



School Plan for Physical Education

St. Louise de Marillac Primary School

Introductory Statement and Rationale

(a) Introductory Statement

The Physical Education (P.E.) plan for St. Louise de Marillac Primary School was formulated in consultation with the teachers, Board of Management and parents of the school.

(b) Rationale

Physical Education provides children with learning opportunities through the medium of movement and contributes to their overall development by helping them to lead full, active and healthy lives. We aim to provide these learning opportunities to the children in our school to maximise active learning experiences and approaches for the benefit of each individual child.

Vision and Aims

(a) Vision

We recognise the individuality and potential of each child in our care. We endeavour to develop this uniqueness by providing the pupils with opportunities to participate in physical movement and challenges as outlined in the curriculum statements and to promote physical activity throughout the school.

Through the strands of our P.E. programme, the pupils will develop their self-confidence by mastering the skills taught and practised. They will interact and co-operate sensitively with others, regardless of cultural or social background or special needs. They will also develop positive attitudes for continued participation in physical activity and recognise its contribution to lifelong health-related fitness.

(b) Aims

We endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for P.E. and the broad objectives of the P.E. curriculum have also been considered.

- 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
- To develop an understanding of fair play and team spirit through participation in both competitive and non-competitive physical activities.

1. Strands and Strand Units

- The strands/strand units/content objectives for the relevant class level(s) are found on the following pages in the DES/NCCA (1999) Curriculum P.E. statement:
 - 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

The school will also use the P.E. lesson plans prepared by the Primary School Sports Initiative (PSSI).

- Teachers will choose a range of activities for all strands for each class. Children will have access to the following five strands each year – Athletics, Dance, Gymnastics, Games, Outdoor and Adventure Activities. Aquatics will be taught in linkage with Science and SPHE and we will continue to review the feasibility of offering swimming classes to second class and third class pupils depending on resources available.
- We will endeavour to create a P.E. rich environment in the school through the use of:
 - Suitable websites and online activities
 - Posters and photographs
- We will ensure there is continuity and progression from class to class by:
 - Developing appropriate warm-up activities for indoor and outdoor work at each level – with strand specific mobility, strengthening and flexibility exercises appropriate to each class level.
 - We will record the content covered at each level which will briefly detail the level of engagement with each strand (Cúntas Míosúil)

2. Approaches and Methodologies

We will use a combination of the following approaches as outlined in the Curriculum Teacher guidelines:

Direct teaching approach - The direct-teaching approach involves the teacher in telling or showing children what to do and in observing their progress. It entails the teacher making all, or most of, the decisions concerning the content of the lesson and the child responding to instructions. It is a useful approach if the objectives are concerned with performing folk dances, for instance. It allows for practice of skills within a games situation where the teacher decides on the nature of the practice and the time allocated to it or the number of repetitions. Direct teaching is appropriate too for use when organizing activities, ensuring that safety practices are being applied and in the handling of P.E. equipment.

Integration - Physical Education has many objectives which are developed by other subjects such as Gaelige, Drama, art, music, mathematics and especially SPHE. The

development of these subjects can be enriched through a programme of physical education which is broad, balanced and in line with the Primary Language Curriculum.

- We will use methods that encourage maximum participation by the child through:
 - Individual, pair, group and team play - At infant level, most activities will be undertaken first by an individual child, and this can then be developed into partner work. Small groups may learn to work together. Providing opportunities for group work from first to sixth classes should enhance co-operation in preparation for the development of team play in a games situation, for instance. Team play is appropriate for children from third to sixth class, but team play should always suit the individual needs of the child. Small-sided games and mini versions of games with modified rules are most suitable.
 - Station teaching - The use of 'stations' and play area divided into grids is appropriate in teaching games, gymnastics, outdoor and adventure activities, athletics or aquatics. This is a framework which allows maximum numbers of children to participate, providing opportunities for continuous practice for groups working on different tasks at the same time.

3. Structure of a P.E. Lesson:

- a. Warm Up - Pulse raising activities, stretches and mobility exercises
- b. Main Activity – running, jumping, throwing, rolling, striking an object, kicking, playing small sided games, orienteering, dancing etc.
- c. This main activity will take place at individual, pair and small group levels.

