



CLONMONEY NATIONAL SCHOOL

WHOLE SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION POLICY

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This plan was formulated by the whole staff to provide a coherent approach to the teaching of P.E. across the whole school. It is envisaged that this plan will benefit the teaching and learning of P.E. Physical Education (P.E.) provides children with learning opportunities through the medium of movement. Through P.E. we aim to help children develop physically as well as socially, emotionally and intellectually. This plan describes the place which we give to Physical Education in our school, which is to support children in every aspect of their life and development. It describes the way in which we use Physical Education to achieve that goal, our agreed approach to teaching P.E. and the content of the programme of the curriculum at each year level. It conforms to the principles outlined in the 1999 Primary Curriculum documents. This document will also serve as a basis for each teacher's long term and short term planning. It will also serve to inform new or temporary teachers and parents and other partners in the education process, of the approaches and methodologies, which we use in P.E.

RATIONALE

When teaching P.E. we, the staff consider the following:

- The importance of enjoying physical activity
- The importance of play in its many forms in the learning and developmental process
- Maximum participation by all children in the physical education lesson – ACTIVE PARTICIPATION
- The development of skills
- Providing a balance between competitive and non-competitive activities
- Providing a balance between contact and non-contact activities
- Providing opportunities for achievement for each child
- Providing activities equally suitable for girls and boys
- It was decided to focus on this area for development:
- To benefit teaching and learning in our school
- To conform to principles outlined in the Primary Curriculum
- To review the existing plan for P.E. in light of the 1999 Primary School Curriculum

VISION

We seek to assist the children in our school in achieving their potential through providing a balanced programme of activities where each child is encouraged to participate at his/her individual level. While we teach a broad and balanced curriculum, we are also supported by a strong tradition of inter-school competitions in hurling, camogie, football, soccer and cross country running.

AIMS

We endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum in 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.

CURRICULUM PLANNING

1. STRANDS

A) THE STRANDS ACROSS THE P.E. CURRICULUM FOR ALL CLASSES ARE:

Athletics; Dance; Gymnastics; Games; Outdoor and Adventure activities and Aquatics

Each of these strands is covered each year with the exception of aquatics, which is covered from 2nd-4th classes.

B) THESE STRANDS ARE FURTHER DIVIDED INTO STRAND UNITS:

1. Athletics – Running; Jumping; Throwing; Understanding and appreciation of athletics
2. Dance - Exploration, creation and performance of dance; Understanding and appreciation of dance
3. Gymnastics – Movement; Understanding and appreciation of gymnastics
4. Games - Sending, receiving and travelling; Creating and playing games; Understanding and appreciation of games
5. Outdoor & Adventure Activities – Walking; Orienteering; Outdoor Challenges; Understanding and appreciation of Outdoor & Adventure Activities; Activities Outdoor challenges
6. Aquatics – Hygiene; Water safety; Entry to and exit from the water; Buoyancy and propulsion; Stroke development; Water-based ball games; Understanding and appreciation of aquatics

The strands/strand units/content objectives for the relevant class level(s) are found on the following pages:

Refer to Curriculum or webpage with objectives: <http://nccaplanning.ie/>

- Infant Classes pp. 16 – 33
- First and Second Classes pp. 24 – 34
- Third and Fourth Classes pp. 38 – 46
- Fifth and Sixth Classes pp. 48 – 59
- Aquatics: Junior Infants – Sixth pp. 62 – 64

N.B. Due to the lack of facilities and equipment, the gymnastic strand is limited for our pupils.

All staff members will endeavour to ensure continuity, progression and consistency from class to class by following the recommendations in the curriculum. Where appropriate, the Special Education teacher may assist in P.E. lessons.

2. APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

The class teacher will be responsible for delivering the P.E. curriculum to the pupils in his/her charge. Specialist teachers/parents may deliver certain parts of the programme e.g. aquatics.

Teachers recognise the value of using a variety of teaching approaches in order to enhance the achievement of the curriculum objectives.

