

# St. Joseph's National School

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## School Plan for Physical Education

St Josephs N.S, Dublin Rd, Longford.

Roll Number: 18178r

### **Introduction:**

This plan was formulated as a result of collaboration between the teacher, pupils, parents, Board of management and the principal.

### **Rationale:**

As a staff we consider that Physical Education plays a very important role in the lives of the children who attend this school. We envisage Physical Education as providing children with learning opportunities through the medium of movement and contribute to the overall development by helping them to lead full, active and healthy lives. Our Physical Education curriculum plan links with and influences the teaching and learning in individual classrooms and conforms to the principles outlined in the primary curriculum.

### **Vision:**

We seek to assist the children in our school in achieving their potential through the implementation of our Physical Education programme. Physical Education assists children in learning to relate to and communicate with each other and to develop self-esteem and confidence. It develops a desire for daily physical activity and encourages constructive use of free time and participation in physical activities in adult life. Physical Education provides opportunities to develop desirable personal and social attributes, the concept of fair play, the acceptance of success and failure, and the ability to co-operate in-group situations. Physical Education is an integral part of the total curriculum; provide vital opportunities for the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of the child.

### **Aims**

By introducing this policy we endorse the aims of the Primary Curriculum for Physical Education

- To promote the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of the child
- To develop positive personal qualities

- To help in the acquisition of an appropriate range of movement skills in a variety of contexts
- To promote understanding and knowledge of the various aspects of movement
- To develop an appreciation of movement and the use of the body as an instrument of expression and creativity
- To promote enjoyment of, and positive attitudes towards, physical activity and its contribution to lifelong health-related fitness, thus preparing the child for the active and purposeful use of leisure time.

### **Stands and Strand Units:**

Teachers are familiar with the strands, stand units and content objectives for their class level according to the curriculum. These are devised by each teacher for his or her class according to the Physical Education curriculum and teacher guidelines 1999. Teachers select a range of activities for all strands for their class. Children have access to six strands each year - Athletics, Dance, Gymnastics, Games, Aquatics, Outdoor and Adventure activities.

The sixth strand Aquatics is implemented on a block basis for all classes from junior infants up to 4<sup>th</sup> Class. The children go to the local swimming pool in The Mall Complex. Generally speaking the class is divided into 2 groups - improvers, advanced. There is one instructor per group.

Teachers ensure that there is continuity and progression from class to class by devising e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> the strand content on a class group basis. In planning for teaching PE, teachers will be guided by the PE Curriculum Teacher Guidelines and will also use the PDST Move Well, Move Often Physical Literacy Resource. Teachers may also use the PE lesson plans prepared by the Primary School Sports Initiative - PSSSI Lesson Plans.

### **Developing the Physically Literate pupil in Physical Education**

We use the Move Well, Move Often resource to support the teaching of Physical Literacy in St Joseph's NS. Physical Literacy is the underlying goal of all physical activity. Physical literacy addresses the whole child



and respects each pupil as an individual. The physically literate child can be described as having the motivation, confidence, movement competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take part in physical activity throughout their personal lifelong journey. Physical literacy includes four essential and interconnected elements whose relative importance may change throughout life: Movement Competence, Motivation and Confidence, Knowledge and Understanding and Opportunities to engage in physical activity for life.

Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) are the basic building blocks of movement and are an essential part of everyday life and recreational activity. These are learnt through a series of developmental stages. Our focus is the development of fundamental movement skills within the strands of the PE curriculum.

### **Approaches & Methodologies**

A combination of both direct teaching approach and guided discovery approach are used in the school.

- Direct Teaching: involves the teacher telling or showing the children what to do and in observing their progress. It involves the teacher making most or all of the decisions concerning the content of the lesson and child responding to instruction.
- Guided discovery strategy involves the teacher asking a sense of questions that will eventually lead to one or more appropriate answers and ultimately the discovery of a particular concept of 'solution'. This approach is used where the teacher wishes to place an emphasis on leading the children to explore and experiment with movement's concepts.
- Integration: P.E. has many objectives, which are developed by other subjects such as Gaelic, English, Art, Music, Mathematics and especially SPHE.
- Every effort is made to encourage maximum participation by the child through Group work. At infant level most activities will be undertaken first by an individual child and then developed into partner work together. Opportunities are provided for group work during first and second classes, which enhance co-operation in preparation for development of team play in a games situation. Team play is used for children from third to sixth class. Suiting the individual needs of the child. The use of 'station' teaching allows maximum numbers of children to participate providing opportunities for continuous practise for groups working on

different tasks at the same time.

