NSW Department of Education

Sport and physical activity school health check

Version 3

The Sport and physical activity school health check (the Health check) is an evidence-informed self-assessment tool designed to help schools plan and deliver quality sport and physical activity through a whole-school approach.

Aligned with the School Excellence Framework, this tool enables schools to gather baseline data and assess their current practices in delivering sport and physical activity. It provides a structured process for schools to identify strengths and areas for improvement, supporting strategic planning to meet and exceed the requirements of the Sport and physical activity procedure.

The Health check helps all NSW public schools achieve equity and excellence in sport and physical activity by clearly describing 9 key elements of high-quality practice across three domains:

- Organisation
- Teaching and learning
- Partnerships.

Each domain includes 3 elements that define core practices in sport and physical activity. The Health check is flexible, allowing schools to adapt it to their unique context, and engages all staff in developing a shared understanding of the delivery of sport and physical activity in their setting.

Schools make on-balance judgements based on these elements to identify areas for improvement and adjust activities to achieve desired outcomes.

For support with using the Health check or for assistance with school improvement in sport and physical activity, schools can contact the School Sport Unit at schoolsportunit@det.nsw.edu.au.

February 2025

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In schools that excel, there is a strategic, evidence-informed, whole-school approach to the implementation of sport and physical activity. School-wide reflection practices are used to monitor, evaluate, and plan physical activity opportunities that cater to the needs of all students.

Themes	Delivering	Sustaining and growing	Excelling
School planning and leadership	The school recognises that physical activity is essential for the overall wellbeing of students. It has a plan to meet the requirements of the Sport and physical activity procedures reflecting current local needs and circumstances.	The school's plan for sport and physical activity, which meets the requirements of the Sport and physical activity procedures, is communicated to the school community (staff, students, parents/carers).	The school's plan for sport and physical activity is reviewed annually, in consultation with the school community, to ensure it continues to meet the requirements of the Sport and physical activity procedures and addresses emerging needs.
	The school has an identified person or team that coordinates the delivery of sport and physical activity (e.g. sport organiser/coordinator/team).	The school sport and physical activity team collaborates in a cycle of improvement, planning, acting and reflecting on the delivery of school sport and physical activity.	There is a school-wide culture of collaboration and continuous improvement in the delivery of sport and physical activity, supported by evidence-informed practices that ensure every student is engaged and challenged.
	During transitions, such as enrolment or moving to a new class, year or stage, student progress, achievements and learning needs in sport and physical activity are communicated to relevant stakeholders.	Schools have procedures in place to identify, monitor and assess student potential, progress, achievements, and learning needs in sport and physical activity, involving collaboration between parents/carers, students, teachers, and relevant stakeholders. Refer to the High potential and gifted education policy and Inclusive education for students with disability policy.	Schools initiate and implement comprehensive procedures to assess all students' potential, progress and achievements in sport and physical activity, including diagnostic, screening and adaptive assessments to identify students who may not be demonstrating their full potential. Refer to the High potential and gifted education policy and Inclusive education for students with disability policy
	The school has a system in place to identify all students eligible to trial for teams in the Representative School Sport Pathway (RSSP). Learn more about classification and the RSSP.	The school has procedures outlining how all students are selected for the Representative School Sport Pathway and these are communicated to the school community.	The school's procedures for selecting students for the Representative School Sport Pathway are evaluated as part of an ongoing review cycle and talent development process.
	There is a nominated person(s) to represent the school at all local network of school sport meetings (e.g. zone meetings).	Teachers are actively involved in local networks of school sport, performing roles such as zone executive, convening sports (e.g. weekly competitions and gala days) or carnivals.	School leaders are active members of local networks of schools, sharing expertise, knowledge and resources related to sport and physical activity to support planning, implementation and evaluation.

