

Air Quality Health Index (AQHI)

Dos & Don'ts for Arranging School Activities During the Health Risk Category at High, Very High and Serious Levels (Applicable to Kindergartens)

Health Risk	AQHI Band	Health Advice to Children	Recommendations to Kindergartens ¹
High	7	Children are advised to reduce outdoor physical exertion, and to reduce the time of their stay outdoors, especially in areas with heavy traffic.	<p>✓ Physical activities of moderate to low/light activity intensity are recommended.²</p> <p>Adjustment in the activity intensity level² and duration of time³ is recommended when having the following activities:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Aerobics ✓ Crawling tunnel ✓ Running or jumping (intermittently) ✓ Playing balls (throwing, casting, rolling, passing the ball games and so on) ✓ Playing slides or climbing jungle gym ✓ Group activities ✓ Riding tricycle ✓ Visits ✓ School picnics ✓ Games day / Parent-child Sports day (reduce physical exertion activities ,e.g. race competition) ✓ Other similar activities <p>Activities not recommended:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Vigorous activities, e.g. chasing games × Prolonged outdoor activities

Health Risk	AQHI Band	Health Advice to Children	Recommendations to Kindergartens ¹
Very High	8-10	Children are advised to <u>reduce to the minimum</u> outdoor physical exertion, and to <u>reduce to the minimum</u> the time of their stay outdoors, especially in areas with heavy traffic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Physical activities of low/light activity intensity are recommended. <p>Adjustment in the activity intensity level² and reduce the duration to the minimum³ when having the following activities:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Aerobics ✓ Crawling tunnel ✓ Playing balls (throwing, casting, rolling, passing the ball games and so on) ✓ Group activities (restricted to low activity intensity level games) ✓ Visits ✓ School picnics ✓ Games day / Parent-child Sports day (Activities with physical exertion should be reduced to the minimum) ✓ Other similar activities <p>Activities not recommended:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Chasing / vigorous games × Playing slide or climbing jungle gym × Running/ jumping / race competition × Riding tricycle × Prolonged outdoor activities
Serious	10+	Children are advised to <u>avoid</u> outdoor physical exertion, and to <u>avoid</u> staying outdoors, especially in areas with heavy traffic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Playing toys indoor, building blocks and other activities of low activity intensity level ✓ Visits (indoor) <p>Avoid physical exertion and staying outdoors.</p>

Note.

¹ For children with heart, respiratory (e.g. Asthma) or chronic illnesses, schools should consider reducing the outdoor activity of moderate intensity for these children when the 'Health Risk' category reaches Moderate level, i.e. AQHI band at 4-6, and take appropriate measures according to the 'Health Advice to Children' when it reaches High level or above, i.e. AQHI band at 7 or above. As health condition differs from person to person, the 'Recommendations to Kindergartens' in activity arrangement shall be used for reference in general. Schools are advised to maintain health records of each child as stipulated in the 'Operation Manual for Pre-primary Institutions' and update the records if necessary, with a view to facilitating teachers to make appropriate arrangement according to the actual need and situation. For details of the AQHI bands and related health advice, please refer to the Environmental Protection Department Home-page <http://www.aqhi.gov.hk>.

² Reference for physical activities of various intensities can be taken from 'Physical Activity Guide for Children Aged 2-6'. The link is as follows:

https://www.startsmart.gov.hk/files/pdf/physical_guide_en.pdf

Examples of physical activities in different level of activity intensity:

Intensity	Physiological signs	Common activity examples
Low/Light	Breathing rate and heart rate normal; able to talk as usual	Slow walking, playing toys, building blocks
Moderate	Noticeable increase in heart rate and breathing rate; able to talk in short sentences or word-by-word	Brisk walking, riding tricycle, playing slides, swinging, circuit games, hopscotch
Vigorous	Significant increase in heart rate and breathing rate; difficult to talk with ease	Running, rope skipping, dancing, chasing, race competition

Remark: The tolerability to different levels of intensity of physical activity varies among people. In general, it depends on an individual's previous exercise experience and their relative level of fitness. The examples given are provided as a guide only and will vary between individuals. Teachers should exercise their professional judgment for appropriate arrangement and adjustment where necessary. Special attention should be paid to children with pre-existing heart, respiratory or chronic illnesses. Concerning the specific kinds of physical activities suitable for this group of students to participate in when the health risk category reaches high level, i.e. AQHI band at 7 or above, teachers should follow the medical advice, if any, on individual students.

³ There is no absolute standard for the duration of exercise, it depends on the health condition of an individual. Teachers may make reference to the 'Health advice to children' to adjust the length of time according to the condition of children.