



St. Peter's National School  
Whole School Policy on Physical Education

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## 1. Introductory statement and rationale

This plan was reviewed by the Assistant Principal II and the teaching staff in order to provide a coherent approach to the teaching of Physical Education across the whole school. The purpose of this policy is to assist teachers in their individual planning for PE and to provide practical guidance for teachers, parents and other relevant persons on the provision of the effective teaching of PE in our school. It reflects the Primary Curriculum, 1999.

## 2. Vision and aims

We seek to assist the children in our school in achieving their full potential through promotion of physical activity throughout the school. We strive to create an engaging, enjoyable and supportive environment in which each child is encouraged to participate at his/her individual level. We endorse the aims of the Primary School 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.

### 3. Curriculum Planning

#### Strands and strand units

The Primary School Curriculum for Physical Education consists of six Strands: Athletics, Dance, Gymnastics, Games, Outdoor and Adventure Activities and Aquatics. Each Strand is subdivided into Strand Units and the relevant content objectives for each class level can be found in the curriculum documents.

The curriculum is designed to be spiral in nature. As the children progress through the school, they experience opportunities to refine and develop their skills, abilities, knowledge and appreciation in each strand. All staff members endeavour to ensure continuity, progression and consistency from class to class by following the recommendations in the curriculum.

**N.B.** Due to the lack of facilities and equipment, the Gymnastics strand will be limited for our pupils. The Aquatics strand is partly covered through the teaching of water safety integrated with S.P.H.E. (due to lack of community pool)

| <i>Strands</i> | <i>Strand Units</i>  |
|----------------|--|
| Athletics      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Running</li><li>• Jumping</li><li>• Throwing</li><li>• Understanding and appreciation of athletics</li></ul> |
| Dance          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exploration, creation and performance of dance</li><li>• Understanding and appreciation of dance</li></ul>   |

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Gymnastics                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Movement</li> <li>• Understanding and appreciation of gymnastics</li> </ul>   |
| Games                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sending, receiving and travelling</li> <li>• Creating and playing games</li> <li>• Understanding and appreciation of games</li> </ul>   |
| Outdoor and adventure activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking</li> <li>• Orienteering</li> <li>• Outdoor challenges</li> <li>• Understanding and appreciation of outdoor and adventure activities</li> </ul>  |
| Aquatics                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hygiene</li> <li>• Water safety</li> <li>• Entry to and exit from the water</li> <li>• Buoyancy and propulsion</li> <li>• Stroke development</li> <li>• Water-based ball games</li> <li>• Understanding and appreciation of aquatics</li> </ul> |

To ensure that each pupil receives a comprehensive programme in all strands, the school applies the following term timetable, over a three-year cycle.

| Month       | Strand                     | FMS Year 1<br>2018-2019 | FMS Year 2<br>2019-2020 | FMS Year 3<br>2020-2021    |
|-------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Sept/Oct    | Games                      | Catching                | Kicking                 | Striking with an implement |
| Nov/Dec     | Dance                      | Balancing               | Skipping                | Side stepping              |
| Jan/Feb     | Gymnastics                 | Jumping for Height      | Landing                 | Jumping for Distance       |
| March/April | Athletics and<br>*Aquatics | Running                 | Throwing                | Striking with the hand     |
| May/June    | Outdoor and Adventure      | Walking                 | Hopping                 | Dodging                    |

The PDST's 'Fundamental Movement Skills' (FMS) has been incorporated into this plan in order to ensure an effective 3 year programme was devised for St. Peter's National School. The FMS resource is intended to contribute to the development of the physically literate child. It has been designed to complement the teaching of the Irish Primary School Physical Education (PE) Curriculum and aims to provide a range of tools to support the teacher in teaching fundamental movement skills (FMS) throughout the primary school. These experiences should lead to a physically literate pupil, who has the movement competence, confidence, and understanding to continue participation in physical activity throughout their lives.

St. Peter's N.S adopts a standard approach to whole school planning for the content in PE in order to develop consistency

around the teaching of PE. This approach offers a guide to teachers in school around what to teach and when. This standard approach involves:

- Teaching all strand units each year. \*The Aquatics strand is partly covered through the teaching of water safety integrated with S.P.H.E.
- Teaching the 15 Fundamental Movement Skills over a 3 year period.
- Teaching five Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3.
- Each strand unit and accompanying FMS is allocated two months of teaching time. The timing of these two month blocks are mapped across each school year.

