Focus plan for Mathematics
(Goals for Shape, space and measures) Activity – Linking elephants

Learning intention
To begin to describe a pattern

Resources
Linking elephants, paper, crayons

How the activity will be carried out
In small groups, invite the children to examine the elephants - discuss how some are small, some medium and some big. Encourage the children to link them together to make families, parades, whatever. Suggest they make patterns with their elephants - you can do so alongside them to model the technique. Encourage them to describe their pattern as they play. Play 'what comes next' games; remove one then try to work out what is missing; see who can make the longest/most colourful etc. pattern. When their play has run its course invite them to draw their pattern to record it. Gather the pictures together to make a 'Pattern Book'. Leave the resources available for revisiting opportunities.

Questions to ask/Language to use
What size is this one? What colour is it? Tell me how your pattern goes. Small, medium, big, tail, trunk, link big-small-small- big-big-small….. or red-yellow-red-yellow etc. repeating, random, long, short, sequence

Differentiation (Birth to Three)
Invite children to explore the elephants, comparing them and discovering how they link then beginning to try to create their own pattern.

Extension
Encourage the children to develop more complex patterns.
Play a game in pairs to describe their pattern so their partner can recreate it.
Encourage the children to notice and describe patterns around them.

Evaluation