

# School Play Space: alternative strategies

Examples of strategies used by NSW schools to provide active play opportunities within limited play space:

## Strategies

### Physical environment:

- Design playgrounds that are easy to supervise with clear sight lines
- Revitalise and activate underutilised areas
- Add or update line markings e.g. handball, hopscotch, number games, wall target games
- Provide access to all useable open spaces e.g. hall, oval, courts, school garden
- Provide all-weather play areas e.g. using shade cloth, tree canopy, heat resistant ground cover, wet weather covered areas
- Utilise alternate spaces for active play e.g. parks, beaches, sports grounds
- Consider 'pop-up' play e.g. tennis or volleyball nets, nature play pods, loose play parts

### Policies and practices:

- Provide access to loose play equipment or enable students to bring their own
- Designate specific play spaces for loose play or fixed play, age or ability play
- Ensure active supervision of all play areas
- Develop a roster for access to all-weather play areas during adverse weather events
- Stagger breaks e.g. K-2 and 3-6

### Student skills and confidence development:

- Enable student-led activities e.g. peer mentors, buddies, sports captains
- Provide teacher-led activities e.g. activity stations, teach students how to use the line markings

### Collaboration:

- Approach Local Council regarding improvements to shared public spaces e.g. toilets, water, shade and appropriate play equipment
- Consult the school community for further ideas on alternative strategies to promote active play e.g. variety of equipment for all ages and abilities

## Resources

Play space support resources can be accessed on [nshp.com.au/PlaySpace](https://nshp.com.au/PlaySpace).

Contact Northern Sydney [School Years Team](#) for further support, advocacy or to conduct a play space audit.

### Reference:

1. Grunseit AC, O'Hara J, Drayton B, Learnihan V, Clark E, Klarenaar P, Engelen L. Ecological study of playground space and physical activity among primary school children BMJ 2020 Vol XX Issue 6, p.2. <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/10/6/e034586>

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