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Physical Education Plan

Introductory Statement

This Physical Education plan for St. Ronan's N.S. was formulated by the Principal and staff after whole staff input and discussion. It was reviewed in May 2022 and has been ratified by the Board of Management.

Rationale

Physical Education provides children with learning opportunities through the medium of movement. Through PE we aim to help children develop physically as well as socially, emotionally and intellectually. We aim to provide these learning opportunities to the children in our school to maximize active learning experiences and approaches to the benefit of each individual child. This plan describes the place which we give to PE 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 PE to achieve that goal, our agreed approach to teaching PE and the content of the programme of the curriculum at each year level. This document will also serve as a basis for each teacher's long and short term planning. It will also serve as a source of information for parents and the Board of Management.

Vision

We envisage that through PE children 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 PE curriculum in our school will always have the children as the focus of attention through the provision of a broad, balanced and differentiated programme of physical activities.

Aims

We endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for PE

- 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.

We aim through this plan to set out our approach to the teaching and learning of PE. It will promote and endorse the key aims of the P.E. Curriculum; The importance of enjoyment and play, maximum participation of 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 and providing activities equally suitable for girls and boys. This plan will form the basis for teachers' long and short-term planning. It will also inform new or temporary teachers of the approaches and methodologies used in our school.

This PE plan will be addressed under the following headings:

Curriculum Planning:

1. Strands and strand units
2. Teaching approaches and methodologies
3. Assessment and record keeping
4. Children with different needs
5. Equality of participation and access
6. Linkage and integration

Organisational Planning:

7. Timetable
8. PE equipment and ICT
9. Health and safety
10. Individual teachers' planning and recording
11. Staff development
12. Parental involvement
13. Community links

1. Strands and Strand Units

The curriculum is divided into six strands:

- Athletics
- Dance
- Gymnastics
- Games
- Outdoor and adventure activities
- Aquatics.

Each strand is subdivided into strand units. The school uses the PE lessons prepared by the Primary Schools Supports Initiative (PPSI) and Move Well, Move Often - fundamental movement skills materials (FMS).

The children will experience all six strands each year for a minimum of a six-week period. The children will also focus on a FMS each six-week period. There are 15 FMS in total which will be delivered over a two-year period. Continuity and progression from class to class is ensured through planning for each individual strand unit and FMS and is outlined in the curriculum grid - see **Appendix 1**.

The strands/strand units/content objectives for the relevant class level(s) are found on the following pages:

Refer to Curriculum (also available on www.ncca.ie)

- 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

2. Approaches and Methodologies

Among the teaching approaches we will use for teaching PE are

- the direct-teaching approach
- the guided-discovery approach
- integrated approaches.

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 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. It can feature as part of the teacher's approach in a wide range of lessons.

Guided-discovery approach

The guided-discovery strategy involves the teacher in designing a series of questions that will eventually lead to one or more appropriate answers and ultimately the discovery of a particular concept or 'solution'. It is one of the approaches that offer children the opportunity to make decisions, solve problems or take initiative. The use of this approach promotes discussion among children and enhances the child's capacity to evaluate.

Integration

The teacher should consider how objectives can be achieved through integration. Physical education has many objectives which are developed by other subjects such as Gaeilge, English, art, music, mathematics and especially social, personal and health education. The development of these subjects can be enriched through a programme of physical education which is broad and balanced.

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
- 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

We will use methods that encourage maximum participation by the child through group work:

- Individual, pair, group and team play - younger children and special needs children will need more individual attention
- Station teaching - groups moving around different stations and having one teaching station
- Using a play area divided into grids - groups of children stay in grids and the activities within the grids are differentiated

Structure of a PE lesson:

Most of our lessons will follow the following format:

Warm Up Main Activity Cool Down

3. Assessment and Record Keeping

The teachers in the school constantly assess the PE lessons delivered as we identify progress and difficulties by observing, listening, asking questions and giving feedback to pupils. This will ensure that ongoing achievements are recognised and areas of difficulty are identified. Children may be asked to self-assess and peer assess where appropriate. Teachers report annually to parents at parent-teacher meetings and end of year reports. Any concerns about a child's progress in PE will be communicated to the principal and parents as necessary.

- We will assess
 - o Willingness to participate in activities
 - o Readiness to engage with a certain activity
 - o The level of competence of a child in carrying out an activity
 - o Interest in and attitude to activity
 - o Willingness to cooperate in individual, pair and group activities
- Our assessment tools are:
 - o Teacher observation
 - o Teacher-designed tasks

Multi-Class Teaching

Teachers adapt the curriculum and group children as they deem necessary to cater for the various levels in such classes.

