Accessible playground games for children who are visually impaired, sighted, or blind.

A risk assessment should be completed for all games prior to introduction.

If games are to be played in the playground a playground supervisor may be able to act as play facilitator to teach the games in the first instance –

Apart from game no.18 none of the games require equipment (other than maybe a coat/hat/glove) and all are intended for children to play without adult intervention after initial instruction. It might be beneficial to the VI child if he/she is taught separately initially so that he/she can then help to teach the others it afterwards.

It is helpful if all participants can call out their name at the start of a game so that the VI child knows exactly who is playing, the child should also be informed when each child is out and who the winner is.

Back Tapper

The goal is for each participant to correctly guess the person who tapped his back.

To start the game, choose someone to be 'it'. 'It' breaks the group into 2 halves – the 'tappers' and the 'guessers'. 'it' then instructs the 'guessers' to face the wall, place both hands in front touching the wall and stamp their feet until they feel the hand of a tapper on their shoulder. Each 'tapper' first puts a hand on to one of the guessers shoulder to indicate that the guesser can stop banging his feet then the 'tapper' taps out his own first name on to the back of their chosen guesser. The tappers then return to the line (make sure you don't all stand opposite the person whose back you tapped). 'It' then calls for the guessers to turn around and each in turn names the person they think tapped their back. If they are correct, the tapper stands by the wall, taking the place of the child who guessed his identity. The game then starts again.

Big Chief

The group (at least 10 children) choose one person to be "it" and one person to be the chief. All players then stand in a circle, standing as far away as they can from each other but holding hands. The "it" is to sit in the middle of the circle with head in lap so he cannot see the others. The chief who has also joined the circle with those that are holding hands then acts out 3 short audible movements. Examples are stomping feet 3 times or whistling 3 times etc. All other players must then in turn do what the Chief has done. A person opposite the chief in the circle indicates to 'it' that they have finished the round and then "it" stands up and walks to whoever he thinks is chief. If 'it' guesses

correctly then he gets to be ‘it’ again but the chief is changed. If ‘it’ guesses incorrectly the chief gets to be ‘it’ next.

Button, Button, Who's Got the Button?

The children all stand (or sit) in a circle with their hands cupped. One child, who is 'it' takes a button or equivalent object and goes around the circle, pretending to put the button in everybody’s hands one by one, each child saying their name as ‘it’ touches their hands. In one person's hands ‘it’ actually drops the button, though ‘it’ continues to put his/her hands in the other's so that no one knows where the button is except for the giver and receiver. Each time ‘it’ has pretended to put the button in a child’s hands the child must close the cup and hold it that way as if they are really cupping the button.

‘It’ then joins in the circle and each child starting from the one on ‘it’s’ left has a guess at who has the button. Before each child has a guess ‘it’ says "Button, button, who's got the button?" The child guessing replies with their choice eg: "Billy has the button!"

When it comes to the turn of the child who has the button to guess who has the button he/she says another child’s name

Once the child with the button is finally guessed, the child that has guessed correctly gets to be ‘it’ for the next round.

Cat & Mouse

Children sit in circle with two different shaped/textured objects (could even be a hat and a glove) that can be called 'cat and 'mouse'. Before the start of the game the visually impaired child is given the cat and the mouse so that he can determine which is which. The mouse is then passed around the circle and when halfway round the cat is sent around to catch the mouse. Cat can also change direction (announce ‘cat changing direction’), in which case the mouse could also change direction to avoid the cat. Each child should meow when he is passed the cat and squeak when he is passed the mouse. Whoever is holding the mouse when the cat catches it is out.

Chicken’s got the Measles

Children stand in a circle with their legs apart and sing the following rhyme: 'Chicken's got the measles, the measles, the measles. Chicken's got the measles, inside out.' The children jump from legs apart to legs crossed along with the rhyme, those with their legs uncrossed at the end of the rhyme are out and the song starts again until there is one child remaining.