The teaching approaches which we will use for teaching P.E. are:

- The direct teaching approach, in which the teacher tells or shows the children exactly what to do and observe their progress.
- The guided-discovery approach, in which the teacher designs a series of questions which will eventually lead to one or more appropriate answer, and finally the discovery of a particular concept or solution. This approach will lead the child to make decisions, solve problems and take initiative. Questioning can lead to a deeper understanding of how skills can be employed in a game situation.
- The Integrated Approach.

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

1. Individual, pair, group, team play. In first and second classes we enhance cooperation
2. Station teaching: Station work works very well in our school and lends itself to them space and equipment available and the number of pupils partaking in P.E. It provides continuous practice for groups working on different tasks at the same time
3. Using a play area divided into grids.

3. ASSESSMENT AND RECORD-KEEPING

The teachers in the school constantly assess in the P.E. lessons delivered as we identify progress and difficulties.

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 any 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

Pupils' Progress is noted at the end of each school term.

Parents are informed of their child's progress at Parent Teacher Meetings also.

Formal records are stored in the school's filing cabinet.

Pupils are encouraged to self-assess and to suggest ways of improving and developing the game/P.E. class.

4. MULTI-CLASS TEACHING/ CHILDREN WITH DIFFERENT NEEDS

- All P.E. lessons will be taught in the context of multi-class teaching. Where appropriate, opportunity will be given to children to group according to ability levels Outside agencies e.g. Clare GAA, Newmarket on Fergus Clubs, Swimming Pool, may be used to support the implementation of the P.E. Programme.
- Participation of children with Special Needs will be ensured through the use of S.N.A/Special Needs Teacher. Children will be allowed to participate in activities at their own level through the modification of tasks where necessary. Group and pair work and similar ability groups will be used in conjunction with a balance of activities from across the strands to encourage inactive/shy/self-conscious children to participate in P.E. activities.

5. EQUALITY OF PARTICIPATION AND ACCESS

- In planning for PE we are going to pay attention to the following areas in order to promote gender equity throughout the physical education curriculum.
- All children from infants to sixth class will partake in all six strands of the curriculum, mindful of limited facilities.
- We will provide equal access for all children to physical education equipment and facilities and the use of the playground during breaks will be incorporated as an integral part of the school's programme i.e. one particular group or class will not be allowed unlimited access to larger yard areas.
- When grouping children for physical education the school will endeavour not to group children solely on the basis of gender whenever possible.
- As a staff we will help children to build positive attitudes towards all activities.

- We will take into account the needs of girls and boys when promoting the health related fitness of children.
- We will enter both boys and girls teams in inter-school competitions and where necessary (if we have insufficient numbers) we will take the opportunity to enter mixed teams.
- Where appropriate, large sporting events such as the Olympics, World Cup, Special Olympics etc., will be used to look at the customs and sporting culture of some of the participating countries.
- Every child will have access to all PE activities provided by the school and lack of financial resources on behalf of the child will not hinder their participation. The exception to this is the Aquatics strand, where a minimal fee is charged by the local pool for swimming lessons.

6. LINKAGE AND INTEGRATION

Integration in our school features hugely in our curriculum. P.E. integrates elements of other subjects such as Gaelge, English, Music, Maths and S.P.H.E. Our swimming lessons promote safety considerations developed in the strand unit "Safety and Protection".

Within the content of the curriculum, footnotes below the strand units suggest where linkage and integration might take place in the PE class.

7. ORGANISATIONAL PLANNING & TIMETABLING

Each class is timetabled for one hour per week for P.E.

(Sample yearly plan of work for P.E. supplied by each class teacher)

This school will use a portion of its discretionary time for the 10 weeks of the pool-based activities undertaken to facilitate the Aquatics programme in the school – in order to cover the time travelling to and from the pool.

A timetable of the PE Strands to be taught throughout the year is included in Appendix 1. In the school there is a Sports Day every year and an Active School Week (Both usually in the third term)

P.E. AREAS

The two tarmacadam areas, Astro Turf & Hurling Wall as well as the Pitch of the school campus will be used.

The 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. On wet days, the children will participate in active lessons using 'Go Noodle' at break times or for a short PE lesson.

