



St. John's Primary School Physical Education Policy

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General Overview and Rationale

St. John's Primary School strongly believes that Physical Education (PE) has a fundamental role to play in the development of the whole child. It provides the foundations for a healthy lifestyle, promotes self-esteem, fosters good behaviour and allows children to develop their understanding of co-operation, fairness and respect for others through active participation.

By employing a wide range of teaching strategies to deliver a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum we strive to provide all our children with a fun, enjoyable, secure and stimulating learning environment that will address the needs of each individual child.

The Physical Education programme of study at Foundation level and Key Stages 1 and 2 includes Athletics, Dance, Games and Gymnastics (Movement and Control). At Key Stage 2 level pupils will also participate in swimming. Through activities provided in all the areas of the programme children will have opportunities to explore, invent, plan, practise, improve, perform, observe and evaluate the performances of themselves and others. Children will also have the opportunity to develop fine and gross motor skills showing creativity, control and co-ordination.

Where possible PE will link to whole school curriculum planning. The physical context will provide pupils with opportunities to enrich their knowledge and understanding of other curricular areas.

The PE policy will be reviewed on a regular basis and adopted or amended as when necessary to assist the delivery of the curriculum in St. John's Primary School.

General Aims of Physical Education within St. John's Primary School

The following aims run central to the teaching and learning of Physical Education across Foundation Stage, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two.

1. All children should experience a sense of fun, enjoyment and achievement through a variety of progressively challenging and innovative activities.
2. To promote physical activity and development and the need for a healthy lifestyle.
3. To develop and increase self-esteem and self-confidence.
4. To foster creative, aesthetic and linguistic understanding through active participation in athletics, Dance, Games and Gymnastics.
5. To develop social co-operation, a sense of fairness and team spirit and to demonstrate a respect for others and the environment.
6. To foster a sense of enjoyment and a positive ethos towards physical activity.
7. To develop fine and gross motor skills, control, balance and co-ordination.
8. To provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve their full potential in a range of activities and contexts.
9. To develop an understanding of the relationship between physical activity and health related fitness.
10. To promote and develop safe practice in physical activities.
11. To deliver an inclusive PE curriculum that provides equal opportunities for all children.

Programme Structure

The content of the curriculum through P1 to P7 will include movement experiences in the following areas:

Athletics

Dance

Games

Gymnastics

Swimming (Key stage 2 only)

Outdoor Education

Foundation Stage

The early years are essential in laying the foundations of physical competency and positive attitudes towards physical activity. The activities in the Foundation Stage aim to enhance the physical development of children, their understanding of themselves and their relationships with others.

In the Foundation Stage children have opportunities to develop the fundamental movement skills using a wide range of small and large equipment, both indoors and outdoors through exploratory play. They will begin to develop body awareness as well as an awareness of space in relation to others and in the physical environment in which they are working. They should be able to recognise and follow relevant rules and safety procedures. Through active participation they will have been given frequent opportunities to enhance their self – esteem and confidence and by making choices and decisions and working co-operatively with others. Children will be given opportunities to have fun, be creative and use their imagination, developing positive attitudes towards physical play and activities and the sense of freedom and achievement.

Teachers trained in Primary Movement will also incorporate principles and activities from the programme to meet the identified needs of the pupils.

Framework for Key Stages One and Two

The explanatory approach will be continued throughout Key Stages One and Two. In order to achieve progression and good quality performance in each of the areas of the programmes of study the PE co-ordinator, in conjunction with the teaching staff, will develop their skills and apply them in more complex challenges. Pupils will be encouraged to discuss the physical education activities and to develop an understanding of them and their relationship to health and exercise in everyday life.

Delivering the PE Curriculum in St. John's Primary School

Physical Resources Available for PE

1. PE is taught in several areas within the school. This includes an assembly hall/gym, a considerable area of hard playing surface (playground with thermoplastic markings), a 3G pitch and a grass pitch.
2. Shared equipment is centrally stored. This includes moveable apparatus, benches, mats, ropes, hoops, bean bags, selection of different sized balls, quoits, bats etc. The PE co-ordinator, in consultation with the staff and principal, aims to ensure the maintenance of the equipment, within the constraints of the budget.

3. A range of digital technology is available including SMART Boards. In addition, other equipment, such as musical instruments, is also readily available to assist in PE teaching and learning.
4. Within the playground there are painted lines and thermoplastic markings for outdoor education. These are also used for break and lunchtime activities. Large free-play resources, much of it reclaimed items, are available for pupils at break and lunch. Under supervision, these are used freely by the pupils to 'build' a range of structures. Such free play supports the development of strength, conditioning, co-ordination and gross-motor control.
5. All pupils in primary Five to Seven are provided with the opportunity to follow a programme of Swimming at Greenvale Leisure centre – one class per term. Pupils will travel by bus. Parental consent is sought and costs are supported by voluntary contributions.

Allocation of Time for PE per Week

- Our aim is for Primaries one to four to have three twenty-to-thirty-minute sessions. Additionally, at the foundation stage pupils should have time each day for outdoor play.
- Our aim is for Primaries five to seven to have two thirty to forty minutes sessions. Additionally, each class will have one session per week of swimming for a ten-week period.
- Our aim is for all classes to have some form of physical activity every day for approximately 10 minutes whether in class or outside. Each class will be expected to complete a variety of brain gym activities every day. The Daily Mile is completed by every class.
- The 'games' element of PE throughout the school, is delivered by a GAA Hurling Coach and currently, a local Football Coach. Sessions are tailored to the age and stage of the pupils and participation is greatly encouraged.
- Coaches are suitably vetted by the GAA, EA or the relevant employing body.