Chinese Whispers

At least 10 children line up holding hands with arms stretched out so that they can whisper to their immediate neighbour but not be heard by any players further away. The player at the beginning of the line thinks of a phrase and whispers it as quietly as possible to her/his neighbour. The neighbour then passes on the message to the next player. The passing continues in this fashion until it reaches the player at the end of the line who calls out the message he or she received. If the game has been 'successful', the final message will bear little or no resemblance to the original because of the cumulative effect of mistakes along the line.

Dog and Bone

One person is chosen to be ‘it’ and one person is chosen to be the ‘dog’. The dog covers his eyes (or puts a coat over his head) and stands with legs apart. The rest of the children hold hands and stand in a circle around the dog. ‘It’ then places a 'bone' (pencil/ball etc) on the floor under the ‘dog’s’ legs and then stands outside the circle. Whilst guarding the bone the dog has to periodically growl. ‘It’ who is outside the circle taps the back of one child in the circle to tell him to go and try get the bone. The child then tries to sneak up and take the bone. The dog has to bark in the direction he thinks the child is approaching, If the dog barks in the correct direction (i.e. towards the child creeping up), then the child must return to the circle. If a child gets the bone he returns to the circle with the ‘bone’ and everyone in the circle put their hands behind their backs. ‘It’ then declares that the bone has been taken. If the dog cannot guess who has taken his/her bone, then the person who took the bone is the new ‘dog’. If the dog guesses correctly he gets to be the ‘dog’ again. In any case a new ‘it’ is chosen.

Elves, Wizards, Giants

Two children hold hands, the children squeeze hands together 3 times - on the 3rd squeeze each child immediately makes a noise like an elf, wizard or giant. Be sure to demonstrate what each one sounds like (see below) before you begin.

The giant beats the elf, the wizard beats the giant, the elf beats the wizard.

Elf - Make "Eeking" sound.

Wizard - say Alakazam

Giant - Make growling / roaring sounds.

Farmer's in the Dell

Children stand in circle holding hands. A 'farmer' is chosen to stand in middle. The circle then goes around whilst singing 'the farmer's in the dell, the farmer's in the dell, hi ho the dairy-o the farmer's in the dell'. The farmer wants a wife the farmer wants a wife, hi ho the dairy-o the farmer wants a wife'. Farmer then chooses a child from the circle to be the wife. The song continues substituting wife for farmer. Wife wants a child. (Wife chooses child from circle), child wants a nurse (child chooses nurse from circle) , nurse wants a dog etc. Whilst patting the dog's back the children sing 'we all pat the dog, we all pat the dog hi ho the dairy-o we all pat the dog'.

Going Hunting

All children stand in a circle. One person in the circle will start the game off by saying, I'm going shopping and I'm going to buy an apple. The next person will have to repeat what the person next to him said and then add something new from the next letter in the alphabet - e.g. I'm going shopping and I'm going to buy an apple and a ball. You keep this going around the circle until one person cannot remember what he is buying. That person is out and you see if the next person can complete the phrase. You don't necessarily have to choose the topic to be something that you would buy whilst shopping -it could be anything eg I'm going to school and I'm going to learn about ants, buildings etc, etc.

Guess Who

This game is for six or more players.

Every one holds hands and stands in a circle around 'it' who stands in the middle.

'It' covers his eyes.

''It' turns around five times and then has to walk to a person in the circle and guess who it is by feeling their hair

If 'it' is guessed correctly then 'it' stays in the middle for another go, otherwise the person who was not guessed correctly gets to be 'it'.

Ha Ha

Children lay down side by side on the ground (children can remain standing in a line but they are not usually as ticklish if stood up). The first person lays the back of his hand on to the next persons stomach and that person lays the back of his hand on the stomach of the next to him and so on. The first person in line is to laugh one HA. The next person in line is to laugh HA HA (two times). The third person is HA HA HA and so on. Any person that forgets how

many HA HA's he should be saying is out of the game and must get up, the space is filled in. The last one left in wins.