Children with ability/talent for PE will be encouraged and supported by acknowledging their talents and creating additional challenges for these children in the strands of the PE curriculum they excel in. These challenges will be based on the activity being pursued by the rest of the class. In addition, the children will be encouraged to maximise their talent by joining school teams, local clubs, so the children can bring

their talent to a higher level. The children 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 PE 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.

4. Children with Different Needs

The child with special needs will experience the enjoyment of participation and progression through the various stages of the PE programme according to his/her ability (often with the assistance of the SNA). 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.

- There are a number of ways that teachers support and ensure the participation of children with special needs:
 - o Mixed ability grouping during activities
 - o Differentiation of tasks (including more challenging tasks for children with exceptional abilities)
 - o Use of S.N.A. for a number of our children.
- There are a number of ways in which classes are organised and activities adapted to include children who may have physical disabilities
 - o Use of S.N.A. to support the child or to work with the group in which the child is a member
 - o Devise group work whereby children take turns to perform
 - o Seek specialist advice on how to organise/adapt activities
 - o Talk to/liaise with the parents of the child
 - o Talk to the child to ascertain where they feel their strengths/needs are within the area of P.E.
- There is a need for children with exceptional ability/talent in P.E. to be encouraged and supported. As mentioned above, this is done through differentiation of the task, e.g. dribbling/travelling activities in Games could offer additional challenges of speed, distance, accuracy. It is also important to inform the child and his/her parent of any clubs in the area that would encourage their child in their area of strength.
- We encourage inactive/shy/self-conscious children to participate in PE activities by:
 - o Differentiating the task
 - o Allowing the child to work within a friendship grouping
 - o Allowing the child to choose teams - who he/she would like to work with.

5. Equality of Participation and Access

- In planning for PE we will pay attention to the following areas in order to promote equality throughout the physical education curriculum.
 - All children will partake in all six strands of the curriculum.
 - We will provide equal access for all children to physical education equipment and facilities and the use of the playground during breaks will be incorporated as an integral part of the school's programme.
 - Special needs children will participate fully in our PE programme. Lessons and activities will be adapted to suit the needs and abilities of these children.
- The PE class provides opportunity for integration and involvement of all pupils regardless of gender, race or ethnic background.
- 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 his/her participation.
- The BoM has given permission to charge a nominal fee to each child for swimming lessons. The BoM pays the cost of the bus. 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 through the DEIS initiative. For large families a maximum charge applies.

6. 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 e.g. language development through following:

- Within the curriculum area of PE, linkage takes place in the following areas:
 - Playground games are linked to the Games strand
 - Athletics and Games activities are linked - warm up for athletics will usually be a Games activity
 - Warm up for Games lesson could be basic skills in orienteering
- PE activities are integrated in the following subjects:
 - Gaeilge - Giving instructions
 - English: All strands
 - Maths: Angles, Measurement, Direction - Dance, Gymnastics, Outdoor and Adventure
 - History: Games in the Past
 - Science: Living Things, Forces, Environmental Awareness and Care - All Strands
 - Geography: Map Skills, Environmental Awareness and Care - Outdoor and Adventure, Music: Listening and responding - Dance

- o SPHE: Health, Hygiene, Feelings and Emotions, Personal Safety - Dance, Team Skills, Aquatics
- o Drama: Games
- Integration of PE with other subjects is planned and organised at a class level. In this way the activities can be adapted for the needs of the class. Also, theme based activities can be planned and organised at a class level.
- Opportunities are given for pupils to discuss and talk about their own and others' performance in PE through feedback at the end of the lesson by the teacher and also the pupils. (Self-assessment and Peer-assessment AFL)
- The children are enabled to develop a vocabulary for discussing PE activities by:
 - o Discussing the rules of certain games
 - o Discussion at the end of a lesson
 - o Labelling equipment

Organisational Planning

7. Timetable

- One hour per week is allocated for PE for all classes. See Appendix 1 for Yearly Timetable
- We do not have an indoor hall so at times PE is weather dependent and the timetable may have to be adjusted accordingly.

Swimming and Water Sports

Aura Leisure Centre pool in Carrick on Shannon is used for the aquatics Strand. Aura provides the instructors. With the consent of the BOM a small fee is charged for swimming lessons. However, no child will be denied access due to lack of financial resources.

From time to time we will endeavour to access water sports such as Stand Up Paddle Boarding, Canoeing or Kayaking through our school tours.

GAA coach

Sligo GAA provides us with a GAA coach. They attend the school once a week for 6 weeks once or twice a year (depending on their time availability). All classes have access.

There is no fee as it is funded by the Sligo GAA.

