**St. John’s N.S., Kenmare**

**Bunscoil Eoin Naofa, An Neidín**

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**Physical Education Policy**

**Physical Education Policy for**

**St. John’s N.S., Kenmare, Co. Kerry. Roll No. 20197K**

**Introductory Statement:**

This plan was developed by the staff of St. John’s N.S. The plan describes the teaching and learning of Physical Education in our school and will serve as the foundation for all long and short term plans in Physical Education. This plan was drafted in accordance with the guidelines set out by the Primary Curriculum in consultation with all the staff.

**Rationale:**

Physical Education provides unique opportunities for children to move with ease and confidence. It provides children with learning opportunities through the medium of movement and contributes to their overall development by helping them lead full, active and healthy lives. It endeavours to provide a coherent approach to Physical Education across the whole school and to ensure that pupils are give adequate opportunities to engage in the strands of the Physical Education Curriculum. It will also inform school staff of the approaches and methodologies to be used in our school. In addition, this policy will incorporate and plan for external instructors who implement some of the curriculum strands.

Through implementation of this plan, we are endeavouring to:

* Encourage the children to explore, respond and interpret the world through Physical Education.
* Provide children with learning opportunities through the medium of movement.
* Contribute to pupil’s overall development by helping them to lead full, active and healthy lives.
* Provide learning opportunities for the pupils in our school in order to maximize active learning experiences and approaches to the benefit of each individual child.
* Conform to the principles of learning outlined in the Primary School Curriculum.
* Promote the Holistic Development of the child.
* Satisfy the requirements of the Physical Education Curriculum.

**Vision:**

St. John’s values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring school community. Our vision is to assist the children in our school in achieving their potential by the promotion of physical activity throughout the school. We intend to incorporate the messages of the Physical Education curriculum in our lessons including the importance of enjoyment and play, the importance of participation and inclusion of all children, the development of skills and understanding, providing activities equally suitable for boys and girls and providing opportunities for achievement of each child.

**Aims:**

**We fully endorse the aims of The Physical Education Curriculum for Primary Schools:**

1. To promote the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of the child.
2. To develop positive personal qualities.
3. To help in the acquisition of an appropriate range of movement skills in a variety of contexts.
4. To promote understanding and knowledge of the various aspects of movement.
5. To develop an appreciation and knowledge and the use of the use of the body as an instrument of expression and creativity.
6. 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.

**Objectives:**

When due account is taken of intrinsic abilities and varying circumstances, the physical education curriculum should enable the child to:

*Social and personal development*

* experience enjoyment and achievement through movement.
* interact and co-operate sensitively with others, regardless of cultural or social background or special needs.
* develop qualities of self-esteem, self-awareness, confidence, initiative and leadership through movement.
* develop an understanding of fair play and team spirit through participation and competition.
* develop positive attitudes towards participation in movement activities.
* experience adventure and challenge.

*Physical and motor development*

* develop strength, speed, endurance and flexibility through engaging in a wide variety of activities.
* develop agility, alertness, control, balance and co-ordination through movement.
* develop personal competence in the athletic skills of running, jumping and throwing.
* perform dances with confidence and competence, including simple folk and Irish dances.
* develop personal competence in a range of gymnastic movements.
* develop personal competence in the games skills of sending, receiving and travelling using a variety of equipment, and to apply these skills in games situations.
* apply the skills needed to live and move with confidence in the environment.
* build water confidence near, in, on and under water.
* develop personal competence in a variety of strokes and water agility.

*Knowledge and understanding*

* develop an understanding and general knowledge of movement activities and derive benefit as a participant and as a spectator.
* develop an understanding of travel and weight-bearing as the basis of efficient body management and control, both on the floor and using apparatus.
* experience and develop an understanding of the use of space, speed, effort, direction and level in the performance of actions.
* develop an understanding of the appropriate basic rules, tactics and strategies of movement activities.
* observe, discuss, analyse, interpret and enjoy the performance of movement.
* gather, record and interpret information on achievement in movement activities.
* be inventive, make decisions, solve problems and develop autonomy through movement activities.
* participate in and develop a knowledge, understanding and appreciation of cultural activities through movement.
* develop an appreciation of and respect for the environment through participation in activities outdoors.

*Creative and aesthetic development*

* use the body as a means of expression and communication, using a range and variety of stimuli.
* create and perform simple dances.
* create and play simple games.
* develop artistic and aesthetic understanding within and through movement.