Areas divided into grids are provided for team training.

### **Assessment & Recording Keeping:**

Teachers are constantly assessing children in the physical education lesson as they identify progress and difficulties.

Teachers assess progress in all aspects of the programme covered.

We will assess;

- • Willingness to participate in activities
- • Readiness to engage with a certain activity
- • The level of competence of a child in carrying out an activity/FMS
- • Interest in and attitude towards an activity
- • Willingness to cooperate in individual, pair and group activities

Our assessment tools are:

- • Teacher observation
- • Teacher-designed tasks

Assessment is used to provide information on individual children, assist the teacher in planning a programme and facilitates communication with other teachers, parents and other professionals.

- • Assessment for learning to provide feedback to children, improve learning and inform practice
- • Assessment of learning which helps to identify the milestones children reach and the progress they
- • make to report to parents, other teachers and the children themselves.
- • Assessment as learning involves teaching the children how to self-assess and peer assess.

The assessment criteria used for each activity forms part of class and school planning. The school will use a PE Journal to guide Self-Assessment. Teachers will refer to the PDST teacher checklists, peer observation checklist and Individual Assessment Profiles from the Move Well Move Often website and resource pack,



Assessment information is shared with parents at Parent Teacher meetings and in end-of-year school reports. The school will communicate through Seesaw as a home school link as well as take home activities and PE homework. If concerns are noted during the year parents may be contacted. Information is shared between teachers during the year as need arises and in particular in the case of formulating Individual Education Plans for children with special needs.

### **Recording and Communication.**

The teachers share information with parent's through feedback during parent - teacher meetings on the child's achievements and with children in an informal manner during / after P.E. lesson with constructive suggestions / praise etc.

Parents - watching team sports  
Sport Days.

### **Multi-class Teaching:**

At present we have a multi class situation in the school. This is a small class. However the teacher has to match the chosen activity to suit the physical strength of the pupils. Group teaching / station teaching are effective particularly in this situation.

### **Children with different needs:**

In St Joseph's NS, we recognise that physical education is important in the curriculum for students with Special Education Needs and disabilities. Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities depend in teachers to manage their learning and to provide support.

It is the teacher's task to assess and plan for learning needs of different students within class and to provide all students with opportunities that are appropriate to their ability but also challenge their potential. P.E. enhances the body strength, physical well being and provides opportunities through which students can improve fine and motor co-ordination, concentration and listening skills, self esteem, self confidence,

games skills, creativity and the ability to co-operate and communicate with others. It provides overall development of each student as a whole person. Each student is challenged at his/her personal level. It is a highly sociable subject involving a high level of appreciation and acceptance of others and allows students to experience practice and enjoy many physical skills. - A positive experience in P.E. at school will motivate students to participate regularly in sports and physical activity as an adult.

Classes are organised to suit all levels of ability. Children are encouraged to participate at the level at which they are comfortable. Where children have a physical disability appropriate apparatus will be used and games modified to suit their needs.

- Students with exceptional ability will be encouraged to set greater goals for themselves and given tasks to reflect their ability.

Opportunities will be given to such children to participate in chosen activities outside of school time in other situations.

- Inactive, shy or self-conscious children need to be nurtured and encouraged through non-competitive activities. Activities such as co-operative games add a great social dimension to P. E. and is carried out in a spirit of fun and play. Children may also play a very valuable role in helping with the organisation of games thus making the feel part of the P.E activity.

### **Equality of participation and access:**

Both boy and girls are given equal opportunities to participate in all class activities.

Boys and girls have equal access to and opportunities to experience all strands. Girls from the senior cycle of the school take part in extra curricular activities e.g. soccer, basketball, football blitzes, swimming club.

Children are sometimes grouped by ability and sometimes by gender depending on the task being undertaken and children engaging in contact activities, the size of the child is considered and they are paired or grouped accordingly.

Each class provides an opportunity to integrate the culture of all pupils e.g. children learning dance from other countries.



In some cases where some children may have difficulty in paying for transport to and from the pool / tracksuits the Board of Management endeavours to make provision for these children.

