

# **Physical Education Policy**

**Property of St. Joseph's NS, Kilcock**

**Ratified by BOM on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

**DO NOT REMOVE FROM STAFFROOM**

## **Introduction**

This Physical Education policy for St. Joseph's NS was formulated by the Principal and teaching staff (The PE Committee). This plan is for the information of those who work in the school, the Board of Management, Department of Education and Skills and any other interested parties in the school community. The plan will be ratified by the Board of Management after it has been approved by staff and parents.

## **Rationale**

Physical education provides children with learning opportunities through the medium of movement and through PE we aim to help children develop physically as well as socially, emotionally and intellectually. This plan describes the place we give to PE in our school and how it can contribute to the overall development of each child by helping them to lead full, active and healthy lives. The purpose of this policy is to provide practical guidance for teachers, parents and other relevant persons on the provision of the effective teaching of Physical Education in our school.

## **Vision**

We envisage that in PE each child will be given the opportunity to develop their physical skills and competencies to their full potential, appropriate to their age and ability in a safe and supportive environment. The planning and management of the Physical Education curriculum in our school will always have the children as the focus of attention through the provision of a broad, balanced and well differentiated programme of physical activities.

## **Aims**

We endorse the aims of the Primary School Physical Education Curriculum as follows:

- 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**

## **Strands and Strand Units**

Our Physical Education curriculum is divided into six ‘strands’ or sections as recommended in the Primary School Physical Education Curriculum. These six strands are:

1. Athletics,
2. Aquatics,
3. Dance,
4. Games,
5. Gymnastics and
6. Outdoor and Adventure Activities.

Each strand is subdivided into strand units. The curriculum is designed to be spiral in nature. The children will experience at least 5 strands in each year. As they progress through the school, they will experience opportunities to refine and develop their skills, abilities, knowledge and appreciation in each strand. The five strands, Athletics, Dance, Games, Gymnastics and Outdoor and Adventure Activities will be taught at each class level. The pool-based section of the *Aquatics will be taught at third class level*. The strands of Hygiene and Water Safety in Aquatics will continue to be addressed in the context of the SPHE Curriculum at all class levels.

The content for each band can be found on the following pages of the curriculum.

- Infant classes pp. 16-23
- 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

### **1. Athletics**

The athletics strand aims to provide children with a variety of opportunities to develop the techniques of running, jumping and throwing as they progress through the school.

## **2. Aquatics**

The aquatics programme is concerned with gaining competence and confidence near, in, under and on water. A major component of this strand will be water safety, which will be taught each year and may be integrated with SPHE. In our school the pool-based aquatics is taught in third class. The children in these classes attend weekly swimming lessons in the local swimming pool for 8 weeks each year, usually in the first term.

## **3. Dance**

The dance strand involves the children in creating performing and appreciating movement as a means of expression and communication. Creative dance and folk dance are involved in our programme.

## **4. Games**

The games strand involves the playing of a variety of games to develop basic skills, enhance social interaction and introduce children to a wide variety of games. Building on our tradition in gaelic games, our traditional field games form a prominent part of this strand.

## **5. Gymnastics**

The gymnastics strand is concerned with the use of controlled movement in a creative way in response to set tasks both individually and in groups. Children will refine and enhance their movement skills through a sequential programme of activities.

## **6. Outdoor and Adventure Activities**

The outdoor and adventure activities strand is concerned with walking, cycling and water-based activities, orienteering and outdoor challenge activities.

### **Fundamental Movement Skills**

The Move Well, Move Often teaching resource available [here](#): should be used as a resource to complement the Physical Education curriculum. It is advised that in each PE lesson, the teacher places an emphasis on integrating the teaching of a specific fundamental movement skill into the relevant PE strand for that lesson.

### **Physical Resources-Facilities and Equipment**

The following facilities are available for Physical Education:

1. School Yard – suitable small sided Games, ball Games, Athletics and Outdoor & Adventure activities

2. School Field – suitable small sided Games, ball Games, Athletics and Outdoor & Adventure activities
3. School Hall – small but suitable for Gymnastics and Dance
4. Trim Swimming Pool .This is used for the aquatics strand.
5. Kilcock GAA grounds – for Games
6. Bawnogue Athletic Track
7. The North Kildare Club - for Games
8. The Royal Canal Greenway – outdoor and adventure

\*\*\*\* A certain amount of flexibility will be required as much of our PE is weather dependent.