*Development of health-related fitness*

* maintain and enhance health-related fitness through vigorous physical activity that helps to promote a healthy life-style.
* understand and practise good hygiene and posture.
* appreciate the benefits of relaxation and cope with challenges.

*Development of safety*

* adopt safe practices in all physical activities.

**Content of the Plan**

**Curriculum Planning**

1. **Strands and Strand Units:**

The curriculum objectives are used as the objectives for each class level in our school:

Junior and Senior Infants: pg 14-23 Curriculum

First and Second Class: pg 24-35

Third and Fourth Class: pg 36-47

Fifth and Sixth Class: pg 48-59

At the beginning of each year, teachers will familiarize themselves with the objectives for their class and make sure that their individual planning for the year incorporates the strands of the P.E. Curriculum.

*Strands Strand Units*

Athletics Running

 Jumping

 Throwing

 Understanding and appreciation of athletics

Dance Exploration, creation and performance of dance

 Understanding and appreciation of dance

Gymnastics Movement

 Understanding and appreciation of gymnastics

Games Sending, receiving and travelling

 Creating and playing games

 Understanding and appreciation of games

Outdoor and Walking

adventure activities Orienteering

 Outdoor challenges

 Understanding and appreciation of outdoor and adventure activities

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

1. **Approaches and Methodologies**

One of the keys to the successful teaching of P.E. is the use of a broad range of approaches and methodologies. The nature of the strands necessitates the use of a variety of teaching methods. Teachers are likely to switch and mix approaches to suit the objectives of the unit of work or the lesson. The teacher begins by deciding what he/she wishes to achieve and then chooses the most appropriate method of realising those objectives.

**Approaches:**

* The direct-teaching approach involves teaching or showing children what to do and observing their progress e.g. teaching a specific skill such as the forward roll in gymnastics. 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.
* The guided-discovery approach designs a series of questions that will lead to one or more appropriate answers and ultimately the discovery of a particular concept. It promotes discussion amongst children and enhances the child’s capacity to evaluate e.g. children making up their own dance routine. It may be utilized as a child explores movement through informal play experiences.
* Integrated approaches through different subjects such as Gaeilge, English, Art, Music, Maths and S.P.H.E. All Physical Education lessons are carefully planned to ensure effective organization. They are organized to encourage maximum participation by each child. It is often more effective to divide the children into groups. Methods are used that encourage maximum participation by the child through group work.
* Individual, pair, group and team play where teachers plan for children to work alone or with others co-operatively and competitively. At infant level most activities will be undertaken first by an individual child. This will then be developed into partner work. Providing opportunities for group work during first and second classes should enhance co-operation in preparation for the development of team play in a games situation. Team play is appropriate for children from third to sixth class but team play should always suit the individual needs of the child. Larger groups of children can work together in dance and gymnastics lessons from 3rd to 6th class, developing from initial work undertaken individually to work with a partner and work as a member of a group.
* Station Teacher is appropriate in teaching games, gymnastics, outdoor and adventure activities, athletics and aquatics. This framework allows maximum members of children to participate, providing opportunities for continuous practice for groups working on different tasks at the same time. Children work with specific equipment, practicing certain skills or playing designated games. The class may consist of six to eight groups. After a given time (30 seconds to 5 minutes, according to the activity being completed), they move on to another station or point to practice a different set of skills or play different games.
* Using play areas divided into grids is a method useful for games teaching especially for third to sixth classes. The size of the play area should be divided most effectively to allow individual or pair practices, group work and small sided games.

**Methodologies:**

* Whole class work.
* Team work.
* Small group work.
* Pair work.
* Individual work.
* Station teaching.
* Grid teaching.

**Linkage and Integration**

Individual teachers will plan for both linkage and integration within the strands of the Physical Education Curriculum and with other pertinent subjects. This will be documented in the class schemes.

*Linkage*

Linkage can take place within Physical Education in that many activities transcend strands and are of benefit to the child irrespective of the strands being covered. Linkage occurs and will be planned for both within and between the strands of the Physical Education Curriculum. It emphasizes the inter-related nature of Physical Education activities. Linkage occurs:

* In the way the strand units provide for complementary activities in games.
* Through athletics which incorporates activities that are also appropriate for development in gymnastics and games.
* Through dance which links to gymnastics and athletics.

