



# Guide to the Local Delivery of the Infant Agility Festival

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### Sportshall Programmes

Infant Agility      Sportshall Primary Competition  
Agility Challenge      Sportshall Secondary Competition  
UK Championships

Recommended and endorsed by:  ENGLAND ATHLETICS



## Introduction

This document provides an introduction to the Infant Agility programme and includes all the background information required to run an Infant Agility Festival.

(i) **The Infant Agility Programme** is based around a set of 12 core activities which are designed to test and develop a child's ability in the following important areas (as well as others):

- Balance
- Control and stability
- Leaping and landing
- Coordination and rhythm
- Single arm throwing
- Speed
- Foot-Eye coordination
- Hand-Eye coordination
- Spatial awareness
- Two arm throwing
- Agility

These core activities can be delivered:

1. By the class teacher within a PE lesson in their school hall
2. By a group of Sports Leaders in the infant school hall in a mini Festival format
3. As part of an Infant Agility Festival
4. As part of a School Sports Day

(ii) **The Infant Agility Festival** is designed to provide children aged 4 – 7 with their first introduction to multi skills activity and the Sportshall concept in a fun, brightly coloured and safe environment.

Key Objectives of the Infant Agility Festival:

- Provide children with an introduction to multi skills activity
- Provide teachers with an introduction to the events and ideas for some extra activities
- Provide opportunities for Sports Leaders to develop and use their initiative
- Provide a fun day for the cluster to join together



# Infant Agility Festivals

## Festival Overview

Infant Agility Festivals provide an enjoyable multi-skills experience for the Key Stage One age group. The events are ideally suited to delivery on a Secondary School site engaging Sports Leaders in providing activity for the local cluster.

Typically each Festival will cater for 6 – 8 schools, with each school bringing a team of 8 – 12 children. Such a Festival would usually be staged within a four badminton court facility. Where space permits, additional teams may be added. Whilst the programme is flexible, the following provides a suggested outline format:

### Welcome and Introductions (5 minutes)

- Each school / team will be allocated a team colour / set of bibs
- The welcome emphasises the focus on fun and a need to support each other
- Sports Leaders are introduced and accompany children to their first event

### Infant Agility - rotation around a series 6 – 8 events (80 minutes)

- Each school / team remain together at an activity, accompanied by their teacher
- Each child participates in every activity
- Sports Leaders are encouraged to provide additional activity and alternative challenges at each event until all teams are ready to move on
- Each rotation will require about 10 minutes
- Sports Leaders remain with the same event throughout
- A couple of leading performances may be identified in between each rotation
- No formal break is provided for – toilet visits are usually accommodated on a “needs” basis and managed by each team’s teaching staff

### Relays (30 minutes)

- A series of simple “out and back” relays for teams of four
- It is unlikely that each child will participate in every relay though a sufficient number will be provided to ensure that each child runs at least twice
- The relays develop and build in complexity along the following lines:
  - Gather the Bag relay
  - Speed Bounce relay (5 bounces each)
  - Hurdles relay
  - Over & Under relay (using hurdles and tunnels or hoops)
- Where space and time permits, a Round Relay will conclude the programme

### Presentations (5 minutes)

- Congratulations to every team
- Thanks to all who have supported the event – Sports Leaders, Teaching staff
- Presentation of certificates etc.

### Scoring

The focus of the event should be on participation. However, the event may be scored and a spreadsheet is available to support this. Further details are included within the spreadsheet.



## Planning and Preparation:

### Key Actions:

1. Book the venue
2. Confirm the number of children / schools and adjust the programme to accommodate this number OR set the number of children per school around a defined programme and invite a specific number of schools to attend
3. Ensure that the schools have all of the relevant information required beforehand
4. Organise the Sports Leaders and ensure they have received sufficient training
5. Ensure that you have the appropriate equipment / resources to deliver the event

Some recommended programme examples are included in this pack but if you would like some guidance as to the best event to run for your requirements please do not hesitate to email the team at [info@sportshall.org](mailto:info@sportshall.org).

### 1. The Venue

The event can be held in a High School or local sports centre. We would suggest the minimum hall size of a four badminton court hall to accommodate up to 120 children across up to 12 activities.

### 2. The Participants

The Festival programme is very flexible and can be altered to suit the number of participating schools and children.

The Infant Agility programme has 12 activities to choose from with the suggested event programme having 12 groups of 10 children rotating around 6 activities (two sets of each activity) within the standard event time of 2 hours.

