STUDENT PARTICIPATION AUDIT

Understanding participation, access and opportunities | Stage 2: Plan and Prioritise

Purpose. A staff-led reflection tool to help schools map physical activity opportunities, consider who is being reached, check assumptions and select practical improvements. It is not an assessment of individual students or a validated participation measure.

How to use: Discuss with a small staff team (approximately 20-30 minutes, or over several meetings). Use existing observations, timetables, participation information and student feedback. Record what you know and what needs checking. Do not identify individual students. If information is limited, select Unsure or Need to check.

School: _____ Date: _____

Completed by / roles: _____

1 | Map participation opportunities

For each setting, distinguish what is available from who appears to participate. The descriptors below are staff impressions, not measured rates.

Rating	How to interpret it
Broad	Many students appear to participate across different groups.
Some	Participation is evident, but opportunities may not reach everyone.
Limited	Participation seems restricted or concentrated among fewer students.
Unsure	There is not enough information to make a reasonable judgement.

Setting	Opportunity available?	Participation (select one)
Physical Education	[ ] Yes [ ] Partly [ ] Unsure	[ ] Broad [ ] Some [ ] Limited [ ] Unsure
School sport	[ ] Yes [ ] Partly [ ] Unsure	[ ] Broad [ ] Some [ ] Limited [ ] Unsure
Recess and lunchtime	[ ] Yes [ ] Partly [ ] Unsure	[ ] Broad [ ] Some [ ] Limited [ ] Unsure
Movement during classroom learning	[ ] Yes [ ] Partly [ ] Unsure	[ ] Broad [ ] Some [ ] Limited [ ] Unsure
Before / after school	[ ] Yes [ ] Partly [ ] Unsure	[ ] Broad [ ] Some [ ] Limited [ ] Unsure
Active travel to / from school	[ ] Yes [ ] Partly [ ] Unsure	[ ] Broad [ ] Some [ ] Limited [ ] Unsure

What opportunities currently work well?

Where do we need more information?

2 | Who is being reached?

Consider equity, inclusion and access across the school day.

Discuss whether opportunities are welcoming and accessible for students with different experiences and needs. Do not assume a student belongs to, or speaks for, a particular group. Need to check is a useful finding, not a judgement of school performance.

Consider	Staff reflection
Different year levels	[ ] Well supported [ ] Some gaps [ ] Need to check
Different interests and activity preferences	[ ] Well supported [ ] Some gaps [ ] Need to check
Different abilities and disability-related access needs	[ ] Well supported [ ] Some gaps [ ] Need to check
Varying confidence or previous experience	[ ] Well supported [ ] Some gaps [ ] Need to check
Students who rarely join organised sport	[ ] Well supported [ ] Some gaps [ ] Need to check
Girls and gender-diverse students	[ ] Well supported [ ] Some gaps [ ] Need to check
Cost, equipment, transport or scheduling barriers	[ ] Well supported [ ] Some gaps [ ] Need to check

Check the evidence behind our impressions

[ ] Staff observations [ ] Activity attendance / counts [ ] Student voice

[ ] Family feedback [ ] Timetables / school data [ ] Accessibility review

What patterns or strengths have staff noticed?

What evidence supports these impressions, and what remains uncertain?

Ask, do not assume. Seek input from students who participate regularly and students who rarely join in. Offer accessible and private ways to respond. Use the Active Schools Student Voice Toolkit and relevant school processes to investigate experiences without identifying students in this audit.

3 | What influences participation?

Explore possible enablers and barriers before deciding on changes.

Mark each factor as a strength, an opportunity or something to check. More than one factor may influence a setting. Avoid treating an observed pattern as proof of a cause.

Possible influence	Current picture
Activity choice and variety	[ ] Strength [ ] Opportunity [ ] Need to check
Friendships, belonging and feeling welcome	[ ] Strength [ ] Opportunity [ ] Need to check
Confidence and opportunities to try	[ ] Strength [ ] Opportunity [ ] Need to check
Inclusive practice and reasonable adjustments	[ ] Strength [ ] Opportunity [ ] Need to check
Spaces, facilities and equipment	[ ] Strength [ ] Opportunity [ ] Need to check
Scheduling, communication and supervision	[ ] Strength [ ] Opportunity [ ] Need to check
Cost, transport and access	[ ] Strength [ ] Opportunity [ ] Need to check
Student voice and influence over activities	[ ] Strength [ ] Opportunity [ ] Need to check
Family / community support and partnerships	[ ] Strength [ ] Opportunity [ ] Need to check

What appears to help students participate? What evidence supports this?

Which barriers should we investigate directly with students?

Across all six priority areas: Quality PE, Quality School Sport, Active Recreation, Active Classrooms and Active Travel offer different settings for movement. Supportive School Environment influences access, inclusion, culture, facilities and partnerships across every setting.

4 | From audit to action

Bring together evidence, student perspectives and a realistic first step.

Two existing strengths

Two opportunities to explore

Select a priority using evidence and student feedback

Planning question	School notes
What did we notice? What supports this assessment?	
What do students say? What still needs checking?	
Which Key Priority Area(s) does this relate to?	
What manageable change could we trial?	

Our initial action

One practical action	Who will lead / support?	When will we review?

[ ] Students already consulted [ ] Student voice still needed [ ] More evidence needed

How will we know whether the change helped?

Next: Bring this audit together with your Active Schools School Overview and the Student Voice Toolkit. Use the School Priority-Setting Tool to choose priorities, explore relevant Key Priority Area pages and record responsibilities and review dates in the Active Schools Action Plan Template.

Practical example and review

A worked example and a simple way to revisit school decisions.

Example | Broadening lunchtime opportunities

Step	Illustrative response
Staff observation	The same students regularly join organised lunchtime games.
What needs checking	Do other students prefer different activities, need equipment, or experience barriers to joining?
Student voice	Ask a mix of students which lunchtime opportunities they enjoy and what would make joining in easier.
Possible first action	Trial a wider range of student-selected lunchtime activities, with varied levels of structure and support.
Relevant KPA(s)	Active Recreation; Supportive School Environment.
Review	Ask students what changed and use simple observations to check whether opportunities became more accessible.

Remember: This is a fictional example for guidance, not a finding from a Victorian school. Popular suggestions should be considered alongside barriers affecting smaller or less-heard groups.

Review what changed

Return to this audit after the school has trialled its action. Use the same broad settings and evidence sources where practical, and document changes in opportunities and student experiences rather than presenting staff ratings as precise participation rates.

Review prompt	Record here
What did we try, and when?	_____ _____
What did students report?	_____ _____
What changed or remained difficult?	_____ _____
What will we keep, adjust or explore next?	_____ _____

Interpretation and privacy: This is a staff reflection and planning tool, not a validated measure of participation or school performance. Do not record identifying student information. Check relevant school privacy, consent, accessibility and child safety procedures. A perceived participation pattern alone does not establish why it occurs.