*Integration*

Opportunities for integration will be identified and planned for with care taken that the objectives for Physical Education are kept in clear focus. Each teacher will consider how objectives can be integrated within their own classroom. The following curricular areas offer real opportunities for integration.

* Music
* Drama
* Irish
* English
* S.E.S.E.
* S.P.H.E.
* Mathematics.
1. **Assessment**

Assessment will take place as the child engages in Physical Education activities. Assessment provides information on individual children, assists the teacher in planning an appropriate programme for the child and facilitates communication with other teachers, with parents and with other professionals.

Teachers will assess

* The social and personal qualities of the child including their attitude to physical education, their sense of fair play, their acceptance of winning or losing and their respect for a referee.
* Physical skills and competence based on a number of different skills being assessed in each strand to provide a valid assessment of the child’s competence, for example:

Games – Throw or strike a ball at a target.

Gymnastics – Create a sequence of movement.

Athletics – Run quickly and fluently over a row of hurdles.

Aquatics – Glide in water.

Dance – Help create and perform a dance as part of a group.

Outdoor and Adventure Activities – Read a simple map and find a number of features.

*Assessment Tools*

* Teacher Observation

This involves the informal monitoring of children’s progress as the actual learning takes place. It focuses on the responses the child makes when set a task, the responses the child makes to the teacher’s questions and suggestions, the participation of the child individually, in a group or as part of the class and the interaction of the child with others when involved in group work.

* Teacher designed tasks

In the physical education programme, teachers will design a variety of tasks for the pupils to engage in. Some tasks will be designed to provide opportunities to practice skills, others to encourage creativity, some to gather knowledge of activities and other tasks will be designed to promote questioning and group discussion before carrying out the task and as the task is completed. Teachers share the information with parents during parent-teacher meetings.

*Standardised tests – The Belfield Infant Assessment Profile assesses the gross motor skills of Junior Infants.*

1. **Children with Different Needs**

Our school cherishes all pupils equally. Therefore, we will strive to provide opportunities for all children to experience success in the Physical Education Programme. All children will have access to Physical Education related facilities and amenities in the school environment.

We will have a balanced programme of Physical Education activities in place to reflect the interests of both boys and girls. Equality of participation and access for children with special educational needs is also assured within the school at a differentiated level. Individual support will be given to children with special needs, for example the implementation of sensory circuits training to develop motor skills. Children who display a particular ability in the area of Physical Education will be encouraged to develop this talent further.

We acknowledge the different cultural heritages of the pupils of our school, so we will endeavor to use the Physical Education class to integrate through cooperative and team-based activities. When and where applicable, the Physical Education class is used as an opportunity to integrate the culture of all pupils within the school e.g. playing games from different cultures or learning dancing from different cultures.

1. **Equality of Participation and Access**

The pupils of St. John’s National School will have access to a balanced programme. They will have equal access to and opportunities to experience all strands.

Consideration will be given to:

* Helping children to build positive attitudes towards all activities.
* Providing equal access for all children to the P.E. equipment and facilities.

The P.E. class will be used as an opportunity to integrate the cultures and all children will have access to the P.E. activities provided by the school.

Special Needs Assistants will guide the children with disabilities appropriate to the child’s abilities.

The school is also involved in the Active Flag Programme.

* [Home](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/)
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	+ [Contact Us](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=7)
* [For Parents](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=310)
	+ [Introduction](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=499)
	+ [Introduction for parents of new infants](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=462)
	+ [School Information Booklet](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=270)
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	+ [Booklists](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=280)
	+ [Recommended Reading for Children](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=343)
		- [Best Children’s Books](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=539)
		- [Books for primary school children](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=541)
		- [Books for all ages](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=543)
	+ [Recommended Ipad Apps](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=282)
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	+ [Aistear](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=830)
	+ [Discover Primary Science and Maths (STEM)](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=403)
	+ [Green Schools](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=288)
	+ [STEPS project (Engineering)](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=396)
	+ [Tree of Life](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=834)
* [After School](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=392)
* [Calendar](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=292)
1. **Time**

According to the Primary School Curriculum Guidelines, one hour per week for all class levels must be allocated for the teaching of Physical Education. This is reflected in each teacher’s timetable. Some teachers may wish to split this into two half hour periods as this provides the children with an opportunity to be active on two occasions in the week. Some discretionary time may also be allocated to the teaching of Physical Education, particularly in the context of integrated work. At various times during the year we have outside instructors, for example Gymnastics and GAA instructors. Sports day is help as an annual event in the last term. Children from third class and from the Autistic Unit avail of swimming lessons also.

