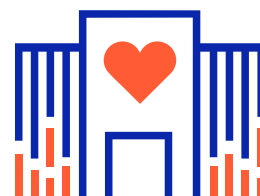




Top Tips: Making more of your physical environment

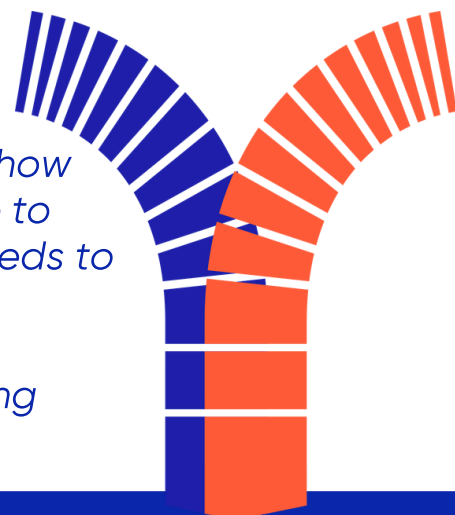


Well Culture.

A school's physical environment can either create opportunities for movement or unintentionally restrict them.

Creating a Well Culture does not require every school to have the same facilities. What matters is how intentionally leaders use the environment they have to enable children and young people with different needs to move, participate, regulate and learn.

These five principles can help you look at your setting with fresh eyes.





01 Start with the children, not facilities

Before thinking about what you need to add, understand how children and young people (CYP) currently experience the environment. The same space can feel exciting and inviting to one pupil but overwhelming or inaccessible to another. Listening to CYP can reveal barriers and opportunities that are not always visible to adults.

Questions to consider

- Which spaces do our CYP enjoy using, and why?
- Where do they feel less comfortable or able to participate?
- Are some groups using particular spaces or opportunities less than others?
- What would CYP change about the environment if we asked them?



02 Look at the whole school day

Movement does not belong only in PE.

Consider arrival, lessons, transitions, break times, lunchtimes, interventions and enrichment. Classrooms, corridors, playgrounds, halls and outdoor spaces can all create different opportunities to move.

Questions to consider

- Where are the natural opportunities for movement across our school day?
- Where are CYP sitting or inactive for long periods?
- Could movement support learning, transitions or readiness to learn?
- Are we making the most of break times and lunchtimes?



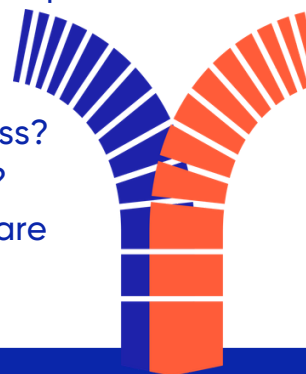
03 Design for different needs

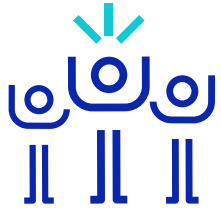
Being active does not look the same for everybody.

Some CYP may want energetic activity and challenge. Others may benefit from controlled movement, sensory input or quieter spaces that help them regulate.

Questions to consider

- Who might find our busiest spaces difficult to access?
- Where can CYP move when they need to regulate?
- Are our active spaces mainly working for CYP who are already confident and active?





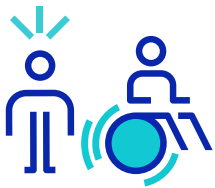
04 Rethink before you rebuild

Limited space or funding can feel like a barrier, but new facilities are not always the first answer.

Look again at the spaces you already have. Consider when they are used, who uses them, how equipment is accessed and whether routines or furniture could be adapted.

Questions to consider

- Which spaces are currently underused?
- Could any spaces serve more than one purpose?
- Is equipment easy for CYP and staff to access?
- Do any routines unnecessarily restrict movement?
- What could we change without high additional cost?



05 Make the environment part of your culture

A physical environment cannot create an active culture on its own.

Leadership, staff confidence, expectations and routines all influence whether CYP feel able to use the opportunities available.

A classroom may have room for movement, for example, but that makes little difference if movement is always viewed as disruption.

Questions to consider

- What messages do our routines and expectations send about movement?
- Do staff feel confident using movement to support learning and regulation?
- Is movement understood as part of wellbeing as well as PE and sport?
- How will we know whether changes are making a difference for CYP?



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