Active Schools Flag

St. Ronan's N.S. is an active school, with active break times throughout the day. Our school participates in the Active School Flag (ASF) programme which is a Department of Education and Skills initiative supported by Healthy Ireland, and part of the National Physical Activity

Plan. The ASF initiative provides schools with a framework to guide, support and incentivise them to work towards achieving a physically educated and physically active school community. We participate in Active Schools Week yearly 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 strands of the PE curriculum as possible.

Lunchtime Games

All children are encouraged to play and enjoy their break times. Playground leaders organise and lead playground games during big lunch on a daily basis. Our SNA is responsible for assisting with the play opportunities of our special needs children and ensure that these children are fully integrated into school playtimes wherever possible. Children usually play soccer, football or basketball (use of grass area depends on the weather). All children have access to all areas of both yards and a resource box of PE equipment. Yard markings also encourage active participation in games during break times.

Green Schools Travel Programme

As part of our Green Schools work on the theme of travel children are encouraged to walk, cycle, scoot or park and stride to school.

Bike/Scooting Skills

When possible children participate in bike/scooting skills training.

Code of Ethics

(Please refer to the school's Child Protection Policy based on the Department of Education and Skills and 'Children First' Guidelines).

- Physical Education is a core subject, an integral part of the school curriculum, and is not considered as an optional subject for the children. Exclusion from P.E. is not considered as an appropriate punishment/sanction for the children and as such, we include all children in P.E. lessons in the school. All children (regardless of gender, ethnicity, dis/ability) will be encouraged to participate while every effort will be made to ensure that P.E. is a positive experience for each pupil. If a child displays a particular reluctance to participate in P.E., the child, teacher and parents will work together to help them overcome any difficulties they may have.
- At times outside coaches are used to support the teacher in the implementation of some of the PE curriculum in the school. It will be ensured that procedures and good practices are used at all times e.g. use of appropriate language and behaviour by the coach. The teacher stays with the coach at all times, actively supporting the coach by teaching with him/her so that the children gain maximum benefit from the PE class.
- Coaches/Instructors must provide a Garda Clearance certificate to the principal prior to commencement.
- 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 (even if it becomes apparent in the context of a PE class), all teachers will adhere to the Department of Education and Science Child Protection Guidelines to be used with the 'Children First Guidelines' produced for all personnel working with children.

8. PE Equipment and ICT

- There is an inventory of equipment and resources available for PE (Appendix 2)
- This equipment is appropriate for the PE curriculum.
- This equipment is stored safely in the SET room and is available to all teachers.
- The P.E. inventory is displayed in the SET room.

Facilities:

- School yard
- Grass area
- Basketball court
- Access to Aura Leitrim Leisure Swimming pool

ICT

- Digital Camera
- Interactive Whiteboards
- Laptop Computer.
- Ipad.
- Purple Pen Software (Orienteering Software)
- PPSI digital lesson plans
- Move Well, Move Often (Fundamental Movements Programme)
- Go Noodle
- Youtube

9. Health and Safety

The Health and Safety Policy will be adhered to at all times in PE activities. Issues identified as being health and safety issues in a PE context include warm-up at the start of all physical activity, practising in confined spaces, use of equipment, accidents, supervision, activities involving the whole school yard, procedures for dealing with accidents, etc.

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

- All children should wear suitable footwear and clothing during a PE lesson.
- 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, carry and use all PE equipment safely
- In all PE lessons, children will warm up and cool down. This develops good practice and the children will return to class relaxed after activity.
- Should an accident occur in the PE lesson we will follow the procedures outlined for other accidents in our Health and Safety policy. All accidents should be recorded in our Accident book which is located in the staff room.
- The First Aid Kit is located in the staff room and will be brought on any out of school trips.
- Any medical information provided to the school by parents/guardians will be kept on the students file and any BoM approved medicines are kept in the staff room or brought on out of school trips.
- Best practice is safe practice and the teacher should ensure that the children understand that the rules and procedures are there for their safety.
- We will endeavour to have an appropriate surface for the activities in the PE lesson e.g. use of mats during gymnastics.
- Running activities will not finish at a wall.
- Children will not be allowed to wear any loose jewellery during a PE lesson.
- Parents will be notified of any out of school trips.

10. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting

Teachers' preparation will be based on this plan (see appendix 1) and if necessary the planning of individual teachers will feed into any amendments to this school plan.

Teachers will also be familiar with the content and methodologies outlined in the plan. There should be clear progression as children move from class to class.

Strands covered in PE each month are recorded in the Cuntas Miosúil. Short term planning is done on a fortnightly/monthly basis.

