

# An overview of the Physical Literacy continuum K-10

## What is Physical Literacy?

Physical Literacy is defined as *“the motivation, confidence, physical competence, understanding and knowledge to maintain physical activity at an individually appropriate level, throughout life”* (Whitehead, 2006).

Individuals who are physically literate have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to lead a healthy lifestyle and are also able to assist others in achieving a healthy lifestyle.

Quality physical education and school sport programs offer the best opportunity to foster the development of physical literacy for all children and young people. Every child should have a personally rewarding experience in physical education and school sport.

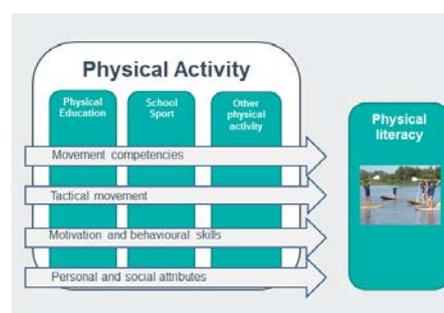
Research has shown that being physically active later in life depends on an individual's ability to feel confident in physical activity settings.

In NSW schools, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) and School Sport aim to provide equal and equitable access for all students to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to become physically literate.

Physical literacy gives children and young people the tools they need to take part in physical activity and sport, both for healthy life-long enjoyment and for sporting success.

## How can the elements of physical literacy be developed through learning and teaching?

Physical literacy is not an alternative to physical activity, physical education or school sport. Physical literacy should be the goal of physical education, physical activity and school sport programs.



Developing physical literacy requires a more inclusive and holistic approach with an equal focus on movement proficiency, motivation to move, and appreciation of the value of moving.

Developing physical literacy in students involves the development of:

- motivation to take part in physical activity inside and outside the curriculum and post school, including commitment to learning and application
- confidence in movement ability, sound self-awareness and sense of self

- the ability to set goals and make informed decisions
- physical competence across a wide range of movement environments and physical activities including positive and ethical interaction with others
- knowledge and understanding of the value of physical activity to enhance quality of life.

Physical literacy can be developed through experience in a wide range of physical activities and environments. Student centred approaches to teaching and learning are essential.

In NSW schools, physical literacy is a capability which can be applied in contexts broader than just PDHPE or School Sport.

A focus on physical literacy allows for and encourages a more personalised approach for all students.



## What is the Physical Literacy continuum?

The Physical Literacy continuum identifies the knowledge, understandings, skills and attitudes regarded as critical to success and lifelong involvement in physical activity.

It maps how critical aspects develop through the years of schooling by describing key markers of expected student achievement. It is informed by international and Australian studies, reports and research.

The continuum is a powerful tool that teachers can use to strengthen their knowledge and understanding of physical literacy. This increased understanding will enhance teacher capacity, skills and confidence enabling teachers to provide quality learning opportunities for students through PDHPE and School Sport.

The continuum is a practical tool to:

- show teachers a progression of learning in relation to critical aspects of physical literacy
- provide guidance on what teachers should see as key markers at different stages
- guide teachers to access appropriate resources to move students along the continuum in relation to the critical aspects
- improve teacher confidence through identifying what success and improvement looks like for students in a practical setting
- increase student learning and improvement in PDHPE and School Sport
- increase opportunities for physical activity through PDHPE and School Sport through increased teacher confidence, particularly in the primary school setting.

The Physical Literacy continuum does not replace syllabus documents.

Teachers report against syllabus outcomes, not continuum markers.

When used together with syllabus documents and other support materials, the Physical Literacy continuum can assist teachers to deliver quality teaching and learning programs through PDHPE and School Sport.

## How can the Physical Literacy continuum be used to support teaching and learning?

The continuum is designed as a tool for enabling teachers, parents and students to track and monitor student progress.

The continuum can be used flexibly to:

- track and monitor student progress through the critical aspects of physical literacy across the years of schooling
- assess *for* learning and identify clear learning goals with students
- determine where to next when planning for student learning for classes, groups of learners and individual students
- assist when differentiating programs by identifying each student's level of achievement across the critical aspects.

The Physical Literacy continuum is designed to assist teachers to differentiate learning by making adjustments to programs in order to meet the individual needs of their students.

By mapping students' achievements against the continuum markers, teachers can identify where to next for groups or individuals with particular learning needs. The continuum can be particularly helpful for teachers in terms of grouping students or with multistage classes.

The Physical Literacy continuum supports teachers to provide feedback to students about their progress, including identifying the skills and strategies needed to develop further in order to move along the continuum in each aspect. This visible progress can be shared with the school community.

## How is the continuum organised?

There are four critical aspects which form the framework of the continuum. These have been identified as critical to the physical literacy achievement of all students.

There is no hierarchy within the critical aspects as they are all essential to student development. The critical aspects are interrelated.

### The Critical Aspects

*Movement competencies* - involves developing proficiency in object control, stability and locomotor skills to sequence movement in a wide variety of physical activity settings.

*Tactical movement* - includes understanding of physical activity contexts, rules and tactics. This understanding is used to plan for tactical movement and demonstration of critical and creative thinking through movement.

*Motivation and behavioural skills* - includes persistence, initiative and working independently in physical activity settings with a focus on the values, attitudes and behavioural skills to plan for and participate in life long physical activity.

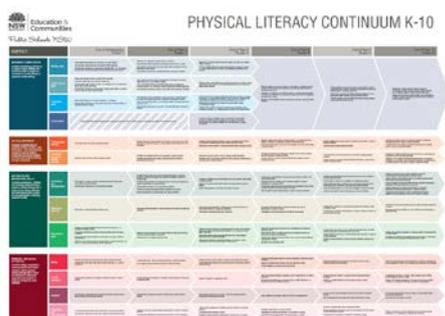
*Personal and social attributes* - includes safety, cooperation, communication and conflict resolution within physical activity settings with a focus on inclusion of others and respectful participation in physical activity and other contexts.



Each critical aspect is identified by a coloured sequence that shows the sequence of learning from left to right.

This continuum can be read in two ways:

- horizontally – to track how the progression of knowledge and skills develop from K to 10
- vertically – for a holistic view of how the critical aspects interrelate to describe expected learning at a particular point in time.



### Clusters and markers

Each column is described as a 'cluster of markers'. The clusters range from Cluster 1 to Cluster 6 and describe expected student achievement from Kindergarten to the end of Year 10. Each cluster correlates to a Stage of learning, for example Cluster 1 is linked to achievement by the end of Kindergarten or Early Stage 1.

The clusters represent milestones of achievement expected of the typical student at particular points in time.

Each cluster is composed of a number of 'markers'. These markers are designed to assist teachers to establish clear learning goals and plan for explicit teaching. Markers show a development from one cluster to another.

## What additional support is available?

Resources that support teachers to implement quality experiences in physical activity are available and mapped to the continuum.

These resources are designed to build the capacity of teachers to plan, develop and deliver quality physical activity as well as assess, monitor and report on student outcomes and achievements.

The resources assist teachers to differentiate and plan for student learning and support needs in the area of movement and physical activity.

Further resources will be continue to be developed throughout 2015 and will be available on the [Physically Active Schools website](#) for NSW Public Schools.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Physically active schools website  
<http://epintranet.det.nsw.edu.au/physically-active-schools/physical-literacy-continuum>

(Intranet only)