



St. Raphaela's Primary School

Policy for Physical Education

Introduction:

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. This plan 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. This P.E. plan 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.

This plan was ratified by the Board of Management of the school in April 2006 and will be reviewed in Summer 2010.

Vision and Aims for P.E:

Our aim at St. Raphaela's Primary School is to give all pupils opportunities to experience a range of activities within physical education which will enable them to feel confident and secure about their own bodies, become physically competent, and adopt generally positive attitudes towards physical activities and good health.

We intend to achieve this by:

- Providing a physical education curriculum which is accessible to all pupils irrespective of their abilities
- Providing a progressive programme of learning objectives, covering areas of games, athletic activities dance, gymnastic activities, and outdoor and adventurous activities.
- Preparing activities, which are enjoyable, stimulating, and challenging for all pupils.
- Enabling pupils to enjoy success and be motivated to develop further individual potential.

We will attempt to develop positive attitudes towards:

- Physical activity and healthy lifestyles and an understanding of the beneficial effects of exercise
- Competition and good sporting behaviour
- Working with others and being part of a team
- Safety procedures and the importance of rules

Curriculum Planning for P.E.:

Strands and Strand Units:

The P.E. Curriculum is divided into the following six strands:

- Athletics
- Dance
- Gymnastics
- Games
- Outdoor and Adventure Activities
- Aquatics

Athletics:

This strand provides a variety of opportunities to engage in the natural activities of running, jumping and throwing. These will be joyful experiences for the child. Children will move from exploring and experimenting with the basic movements of walking, running, jumping and throwing, through a wide range of informal play experiences, to developing techniques of running, jumping and throwing as they progress through the school.

Dance:

Dance involves the child in creating, performing, and appreciating movement as a means of expression and communication. Our primary concern in teaching dance is that children enjoy and appreciate the expressive and artistic qualities of movement. Our programme will include both creative and folk dance.

Gymnastics:

Gymnastics is concerned with the use of movement in a creative way in response to set tasks, both individually and with others. Children will explore movement on the floor and when negotiating a variety of equipment. As children progress through a sequential programme they will be encouraged to have more control over their movements and to respond to more complex tasks.

Games:

The games strand initially fosters the child's natural tendency to play through informal play activities. It enhances the development of basic skills and provides opportunities for social interaction. As the child progresses a variety of games will be taught that will develop not only skills but also concepts such as possession, teamwork, attack, defence, and use of space. These games will include Gaelic Football, rounders, basketball, tennis and hockey from Fourth Class upwards. It is our aim that through experiencing such a broad range of sports we will provide both enjoyment and challenge and foster the beginnings of a life long interest in sport in each child.

Outdoor and Adventure Activities:

Outdoor and adventure activities are the facets of our P.E. curriculum concerned with walking, cycling, camping, orienteering and outdoor challenge activities. These activities are non competitive and will encourage children to adopt a healthy lifestyle based on enjoyment and appreciation of the outdoors.

Aquatics:

The aquatics programme is based on gaining confidence in the water. While we do not offer an aquatics programme during the school day our school has the use of Glenalbyn Pool and four swimming instructors from 3-4 p.m. each Friday afternoon. This activity is organised and supervised by the Parents Association and is available to children from First to Sixth Class.

Approaches and Methodologies:

While most of the PE programme in our school is taught by specialist P.E. teachers, some of it will also be taught by the class teacher at different times. The P.E. teacher and the Class Teacher will liaise constantly about the content and delivery of the programme and the P.E. teacher will give his/her lesson plans to the class teacher who will include them in his/her cúntas miosúil.

Among 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 observes their progress.
- The guided-discovery approach, in which the teacher designs a series of questions which will eventually lead to one or more appropriate answers, and in the end to the discovery of a particular concept or solution. This approach will lead the child to make decisions, solve problems and take the initiative.
- Integrated approaches using both methodologies in the same lesson as appropriate.

In every strand children will be given opportunities to:

- Become skilful and intelligent performers
- Acquire and develop skills, performing with increasing physical competence and confidence
- Learn how to select and apply skills. Tactics and compositional ideas to suit activities that need different approaches and ways of thinking
- Develop their ideas in a creative way
- Set targets for themselves and compete against others individually and as team members
- Understand what it means to persevere, succeed, and acknowledge others success
- Take the initiative, lead activity and focus on improving aspects of their own performance:
- Discover their own aptitudes and preferences for different activities:

Assessment and Record Keeping:

Assessment in physical education informs teaching and learning by providing information on what children have learned and how they learn. It will allow the teacher to recognise achievement and indicate areas of difficulty.