11. Staff Development

- Staff will be encouraged to participate in in-service training/summer courses. The Board of Management may fund these courses.
- The school has a library of relevant resource material in the staff room which aids the teachers in their development and implementation of the PE curriculum.
- New methodologies, resources etc. have been highlighted and demonstrated through in-service development days dedicated to the PE curriculum.
- Time is provided during staff meetings for teachers to share any knowledge or expertise they may have gained through CPD courses.
- Time has been allocated in whole staff meetings to facilitate the drafting of this plan and other aspects of the PE curriculum.
- Teachers also avail of external expertise to inform and up-skill the school community. This is done through the coaches who come into the school on a regular basis to teach various aspects of the PE curriculum.

12. Parental Involvement

- Parents have a responsibility to support and encourage their children to participate in all strands of the curriculum.
- The PE plan is available on line for parents to view.
- Parent/Teacher Meetings: P/T meetings are held annually. This is an ideal time to inform parents of their child's progress in PE and highlight any clubs or extra-curricular activities which may benefit their child.
- End of Year Report: An end of year report is sent home to each parent which includes a section on PE.
- Parents can encourage their child to participate in clubs organised in the community.
- Parents with a sporting background may be invited in to share their expertise with the staff and children.

Success Criteria

The criteria for evaluating the success of our PE plan will be:

- 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 girls and boys.

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

Implementation

Roles and Responsibilities

Each teacher is responsible for implementing this plan with his/her own class. The Principal will coordinate the progress of the plan, encourage and accept feedback on its implementation. All members of staff contributed to the formation of this document and it was completed and agreed upon during Croke Park hours in May 2022.

Other stakeholders include: pupils, parents, Board of Management and DES Inspectorate.

Timeframe

This plan will be reviewed and amended if deemed necessary.

Ratification and Communication

This PE plan was ratified by the Board of Management on 8th June 2022 and is available on our school website or a copy can be viewed in the school office on request.

Fr. Joseph Caulfield
Chairperson
Board of Management

Appendix 1 – Yearly Physical Education Timetable

Months	September/October	October/November	December/January	January/February
Strand Strand Unit	Outdoor & Adventure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking Orienteering, cycling and camping activities* Outdoor Challenges Water-based activities* Understanding & appreciation of outdoor & adventure activities 	Games <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sending, receiving & travelling Creating & playing games Understanding & appreciation of games Year 1 - Rounders Year 2 - Unihoc Year 3 - Tennis Year 4 - Handball	Dance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploration, creation and performance of dance Understanding & appreciation of dance 	Gymnastics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Movement Understanding & appreciation of gymnastics
Fundamental Movement Skill	Year 1/3 - Walking Year 2/4 - Running	Year 1/3 - Striking with an Implement Year 2 - Dodging Year 4 - Striking with a hand	Year 1/3 - Sidestepping Year 2/4 - Hopping	Year 1/3 - Balancing Year 2/4 - Landing
Social Skills & Personal Qualities	Teamwork		Commitment	
Months	March/April	April/May	May/June	
Strand Strand Unit	Athletics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Running Jumping Throwing Understanding & appreciation of athletics 	Games <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sending, receiving & travelling Creating & playing games Understanding & appreciation of games Year 1 - Gaelic Year 2 - Basketball Year 3 - Soccer Year 4 - Rugby	Aquatics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hygiene Water Safety Entry to and exit from the water Buoyancy and propulsion Stroke development Water-based ball games Understanding & appreciation of aquatics 	
Fundamental Movement Skill	Year 1/ 3 - Throwing Year 2/4 - Jumping	Year 1/3 - Kicking Year 2 - Striking with the hand Year 4 - Dodging	Year 1/ 3 - Skipping Year 2/4 - Catching	
Social Skills & Personal Qualities	Commitment	Fair Play		

Appendix 2 - Inventory of PE Equipment

P.E EQUIPMENT

Item	Quantity
Hula Hoops	17
Tennis Balls	1 Bucket
Tennis Raquets	28
Yoga Mats	3
Rugby Balls	14
Tag Rugby Belts	42
GAA Balls	4
Soccer Balls	8
Basketballs	4
Big Foam Balls	19
Medium Hard Balls	33
Small Soft Balls	1 Box
Small Plastic Play Balls	1 Bag
Small Target Practice Balls	1 Box
Target Practice Mat	1
Parachute	1

Hockey Sticks	34
Rounders Bat	3
School Javelin	4
Hurdles	4- Non-Adjustable 6-Adjustable
Agility Ladder	2
Relay Batons	13
Skipping Rope	17-Plastic 27-Ropes
Beanbags	50
Saucer Cones	1 Box
Space Markers	80
Rubber Rings	21
Orienteering Box	1
Crazy Golf Set	1
Peanut Balls	2