Our school is developing a well resourced Physical Education store containing the necessary equipment for the implementation most strands. (list in appendix) This equipment is stored in our PE store-room in the hall. Equipment is checked regularly and stock replenished as often as budget allows. Teachers keep PE related resources in their own individual classrooms and extra resources are available in the Staff Room. The school uses the PE lesson plans prepared by the Primary School Sports Initiative (available at [pssi.pdst.ie](http://pssi.pdst.ie)) in the planning and implementation of our PE programme.

### **Approaches and Methodologies**

We will use a combination of the following approaches:

- Direct teaching approach
- Guided discovery approach
- Integration

We will use methods that encourage maximum participation by the child through group work: Individual, pair, group and team play; Station teaching; using a play area divided into grids.

#### Structure of a PE lesson:

Most of our lessons will follow the following format;

- Warm Up
- Main Activity
- Cool Down

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

As Physical Education is a physical activity-based area, most assessment is done within the lesson by observing, listening, asking questions and giving feedback to pupils. This will ensure that on-going achievements are recognised, areas of learning difficulty and high achievement are identified, the progress of a child is recorded and communicated to the child, other teachers and parents and the next stages of learning are planned. Teachers report annually to children, parents and relevant staff through parent-teacher meetings and end of year school reports. Swim teachers assess the children and award swim award certificates to children at different levels. Children may be asked to self-assess and peer assess where appropriate. We will assess;

- Willingness and readiness to participate in activities.
- The level of confidence and competence of a child in performing a skill and/or carrying out an activity.
- Willingness to cooperate in individual, pair and group activities.

Our assessment tools are:

- Teacher observation
- Teacher-designed tasks
- PDST *Move Well, Move often* assessment resources available [here](#).

#### **Multi-Class Teaching**

Multi-class teaching is not a facet of life in our school at the moment. Should the situation arise in the future, the relevant teachers may adapt the curriculum and group children as they deem necessary to cater for the various levels in such classes.

## Timetable

In our school each class will receive a minimum of one hour of Physical Education per week and this time may be blocked or divided at each teacher's discretion.

We organise our **Yearly Plan of the 6 strands** in PE as shown below:

<b>PHYSICAL EDUCATION -YEARLY PLAN</b>		
<b>Sept-Oct</b>	<b>Oct-Nov</b>	<b>Dec-Jan</b>
Games  Pool Based Aquatics 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Gymnastics  Pool Based Aquatics 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Gymnastics Classroom Based Aquatics (PAWS Programme) Dance
<b>Feb-Mar</b>	<b>Apr-May</b>	<b>May-June</b>
Games  Dance	Athletics  Outdoor & Adventure	Outdoor & Adventure  Athletics  Sports Day

A certain amount of flexibility will be required in relation to our yearly plan as most of our PE is weather dependent. We use our discretionary time to cover the time travelling to and from the pool, for the 8 weeks of the pool-based Aquatics programme.

## 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. Every attempt, often with the valued assistance of additional staff (SNA), will be made to ensure that all children experience the richness and

breadth of a full Physical Education curriculum. A safe and secure environment will be provided for PE appropriate to the child with special needs. Specialist advice may be sought (e.g. OT) to identify the appropriate activities.

### **Equality of Participation and Access**

We promote the needs and interests of all pupils regardless of ability, culture, gender or aptitude. Quality work to the best of the children's ability is the target for everyone. 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.

In line with Department of Education and Skills recommendations, it is our policy not to charge for in-school curricular activities. However, when organising the aquatics strand, this school is unable to meet the cost of running an adequate aquatics programme. As a result, the Board of Management has given permission to charge a nominal fee to each child. No child will be denied access to swimming lessons due to lack of financial resources and the school has made provision for such children to attend classes

### **Linkage and integration**

Every attempt will be made to link the various strands of the PE curriculum and to integrate the other subject areas with PE, where appropriate.

Dance with Music;

Aquatics/Games with SPHE;

Athletics with Maths;

Orienteering with Geography;

Language development through discussion and questioning and

Gaeilge to implement the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach.

### **Code of Ethics**

All teachers and coaches working in the school context will be made aware of and expected to adhere to the school Child Safeguarding and Garda Vetting Policies. They should always ensure that they treat children with integrity and respect and that the self-esteem of children is enhanced. All adult actions in PE should be guided by what is best for the child and carried out in the context of respectful and open relationships.