I Hear with my Little Ear

'It' starts by listening for the sound of something that everyone will be able to hear and says "I hear with my little ear, something beginning with and chooses the first letter of what he can hear – lets say B for example. The other players listen and suggest things it might be: "bike" (no), "bus" (no), "baby" (no), "bird" - yes. The person who guesses correctly gets to choose the next sound.

If all guesses have been exhausted then 'it' tells what the sound actually is and he has another go. If the guesser guesses the sound correctly he can be 'it' for the next game. Each person has a limit of being 'it' three times in a row.

London Bridge is Falling Down

Two children form an arch with their outstretched arms/fingers and a line of children (each with one hand on the shoulder of the child in front) process underneath it and round in a circle as they sing the rhyme. "London Bridge is falling down, falling down, London bridge is falling down, my fair lady. Here comes the candle to light you to bed, here comes the chopper to chop off your head with a chip chop chip chop last man's head".

When it gets to chip chop chip chop the two bring their arms down over the children's heads as they pass underneath until the last one is trapped in them on "last man's head" – this child is out. The winner is the last person in the line to still be 'in'.

Memory Game

'It' collects approx 8 recognisable things found in the playground (leaf, stone, twig, snack wrapper, pocket toy) etc and lays them on a wall/ the floor/ in a line or on a tray for all participants to see or feel. Once all participants have identified all of the items they walk 5 paces away from the wall to form a line and 'it' places a coat over the items so that the participants can no longer see them. When their name is called out by 'it' they have to walk the 5 steps forward again to 'it' who is by the wall/line of items and the participant then has to say what was included, in the correct order. The participant that lists the most objects in order is the winner. You can break ties by asking the participants to list the items in reverse order.

Mother / Father May I

A child is chosen to be Mother or Father. The object of the game is for the children to try to get to the Mother/Father. The Mother/Father stands facing a wall so that they cannot see the other children, all other children stand in a

line at least 6 metres away. The 1st child in the line shouts ‘Mother May I’ and the leader says ‘yes do a’ and chooses 1 of these moves for the child to do - a tomato/ a rabbit /a giant step/ a baby step/ a train/ a kangaroo, the child then has to 'do' that move and when he has done it the next child in line shouts ‘Mother May I’. The winner is the child that first reaches the line that the Mother/Father is on.

Tomato (1 step backwards)

Rabbit (1 hop)

Giant step (1 big step)

Baby step (1 small step)

Train (child steps forwards and says choo choo until leader says stop)

Kangaroo (1 jump forwards)

Name that Tune in 3

One child (‘it’) starts by thinking of a tune and then lets the other participants know the genre (not the actual tune) – pop song, film, advertisement, cartoon etc. ‘it’ then hums whistles or taps out the tune, the other participants get up to 3 guesses each and if it is not guessed correctly after everyone has had 3 guesses ‘it’ gets to choose another tune. If the tune is guessed by one of the participants then he is the next one to be ‘it’. Each child has a limit of performing 3 tunes in a row.

Party Ark

This game requires some preparation

Prepare some cards with the name of an animal (using Braille and large print if needed). There should be two cards for each animal. Choose someone to be the leader. The leader puts the animal cards in a hat. The leader asks each child to pick out a card, but to keep the name of their animal a secret - the children walk around the room/playground making animal noises, until they meet their ‘partner’ (who should be making the same animal noise).

Radio

At least 6 children sit or stand in a circle. A leader is selected who must choose two numbers that will be repeated twice and start the game. If the leader chooses 2 and 9, then the leader must start the game by saying 2-2-9-9 (said two, two, nine, nine). Then the person to the left of the leader will

repeat the second number for his/her first number and pick his or her number (9-9-4-4) The next player will then pick his/her number

(4-4-7-7) and pass the combination on to the next player. A player is "out" when the player forgets the last number of the player before him or her.