Teachers plan activities that allow children to undertake tasks appropriate to their levels of ability e.g.:

- (a) applying different levels of difficulty to tasks
- (b) setting a common task but allowing children to operate at different levels
- (c). Placing an emphasis on a variety of strand units or different activities within a strand.
- (d). grouping children sometimes by ability or sometimes by gender.

We ensure that every child has access to all aspects of Physical Education in the school and Board of Management ensures that funds are made available to all pupils especially disadvantaged pupils.

#### **Linkage and Integration:**

Opportunities for *linkage* (i.e. integration within the physical education curriculum) and *integration* (i.e. cross-curricular connections) exist throughout all levels. Many of the broad objectives of physical education, such as the development of self-esteem, confidence and initiative, are shared with other subjects. Within physical education it is through learning opportunities provided in the various aspects of movement that the achievement of these objectives can be enhanced. Physical education can be integrated with English, Gaeilge, Geography, Art, Music, Mathematics and especially social, personal and health education. The development of other curricular areas can be enriched through a programme of physical education, which is broad and balanced. Planning for the transfer and reinforcement of learning from one area of the curriculum to another is essential to ensure success. It is important therefore for our school to consider the links that exist between physical education and other subjects.

Integration could take place within physical education (linkage) or with other subjects in almost all strands. Many playground games, for example, could be planned as part of an athletics or games unit. Aspects of the *Outdoor/ adventure activities* strand are particularly suited to an



integrated approach combined with a full-day experience at a given time. Here are some of the instances where linkage and integration might be established in each strand for each class standard:

### **Athletics**

#### **Linkage:**

Athletics incorporates activities that are also appropriate for development in gymnastics and games.

*Integration:* Music: skipping songs may be linked with performing song singing. Mathematics: Measures

### **Dance**

#### **Integration**

Mathematics: Shape and space- Spatial awareness

Music: Listening and responding- Exploring sounds; Performing- Song singing

SPHE: Myself - Feelings and emotions

History: Myself and my family - Feasts and festivals in the past

Visual arts: art work may be used as a stimulus for dance or themes may be interpreted in a variety of visual arts media.

### **Gymnastics**

#### **Integration**

Mathematics: Shape and space - Spatial awareness

SPHE: Myself - Safety and protection

Music: Listening - Listening and responding to music

### **Games**

#### **Integration**

History: Myself and my family - Games in the past, Feasts and festivals in the past

### **Outdoor and adventure activities**

#### **Integration**

Geography: A sense of place and space; Maps, globes and graphical skills;

Environmental awareness and care

Science: Environmental awareness and care

SPHE: Myself and the wider world Developing citizenship; myself and others - Relating to others

**Aquatics. Infants - sixth**

**Integration**

SPHE: Myself - Safety and protection

**Timetable:**

One hour each week is allocated to P.E. but occasionally if teachers feel it necessary this is sometime split into two half hour sessions. The Aquatics strand is covered in a block session (6 weeks for 1<sup>st</sup> class upwards/4 weeks for infants) during which time the children travel to Longford Swimming Pool for lessons. This applies for all classes up to 4<sup>th</sup> class. The children from 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> class are offered the opportunity to attend an after school session in the first term.

Sept/ Oct	Jan - Mar	Apr - June
Aquatics 2 <sup>nd</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup>	Aquatics 3 <sup>rd</sup> / 4 <sup>th</sup> / Senior Infants	Aquatics Infants

We have an external GAA coach who visits the school for one day a week. Each class are given a block of six 30 minute sessions to practise and develop their GAA skills.

## **Code of Ethics:**

*(Refer to school's Child Protection Policy based on the Department of Education and Science guidelines accompanying the 'Children First' Guidelines*

Coaches are used to support the class teacher in the implementation of some of the P.E. strands in the school.

Good practice and procedures are outlined and are communicated to the coaches at the start of their period with us. They are expected appropriately dressed; use appropriate language and behaviour when engaging with the class. Teacher actively support the coaches as they are present in a supervisory role and actively engaged in helping the coach.

## **After School Activities:**

Children are offered a number of opportunities to participate in extra curricular activities (football, basketball, and swimming). While some activities are fun based, most are inter-school competitions.

