

APOLLO / COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY LEARNING KIT



# Desert Futures

HEAT RESILIENCE & PUBLIC-SPACE LEARNING

## The Heat-Smart School

*A school-ground learning kit*

Understand where people experience sun and heat during a school day—and how to plan a safer discussion about outdoor spaces.

FREE TO READ • NO REGISTRATION

School leaders, educators, estates teams and parent groups

ORIGINAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE • OCTOBER 2026

An Apollo NZ Global open-learning initiative. Not a funded programme, official endorsement or professional certification.

# Begin with the right questions

A short briefing for the facilitator and participants.

**Understand where people experience sun and heat during a school day—and how to plan a safer discussion about outdoor spaces.**

## 01 / EXPOSURE FOLLOWS THE TIMETABLE

Arrival queues, outdoor classrooms, breaks, bus stops and departure areas may create different patterns of exposure.

## 02 / SHADE IS ONLY ONE FACTOR

Cooling, drinking water, changes to activities, supervision, accessibility and official alerts also matter.

## 03 / NO UNIVERSAL SAFE TEMPERATURE

Use local public-health guidance and school or sport protocols. This kit provides no temperature threshold or medical clearance.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Where do pupils, staff and visitors wait outdoors?
- What existing shade and cooler indoor areas can people reach?
- Which spaces have limited water or accessible routes?
- Who sets heat-alert responses, activity rules and emergency procedures?

# A guided group session

One 45–60 minute planning session + local specialist review

00–10

## Trace the day

Draw typical arrival, break, activity and departure routes.

10–22

## Identify exposed moments

Mark where people wait or exercise in direct sun; rely on existing safe information.

22–35

## Review protective systems

List water, rest areas, indoor cooling, policies, shade and accessibility.

35–47

## Separate responsibilities

Distinguish school operations from decisions needing health, design or engineering advice.

47–60

## Prioritise discussion

Agree two priority questions and who will consult the local responsible team.

### FACILITATOR CHECK

Use locally meaningful language. Invite corrections. Avoid gathering or publishing private, culturally sensitive, or personal information without consent.

# A whole-day school exposure map

Map ordinary use patterns on paper. Do not send students outside to collect data during dangerous heat or disregard official restrictions.

ARRIVAL & WAIT



PLAY & LEARN



REST & WATER



DEPARTURE

Illustrative planning pathway — adapt locally; arrows do not imply measured causation.

## GROUP ACTIVITY

1

Plot waiting and gathering points by time of day.

2

Identify shaded or cooler alternatives and drinking-water access.

3

Mark accessible routes and vulnerable-user needs.

4

Refer operational heat decisions to school and health authorities.

## REFLECTION

*Which conclusion can we support today? Which question still needs local advice, permission or reliable evidence?*

# A planning sheet to keep

Fill this in together. Leave space for uncertainty and for local voices.

## 01 SCHOOL, CAMPUS OR SITE

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## 02 WHERE AND WHEN EXPOSURE IS OBSERVED

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## 03 EXISTING SHADE, WATER AND COOLER PLACES

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## 04 WHO MAY NEED ACCESSIBLE ALTERNATIVES

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## 05 POLICY, SPECIALIST AND APPROVAL QUESTIONS

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# Review, do not rush

Keep the value in informed discussions and locally accountable decisions.

## WHAT A USEFUL FIRST REVIEW LOOKS LIKE

- ☐ Whole-day patterns are mapped, not just a single playground.
- ☐ Water, cooling, accessibility and emergency procedures are considered.
- ☐ No shade product is presented as a guaranteed safety fix.
- ☐ The appropriate school and health teams own next decisions.

### PRIORITY HANDOFF

Who should receive the discussion summary? Who can confirm cultural, health, planning, environmental or engineering requirements? Agree a review date rather than promising an intervention.

## INDEPENDENT FURTHER READING

### WHO – Heat and health

[www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-heat-and-health](http://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-heat-and-health)

### UNEP – Sustainable Cooling Handbook

[wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/37313](http://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/37313)

## IMPORTANT

Education and early planning only. Never replace official local heat warnings, school safety protocols or qualified health and engineering advice.