

# Reviewing and implementing approaches to movement and physical activity



School resources

When considering the role of physical activity and movement in schools, it is important to assess starting points and head towards a common and shared goal that includes teachers and students. Physical activity can be incorporated into everyday classroom routines both as physically active breaks and games, and as part of the P.E. curriculum. The P.E. curriculum may include games for motor skill acquisition, dance or gymnastics for primary school students, or organised sports for older students. It is useful to consider physical activity and P.E. at the school, teacher, and student level.

## Schools

Principals and curriculum area leaders may want to take stock of the current state of P.E. in their school. The following assessment tool focuses on personnel, instructional time, facilities, and equipment to review how successfully the current P.E. curriculum is being implemented.

Feasibility questionnaire:

- What student assessments of motor skills are included in the curriculum?
- Can the curriculum be reasonably implemented within the capacity (for example, the level of training and certification in teaching physical education) of existing physical education teachers?
- How much instructional time (number of days of the week and minutes per class) is currently available at the school for P.E.?
- Can the curriculum be implemented within the available instructional time?
- Can the curriculum be implemented with the existing equipment available for physical education instruction?

If changes are required to the P.E. curriculum, some action steps to take might be to work with the P.E. lead teacher to find ways to weave physical activity into the day, such as a 5 minute in class aerobic exercises at the start of the day, or applying the [UNESCO Quality Physical Education Policy guidelines](#) to the school P.E. curriculum. These guidelines focus on physical literacy and inclusion, and outline ways to approach this.

## Teachers

It is also valuable for school leaders to assess teachers' current attitudes to teaching P.E., particularly generalist classroom teachers who teach P.E. The following P.E. teaching practice questionnaire may be useful<sup>1</sup>:

	Not at all	No	I am not sure	Yes	Yes, very much
I teach as I would like to	1	2	3	4	5
There is a match between my skill set and the P.E. lessons and age-groups I am teaching	1	2	3	4	5
I feel supported in my P.E. work	1	2	3	4	5
I find P.E. lessons rewarding	1	2	3	4	5
I have the necessary training to teach dance	1	2	3	4	5
My lessons allow my students to express their creativity	1	2	3	4	5

Some action steps could include observing other teachers or schools to share learnings, create a community group of practice with different schools to discuss different ideas, and including the P.E. lead to identify types of physical activity to use throughout the day. Other things to think about are how physical activity is taught: for example, in the early years using copying and drills, as seen in [linear pedagogy](#), while later on allowing more freedom in decision-making by using non-linear pedagogy.

## Students

An important goal of physical activity and movement programmes is to create an inclusive environment for all movement capabilities. This can be achieved by focusing on students' motivation during P.E. and the teacher's role in students' motivation and enjoyment. To obtain a measure of younger students' enjoyment of a P.E. lesson, ask them to tap on one of three posters displaying an emoji face depicting boring, okay, or fun. Older students could answer the following questions anonymously. These questions help teachers understand what motivational climate they are creating and allows them to adjust their lesson plan to suit the learning climate and how pupils are feeling mentally and emotionally throughout the day. For example, children might have less energy for an aerobic session at the end of the day and prefer activities that involve winding down such as guided stretching.

	Not at all	No	I am not sure	Yes	Yes, very much
1. my teachers provided me with choices	1	2	3	4	5
2. my teacher encouraged me to make my own moves in the program	1	2	3	4	5
3. my teacher understood me	1	2	3	4	5

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## Recommended resources

[Physical activity with academic instruction](#)

[Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool](#)

## Endnotes

1 For a complete look at your starting points as a teacher I invite you to the [full questionnaire](#).

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