Construction Common Play Behaviours Progression

Lifting, carrying and moving

As children move blocks, you may notice they are exploring a particular schema. As their physical and cognitive skills develop, their movement of blocks and construction kits shows how their movements link to a plan they have in mind.

Emerging

I can pick up large blocks

I can carry blocks while walking and squat down to put them in a new position

Developing

I can pick up smaller blocks using smaller movements

I can turn to place blocks in different positions

I can use bags, boxes and other containers to carry blocks and move them

Extending

I can pick up and move small pieces using fingers to reposition and place blocks carefully

I can move blocks using different resources such as pulleys, string and fabric to move them with a plan in mind

Typical age expectations

- = N1
- = N2
- = Reception
- = Y1

Construction Common Play Behaviours Progression

Stacking and lining up

As children use blocks and construction kits to build lines and towers, they explore cause and effect and forces. They develop resilience as they rebuild when a tower falls.

Emerging

- I can place blocks of a similar size on top or next to each other
- I can build a tower and knock it down

Developing

- I can join construction pieces by pushing them together to make towers or lines
- I can place blocks of different sizes to create towers or lines

Extending

- I can use my spatial awareness to plan and build towers that are tall and stable
- I can use resources to create longer lines that go around objects

Typical age expectations

- = N1
- = N2
- = Reception
- = Y1

Construction Common Play Behaviours Progression

Bridging

Building bridges supports the development of physical skills, including coordination and motor planning.

Emerging

I can place one block on top of another two to create a bridge

Developing

I can combine multiple pieces to create a bridge

Extending

I can include a bridge alongside other arrangements

I can build a bridge with a plan and alter it if needed such as making it wider

Typical age expectations

- = N1
- = N2
- = Reception
- = Y1

Construction Common Play Behaviours Progression

Enclosing

Making enclosures may be an exploration of a schema. These constructions, as with others, become more intricate and carefully planned as children's skills develop.

Emerging

- I can use blocks and construction toys of the same size to make simple enclosures
- I can place pieces together focusing on making one enclosue

Developing

- I can make enclosures using different sized pieces
- I can make multiple enclosures using different sized pieces

Extending

- I can make a purposeful enclosure, choosing which pieces I need to use to make it according to it's purpose
- I can include enclosures alongside other arrangements such as towers, bridges, and lines in my constructions

Typical age expectations

= N1

= N2

= Reception

= Y1

Construction Common Play Behaviours Progression

Making patterns

Making patterns supports physical skills and spatial awareness. This also provides opportunities to communicate and build vocabulary linked to shape, size, and pattern. Consider ways to support communication for all children; for example, include communication boards and consider core signs and vocabulary to be used in this area.

Emerging

I can explore blocks and communicate my interest in their size through what they make, gesture and words

Developing

I begin to explore using towers, lines, bridges and enclosures together

I can describe what I have built and talk about what I am building as I do it

Extending

I can plan what I want to build and think about what resources I need to build what I have in mind

I can build with clear pattern including symmetry and combinations of pieces to create the shapes they have planned

Typical age expectations

- = N1
- = N2
- = Reception
- = Y1

Construction Common Play Behaviours Progression

Joining

Providing construction kits that are joined in different ways supports the development of physical skills. Placing on top or next to: children place blocks together by putting one on top of or next to another. Pushing together: children fix pieces together by pushing them together. This supports the development of physical and cognitive skills.

Emerging

I can place blocks together by placing them on top or next to each other

Developing

I can fix pieces together by pushing them together

I can turn construction toys to join them together at different points

Extending

I can hold and turn pieces to connect them including nuts and bolts

I can use tools to join pieces of construction together

Typical age expectations

- = N1
- = N2
- = Reception
- = Y1

Construction Common Play Behaviours Progression

Representing and imaging

As children's physical, cognitive, and social skills develop, they begin to use construction toys to represent other things, moving from first-hand experiences to stories and fantasy. As adults comment on what children are building and share in their representations, they support and encourage the development of pretend play and storytelling.

Emerging

- I can use gestures or words to describe the shape and size of the blocks or construction toys
- I can use blocks to represent familiar objects, often which are similar size eg using a block as a phone

Developing

- I can use blocks and construction to retell familiar stories and recreate events from their first hand experience
- I can use available resources to build props for storytelling

Extending

- I can use blocks and construction to tell stories linked to fantasy and share a more complex narrative with others
- I can plan and build resources I need for my imaginary play and adapt them to suit the purpose of them

Typical age expectations

- = N1
- = N2
- = Reception
- = Y1

Construction Common Play Behaviours Progression

Building together

Blocks and construction areas can provide opportunities for children to explore ideas on their own and with others. Using these spaces supports them to understand that other children have different goals and ideas, and can provide opportunities for them to develop the confidence to say when they would like to play alone as well as to join others' play and develop ideas together.

Emerging

- I want to explore and build on my own but with support I can respect other people's space
- I explore ownership by taking blocks and construction toys other people are using and may say which ones are theirs

Developing

- I can build alongside other children often sharing resources and agreeing with others what they need
- I am interested in what other children are building and copy what they do

Extending

- I share resources and build together. We move larger pieces together and may cooperate using equipment
- I can talk to others about my ideas and listen to their ideas. We agree on how to build together.

Typical age expectations

- = N1
- = N2
- = Reception
- = Y1