CHOOSE PRACTICAL STRATEGIES

A small change can be a strong start.

Use this Strategy Selector to find an idea that suits your students, choose one manageable trial, and learn what works. You do not need a new program, a large budget or a perfect plan to take a first step.

YOUR ROUTE FROM IDEA TO ACTION

1. Find ideas
Explore options in the KPAs

>

2. Choose one
Check fit, access and feasibility

>

3. Try and learn
Run a short trial and review

1 Start with one change you want to see

You may already have a priority from your School Priority-Setting Tool or Action Plan. If not, choose one issue or opportunity to explore. Keep it specific enough to act on.

The opportunity or change we want to explore:

Which students could benefit, especially those not currently reached?

What have students or staff told us? What still needs checking?

Remember: A small, inclusive trial is a starting point, not a promise of success. Listen to students, consider safety and accessibility, and adapt before scaling up.

Open the Active Schools Toolkit homepage

IDEA FINDER

18 ideas across six priority areas

Use these examples as prompts, then visit the relevant KPA page for its top actions, practical resources and school stories. Adapt ideas to your school context, student feedback and existing policies.

ACTIVE CLASSROOMS

1. Build a short movement choice into lesson transitions.
2. Try learning tasks that include movement or standing responses.
3. Offer flexible ways to move safely between learning tasks.

ACTIVE RECREATION

1. Trial student-selected non-competitive options at lunch.
2. Set up a simple, accessible equipment loan routine.
3. Invite students to co-design an inclusive active break.

ACTIVE TRAVEL

1. Ask families about barriers to walking, riding or scooting.
2. Review safe access, storage and arrival arrangements.
3. Explore a safe part-journey active travel option.

QUALITY PHYSICAL EDUCATION

1. Modify rules, equipment and roles to widen participation.
2. Offer progressive skill challenges with teacher feedback.
3. Ask students which activities help them feel included.

QUALITY SCHOOL SPORT

1. Offer recreational alongside competitive sport options.
2. Trial modified formats with flexible entry points.
3. Create meaningful student leadership and officiating roles.

SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

1. Check whether spaces and equipment are accessible.
2. Agree on simple staff routines that support movement.
3. Speak with families or partners about a practical opportunity.

Explore the six Key Priority Areas on the Toolkit homepage

These are illustrative starting ideas, not universal recommendations. Apply school safety, accessibility, curriculum and supervision requirements.

MAKE A CHOICE

Compare a few ideas, not dozens

Use the KPA pages or the ideas on page 2 to identify up to three possible strategies. Compare them in a short staff conversation, with student input where practical. This is a discussion aid, not a scoring system.

2 Our shortlist

List two or three approaches. A helpful option meets a genuine student need, can be made inclusive, is feasible to try, and can be reviewed.

Option 1:

Option 2:

Option 3:

Ask these four questions about EACH option

STRATEGY	STUDENT FIT	ACCESS & INCLUSION	CAN WE TRIAL IT?
Option 1			
Option 2			
Option 3			

FOUR LENSES TO DISCUSS

Student fit: Does it reflect what students need or want? Access: Who might still miss out, and what adjustments are needed?
Feasibility: Can we provide time, people, space and safe supervision? Learning: Can we trial it and respond to feedback?

The strategy we will trial first:

Why this is the best starting point for our school:

MAKE IT POSSIBLE

Your first-trial card

Do not wait for a whole-school launch. Agree on a small trial that is safe, inclusive and realistic. This one-page card helps you get started; use the Action Plan Template for detailed implementation.

3 What exactly will we trial?

Selected strategy (one sentence):

Where and with whom?

When and for how long?

Lead person / team:

People or resources needed:

INCLUSION AND READINESS CHECK

- ☐ We have asked or will ask students affected by the change.
- ☐ We can offer meaningful choices and necessary adjustments.
- ☐ We have checked school safety, supervision and access requirements.
- ☐ The trial is achievable with available people, time and resources.

One change students should notice:

How will we gather feedback or observe progress?

AFTER THE TRIAL: WHAT DID WE LEARN?

Ask students: What worked? Who felt included? What would you change? Consider staff observations and any participation information available. Avoid identifying individual students in shared notes.

Our decision: ☐ Continue ☐ Adapt ☐ Stop ☐ Expand

What will we do next? Record the agreed action in our Action Plan:

WORKED EXAMPLE

A practical Active Classrooms trial

This fictional example illustrates how a school might compare strategies and choose a manageable first step. It does not represent a measured school outcome.

School priority: Create more opportunities for students to move during classroom learning.
What students and staff notice: Some classes have long seated periods. Staff want a simple way to provide movement choice without losing lesson time.

A

Short movement breaks

FIRST TRIAL

Easy to trial during transitions; can include seated, standing or gesture-based choices.

B

Movement-based learning

Links movement to curriculum tasks; needs extra planning and adjustments.

C

Flexible movement choices

Supports individual movement needs; needs agreed classroom routines.

THEIR FIRST TRIAL

Try:	Offer a two-minute movement choice at two planned lesson transitions, over two weeks.
Make it inclusive:	Offer seated, standing and low-impact variations; participation is invitational.
Prepare:	Teacher checks space, supervision, timing and accessibility before starting.
Listen:	Briefly ask students what helped them join in and what they would change.
Review:	Use staff notes and student feedback to decide whether to adapt, continue or expand.

What makes this a useful selection? It responds to an identified opportunity, can be adjusted for different students, uses existing spaces and provides a way to learn before introducing the approach more widely.

KEEP GOING

When an idea feels too difficult

A trial does not need to be perfect to be useful. These common sticking points can be addressed before deciding to stop or delay a strategy.

We do not have extra equipment

Start with an option using existing space, movement choice or everyday classroom routines.

Staff are short on time

Test one small routine in one setting rather than launching across the whole school.

Some students might miss out

Ask those students what would help. Adjust participation formats, roles, environments or equipment.

We are unsure what students want

Use a short student voice check-in before choosing or changing the strategy.

We cannot tell whether it worked

Choose one simple sign before you begin and combine it with brief student feedback.

A 15-MINUTE STAFF CONVERSATION

3 min	Name one priority and whose participation it should improve.
5 min	Compare two options against student need, inclusion and feasibility.
4 min	Choose a short trial and the person who will coordinate it.
3 min	Agree how students will give feedback and when you will review.

Where to go next

Explore a KPA: Find the relevant page for its top three actions, practical resources and school examples.
Use your Action Plan: Transfer the selected approach, responsibilities and review point into the Active Schools Action Plan Template.
Review: Return to student feedback and make a deliberate decision to continue, adapt, stop or expand.

Explore the Active Schools Toolkit

The strategies in this workbook are illustrative starting points. Schools should adapt them to local context, student needs and applicable school procedures; this tool is not a validated measure or a required implementation sequence.