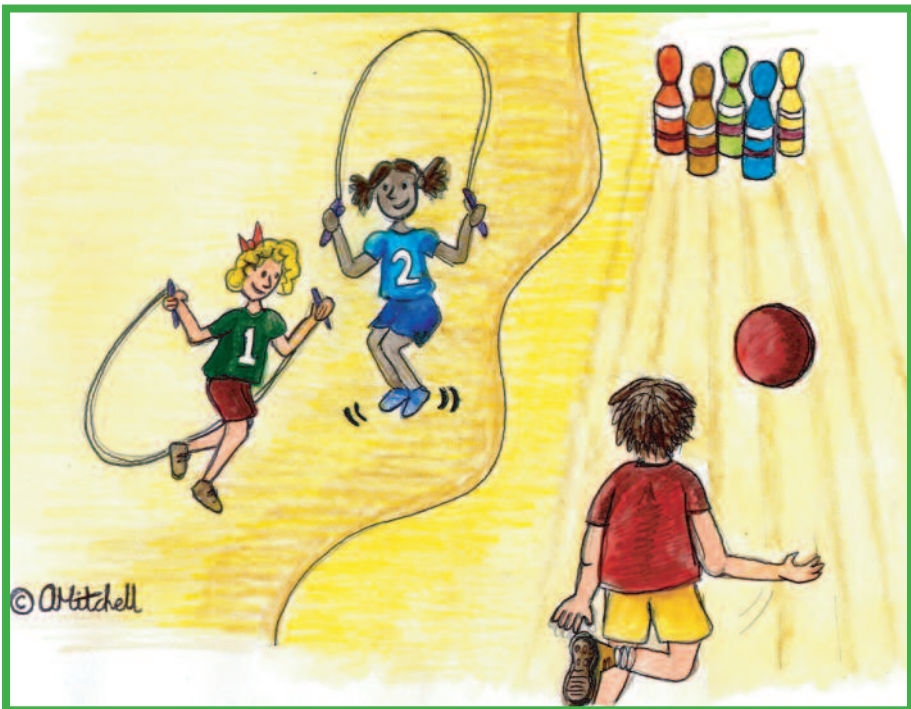
Giant 5in a row

Skipping Ropes

Target Ring

Crazy Golf

Skittles



Skipping Ropes/Skittles



## **Obstacle Course**

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This has unlimited scope depending on the equipment available. Using hurdles, cones, balls, skipping ropes, or gym equipment you can introduce running, skipping, hopping, side skip, side jump, aiming, throwing, dribbling and kicking.

Long distances required to keep players moving. Circular course an option to keep players moving at all times. Can also be made more competitive by introducing two courses and having a relay race or individual times taken to see can each player improve on their own time .



## **Parachute Games**

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Always a popular activity for all age groups. Can be used with songs and rhymes for younger children.

Add a soft ball and get children to move ball around without it leaving the parachute.

Add several small light balls and divide into teams. Team A holds the parachute and shakes it trying to get all balls off while Team B picks up ball from ground and places them back on the parachute again. Timed and winning team have the least balls/bean bags remaining.

Cat and Mouse, where all the children hold the parachute except the cat and mouse. The cat chases the mouse in and out through children under the parachute. When the mouse is caught another two children are chosen.



## **Treasure Hunts**

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This is a fantastic game for children to work individually or as part of a small group. It is suitable for children of all ages by just making a few small changes and can be adapted to suit the area available. A little forward planning is all that is needed and the format can be kept and used each year.

**Here are some examples of some of the treasure hunts available:**

### **Photo Hunt**

This hunt is aided by close-up photos of the surrounding area of the school, some may be difficult to recognise and may take some time to find the location. Beside each photograph the pupils must write the location and description of what they find.

### **Clues Hunt**

This hunt would consist of clues given out and the children have to locate the object and find a number taped to it, the pupils would have to collect the numbers/letters in sequence.