Special Educational Needs

All children are catered for and have the opportunity to participate in every activity. Each child is given realistic goals that they can work towards. A range of strategies, resources and tasks employed within the content of each PE lesson will ensure that the needs of each individual child are met. When necessary teachers will consult with Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and the PE Co-ordinator as well as other agencies such as physiotherapists when planning units and lesson work.

Differentiation

The PE programme aims to cater for the needs of the children with a wide range of abilities. Teachers will take account of differences in stages of development, previous experience, body size, age, fitness and skill levels. These differences will be reflected in the variety of teaching and learning approaches and in the organisational management during PE lessons.

Gender

The school is committed to providing equal opportunities in the provision of PE.

Continuity and Progression

This will be overseen by the co-ordinator, who will support and advise on the development of schemes and units of work for each year group. The co-ordinator will also ensure that each year group is aware of the required progression.

Range and Balance of Teaching Styles

A variety of teaching styles will be employed to meet the learning needs of all children and the demands of the lesson. These include:

- Explanatory Approach
- Direct Approach
- Problem- Solving
- Guided Discovery
- Task Oriented

Children will have opportunities to work individually with a partner, in groups and as a whole class.

Assessing, Recording and Reporting Pupil Attainment

Assessment in PE is designed to identify the attainment of each individual child and should influence future teaching and planning. All teachers are involved in continuously assessing and monitoring pupils' progress and achievements.

While PE is not to be formally assessed, teachers will record pupil's progress and attainments on annual reports and discuss during parents/ guardians consultation meetings. Reports will also inform new class teachers of previous learning, progress and attainment.

Evaluating

All teachers will be involved in continually monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning and teaching and adjust their programmes accordingly. This will ensure that curriculum planning, pupil learning, progress and attainment are being achieved. The PE Co-ordinator will be responsible for the overall monitoring and evaluating of all aspects of PE.

Non- Participants

PE is a very important part of children's development and everyone participates in each lesson unless excused with a note or medical problem. If pupils are excused they must watch the lesson to keep up with the progress of the class and if appropriate take part in the lesson in a meaningful way i.e., timekeeping, assessing, writing a brief account or diagram of what is happening.

If pupils are not able to participate in a swimming lesson, they may remain behind, supervised in school, continuing with assigned tasks. This is because the teacher's attention will be focused on the poolside.

Physical Education across the Curriculum

The development of physical abilities can positively impact on many other aspects of a child's learning and development. Physical Education can contribute to and enhance other areas of learning, for example:

Personal Development:

- By learning about how the body develops respecting their own body and keep it safe and healthy by making the right choices. Through working with and showing respect for others and by accepting and respecting differences in physical abilities.

The Arts:

- By using the stimuli of music, art and design and drama to interpret, respond and move creatively and imaginatively.

Language and Literacy:

- By being able to listen to, describe and evaluate movements, emotions and feelings of themselves and others and by using movement story books and texts as a stimuli for movement.

Mathematics & Numeracy:

- By using number, distance, direction, time, shape and space to improve variety and quality of movements and handling data and using ICT resources to inform progress, for example, athletics, health and fitness.

World Around us:

- By discussing and investigating (in a range of ways, for example using ICT software) how the body works. By using their local and the global environment as a stimulus for learning and by raising awareness of sport and recreation facilities within their local community.

ICT:

- By using a range of ICT related resources like the internet to develop an understanding of movement, health-related fitness and personal development. Using a range of software to record, present and interpret data.

RE: Prayer Movement allows for the body to express emotional and spiritual connections, linked to a hymn or prayer.

Health and Safety Factors in Physical Education

The physical education and extra curricular programme both require the same 'duty of care' of teachers and provide many continuing opportunities to involve young people in safety matters. Awareness of safety is an integral part of the education process...nowhere more so than in physical education. (BAALPE, 2000)

NB: If any aspect of the safety policy is in doubt teachers should refer to recent 'BAALP – Safe Practice in PE' document.

- a) Children must wear suitable clothing for PE and avoid jewellery.
- b) Teachers should wear appropriate clothing and footwear suitable to the task.

Condition of the Hall or Playing Surface

To ensure that children are working in a safe and suitable environment the following considerations are essential.

- a) Removal of unnecessary furniture from the working space.
- b) A clean non-slip and splinter proof floor.
- c) A safe out-door surface for playing games (no loose stones or gravel, no badly uneven surface, no holes in tarmac). Children will not be permitted to play on these surfaces if they are frozen, covered in moss, glass or any other hazard.
- d) Floor markings for games are sufficiently far away from fences and walls to prevent accidents.

Suitable and Safe Organisation of Equipment will mean:

- a) Easily accessible gymnastics equipment is stored in an organised manner in the store.
- b) Game apparatus and equipment is stored safely in suitable containers in the PE store and is organised so that appointed children can easily and safely remove the selected containers.
- c) Although the PE co-ordinator is responsible for the store and equipment, each class teacher will be expected to return equipment to its proper place within the store.
- d) Damaged equipment should not be used. It must be reported to the PE co-ordinator.

Good Organisation of the Lesson will mean:

- a) Good class control is fundamental to ensure that the children can participate safely.
- b) The format of the lesson will be very clearly planned with appropriate progression i.e.
 - Supervised entry into the hall/playground
 - Progression for safety
 - Introduction/ warm- up activity
 - Development of lesson
 - Conclusion/cool down
 - Appropriate apparatus and teaching styles used
 - Differentiation considered for all pupils especially those with special needs
 - Appropriate teacher involvement

Medical Conditions

- a) Teachers should be aware of any medical conditions of children in their class.
- b) Teachers and children should be aware of the normal emergency aid/first aid procedures.

Swimming

No pupils should be sent to the pool as a spectator. All parties of pupils must be accompanied by teachers considered by the principal to be sufficient in number to maintain discipline and to ensure the safety of the pupils involved.