Games Curriculum Objectives – EYFS to Year 2

Progression and continuity in object control, movement, sending/receiving, invasion, target, striking/fielding, tactics and teamwork

Curriculum rationale: Games are taught through a broad range of playful, inclusive and progressively challenging activities. Children first develop movement, object-control and cooperation skills, then learn to apply them under increasing pressure, make simple tactical decisions and work effectively with others.

Aspect	EYFS- Reception	Year 1	Year 2
Moving with control & spatial awareness	Move safely in different directions, pathways and speeds. Stop and start on a signal. Negotiate space and obstacles, avoiding others. Explore running, jumping, hopping, skipping, dodging and changing direction.	Move into space and away from others with increasing control. Change speed and direction. Stop safely and respond to simple signals. Use movement skills in small games and activities.	Move with greater fluency and awareness of space. Accelerate, decelerate, dodge and change direction to support an attacking or defending role. Recognise where space is and move into it purposefully.
Sending: throwing, rolling & kicking	Explore rolling, throwing, kicking and pushing a range of objects towards people, spaces and targets. Use two hands and one hand in varied ways. Begin to adjust force and direction.	Throw, roll and kick towards a target or partner with increasing accuracy. Use underarm and simple overarm throws. Kick a stationary ball with control and send it into space.	Select an appropriate sending action and vary force, direction and height. Throw/kick accurately to a partner or target and send into space away from a defender. Begin to pass on the move.
Receiving: catching, stopping & controlling	Catch or stop large, slow-moving objects with increasing success. Trap/receive a ball with hands, feet or body as appropriate. Track an object visually.	Catch a large or appropriately sized ball with two hands. Stop a rolling ball with hands or feet. Receive from a partner and return accurately.	Catch with increasing consistency, including a range of passes. Control a ball with hands or feet and move into a suitable receiving position. Receive while moving where appropriate.
Bouncing, dribbling & ball control	Explore bouncing, tapping and carrying a ball. Attempt to control a ball with hands or feet. Follow simple movement pathways while handling an object.	Bounce and catch a ball. Dribble with feet over a short distance; keep the ball close and under control. Change direction with support.	Dribble with hands or feet while looking up intermittently. Change speed/direction, protect the ball from a passive defender and maintain control while moving.
Target games & accuracy	Roll, throw, kick or push objects towards large, close targets. Explore aiming at different sizes and distances. Celebrate success and persevere with challenge.	Aim accurately at targets using rolling, throwing, kicking or pushing. Explore how changing force and direction affects success. Take turns and follow simple rules.	Choose an appropriate technique and target. Vary force, angle and direction to improve accuracy. Begin to recognise where a target is easiest to attack.
Striking & batting	Explore hitting or tapping a stationary ball/object with hands, bats or safe striking equipment. Develop hand-eye coordination and awareness of personal space.	Strike a stationary ball from a tee or self-feed with a hand, bat or racket. Send the ball into a safe space and begin to move after striking.	Strike with increasing control and accuracy from a tee or simple feed. Aim into space and begin to choose where to hit. Combine striking with running/scoring opportunities.
Pushing / stick & equipment control	Explore pushing, pulling and guiding objects safely with hands and, where appropriate, child-sized equipment. Follow safety rules and maintain personal space.	Use a stick or similar implement safely to push/guide a ball. Keep the implement under control and send the ball towards a target or partner.	Control and guide a ball with increasing accuracy using an appropriate implement. Change direction, pass to a partner and use space while maintaining safe control.
Invasion games: attacking & defending	Play simple chasing, avoiding and team games. Begin to understand taking turns, sharing space and following a simple rule. Explore getting past a defender or protecting a space/object.	In small-sided games, begin to attack by moving towards space and passing/sending to a teammate. Begin to defend by marking space or an opponent and trying to intercept.	Use simple attacking and defending principles: create space, support the ball carrier, mark, track, intercept and recover. Make simple decisions about when to pass, move or defend.
Striking/fielding & running games	Explore striking, running to safe places, retrieving and returning objects. Follow simple rules and take turns.	Strike a ball into space and run to a safe area/marker. Retrieve and return a ball with a partner/team. Begin to understand scoring and simple fielding roles.	Strike for distance or placement, run between safe areas and make simple decisions about when to run or stay. Field, retrieve and return efficiently; work together to stop scoring.

Teamwork, cooperation & competition	Take turns, share equipment and play cooperatively. Begin to follow agreed rules, cope with winning/losing and show sensitivity to others.	Work with a partner or small group, take turns and follow simple rules. Demonstrate fair play and encouragement. Experience competition against self and others.	Communicate and cooperate effectively in small teams. Show respect for opponents, officials/teachers and teammates. Adapt behaviour to support team success and respond positively to outcomes.
Rules, tactics & decision-making	Understand and follow one or two simple rules. Respond to stop/go signals and simple changes to a game.	Understand the basic purpose and rules of a game. Make simple choices such as where to move, who to pass to or where to aim.	Explain and apply simple attacking/defending tactics. Choose between two or more options and begin to recognise why a decision was effective.
Evaluation, vocabulary & improvement	Talk about what went well using words such as fast, slow, near, far, hard, soft, accurate, fair and safe. Identify something they would like to try again.	Use basic games vocabulary: pass, receive, target, defend, attack, space, score, throw, catch, kick, dribble. Identify one success with support.	Use increasingly precise vocabulary: accuracy, control, space, support, mark, intercept, tactic, decision. Explain a simple improvement and apply it in the next attempt/game.

Suggested progression model

Stage	Core progression	What this means in practice
EYFS	Explore → control → cooperate	Develop broad movement and object-control experiences; learn to move safely, share space, take turns and enjoy active play.
Year 1	Control → apply → play	Apply fundamental skills in simple, small-sided games and begin to understand space, simple rules and basic attacking/defending ideas.
Year 2	Select → decide → improve	Select appropriate skills, make simple tactical decisions, communicate with teammates and evaluate/improve performance.