Many of the competitions reflect the P. E. programmes - games, athletics, and aquatics. The school enters all Cumann Na mBunscoil activities held in Autumn and from March onwards. The F.A.I. run soccer competitions, which cater for eight year olds upwards. At Easter an inter-school basketball competition is organised. School leagues are run in September and October. The Annual School Sports is a mixture of fun events as well as competitive activities. A Family Fun Day is organised by the local GAA and is supported by the staff in the school. Parents are asked to support the teachers with inter-school games.

## **P.E. Equipment and ICT:**

- Our school has a detailed inventory of equipment and resources available for PE. This list is compiled by the PE Coordinator and is checked and updated at the beginning and end of each school year.
- The equipment is stored in our PE store room in the school. **Each teacher has the responsibility to ensure that all equipment is returned**



to the room after each lesson. Any breakages have to be reported to the Co-ordinator as soon as possible.

- The use of pictures and videos will be vital in recording PE activities. The display of these pictures on the noticeboard, school website, facebook and the use of the Seesaw Application will give an opportunity to children to see themselves

Information and communication technologies can be used to supplement and research specific areas within the physical education curriculum. The internet contains a wealth of knowledge and information on many aspects of sport. Information can be sourced to extend the children's knowledge and appreciation of activities which they are experiencing in the physical education lesson. The history of sports, pictures of sports personalities or venues and results of sports events are readily available online.

### **Health and Safety:**

P.E. includes many activities, which offer a challenge to the child's initiative, determination and courage. Safety precautions cannot remove all risks but should eliminate unnecessary hazards.

The following health and safety issues pertain to P.E.

- all P.E. activities should begin with a warm up activity and end with a cool down activity. Teachers need to present activities that are safe and enjoyable.
- Emphasis should be placed on maintenance of good posture throughout all activities especially when lifting and carrying apparatus.
- The children must wear their school tracksuit for P.E. lessons as these allow mobility during all activities.
- The children must wear appropriate footwear. They are not allowed to work indoors in stocking feet, which do not grip the floor, nor are they allowed to work bare footed unless conditions are suitable. Jewellery is not allowed during P.E lessons.
- the equipment used for all activities should be suited in size, weight, and design to age strength and ability of the child and should be of good quality and repair. The condition of all equipment and working areas should be checked regularly to ensure that the children are working in a

safe clean environment.

- The medical condition of individual children which may affect their safety during a P.E. lesson should be made known to the teacher.
- An awareness of the age, stage of development and special needs of the child is essential in ensuring the child's safety.

Procedures for dealing with accidents are:

- The class teacher investigates the injury;
- If the injury is not serious simple first aid is applied;
- If injury is more serious parents are contacted and the child is taken home;
- If parents are not available the injured child is taken to Casualty in Longford by a member of the teaching staff;
- An accident report form is filled by teacher on yard duty and kept by Principal.

Aisling Finan, Aine Carberry, Lisa McWeeney, Carmel Farrell and Ms Smith has First Aid Training on the staff.

Children are supervised by the at least two members of staff on days out / visits out of school.

Children always have an appropriate /safe space to work in.

Every effort is made that staff members are aware of specific medical conditions of individual children.

### **Individual Teacher planning and Reporting:**

- Each teacher uses the whole school plan and the curriculum documents for P.E. as they prepare their yearly scheme and their fortnightly notes. The appropriate strands and strand units provide direction for the teachers work with the class.
- Teachers select the period of the year in which activities take place. Factors such as weather, access to outdoor and indoor facilities, and access to swimming pool are taken into account when teachers are planning their P.E. programme for the year.



- The Cuntas Míósúil helps in reviewing and developing the whole school plan / individual preparation for the following years. As the cuntas míósúil is recorded by all teachers and kept in their own folders and also a copy handed up to the Principal each month - this enables each teacher to have easy access to information, which they may require when doing their planning from year to year.

### **Staff Development:**

At present teachers have access to current research, reference books, resource materials and websites dealing with P.E. Mrs Kane (P.E. Co-ordinator), Ms Butler (GAA) and Ms Gilmartin (basketball) have responsibility for training and development of team games in our school. Teachers took part in a training day for the Buntus Sport Programme in April 09 run by Longford County Council and the Action for Life Training in May 10. The programme supplied the school with equipment and lesson plans which are available for use by all staff.