Red Letter

Choose one person in the group to be the 'letter-picker' - this person will shout out all the letters. The letter-picker stands near a wall. The others gather in a horizontal line opposite and at least 6 metres away.

The letter-picker chooses one letter of the alphabet to be the Red Letter, also telling the other children what it is.

After asking if everyone is ready, the 'letter-picker' calls out a letter of the alphabet. This can be any letter, including the Red Letter. If the letter is not the Red Letter, the participants (not the letter-picker) take x number of paces forward, depending on the number of that letter in their full name. For example if the letter called out was 'E', and one person had four 'E's in their name, that person would take four paces forward. On the other hand, if the Red Letter chosen was 'E' and a person starts to move forward, they have to return to the beginning. Therefore, the objective is to get to the letter-picker first, and to remember not to move on when the Red Letter is called.

The first person to get to the same end as the letter-picker gets the honour of being the letter-picker in the next game.

Other twists on the game may include:

Doing a forfeit if you move forward when the Red Letter is called

Instead of stepping forward, hop, skip, or jump.

Barring middle or surnames from the game

Having the Red Letter as a letter that is in nobody's name, or is not likely to be called out

Scarecrow

One person is chosen to be the crow – he stands away from the rest of the group whilst they choose another child to be ‘the lion’ – the crow must not find out who has been chosen to be ‘the lion’. All of the other children are scarecrows.

The scarecrows and the lion stand in a line against the wall. The crow then walks along the line and taps each person on the shoulder saying either ‘you are a scarecrow’ or ‘you are the lion’, if the crow is correct i.e. he says you are

a scarecrow and the child is a scarecrow then the scarecrow is out, if the crow taps the lion and says you are a scarecrow then the lion makes a loud roaring sound and the crow is out, in this case the ‘lion is the next crow. If the crow guesses correctly who ‘the lion’ is he gets another turn at being the crow. In any case a new ‘lion’ must be chosen.

Shoe Shuffle

This game is for between 4 and 8 children, one child needs to be ‘it’. Each child sits on the floor in a backwards circle and must not at any point look behind them into the circle. Each child then takes off one of their shoes and puts it into the pile in the middle of the circle. The shoes are then jumbled up by everyone putting their hands behind them into the circle of shoes. When the shoes have been jumbled up the signal is given by ‘it’ to go. If a child collects the wrong shoe from the circle he must put it back into the circle without looking and search again for his own shoe. The first person to find their shoes by touch and put them on is the winner.

Squeak Piggy Squeak

To play the game, one player is chosen to be the 'farmer'; the others are the ‘piggy’s’. The farmer sits in the middle of the circle with his head in his lap so he cannot see the others. The piggy’s then sit in a tight circle around the farmer. (All players could stand instead but then the farmer must cover his eyes or put a coat/jumper over his head).

One child puts a hand on the farmer’s head or shoulder and the farmer says ‘squeak piggy squeak’ The piggy then squeaks and the farmer has to guess the name of the player who squeaked. If the farmer guesses correctly then the farmer remains and the next child (going clockwise) gets to put the hand on the farmer. If the farmer guesses incorrectly the piggy becomes the farmer and the circle reforms (so that they are not all sat in the same place).

123 Dragon

Everyone makes a line with each player holding the shoulders of the person in front of them. This line of children is the ‘dragon’. The person in the front is the "Head."

The person at the back of the line is the "Tail." To start the game the tail shouts "1,2,3 dragon." And then the head leads the line round to try and catch the tail, but the line must stay joined together the whole time.

If the dragon breaks, the dragon dies, and the head moves to the end of the line and becomes the tail. The second person in line now becomes the head. The head is more likely to catch the tail if he keeps the line moving at a walking rather than running pace and weaves the dragon to confuse the tail.

If the head catches the tail (the person at the end of the line) that person is out.