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.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Opportunities are provided for children to participate in and enjoy a variety of extra curricular activities during break-time and after school. These include Gaelic football, soccer, volleyball, hurling, camogie, athletics and basketball. School representative teams are also catered for in inter-school competitions organised by the GAA, FAI and AAI. The school organises a sports for all day / school sports day and physical activity for all is encouraged during our annual Active School Week. Children are encouraged to play games and practice skills during break-time. **Occasionally the school may organise an outdoor walking trip to suitable locations in the locality.** School tours often include a PE element.

### **Information and Communication Technology**

Information and communication technology may be integrated with PE through the use of school laptops, digital camera, photo-copier, digital video-camera, school iPads and internet resources.

### **Health and Safety**

The children are required to wear the school tracksuit and bring appropriate gear on the day they have physical education. Children should not wear dangerous jewellery. Children are taught to handle all apparatus safely and carefully. Correct methods of lifting and carrying are also taught. Should an accident occur in the PE lesson we will follow the procedures outlined for accidents in our Health and Safety policy and complete the appropriate Accident Report form. The First Aid kit is available in the staffroom and the medical conditions of specific at-risk children are made known to the class teacher.

### **Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting**

Individual teachers will design a physical education plan specifically for their own class while at the same time ensuring that their class plans coordinate with and feed into the overall school plan, set out in the policy and **progression grids**. This should ensure clear progression as children move from class to class.

Strands covered in PE each month are recorded on the Cuntas Miosuil and these documents will be relevant in recording what has been covered and in reviewing and developing the school plan for the following years.

### **Staff Development**

The PE Committee will continue to promote and update staff on PE developments. Teachers will be notified regarding PE courses available locally, the availability of PDST assistance and resources, the role of the Irish Primary PE Teachers Association (IPPEA) and the Board of Management will encourage and support professional development in the area of PE.

Visiting coaches for Games (Rugby, Gaelic games) may be used to supplement and support the work of the class teacher. These are recognised as up-skilling opportunities for the teachers involved.

### **Parental Involvement**

Parents have a responsibility to support and encourage their children to participate in all strands of the Physical Education curriculum without putting undue pressure on children to always win. Parents may view the PE policy in the school. Parents may be invited to attend and assist at school PE and sporting events, such as our school sports day, in accordance with our school Child Protection and Garda Vetting Policy.

### **Community Links**

Local clubs and sporting organisations are invited to provide information on the services that they provide. (e.g. Kilcock GAA club, St. Coca's Athletic club, North Kildare Rugby club, Kilcock Celtic soccer club) Children will be encouraged to maximise their talent by forging links with local clubs. 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. The school has a dedicated notice-board where school and local events are advertised. The community is also involved in fundraising for PE equipment for the school. We will highlight suitable role models in sports from our locality.

## **Implications of COVID 19 and specific Physical Education guidelines**

**Specific Physical Education (PE) guidelines outlined in the *Return to School Primary School Curriculum Guidance* (Department of Education and Skills, July 2020; p.17-18).**

*Physical Education supports the development of skills and attributes such as physical movement and development, communication, self-esteem and confidence, all of which are particularly important as pupils return to school. Pupils will have had varying opportunities for movement and physical activity over the past months. As the new school year gets underway, movement and activity through timetabled PE lessons, along with activity throughout the day, will contribute positively to pupils' wellbeing. The use of 'pods', the need for physical distancing, the cleaning and organisation of equipment, and the individual school environment will shape the PE learning experiences in the new school year.*