Station teaching may be used to teach a specific skill and to enable the children to experience a variety of activities in the P.E. lesson. We will divide our hall/play area into grids to allow for small group activity but with all children involved.

- d. Cool Down - Slower activities to reduce heart rate and prepare children for return to the classroom.

4. 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:

- a) Social and personal qualities of the child which include:
 - Willingness to participate in activities
 - Readiness to engage with a certain activity
 - Interest in and attitude to activity
 - Willingness to cooperate in individual, pair and group activities

We will also assess:

- b) the physical skills and level of competence of a child in carrying out an activity
- c) the development of safe practices and understanding and adherence to rules

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.

Types of Assessment

- **Assessment for learning** to provide feedback to children, improve learning and to inform practice
- **Assessment of learning** which helps to identify the milestones that 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.

5. Children with Different Needs / Special Class

- Teachers will endeavour to support and ensure the participation of children with special needs by planning to include all children in P.E. activities. This will mean we have to focus on the abilities of each child.

SAMPLE: POTENTIAL AREAS OF DIFFICULTY FOR STUDENTS WITH MILD GENERAL LEARNING DISABILITIES

Potential area of difficulty	Implications for learning	Possible strategies
• fitness levels	It may be necessary to set targets to improve fitness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include active warm ups and drills for skills practice • vary activities in the lesson to include the use of gross motor skills; regular short periods of exercise daily; cooling down exercises and consultation with parents/guardians
• listening and responding	The student may have difficulty with short-term memory and concentration span.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keep instruction simple and clear. Students repeat instruction. • demonstration(s) of task; verbal analysis of task; student performs task; teacher affirms task • move to new instruction regularly
• co-ordination and balance	The student may have difficulties in fine and gross motor skills in all strand areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teach suitable gait for skill, for example, throwing and catching a ball, jumping and landing, balancing. • give good visual demonstrations • reaffirm good examples and practices • use additional equipment to suit the needs of the student, for example softer balls, larger target • provide physical support to student in performing skill, for example, jumping
• spatial and body awareness	There may be safety issues for students engaging in movement exercises.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide suitable group arrangements; restrict area of movement; plan for the student to engage in follow the leader, and copying and contrasting exercises • use specific body parts in exercises e.g make a shape with the upper part of the body
• left-right orientation	It may be necessary to include regular exercises with these movements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include warm-up exercises/stretchers. Students mirror actions of peers or teacher: O'Grady says; Follow the leader • include exercises with equipment using both sides of the body
• behaviour	This will necessitate the smooth progression of lesson structure with clear instructions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish routine format for class and the expectations of desired behaviours • ensure that the student is suitably placed in the class for optimum learning

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • check that the student is attending by reinforcing and questioning • involve the student where possible in demonstration • encourage the student and assign tasks opportunities for success
• social integration.	Keep appropriate balance between cooperative and competitive activities. Foster enjoyment of activities with others. Encourage individual student's interest in particular aspects of the strands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • group student(s) appropriately • use co-operative fun activities regularly • give encouragement and acknowledge good effort • set appropriate skill development level commensurate with students' ability level • set reasonable targets for co-operative activities (individual and group).

- The School Enrichment Programme produced by Special Olympics Ireland to mark the occasion of the World Games in Ireland may also be used as a useful reference www.specialolympics.ie
- We will include children who may have physical disabilities by planning to include them as far as possible in all PE activities by adapting the activities as necessary.

General Adaptation Suggestions

Equipment:

Larger/lighter bat
 Use of velcro
 Larger goal/target
 Mark positions on playing field
 Lower goal/target
 Scoops for catching
 Vary balls (size, weight, color, texture)

Rules, Prompts, Cues:

Demonstrate/model activity
 Partner assisted
 Disregard time limits
 Oral prompt
 More space between students
 Eliminate outs
 Allow ball to remain stationary
 Allow batter to sit in chair
 Place student with disability near teacher

Boundary/Playing Field:

Decrease distance
 Use well-defined boundaries
 Simplify patterns
 Adapt playing area (smaller, obstacles removed)

Actions:

Change locomotor patterns
 Modify grasps
 Modify body positions
 Reduce number of actions
 Use different body parts

Time:

Vary the tempo
 Slow the activity pace
 Lengthen the time
 Shorten the time
 Provide frequent rest periods

Basketball

Use various size balls (size, weight, texture, colour)

Allow travelling / Allow two hand dribble

Use larger/lower goal

Slow the pace, especially when first learning

If student uses wheelchair, allow him/her to hold ball on his/her lap while pushing wheelchair

Use beeper ball, radio basket for individual with visual impairment

Children with exceptional ability/talent for P.E. will be encouraged and supported by acknowledging their talents. In addition, the children will be encouraged to maximise their talent by forging links with local clubs (if links have not been established already) so the child/children can bring their talent to a higher level. The children with exceptional ability will, on occasion, be encouraged to assist their classmates in achieving proficiency in the activities they are undertaking.

All children will be encouraged to participate in all P.E. activities through the use of co-operative fun activities. We will also give encouragement and acknowledge good effort wherever possible. Our main aim is to set activities close to each child's ability level but, at the same time, challenging them to improve their performance. Reasonable targets will be set for all children at individual, pair and small group levels.

6. Equality of Participation and Access

- In planning for P.E. we will pay attention to the following areas in order to promote gender equity throughout the physical education curriculum:
 - All children from infants to 6th class will be encouraged to partake in all five strands of the curriculum.
 - We will provide equal access for all children to physical education equipment and facilities.
 - 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

Due to the increased enrolment of children from other countries in Irish schools, it is vital to support the inclusion of these children. P.E. provides great opportunities for this inclusion.

- The Dance strand of the curriculum will be used to introduce dances from other cultures in the area of folk dance. The children from other countries will also appreciate the folk dances which are an integral part of our Irish culture.
- Large sporting events such as the Olympics, World Cup, Special Olympics etc. may be used to look at the customs and sporting culture of some of the participating countries.
- Introduction of games from different countries to children in the school, yet at the same time acknowledging the special place that Gaelic Games hold in our culture.

- Every child will have access to all P.E. activities provided by the school and lack of financial resources on behalf of the child will not hinder their participation.

7. Linkage and Integration

(Refer to Curriculum p. 13, 18, 37, pp.45-47 Teacher Guidelines)

- Linkage and integration:
 - Linkage can take place within physical education in that many activities transcend strands and are of benefit to the child irrespective of the strands or subjects being covered. Within the content of the curriculum, footnotes below the strand units suggest where linkage and integration might take place in the P.E. class.

Integration

- Theme based activities will be used to support integration especially in the gymnastics strand where the language of movement can be developed in tandem with the practical activities under the theme of travelling. Further language development can take place under the theme of balance. Mathematical concepts can be developed with the theme of symmetry and asymmetry in the P.E. class. Some instructions can be given in Irish.
- Language:
 - The effective use of questioning from the teacher will develop the vocabulary associated with P.E. Allowing the children to analyse their own performance will allow them understand and appreciate the activities of P.E. better and thus physically educate themselves in a more meaningful way – as opposed to something that just happens with time.

8. Organisational Planning:

A timetable for P.E. and for the use of the school hall will be formulated annually at the beginning of the school year. It will be distributed to teachers and on display on the notice board in the staffroom. In this school currently, each class will have 2 sessions of P.E. each week - each session is approximately thirty minutes duration.

The Games, Outdoor and Adventure Activities and Athletics strands are done at a time of the year when it is hoped the weather will be fine and will allow the P.E. lessons to take place outside.

Content:

- 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

- The school will facilitate an “Active School Week” usually in May/June each year, 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 P.E. curriculum as possible.

9. Code of Ethics

(Refer to school’s Child Safeguarding Statement)

- If coaches from a local or a national sporting organisation are invited into the school to work with the children they will have to provide Garda Vetting. 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 actions 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 (which may become apparent in the context of a P.E. class), all teachers are mandated persons. If they receive a disclosure they will follow procedures in line with the school’s Safeguarding Statement. In our school the principal is the Designated Liaison Person and should be informed in the first instance.

10. After School Activities

After school activities may be organised by the school depending on available resources. All children of relevant age to the activities being offered will be invited to attend. These activities will adhere to the general principles of the P.E. 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.