Within this standard approach all teachers are covering the same strand units at the same time. This supports the work of the whole school atmosphere and integration with planned school activities. It also enables the teachers to anticipate what will be covered and when, therefore increasing the scope for planned integration or thematic planning with other curricular areas.

## **Approaches and methodologies**

We use a combination of the following approaches:

- Direct teaching approach e.g. teaching a specific skill such as an underarm throw
- Guided discovery approach e.g. children creating their own sequence in dance
- Integration e.g. Geography and Outdoor and Adventure Activities - development of map work skills through participation in a snake walk

We use methods that encourage maximum participation by the child through group work:

- Individual, pair, group and team play
- Station teaching
- Use of the yard with playground markings.

We incorporate movement breaks throughout the school day to facilitate the needs of all children. This is done through whole school initiatives such as the Daily Mile, the Active Break Every Day Challenge and the Climb a Mountain skipping challenge. Whole class movement breaks are led by teachers and include dance breaks, chair exercises, Go Noodle, 10@10 exercise videos as well as games, laps and exercises in the yard. Children with additional needs are facilitated to take movement breaks accompanied by an SNA as directed by the class teacher.

### **Assessment and record-keeping**

As PE is a physical activity-based area, most assessment is done within the lesson by observing, listening, asking questions and giving feedback to pupils. Teachers keep their own records of pupils' achievement. They use these records to report annually to children, parents and relevant staff through parent-teacher meetings and end of year school reports. Children are asked to self-assess and peer assess where appropriate.

We 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
- Interest in and attitude to activity
- Willingness to cooperate in individual, pair and group activities

- Our assessment tools are:
- Teacher observation
- Teacher-designed tasks

### Multi-class teaching

Teachers adapt the curriculum and group children as they deem necessary to cater for the various levels in a multi-class setting.

### Children with different needs

We acknowledge that each individual child has particular needs and all are at different stages of their personal development. We also recognise that for some children, participation in certain strands of the Physical Education curriculum may be problematic because of physical, intellectual or emotional difficulties. Where appropriate, the Special Needs Assistant may assist in PE lessons. Children with exceptional ability/talent for PE are encouraged and supported. We also encourage inactive/shy/self-conscious children to participate in PE activities.

Every attempt is made to ensure that all children experience the richness and breadth of a full Physical Education curriculum.

### Equality of participation and access

We promote the needs and interests of all pupils regardless of ability, culture, gender or aptitude. We provide equal access for all children to Physical Education equipment and facilities and the use of the playground during breaks is incorporated as an integral part of the school's programme i.e. one particular group or class is not allowed unlimited access to larger yard areas. Every child has



access to all PE activities provided by the school and lack of financial resources on behalf of the child does not hinder their participation.

### Linkage and integration

Every attempt is made to link the various strands of the PE curriculum and to integrate the other subject areas with PE, where appropriate e.g. Dance can be integrated with Music, Aquatics/Games with SPHE and Gaeilge can be used to give simple directions. This is achieved through the individual teacher's planning and organisation. Theme based activities are used to support integration where teachers find suitable.

## 4. Organisational Planning

### **Timetable**

Each class receives a minimum of one hour of Physical Education per week. This time may be blocked or divided at each teacher's discretion.

### **Code of ethics**

Coaches are used to support the class teacher in the implementation of some of the PE curriculum strands in the school. They do not replace the class teacher and ultimate responsibility for the class lies with the class teacher. All teachers and coaches working in the school context are expected to adhere to the school Child Protection policy and Child Safeguarding policy. They should always ensure that they treat children with integrity and respect and that the self-esteem of children is enhanced.

## After school activities

School representative teams are catered for in inter-school competitions. Children are encouraged to play games and practice skills during break-time.

## PE equipment and ICT

An inventory of equipment and resources is available for Physical Education. Each teacher is given a copy of the equipment list. There is also specialised SET equipment provided as needed. The equipment is stored safely in the Storage Container and Resource Room. All staff are responsible for the return of equipment to the designated storage area. Any damage or breakages should be reported to the Principal and equipment replaced where necessary.

## Health and safety

As with all curricular areas, the Physical Education Curriculum maintains due care to our schools Health and Safety Policy.

