ACTIVE SCHOOLS STUDENT VOICE TOOLKIT

Active Schools | Plan and Prioritise | Understand student needs

Purpose

Help students share what makes movement enjoyable, what gets in the way and what they would like their school to try. Use their feedback alongside the School Overview and other evidence to inform priorities and practical changes.

How to use this toolkit

• Choose 3-5 activities, use the 15-20 minute check-in, or follow the 45-60 minute workshop.

• Explain why you are consulting students, how responses will be used and when you will report back. Participation and sharing personal experiences are voluntary.

• Offer spoken, written, visual, seated, movement-based and private response options. Never require students to share sensitive experiences publicly.

• Record themes without names unless there is a necessary and appropriately approved reason. Follow school consent, child safety and privacy procedures.

• Include students with varied interests and activity levels, including those who rarely participate, not only sports teams or student leaders.

Quick option | 15-20 minute student voice check-in

Time	Activity	Capture
3 min	Welcome: explain the purpose, choices and how students will hear back.	Participation choices and feedback timeframe
5 min	This or That: offer 3-4 preferences about activities, places and formats.	Anonymous tally and short reasons
5-7 min	Agree / Unsure / Disagree: explore welcome, access and choice.	Patterns and barriers, not names
4-5 min	One change: students privately suggest an improvement.	Ideas to consider and students who may benefit

Afterwards: Compare student feedback with the School Overview, select one achievable trial and tell students what will happen next. This quick check-in is a consultation activity, not a validated survey instrument.

Six ready-to-deliver activities | 1-3

1. Connect First: a choice game

5-7 min | No equipment

Use a low-contact connection game or a choice prompt. Students point, hold up a card, stay seated or move to an option. Invite each student to name a movement activity they enjoy or used to enjoy.

Ask: What helps people feel welcome when trying something new?

Record: Capture recurring examples of enjoyable movement without attributing comments to individuals.

Inclusion note: Offer no-contact participation as the default; do not require touch or movement.

2. This or That: move and choose

6-8 min | Two signs; optional tally sheet

Offer pairs of choices: with friends / on my own; outdoors / indoors; competitive / just for fun; familiar / new; during breaks / before or after school; with equipment / without equipment. Students can select either, both, neither or respond privately.

Ask: Why did you choose that? What would make the other option appealing?

Record: Tally choices and note reasons, including less common preferences. Do not assume the majority choice suits everyone.

Inclusion note: Allow a middle option, pointing, picture cards, seated choices or an anonymous response.

3. Agree / Unsure / Disagree: experiences of being active

8-10 min | Three signs or private response cards

Read statements: “I feel welcome joining physical activities at school”; “I can find movement activities I enjoy”; “There are safe and accessible options for me”; “I can choose activities that suit my confidence”; “Students have a say in what is offered”; “Adults listen when students suggest changes.”

Ask: What helps? What makes joining in difficult? What could we improve?

Record: Capture broad patterns, anonymous concerns and practical suggestions. These statements are opinion prompts, not factual tests.

Inclusion note: Use private response cards to avoid exposing students who feel excluded or unsafe.

Six ready-to-deliver activities | 4-6

4. Remember When: positive movement moments

7-9 min | Paper or sticky notes

Invite students to recall a time movement was enjoyable, at school or elsewhere. They may think, draw, write or talk privately with a partner. Prompt for setting, people, choice, challenge and feelings.

Ask: What made it positive? How could we create those conditions more often?

Record: Group responses into themes such as friendship, choice, belonging, fun or achievement.

Inclusion note: Do not require students to recount personal experiences or explain uncomfortable memories.

5. Idea Gallery: ideas and priorities

8-10 min | Large paper, markers, three dots per student

Display ideas raised in earlier activities, with blank posters for new suggestions. Students add ideas and use three dots to show what they would most like the school to explore. Offer private voting.

Ask: Who would benefit? Who might still miss out? What would make an idea more accessible?

Record: Count votes, preserve minority suggestions and note feasibility. Popularity indicates interest, not automatic approval or the absence of need.

Inclusion note: Offer large-print ideas, visual prompts, accessible positioning and supported or private voting.

6. From Voice to Action: student design team

8-12 min | Action sheet

In groups, students choose one popular or overlooked idea and describe who it is for, where and when it might occur, support needed and ways to include more students. Invite students to contribute but do not require ongoing involvement.

Ask: What is one small trial? How will we know it works? How will we ask students again?

Record: Collect one short proposal per group and note students interested in a follow-up conversation.

Inclusion note: Consider an overlooked idea that addresses an important barrier, not only the highest-voted proposal.

Ready-to-deliver workshop | 45-60 minutes

Aim: Identify what students value about being active, understand participation experiences and select realistic ideas to explore. Use a class or facilitated smaller group; consider an additional adult for larger groups.