### **Key messages for the teaching and learning of PE in 2020/21 (DES, July 2020):**

- Pupils' physical education is a central part of their wellbeing: it should form a significant component of timetabled programmes upon returning to school.
- Emphasise strands such as **athletics** or **outdoor and adventure activities** with particular focus on the strand units of **running, jumping, throwing, and orienteering**. 'Games' may also provide suitable learning experiences.
- Choose learning experiences where pupils can work individually or in small groups (for example, in their pods) with **minimal equipment**
- Promote **physical activity and movement** of a non-contact nature. Opportunities for both indoor and outdoor activity should be exploited during break-times, transitions, play, PE lessons, and across curricular areas.
- During PE lessons, continue to ensure all pupils engage in aerobic activities as well as skill development, with an emphasis on fundamental movement skills.
- Many aspects of the six strands can be taught, reinforced and assessed by using online resources such as *Move Well Move Often* (PDST) and the Active School Flag resources. The PDST *Beyond the Classroom* materials build on the *Move Well, Move Often* physical literacy resources. New materials were released each week during the school closure period in both Irish and English. The *Beyond the Classroom* programme includes 92 video clips (46 in each language) and 30 Activity Packs (15 in each language), which are all available to access on <https://www.scoilnet.ie/pdst/physlit/beyond/>
- Actively encourage pupils to be creative, to cooperate with others, to create and modify games, to solve problems, make decisions, engage in peer and self-assessment, and to reflect as part of the planned physical education programme.

Please see further guidelines from the IPPEA.

**[www.irishprimarype](http://www.irishprimarype)**

## **Evaluating the Policy**

When evaluating the outcomes of our PE policy we will consider the views of children, parents and teachers as well as recommendations from Whole School Evaluation and Cigiri.

The criteria for evaluating the success of this policy will be:

- 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.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Principal and staff under the guidance of the PE Team will co-ordinate the progress of the policy, encourage and accept feedback on its implementation. Each teacher is responsible for implementing this policy with his/her own class.

The policy will be monitored and reviewed by the staff as necessary, when we will reflect meaningfully on how well the PE programme has been taught and received in the school.

## **Teaching and Learning**

Most of the teaching in Physical Education will be conducted by the class teacher with the class group. However, visiting coaches may be available to support teachers in the implementation of some strands. In aquatics, specialist swimming coaches are employed by the school to teach swimming. All support coaches work under the supervision of the class teacher in planning and implementing the PE programme. The class teacher will be present to supervise all activities organised by visiting/support coaches and will retain ultimate responsibility for the class.

**Ratification and Communication**

*Parents and staff are welcome to view this policy.*

*Adopted by BOM on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021*

Chairperson BOM: \_\_\_\_\_.

## APPENDIX 1: Physical Education Yearly Plan

Week 1-7	Week 8-14	Week 15-17	Week 18-24	Week 24-30	Week 31-37
<i>Sept - Oct</i>	<i>Oct - Dec</i>	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb - March</i>	<i>March - May</i>	<i>May - June</i>
<b>Athletics</b>	<b>Outdoor and Adventure</b>	<b>Aquatics (PAWS Programme)</b>	<b>Dance</b>	<b>Games</b>	<b>Gymnastics</b>
<p><b>Resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PDST PE Website <a href="http://www.pdst.ie/Physical-Education-Main">http://www.pdst.ie/Physical-Education-Main</a></li> <li>• PSSSI Lesson Plans <a href="http://pssi.pdst.ie/clickme.html">http://pssi.pdst.ie/clickme.html</a></li> <li>• Active Schools Website <a href="http://activeschoolflag.ie/">http://activeschoolflag.ie/</a></li> <li>• Physical Literacy <a href="https://www.scoilnet.ie/pdst/physlit/">https://www.scoilnet.ie/pdst/physlit/</a></li> <li>• IWS Land PAWS <a href="http://paws.iws.ie/">http://paws.iws.ie/</a></li> <li>• Gymnastics <a href="https://www.peai.org/resources/gymnastics/">https://www.peai.org/resources/gymnastics/</a></li> <li>• IPPEA <a href="https://www.irishprimarype.com/">https://www.irishprimarype.com/</a></li> </ul>			<p><b>Local Facilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School yard/field/hall</li> <li>• Running Track</li> <li>• Walkway around the Bawnogue</li> <li>• Canal greenway</li> <li>• North Kildare Club</li> <li>• Kilcock GAA Club</li> <li>• Trim Swimming Pool</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Thematic Weeks:</b>            European Week of Sport: Sept 23rd-Sept 30<sup>th</sup>            European School Sports Day: Sept 25<sup>th</sup> 2020 <a href="http://www.essd.eu/">http://www.essd.eu/</a>            Coicíse na Gaeilge (Dance) Márta 1ú – 17ú 2021</p>					
<p><b>Points to Note:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum expectation is 1 hour per week (60min x 1) (30min x 2) (20min x 3)</li> <li>• Lessons should have a focus on developing skills from the curriculum</li> <li>• Plan for 14 x 30min lessons for each strand</li> </ul>					