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Themes	Delivering	Sustaining and growing	Excelling
Resources	An appropriate budget is allocated to ensure there is a sufficient supply of sport and physical activity resources and equipment.	The school regularly monitors, replenishes, updates and adds to sport and physical activity resources and equipment using the allocated budget.	The school has a planned, long-term approach for resourcing sport and physical activity equipment and resources, ensuring sustainability and alignment with future needs.
	Sport and physical activity equipment and resources cater for the needs of all students, including HPG students and students with disability, across all stages and settings.	Sport and physical activity resources are accessible and organised for all classes to use throughout the school day.	A wide range of sport and physical activity equipment and resources are easily accessible to all teachers, enabling them to embed physical activity across the school day in all Key Learning Areas.
	There are school uniform options that allow all students to participate in the full range of school activities, including physical activities. Girls have the option to wear either shorts or pants.	Formal consultation takes place with students, staff and the school community to allow changes to the school uniform that promote and enable physical activity.	The school uniform enables all students to participate in physical activities throughout the school day, on every day of the school week.
Environment and accessibility	Students have access to well-maintained, all-weather sport and physical activity facilities.	The school has processes in place to ensure all students and classes have equitable access to sport and physical activity facilities during class time and breaks.	Consultation occurs with the school community to ensure all students have access to sport and physical activity facilities that meet their current interests.
	School and community space is utilised to provide students with the minimum 25 square metres per student of playground space. Refer to School play space – how much is enough?	Students have access to a range of facilities that are suitable and inviting, encouraging physical activity during breaks and before/after school.	The school provides access to high-quality facilities that are available and suitable for all members of the community, promoting year-round participation in sport and physical activity.
	Teachers recognise that movement and physical activity can take place in most classrooms.	Students and teachers have access to classrooms that encourage and allow for movement and physical activity.	Where possible, classrooms are configured to encourage and allow for regular movement and physical activity.

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Teaching and learning

In schools that excel, all staff members are dedicated to identifying, understanding and implementing a whole-school approach to sport and physical activity, with this commitment reflected in the school's Strategic Improvement Plan.

Themes	Delivering	Sustaining and growing	Excelling
Teacher professional knowledge	All teachers are aware of the requirements related to mandatory weekly participation in sport and physical activity as outlined in the Sport and physical activity procedure. Refer to related professional learning: School Sport Unit - Sport and physical activity procedure awareness training	The school schedules professional learning that builds teachers' capacity to use effective strategies in teaching sport and physical activity. Teachers collaborate within the school to share and embed inclusive quality practices. Refer to related professional learning.	All staff evaluate professional learning activities to identify and promote the most effective strategies for improving teaching and learning in sport and physical activity, collaborating with staff in other schools to share and embed good practice.
	All teachers adhere to the Sport and physical activity procedure and Specific sport safety guidelines when delivering sport or physical activity sessions to students.	Sport and physical activity sessions are planned and delivered based on the SAAFE principles to support student engagement and enjoyment.	Teachers explore and implement evidence-informed pedagogical approaches to deliver high-quality sport and physical activity sessions, ensuring students are challenged, engaged and continually progressing.
	Staff delivering sports and physical activities that require additional qualifications, such as rugby league and learn to swim, hold the necessary mandatory qualifications.	Staff who coach competitive school teams, such as for state-wide competitions and knockouts, hold general coaching and/or sport-specific qualifications.	Targeted sport programs, settings, and classes for high-potential and gifted students are delivered by staff with advanced training and expertise in educating these students in the specific sport or physical activity.
	Time during executive, staff, faculty/stage, team and/or other meetings is dedicated to planning weekly sport and physical activity.	Teachers engage in scheduled professional discussions and collaboration to improve the provision of weekly sport and physical activity in their classes, year groups, stages, faculties or for specific student groups.	Local networks of schools (i.e. zones or communities of schools) share expertise, knowledge and resources related to sport and physical activity, supporting planning, implementation and evaluation at both the school and zone level.

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Themes	Delivering	Sustaining and growing	Excelling
Quality sport and physical activity	Teachers follow a program for sport and physical activity that ensures a minimum of 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each week.	There is a collaborative approach within Stage/facility teams to programming sport and physical activity, including weekly school sport, PE lessons, classroom energisers and physically active lessons across various Key Learning Areas.	The whole-school approach to programming sport and physical activity is collaboratively evaluated by all teachers to continuously improve and adapt the program.
	Teachers provide feedback on students' skill development and effort.	A variety of assessments, including self-reflections, peer assessments and rubrics, are used to measure student potential, progress and achievement in sport and physical activity, focusing on attributes such as teamwork, game strategies and sportsmanship.	The school explores and implements multifaceted and detailed assessment and feedback methods across all attributes of sport and physical activity, including tactical knowledge, decision making and leadership. This may also involve physical activity logs, fitness testing and goal setting.
	The school provides weekly school sport for all students in Years K to 10, with a minimum of 60 minutes of timetabled weekly school sport for students in Years 3 to 6.	The school offers a variety of inclusive competitive and non-competitive, team and individual sports and recreational activities across a range of game categories to promote student engagement and encourage long-term participation in sport and physical activity.	The school actively seeks student voice to enhance and adapt its weekly school sport program, ensuring it reflects student interests and fosters continued engagement.
	Teachers differentiate sport and physical activity to meet the learning needs of students, including adjustments to support HPG students and students with disability.	Differentiation of sport and physical activity occurs at the class, year group or stage level to meet the interests of students.	The school considers the range of sport and physical activity options available within the school setting, the community and School Sport Unit programs and events, carefully adapting them to suit the diverse needs, goals and capabilities of all participants.
	Schools with primary students and Intensive English Centres participate in the School Swimming and Water Safety Program.	Structured swimming sessions and/or water safety learning experiences are provided for identified students.	Students are provided with enrichment and extracurricular and advanced learning opportunities to develop their skills and interests in aquatic sports and physical activities.