### 3. The Teachers

The teachers need to be given a copy of the proposed programme together with a few notes on the activities you intend to include together with the time, date and venue details of the Festival.

### 4. The Leaders

Generally the Sports Leaders can be given the appropriate training to assist with the delivery of the event 30 minutes before the start of the Festival. Obviously prior knowledge / experience is helpful but not essential. We would suggest introducing all of the activities to all of the leaders but assigning each leader one event to deliver for the entirety of the Festival.

### 5. The Equipment

The equipment for the Festival is designed to be held within an Infant school so that it can be used on a daily basis. With two 12 mat Infant packs you can comfortably cover all of the activities that you could include in the Festival.

In addition to the equipment relating directly to the events that you have chosen you should ensure you have the following:

Stopwatches	Clipboards
Tape Measure	Pens / Pencils
Whistles	Bibs (if required)
Documentation (scoresheets, certificates etc)	Relay equipment



## Delivering the Event:

### (i) Setting up the Activities:

How you set up your activities will depend on a number of variables:

- Number of Children
- Number of Groups
- Proposed Events / Number of Events
- Experience of Leaders

Regardless of these variables safety must inform all of your set up decisions.

Some basic rules are:

1. Always throw / kick towards a wall – this stops stray objects impeding / effecting other activities.
2. Consider events where there may be stray objects and try to isolate them from the other events.
3. Always allow adequate run off at both ends of any event involving running – this eliminates the possibility of a participant running into a wall or another activity.
4. Always jump away from a wall – to stop athletes falling into the wall after a jump.
5. Always consider where you intend to sit the children at each event when they are not competing. The young children involved will benefit from a clear line.
6. Always consider the flow of activities – try to alternate between activities requiring high exertion and activities with low exertion.

The recommended distance for Striker, Pitcher and Bowler will vary according to the age of the participants.

Recommended Distances:

Age	Striker	Pitcher	Bowler
4 & 5	2 metres	1.5 metres	1.5 metres
6 & 7	3 metres	2 metres	2 metres

For events such as Jumper, Runner and Stepper the older participants will require a greater run off distance to accommodate for their potential jumping ability / running speed.

For events such as Thrower and Launcher a few extra metres should be allowed at the far end of the roll mat to accommodate for the older participants who may throw over 10 metres.

For events such as Balancer, Bouncer, Catcher and Skipper a larger radius should be allowed around the younger children who may be less stable on their feet / have less spatial awareness.



## (ii) Sports Leaders Briefing:

When dealing with Infants, Sports Leaders should:

- Always have safety as paramount in their mind and ensure non participants are sat down
- Act responsibly – young children will mimic their behaviour (good or bad)
- Demonstrate the activity and reinforce the rules / technique regularly
- Speak clearly and be concise – attention spans will be short
- Kneel down to the child's level and chat to them

Above all, the Sports Leaders should have fun and ensure the children are always interested. In a flow rotation the event is dictated to by the slowest activity so each Sports Leader should have extra activities / games to play after they have finished their Infant Agility activity. They should be encouraged to use their own imagination but below are a few ideas that have been used previously:

### **Balancer**

- Get the whole group balancing with one foot and see who can balance the longest.
- Ask the children to pull funny shapes and see who can balance the longest – statues.

### **Jumper**

- Create a 'Water Zone' using the mats where each child has to jump from one bank to the next. The river gets wider as the children who make the far bank progress.
- Create a Vertical Jump game where each child takes it in turns to try and clap your raised hand. Those that touch your hand go through to the next height.

### **Bouncer**

- An extra team game can be organised where the children each complete 10 bounces in a relay against the clock. The group can be split into two to create a fun competition or the whole group can compete against the times of the other groups.

### **Thrower**

- Extra targets can be set at various distances, the farther away the more points are awarded. This can be a team game where each child has one or two throws totalled to beat the other groups.
- The javelin can be a rocket to get to the next planet (a specific coloured mat). A progressive game where children drop off as the distance of the planet is moved further away.

### **Runner**

- Children can race against each other over a few laps.
- A relay competition can be organised with each child in the group completing two ten metre distances and the lowest group time recorded as the winner.

### **Striker**

- A team competition with each child having a shot with both feet.
- Extend the shooting distance and remove all the skittles but one (each child having one attempt).

### **Pitcher**

- Extend the throwing distance and give each child 2 bean bags at the farthest distance.
- The children can each try a few bean bags with their weaker hand.