8. CODE OF ETHICS:

(Refer to school's Child Protection Policy based on the Department of Education and Skills guidelines accompanying the 'Children First' guidelines. Also refer to SPHE plan; Code of Ethics, Good Practice for Children's Sport)

- If coaches from a local or a national sporting organisation are invited into the school to work with the children as part of their PE class, they will be used to support the class teacher in the implementation of some of the PE curriculum strands in the school. They will not replace the class teacher and ultimate responsibility for the class lies with the class teacher. The class teacher will in turn support the coach on certain occasions when this will lead to maximum benefit for the children in the class.
- Any coaches working in the school context will be expected to adhere to the Code of Ethics of Irish Sport, produced by the Irish Sports Council. 'Adults interacting with children in sport (referred to as Sports Leaders in this code) are in a position of trust and influence. They should always ensure that they treat children with integrity and respect and that the self-esteem of children is enhanced. All adult action in sport should be guided by what is best for the child and carried out in the context of respectful and open relationships. Verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse of any kind or threat of such abuse is totally unacceptable within sport, as in society in general'
- If there is a suspected case of child abuse in the class (even if it becomes apparent in the context of a PE class), all teachers will adhere to the Department of Education and Science Child Protection Guidelines to be used with the 'Children First Guidelines' produced for all personnel working with children.

9. AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

After school activities are regularly organised by the school. All children of relevant age to the activities being offered will be invited to attend. Extra-curricular activities on offer include Hurling, Camogie, Gaelic Football, Soccer, and Cross Country and take place at appropriate times during the year. These activities will adhere to the general principle of the PE curriculum of the school as follows:

- The importance of enjoyment and play
- 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
- Providing opportunities for achievement for each child
- Providing activities equally suitable for boys and girls

Note: The extra-curricular programme that involves competitive activities will always reflect the aims and objectives of the PE curriculum.

10. P.E. EQUIPMENT AND ICT

(Refer to pp. 104-105 Teacher Guidelines)

Our school has a detailed inventory of equipment and resources available for PE.

- See Appendix 2 for a full list Equipment.
- The equipment is all stored in the Prefab and is checked regularly.

- It is the responsibility of each class teacher to ensure that all equipment is returned to the store room after each lesson. Any breakages have to be reported to the Principal as soon as possible. Active Schools Committee members will inspect the room once a month. Each teacher will be given a copy of the equipment list and will be informed of any changes to it throughout the year.
- The principal & secretary will have the responsibility to purchase the PE equipment for the school and to apply for equipment from different organisations who give free equipment to schools.

11. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Issues identified as being health and safety issues in a PE context include warm-up at the start of all physical activity, practising in confined spaces, use of equipment, accidents, supervision, activities involving the whole school yard, procedures for dealing with accidents...etc.

It is important to acknowledge from the beginning that while the following procedures will eliminate unnecessary hazards they cannot remove all risks due to the physical nature of the subject. When engaging children in PE all members of staff will ensure that the following safety aspects will be taken into consideration;

- All children must wear suitable footwear and clothing during a PE lesson
- All children will not be allowed to wear any jewellery during a PE lesson
- The equipment used will be suitable in size, weight and design to the age, strength and ability of the child and be of good quality and in good repair
- Children will be taught how to lift and carry all PE equipment safely
- In all PE lessons, children will warm up and cool down. This develops good practice and the children will return to class relaxed after activity.
- Should an accident occur in the PE lesson we will follow the procedures outlined for other accidents in our Health and Safety policy.
- Running activities will not finish at a wall or pole.
- Best practice is safe practice and the teacher should ensure that the children understand that the rules and procedures are there for their safety.
- We will endeavour to have an appropriate surface for the activities in the PE lesson.
- Children will not be forced to do activities they are not physically or mentally ready for.
- There will be a least one person on staff (Secretary, Mrs Enright) with a current First Aid qualification and the BOM will fund the course fees. The First Aid Kit is kept in the staffroom and is restocked regularly with items only recommended by First Aid personnel.
- A second portable kit is also available when children are participating in PE outside the school grounds.
- The medical conditions of all children are detailed by their parents/guardians on the school enrolment form, on the conditions and resulting procedures to be followed.