There are two main ways that we assess children's progress in P.E:

- Through teacher observation. This observation forms a natural part of each lesson.
- Through teacher designed tasks. (C.f. page 99 teacher guidelines).
Teacher designated tasks will always be related to our stated objectives outlined for each class and will focus on:
 - The social and personal qualities of the child

- Physical skills and competence
- Creative and cognitive development
- Development of health-related fitness
- Development of safe practice (c.f. pages 70- 71 curriculum book, pink and white cover).

This information is recorded and passed on to parents at parent teacher meetings and in the annual report to parents. Any concerns about a child's progress in P.E. will be communicated to the Principal and the parents as necessary.

Children with Special needs:

Children with special needs will experience the enjoyment of participation and progression through the various stages of the Physical Education programme according to his/her own ability. The class teacher will always encourage maximum participation in the P.E. lessons according to each child's ability.

Links With Other Curriculum Areas:

We will use the opportunities, which P.E. provides to help develop children's language development (following instructions, skipping rhymes etc.) and also Music and Geography.

How P.E. is organised at St. Raphaela's School:

We have two specialist PE teachers who are employed on a part time basis by the Board of Management to teach P.E. in the school. Children are invited to pay a small sum with their voluntary contribution at the beginning of each academic year to defray expenses incurred in employing part time specialists. This fee is voluntary and no child will ever be excluded from a lesson or be made to know whether the fee is paid or not. Teachers will liaise constantly with P.E. teachers. P.E. teachers in turn are fully briefed on the schools code of behaviour and general ethos.

Children from Junior Infants to Third Class inclusive will normally have 30 minutes specialist teaching a week and a further 30 minutes lesson from their class teacher. First and Second Class will have lessons in Gaelic Football during the Spring term from Transition Year students in collaboration with Kilmacud Crokes.

Children from Fourth Class to Sixth Class will have two 30-minute P.E. periods a week from our specialist teacher.

P.E. will normally take place in one or other of our two sports halls, on our All-weather pitch, our basketball court or on the two big fields at the back of the school.

Swimming will take place for children from Second to Sixth Class in Glenalbyn Pool on Friday afternoons from 3.15 to 4.15 pm.

After school activities include Dance (Hip-Hop and Irish Dancing), Hockey, Tennis, and Tae-Kwondo Little Dragons martial arts club. A gymnastics club is also available to children on four evenings a week in the badminton hall.

Children from our tennis club regularly participate in the Leinster Junior League.

Equipment:

The PE storage cupboard is located on the corridor leading to the play area at the back of Junior Infants.

A list of equipment available in the school is appended to this document.

Designated Areas for PE:

We will use the school hall, the badminton hall, the all weather pitch and the badminton court for P.E. In summer we will also use the two big fields at the back of the school.

Health and Safety:

- All P.E. lessons will be preceded by a warm up period.
- In lessons where children are doing gymnastics etc. they must always use a mat.
- Children should always wear their PE kit for PE. This is a plain white tee shirt and tracksuit or shorts in summer; Children can do gymnastics in runners or in their bare feet. Loose hair should be tied back.
- Each child will be asked to find their own space at the beginning of each lesson and to work within their own space only.
- Children will not set up equipment or lift any heavy items.
- If an accident occurs the schools trained First Aiders (Olive Harrison and Sr. Mary Lawless) will be consulted. The Principal will be informed and in cases of possible serious injury the child will not be moved and an ambulance summoned immediately.
- All staff will be informed of any specific medical conditions which may affect the child during PE and how to deal with situations which may arise as a result of these.

Long Term and Short Term Planning for P.E:

Each teacher will work to a long term P.E. plan that we as a school have devised and agreed together for each Year group. A copy of our long-term objectives for each class is appended to this document. Short term planning is done on a fortnightly basis and describes how these objectives are met in the week-to-week delivery of the curriculum.

Reporting to Parents:

Parents will be kept informed of their child's progress both in parent teacher meetings and in the annual reports.

Sports Day:

Our annual sports day takes place in the summer term. Parents and staff organise it jointly and a copy of the programme is appended to this document. It is intended primarily as a fun day and even though races are competitive and medals are awarded at the end, there will always be an award for good sportsmanship and everyone participates. All parents are warmly invited to attend this and all other sporting fixtures.

Review:

All members of staff contributed to the putting together of this document and it was completed and agreed in February 2006. It was ratified by the Board of Management in April 2006 and will be reviewed in 2010.

Appendices

- Long term annual plan for each class
- List of Equipment available in the school
- Copy of typical programme for Sports Day and sheets of instructions for games played on the Day
- CD of suggested resources, games, poems etc. suitable for use in P.E.