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Themes	Delivering	Sustaining and growing	Excelling
Physical activity across the school day	Teachers include classroom energisers in their teaching programs. Refer to Teaching and learning resources for examples of classroom energisers.	All students are provided the opportunity to participate in a minimum of two classroom energisers each day.	Teachers consider the interests and preferences of students to collaboratively plan engaging classroom energisers.
	Teachers embed physical activity into learning areas other than physical education (PE) and sport (e.g. Thinking while moving in maths and English).	All classes participate in physically active lessons (not including PE and sport) at least once a week.	Stage/faculty teams collaboratively plan physically active learning experiences that occur twice a week (not including PE or sport). These lessons are integrated into all teaching programs.
	Sport and physical activity equipment is available for students in the playground before school, at recess and lunchtime.	The school works with the school community to provide sport and physical activity opportunities for students before and after school and during break times (e.g. morning run clubs, coaching clinics and fitness challenges).	Opportunities for all students to be active are prioritised by all staff throughout the day, including before and after school, during break times, in instructional time and at home.
	The school participates in one or more of the Premier's Sporting Challenges (PSC).	The school utilises School Sport Unit teaching resources to deliver high-quality sport and physical activity experiences to students both during and outside of the Premier's Sporting Challenge.	The school has systems in place to ensure the ongoing delivery of high-quality sport and physical activity both during and outside of the Premier's Sporting Challenges.
	School house captains have designated roles and responsibilities to promote sport and physical activity throughout the school year.	Students are supported to lead sport and physical activity initiatives across the school (e.g. PSC student ambassadors, peer mentoring system, gala day organising committee and school-wide physical activity challenges).	Students are supported to be leaders in sport and physical activity initiatives within the community (e.g. community sport coaches, before/after school programs for younger students).

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In schools that excel, sport and physical activity are integral to the school culture and recognised as a research-based approach to supporting student wellbeing. The school community collaborates to strategically plan and deliver high-quality sport and physical activity opportunities for all students.

Themes	Delivering	Sustaining and growing	Excelling
Staff	Staff members are aware that physical activity positively supports wellbeing and engagement.	Staff strengthen student wellbeing by supporting participation in sport and physical activity programs.	Staff strategically plan and deliver sport and physical activity experiences across the school week to meet the school's improvement measures.
	Staff members model a positive attitude towards sport and physical activity to students.	Teachers act as role models by participating alongside students in physical activity.	The school leadership team members, including the principal, act as role models by participating in physical activity with teachers and students.
	Teachers are aware of the opportunities to be involved in the Representative School Sport Pathway, including leadership, coaching, managing and officiating positions.	Teachers are encouraged and supported to be involved in the Representative School Sport Pathway.	Staff members act as mentors to support colleagues in becoming involved in the Representative School Sport Pathway.
Family involvement	The school promotes school sport achievements in communications with parents/carers.	The school promotes the benefits of regular physical activity with parents/carers.	A planned approach, with parents/carers, is taken to promote the link between sport and physical activity and improved wellbeing, health and learning.
	The school informs parents/carers of the learning experiences planned for school sport and physical activity.	There are opportunities for parents/carers and families to be involved in the school's sport and physical activity approach.	The school seeks family input and acts on feedback to improve sport and physical activity opportunities for all students throughout the school.
	Parents/carers are aware of appropriate active travel options for students to commute to school.	The school community coordinates active travel opportunities for students to commute to and from school, such as walking school buses or cycle buses.	The school, parents/carers and community members have a shared commitment to increasing physical activity opportunities before and after school that promote lifelong health and wellbeing.

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Themes	Delivering	Sustaining and growing	Excelling
Community	Students are encouraged to access sport and/or physical activity opportunities in their local community.	The school partners with community organisations to deliver additional inclusive sporting opportunities that broaden student interests and develop talent.	The school utilises community facilities and equipment to enhance sport and physical activity opportunities for all students.
	The school promotes community health messages for sport and physical activity.	The school participates in community events that promote sport and physical activity (e.g., community fun runs).	The school participates in research projects to strengthen the evidence base for sport, physical activity and wellbeing.
	The school is available for use by the local community before and after school as an open and green space for active play.	The school is open to the local community during the school holidays as an open and green space for active play. Refer to Share our Space.	The school community has representation on Local Government Area (LGA) reference/advisory groups, advocating for local sport and physical activity facilities.

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