1. **Code of Ethics**

A qualified coach is used to support the class teacher in the implementation of some of the P.E. strands in the school. This coach is aware of the content of the Physical Education programme and will consult with the class teacher in planning his/her programme of work. The following strands and activities are covered by instructors in conjunction with the class teacher:

* Gymnastics for all classes
* Aquatics for third class
* Dance – Irish Dancing
* Games - G.A.A Coaching for Football and Hurling.
1. **After School Activities**

The following sports related after school activities are also provided:

* Gymnastics
* Kickboxing
* Irish Dancing
1. **Resources**

There is an inventory of equipment and resources for P.E. in the school. The equipment is appropriate for the P.E. curriculum and it is stored safely in the P.E. Hall storage room. It is available to all teachers. A folder of resources covering lesson plans for all strands is available in the Staff Room. These resources are from the Primary Schools Sports Initiative Programme.

**10. Health and Safety**

We are mindful of potential health and safety issues associated with Physical Education. Therefore, it is expected that due care will be taken when children are participating in Physical Education. The following procedures should be adhered to in endeavouring to make Physical Education activities as safe as possible:

* Suitable footwear and P.E. uniform should be worn on P.E. days.
* Safety gear to be worn where appropriate.
* Continuous supervision.
* Warm up at the start of all physical activity.
* Proper transporting of P.E. equipment.
* Safe use of all equipment.
* Care practiced in throwing games etc.
* Surface suitable for activities to be assessed.
* Accidents as per school plan.
* Parents to inform teachers of any long-standing or temporary medical conditions which may restrict or inhibit participation.
* Gymnastics is taught by specialized coaches who have qualifications in the area. The emphasis here is on health and safety in order to minimize risks to children.
* The teaching of Aquatics is done by a specialized teacher is this area in the local swimming pool.

**11. Individual Teachers’ Planning and Reporting**

Each teacher will plan individually while at the same time ensuring that their class plans co-ordinate with the overall school plan. Teachers record work completed in the Cuntas Míosúil. A folder of resources is available in the Staff Room with Lessons from the PSSI (Primary Schools’ Sports Initiative) Programme. All strands are covered for all classes.

**12. Staff Development**

Teachers are encouraged to develop their own range of skills and knowledge in Physical Education. Participation at relevant courses is promoted and the sharing of knowledge and skills is facilitated at staff meetings.

**13. Parental/Community Involvement**

We endeavor to involve parents as much as possible in Physical Education. Parents are invited to view their children’s achievements in Physical Education at sports tournaments and displays at the school. Local and nationwide sporting personalities are also invited into the school to share their achievements and expertise. Children are encouraged to support local teams and information on local sporting events may be circulated via the school newsletter.

*Other Initiatives*

The school is involved in the Active Schools’ Flag Programme as well as Safer Cycling Week, Healthy Eating Week, Get Active Week and Bizzy Breaks.

\* Please see Appendix for information on Active Schools.

**14. Success Criteria**

It is hoped that this plan will impact positively on the teaching and learning of Physical Education in our school. Primarily, the success of this plan will be evident from the degree in which the pupils learn to express themselves through each of the strands. The implementation of the plan will be evident through the adoption of a more co-ordinated and effective approach to the teaching of Physical Education across the school. The efficacy of the plan will be evident from:

* Feedback from pupils, parents and teachers and the school inspector.
* Cuntais míosúila.
* Pupils working at their own level.
* Teacher evaluation and assessment.
* Implementation of teaching and learning in the classroom.
* Continuity of content and methodology in teacher’s planning and reports.

**15. Implementation**

This plan has been formulated by the staff of our school. It will be supported, developed and implemented by teaching and non-teaching staff members. The teacher responsible for co-ordinating Physical Education has responsibility for co-ordinating its implementation. The post holder with responsibility for P.E. supports the implementation of the P.E. programme and is responsible for the purchase, distribution and monitoring of resources.

**16. Review**

The plan will be monitored and evaluated at regular staff meetings. It will be reviewed regularly to ensure maximum implementation of the Physical Education Curriculum in our School. The Principal and teachers in the school will be involved in the review.

**17. Ratification and Communication**

Following ratification by the Board of Management, this plan will be circulated to all staff members. A copy of the plan will be available to parents and guardians on the school website.

**Date Created:** October 2021