- Teachers will not treat a child unless it will make the difference between life and death. Their parents/guardians will be contacted and if necessary, their family doctor as outlined on the aforementioned enrolment form.
- Detailed leaflets are made available to all staff on specific conditions such as asthma, diabetes and allergic reactions.

12. INDIVIDUAL TEACHERS' PLANNING AND REPORTING

The whole school plan and the curriculum documents for PE will lay out the structure and format that teachers will follow in addition to the aims and objectives of the primary school curriculum. While these documents are vital for planning, it is important that teachers do not rely on them exclusively as it is necessary to adapt the PE plan to your own class level and experience. It is vital that all teachers plan individually while at the same time ensuring that their class plans co-ordinate and feed into the overall school plan.

For now, teachers will plan based on the strands as outlined on the yearly timetable and can explore the use of themes in their planning especially in Gymnastics where themes such as balance and travel can provide a great stimulus for lessons (Refer to pp. 34-35 Teacher Guidelines)

The Cuntas Míosúil will be very relevant in reviewing and developing the school plan for the following years. Once the individual Cuntas Míosúil have been evaluated it should be obvious to the staff which elements of the curriculum were being implemented.

13. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Principal will update staff on P.E. developments. Research, reference books, resource materials and websites dealing with P.E. <http://pssi.pdst.ie/strand.html> and www.irishprimarype.com have definite links to the curriculum and PE in Ireland. The school has a library of relevant resource material which will aid the teachers in their development and implementation of the PE curriculum and we endeavour to build on it. An inventory of organisations will be drawn up where free resources will be available.

14. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We will ask all parents to support their children to participate in all strands of the PE curriculum. We will ask parents with recognised areas of expertise in the area of PE and/or Sport to support us in our efforts if their talents will be of benefit. We will outline the benefits of the PE curriculum and stress the difference between PE and sport and encourage them to become involved in our Active School Week or any initiative we will organise. We will encourage sporting endeavour at all times.

In order to partake in school sport, we will use buses as transport to all school activities.

Parents who offer lifts may be availed of if needed. The teacher involved with the activity will travel on the bus.

15. COMMUNITY LINKS

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, such links as members of local clubs or groups in the community support the school's PE programme. Newmarket-on-Fergus GAA employs a GAA coach to visit our school. We also make reference to sports people from our community and invite suitable people into the school to talk to the children as long as the content is in keeping with the sentiments of the curriculum. If a local team or individual has had a notable victory, they will be invited into the school to share the victory with the local children.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

When we are reviewing our plan at the end of the school year, we will take into consideration, the following points:

- The importance of enjoyment and play
- 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
- Providing opportunities for achievement for each child
- Providing activities equally suitable for boys and girls

Means of assessing the outcomes of the plan include;

- Teacher/parent/community feedback
- Children's feedback regarding the activity level, enjoyment and skill development of the classes
- Inspectors' suggestions/report

REVIEW

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the PE curriculum. We aim to review this plan every 3 years.

Ratified by Board of Management on _____ (Date)

Signed _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Appendix 1: PE Strands Timetable



September & October	November & December	January & February	March & April	May & June
Athletics Aquatics*	Gymnastics	Games	Dance	Outdoor & Adventure Activities Active School Week
Games Aquatics*	Athletics	Games	Gymnastics	Outdoor & Adventure Activities Sports Day

*2nd to 4th classes attend swimming lessons in the local pool for a period of up to 6 weeks between September and October each year.

** Games/Athletics/Gymnastics are taught every week with the assistance of club GAA coach.

Appendix 2

Physical Education Curriculum 'Glance Cards'

These curriculum "glance cards" were designed to provide a one-page overview of the content objectives in each strand unit for all class levels. It is not intended that these glance cards replace the curriculum documents but that rather they will provide an immediate snapshot of how particular concepts are developed from infants to sixth class.

It is essential that teachers consult the curriculum documents when engaging in planning (www.nccaplanning.ie) as the content objectives are expanded upon in the context of the various class levels.

(Document Attached)