Teachers are encouraged to attend P.E. courses. The board of Management support the staff by encouraging participation and paying fees for P.E. courses. Teachers share information acquired at these courses on planning days and at staff meetings. This information can also be circulated in paper form among staff members. Aspects of the P.E. programme can be discussed at staff meetings. Demonstrations of P.E, equipment and resources can also be organised. Teachers can avail of internal and external expertise to up skill the school community as the need arises. Team teaching takes place. If one teacher has skills in a particular area then, this teacher can share his/her expertise with other teachers / classes. Supervision arrangements are put in place.

### **Parental Involvement:**

Parents support the P.E. plan by offering assistance, providing transport to and from matches, supporting extra-curricular activities and by discussion with the class teacher. After ratification of the P.E. plan a copy is kept in the school and available for parent's perusal if requested. Parents are informed of, invited to attend and support all school and inter-school football, basketball, matches.

Parents are invited to Sports Day held in the last term of school. The



emphasis is placed on fun and the importance of participation. Also Active School Week offers children the chance to engage in P.E. strands.

### **Active School/Health Promoting School**

St Joseph's NS is both an Active School and a Health Promoting School. The Active School Flag (ASF) is a Department of Education and Skills initiative supported by Healthy Ireland. The ASF is awarded to schools that strive to achieve a physically educated and physically active school community. The process aims to get more schools, more active, more often. In order to achieve the ASF, we began the process by self-evaluating our current provision across three areas: Physical Education, Physical Activity and Partnerships. We were awarded our first ASF in 2017. The flag remains valid for a period of 3 years after which time we will be invited to re-apply. We are currently renewing our ASF.

Each year, Holy Cross Mercy School will facilitate an Active School Week whereby the discretionary curriculum time for the period in question is used to promote physical activity for all children in the school encompassing as many of the strands of the PE curriculum as possible. This will take place in May/June. This is due to better weather conditions for outdoor activities. In addition to PE we prioritise physical activity throughout the day during Active Schools Week

### **Community Links:**

The local GAA club offers personnel and facilities, which allow not only the development of Gaelic games activities but also many P.E. activities. Local coaches come to the school on a regular basis to work with teachers and children.

School tours are organised on an annual basis. These give an opportunity to experience places of interest and activity centres.

E-mail is available as a form of communication with other school and community groups.

### **Success Criteria:**

The school plan makes provisions for an enrolling P.E. programme that can be continually assessed and developed to meet the needs of the students.

The plan will be implemented by:

- Teachers preparation is based on the scheme
- Expert guidance will be given from qualified instructors (swimming, football, camogie, soccer)
- Regular feedback from teachers

The plan will achieve its aims by:

- feedback from the teachers, parents and community
- children's feedback will be monitored regarding activity, skill level, enjoyment of classes

Inspector's reports will indicate whether or not the plan has achieved its aims and recommendations will be taken on board.

The plan has promoted key considerations by:

- the importance of enjoyment and play
- maximum participation of all children
- development of skills and understanding
- a balance between competitive and non-competitive activities
- a balance between contact and non-contact
- providing activities equally suited for girls and boys
- providing opportunities for achievement for each child
- to improve general level of fitness
- to accommodate student needs
- fostering self-esteem and confidence
- encourage individual interest in specific sports and interest in sports promoted in the media and local community

### **Implementation:**

The Principal will co-ordinate the progress of the plan, encourage and accept feedback on its implementation and report to the staff. The P.E.

Co-ordinator and the Special Duties posts will report to the staff on training and development of school teams.

The plan will be monitored and evaluated by the teachers and Principal.

This is done on an ongoing basis. The teachers, assessing the implementation of the strands, achieve this. Feedback on this plan will be accepted and discussed at staff meetings and amendments made when necessary.

#### Timeframe:

Aspects of the plan are being implemented at present. All strands will be implemented in the 20/21 academic year.

#### Review:

This plan will be reviewed on a regular basis. The teachers, pupils, parents, Principal, Board of Management, School Inspector and cuiditheoirí will be involved in the formal review.

The principal will co-ordinate this review. The first review will take place in March 2024.

#### Ratification and Communication:

This plan will be made available to our parent's Association for discussion and ratified by the Board of management including any necessary amendments by March 2021. Parents will be made aware that this is available for perusal in the school with appointment from April 2021.

Signed: Donk Casey  
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 24/3/2021.

Signed: Mrs. O. Egan  
Principal

Date: 24/3/2021