When engaging children in PE all members of staff ensure that the following safety aspects are taken into consideration;

- The size, weight and design of equipment are suitable to the age, strength and ability of the child
- Children are taught how to handle, lift and carry all apparatus safely
- Children warm up and cool down in each Physical Education lesson
- Children are not permitted to wear dangerous jewellery
- Children must wear appropriate clothing and footwear.

Should an accident occur in the Physical Education lesson we will follow the procedures outlined for accidents in our Health and Safety policy.

### **Individual teachers' planning and reporting**

The Curriculum documents for PE help to guide teachers in their short and long term planning. Teachers create individual Physical Education plans specific to their own class, while incorporating the objectives laid out in the 1999 Physical Education Curriculum for the appropriate class level. This ensures clear progression as children move from class to class.

The strands covered in PE each month are recorded in the Cúntas Míósúil.

The Cúntas Míósúil are very relevant in recording what has been covered and in reviewing and developing the school plan for the following years.

### **Staff development**

Visiting coaches for GAA, Tag Rugby, Football, Cycling and Cricket may be used to supplement and support the work of the class teacher. These are recognised as up-skilling opportunities for the teachers involved. Teachers make use of the Primary Schools' Sports Initiative (P.S.S.I.) lessons in their planning. They are notified of courses relating to PE available in the area and encouraged to attend.

## Parental involvement

Parents have a responsibility to encourage their children to participate in all strands of the Physical Education curriculum. They are welcome to view the PE policy in the school. At the end of each school year, the school organises a sports day in conjunction with the parents. All parents are invited to view and support the children in the PE activities planned.

## Community links

Local clubs and sporting organisations are invited to offer information on the services that they provide. We are very much aware of the school's role in the community and we are also conscious of the fact that the expertise of people in the community is an invaluable resource to any school.

## 5. Success criteria

Means of assessing the outcomes of the plan may include;

- Teacher/parent/community feedback
- Children's feedback regarding activity levels, enjoyment and skill development
- Inspectors' suggestions/WSE recommendations
- Second level feedback

The criteria for evaluating the success of this policy are:

- The level of enjoyment exhibited by the children
- The maximum participation by all children
- The development of skills and understanding
- A balance between competitive and non-competitive activities
- A balance between contact and non-contact activities

- The provision of opportunities for achievement for each child
- The level of teacher satisfaction in teaching a broad, balanced curriculum.

## 6. Implementation

The Principal co-ordinates the progress of the policy, encourages and accepts feedback on its implementation and reports to staff on findings. Each teacher is responsible for implementing this policy with his/her own class.

## 7. Review and Ratification

This Physical Education Policy was reviewed in April 2019, by the Assistant Principal II, informed by the views of staff and parents (via the PTA) and was ratified by the Board of Management on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May 2019.

The Board will monitor its implementation and will review it again, in May 2022, or as the need arises.

Date Ratified:

Signed: Rod. Egan Date: 8 May 2019

Chairperson Board of Management

Signed: Rachael Date: 8.5.19.

## 8. Equipment list

- Hockey sticks and balls
- Cricket bats
- Assorted bats - cricket, baseball, unihoc sticks, hurls.
- Plastic tennis rackets - big and small
- Badminton rackets
- Shuttlecocks
- Hurdles - big and small
- Soccer balls
- Soccer Goalposts
- Basketballs
- Basketball net (on wheels)
- Rubber balls
- Sponge balls - big and small
- Scoops and balls
- Tennis balls
- Foam tennis balls
- Footballs
- Rugby balls
- Ball Pump
- Large sacks
- Bibs
- Parachutes x 2
- Balancing sets
- Velcro catch hand pads
- Orienteering box
- Foam rocket javelins
- Target hoops
- Hoops - big and small
- Mats
- Cones - upright and flat
- Movement station spots
- Skipping ropes - long and short
- Tug o' War rope
- Tall cones
- Disc cones

- Beanbags
- Foam rings
- Foam discs
- Agility ladders
- Bibs (red, green, yellow)
- Black and yellow vests numbered (youth and junior sizes)
- Red and black soccer strip (red jerseys with name of school, black shorts, black socks, shin guards)

#### Additional Resources for SEN

- Peanut Ball
- Trampoline
- Sand Tray
- Pop up tunnel

#### ICT PE Resources

- IPADS
- Fundamental Movement Skills Books and online  
<https://www.scoilnet.ie/pdst/physlit/>
- Buntús Cards
- Be Active Cards
- PSSI lessons
- Youtube- just dance videos
- 10@10 RTE videos
- Go noodle