Time	Activity	Facilitator action / evidence
0-5 min	Welcome and purpose	Explain voluntary participation, response options, privacy and how feedback will be used.
5-10 min	Connect First	Use a low-contact connection prompt; collect enjoyable movement examples.
10-18 min	This or That	Run 4-5 questions; tally preferences and record reasons.
18-28 min	Agree / Unsure / Disagree	Explore belonging, access, safety and choice. Use private responses if preferred.
28-37 min	Remember When	Invite written, drawn or optional verbal responses; cluster enablers.
37-48 min	Idea Gallery	Generate ideas; let students vote independently; preserve minority ideas.
48-55 min	Student Design Team	Develop one small trial and identify who could benefit.
55-60 min	Close the loop	Explain how the school will decide, when students will hear back and how they can respond.

If you only have 45 minutes

Shorten This or That to 5 minutes, Agree / Disagree to 7 minutes, Remember When to 6 minutes, Idea Gallery to 8 minutes, and replace group design with a three-minute exit ticket. Keep the welcome and commitment to report back.

Facilitator question bank

- What movement or physical activity do you enjoy, in or outside school?
- When do you feel welcomed and comfortable joining in?
- What makes being active easier? What stops some students taking part?
- Are there barriers involving time, spaces, costs, equipment, confidence, safety or who activities are designed for?
- What would you change during lessons, breaks or before or after school?
- Whose views might we still be missing? What would make participation more inclusive?
- What would tell us a change was working?

Adapting student voice across Foundation-Year 12

Students	Adaptation and facilitation
Foundation-Year 2	Use picture activity cards, two simple choices, pointing, drawing or brief conversations. Ask “What do you like?” and “What could we try?” Adults record responses accurately without adding their own interpretation.
Years 3-6	Use brief statements, sticky notes, visual idea cards, optional small-group discussions and simple dot voting. Ask what makes joining in easier or harder.
Years 7-12	Invite fuller discussion of belonging, social factors, access, safety, choice and student-designed opportunities. Allow anonymous responses and structured opportunities to challenge assumptions.
All students	Offer alternative or augmentative communication, visual or written responses, adult-read prompts and private options where useful. Follow school child safety, cultural responsiveness, accessibility and privacy procedures.

Who should have a voice?

Consult students across year levels and with varied movement preferences, confidence and participation patterns. Include students who rarely join sport or organised recreation, students with disability, and students who may experience access or belonging barriers. Avoid assuming student leaders speak for everyone.

Participation and privacy safeguards

• Make participation and sharing personal experiences voluntary. Offer opt-out and non-public options.

• Explain that student feedback may be summarised, but individual comments will not be attributed without appropriate permission.

• Do not collect unnecessary personal or sensitive details. Where a student raises a wellbeing or safety concern, follow the school's established reporting and support procedures.

• If students cannot access an activity, adapt the format rather than excluding them.

• Use questions as consultation prompts. Do not present informal tallies as representative of every student.

Using the findings in the Toolkit

This resource supports Stage 2 (Plan and Prioritise), particularly “Understand student needs”. Compare findings with the Active Schools School Overview and Student Participation Audit, then use the School Priority-Setting Tool and Active Schools Action Plan Template to decide and document action.

Printable recording sheet | What students told us

School / group: _____ Date: _____

How students were consulted: _____

Number of responses (if known): _____ Who may be under-represented? _____

What students told us	What we noticed / evidence	What we could change	Relevant KPA
Enjoyable experiences			
What helps participation			
Barriers or concerns			
Ideas and preferences			
Less common but important views			

Example only: “Some students prefer non-competitive activity” → Offer social or modified sport formats → Quality School Sport. Record your own school evidence above.

Interpreting the feedback

• Distinguish what students said from the facilitator's interpretation. Note counts only when meaningful and known.

• Do not choose changes solely by votes. Consider barriers experienced by students who participate less.

• Check feedback alongside School Overview findings, participation information and practical constraints.

• Identify one or two changes worth trying and discuss them with students before finalising priorities.

Printable action sheet | From voice to action

School / group: _____ Date: _____

Priority idea	Who benefits?	First small step	Student contribution	When to review

Close the loop: tell students what happens next

Share a short response within an agreed timeframe. Explain what the school will try, what requires more consideration and what cannot proceed (and why). Invite students to help trial changes or provide feedback without making participation compulsory.

You said / We are trying / What happens next

You said: _____

We are trying: _____

What happens next: _____

Review the trial

- Ask students again: did the change make being active more enjoyable, accessible or welcoming?
- Check whether participation changed and whether some students still face barriers.
- Decide whether to keep, adapt, extend or stop the trial. Share that decision with students.
- Update the school's Active Schools Action Plan and use the Review Progress stage of the Toolkit when available.

Source and adaptation note

Adapted from Active Schools PAA student voice facilitation materials, including Bacchus Marsh College Girls On The Go session plans, the PAA Student Voice planning session and the Mortlake Girls Get Active Forum. The activities, questions and timings are adaptable facilitation prompts, not validated survey instruments.

Toolkit pathway: Plan and Prioritise → School Priority-Setting Tool → Active Schools Action Plan Template → Taking Action → Review Progress.