### **Catcher**

- Extra catching exercises can be added. More claps, more bounces, etc.
- If space allows a small game of hot potato can be organised.

### **Bowler**

- Each child has two attempts at hitting a specific skittle in a team competition.
- Each child must attempt the activity with their weaker hand.

### **Stepper**

- The activity could be completed by hopping or jumping two feet together over the wedges.
- A relay competition can be organised with each child in the group completing the course and the lowest group time recorded as the winner.

### **Launcher**

- Different throws can be incorporated (Football Throw or Forward Pitch for example).

### **Skipper**

- The children can attempt to hula with the hoops.
- The children can see how quick they can get through the hoop as a team with each child passing the hoop over their head and under their feet before passing the hoop on to the next child.

If all this fails then the Leader can always make a show of completing the activity themselves!

(iii) During the Activity Rotation:

Whilst the children are rotating around the activities the organiser should:

- Ensure all the rules are being applied correctly
- Ensure the Leaders are acting responsibly and keeping their children engaged and under control
- Ensure that good Health and Safety practice is adhered to at all times
- Chat to the children to encourage them and to see whether they are enjoying the activities

(iv) Relays:

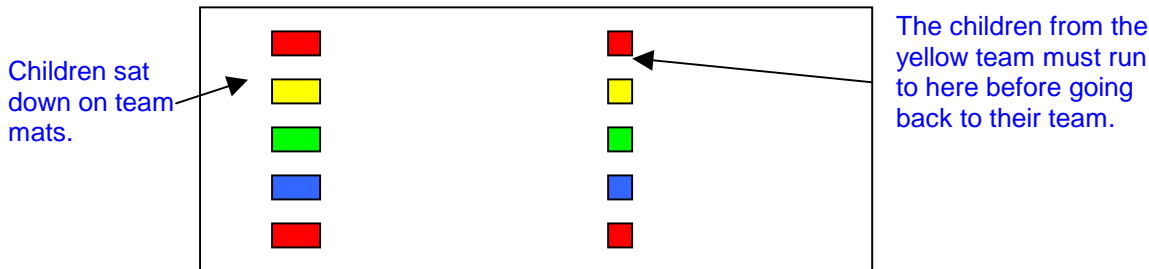
When working with this age group it is important to:

- Keep the activities as simple as possible
- Demonstrate each activity
- Build the activities up, keep the emphasis on fun and retain the child's interest
- Keep the distance small
- Keep the team sizes small (4) so that no child feels embarrassed if they finish a long time after the other teams.
- Assign a Sports Leader to manage each relay team
- Ensure any non participants encourage the teams

We suggest using linear relays (out and back) and adding interest to the activity with a variety of the Infant Agility equipment.

The first race is used to introduce the idea of linear relays to the children.

- The children will line up in their group with the first participant standing up holding a bean bag
- On the whistle the first participant will run to their colour mat and then back to their team
- They will then pass the bean bag to the next participant who will do the same
- When all participants have run the team will sit down (the first team sat down are the winners)



The format for all of the other races will remain the same as this.

Speed Bounce Race – each team will have a Speed Bounce opposite, over which they must complete five bounces before running back and passing the bean bag to the next team member.

Hurdles Race – two wedges to be laid out in each teams lane so the child must jump over the first wedge, then the second wedge before standing on the far mat and then running back over the wedges before passing the bean bag onto the next team member.

Obstacle Relay – The child must pass a hoop over their body before picking up a football and running to the mat, then passing the ball to their sports leader and running back to the next team member.

Obstacle Relay 2 – The child must weave in and out of a set of four cones before jumping over a hurdle picking up a bean bag and attempting to throw it on to their mat before running back to their team.



## Sample Programme

### Central Warwickshire Partnership

### Infant Agility Festival

Thursday 13 November 2008

### Kenilworth School

We welcome teams today from:

**Budbrook Primary**  
**Kingsway Primary**  
**Priorsfield Primary**  
**St John's Primary**  
**St Nicholas Primary**

Infant Agility Festivals provide an enjoyable multi-skills experience for Key Stage One. Whilst the programme is flexible, the following provides an outline of today's event:

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

- Each school / team will be allocated a team colour / set of bibs
- Sports Leaders are introduced and accompany children to events

**Infant Agility** - rotation around a series of 5 or 6 events drawn from

- Balancer
- Jumper
- Bouncer
- Thrower
- Striker
- Stepper

#### **Relays**

- A series of relays for teams of four

#### **Presentations**