Sports Day

The school will organise an annual sports day usually in May / June where all children will be encouraged to participate.

11. P.E. Equipment and ICT

(Refer to pp. 104-105 Teacher Guidelines)

- Our school has a detailed inventory of equipment and resources available for P.E. The equipment is stored in a room/store with access for all the teaching staff. It is the responsibility of each class teacher to ensure that all equipment is returned to the room after each lesson.

Post Holders:

- The post-holder, in consultation with the Principal and the staff, will have the responsibility to purchase the P.E. equipment for the school and to apply for equipment from different organisations who give free equipment to schools. The BOM, on the recommendation of the Principal will sanction a budget for updating P.E. equipment annually - subject to funds being available. At present, there is no dedicated P.E. grant.

12. Health and Safety

(Refer to school's Health & Safety Policy)

Issues identified as being health and safety issues in a P.E. context include warm-up at the start of all physical activity and cool down at the end of each session, practising in confined spaces such as the school hall, use of equipment, procedures for dealing with accidents, supervision and activities involving the whole school yard.

Safety:

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 P.E. all members of staff will ensure that the following safety aspects will be taken into consideration:

- All children have to wear suitable footwear and clothing during a P.E. lesson. As per school policy, pupils may be wearing watches and they will be required to remove them. Children will not be allowed wear any jewellery except stud earrings during a P.E. lesson. If a child is not wearing runners or cannot remove jewellery, he/she cannot participate in the P.E. lesson.
- In all P.E. lessons, children will warm up and cool down. This develops good practice and the children will return to class relaxed after activity.
- 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 P.E. equipment safely
- Should an accident occur in the P.E. lesson we will follow the procedures outlined for accidents in our Health and Safety policy.
- Running activities should not finish at a wall or pole. A finish line or boundary must be clearly indicated.
- Best practice is safe practice and the teacher should ensure that the children understand that the rules and procedures are there for their safety.

- Children will not be forced to do activities they are not physically or mentally ready for.

First Aid Kits

First Aid Training is provided for all staff at a Croke Park session every two years. The First Aid Kits are kept in each classroom and each teacher and SNA has their own kit. The medical conditions of all children are detailed in their Health Care Plan. Children with life threatening conditions requiring epipens are displayed on a notice board in the Staff Room. A copy is also filed in the Principal's / HSCL's office. Detailed leaflets are made available to all staff on specific conditions such as asthma, diabetes and allergic reactions etc.

13. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting

The whole school plan and the curriculum documents for P.E. 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 P.E. plan to their 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.

14. Staff Development

www.pdst.ie and www.irishprimarype.com have definite links to the curriculum and P.E. in Ireland. The school has a library of relevant resource material which will aid the teachers in their development and implementation of the P.E. curriculum. Teachers can benefit from their interaction with the local sports coaches e.g. G.A.A., Rowing, Swimming and Tennis. As outlined previously, any coaches invited into the school will be there to support the teacher with a view to promoting good practice.

15. Parental Involvement

We will outline the benefits of the P.E. curriculum and encourage them through notes/newsletters to become involved in our Active School Week or any initiative we will organise. We will encourage sporting endeavour at all times. Parents may be invited to our annual School Sports Day. Parents can inspect the P.E. plan on the school website or in the office.

Assessment

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

Success criteria

- 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.

Implementation:

The plan will be monitored and evaluated on an on-going basis. St. Louise de Marillac has a systemic cycle of review of plans and policies where new policies are reviewed after a year and established plans are reviewed after three years or when deemed necessary by the staff. This plan will be reviewed in 3 years' time (school year 2027 – 2028).

(a) Roles and Responsibilities


The plan will be monitored and evaluated continually throughout the year. We will reflect meaningfully on how well the P.E. programme has been taught and received in the school. The following may be consulted in appraising the P.E. plan:

- Teachers
- Pupils
- Parents/Guardians
- Post-holders
- BoM
- DES Inspectorate

Ratification and Communication

The P.E. plan has been ratified by the Board of Management on 8th April 2025.

Signed:



Chairperson, Board of Management

Date:

8.4.2025