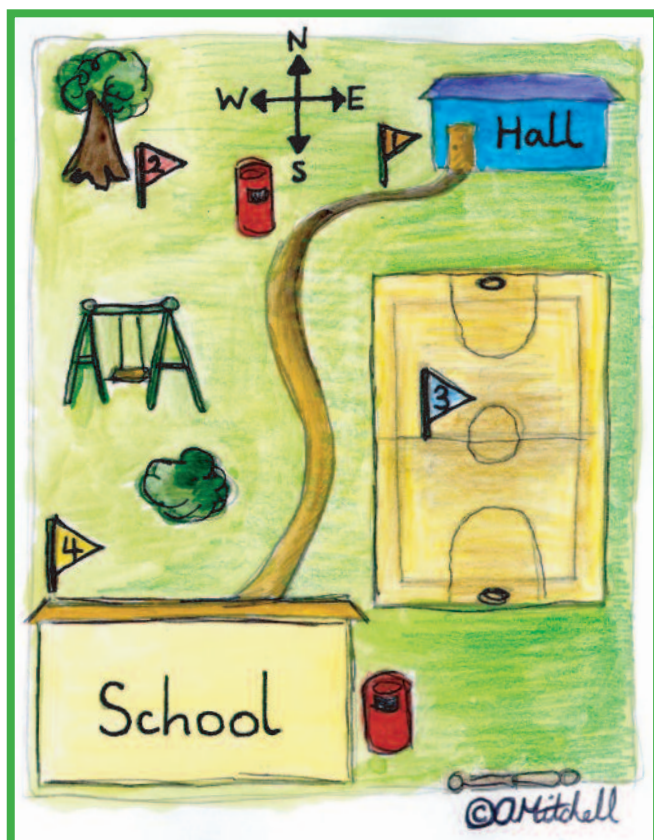
e.g.

North Facing Basketball Net (with letter R)  
In playground, facing North, third tree from left. (letter I)  
Side of School, fourth rock from right hand side in garden)  
(letter G)  
Side gate of school. (letter H)  
Fourth window from left at rear of school. (letter T)



## Map and Markers Treasure Hunt

1. At the start of the hunt each team is given a Team Card with their team name (in this case it is a letter or another identity label e.g. colour, animal etc.) and a map of the area with all the markers on it.
2. A map of the area for the treasure hunt (e.g. school playground or hall) is drawn up with markers included on the map. See example 1. The markers indicate the location of a grid card.

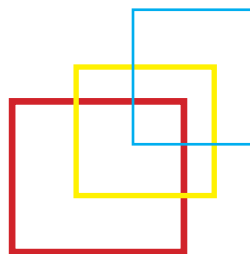




3. Each of the markers outlined on the map are numbered. In this example there are four grid cards so four markers numbered 1-4.
4. On the Grid Cards located at every marker there are numbers opposite each team's name. ( Example 2) This indicates the number of the marker which the team must first locate.

#### Example 2: **Grid Card**

Team A	4
Team B	2
Team C	3
Team D	1



5. At each marker, the team's next marker will be identified on the grid card at this location.
6. The grid cards can be taped to items or even hidden to make the hunt a little trickier. The important thing is that the grid cards are secure so that no team can accidentally remove a grid card.
7. Looking at their map Team A would go to the marker number 4 on the map. (Example 3) Once they locate the grid card they look for their own team name and the corresponding number, the number 2. (Example 4)

Example 3: Team A's Team Card

TEAM A	4
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Example 4: Grid Card at Marker 4

Team A	2
Team B	4
Team C	1
Team D	3

8. They write this number on their team card and then proceed to the location indicated on the map as marker number 2.
9. Again at marker number 2 they will find another grid card with their team name and a number opposite. Again they will put that number on their Team Card and proceed to that numbered marker.
10. When Team A have all of their Team Card filled out (Example 5) they bring it back to the start, the teacher can check to see that the sequence is correct (example 6), to make sure the team went to all of the markers in order.

Example 5: Team A's Team Card

TEAM A	4	2	1	3
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Example 6: Teacher's Card

TEAM A	4	2	1	3
TEAM B	2	4	3	1
TEAM C	3	1	4	2
TEAM D	1	3	2	4

This example is a simplified version of the hunt. It can be expanded to include as many teams or as many locations as required.



**Compiled by Meath Local Sports Partnership**

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