

St. Eunan's National School

Physical Education Whole School Plan

Introductory Statement and Rationale

(a) Introductory Statement

The PE plan for St. Eunan's N.S. was formulated in consultation: with the teachers and Board of Management.

(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 lives¹. This plan was formulated to

- *to ensure the provision of a broad and balanced PE programme in our school.*
- *to guide staff in the planning for and teaching of PE.*
- *to ensure continuity and progression from class to class.*

Vision and Aims

(a) Vision

We seek to assist the children in our school in achieving their potential through the opportunities they receive to participate in activities drawn from the strands of the P.E. curriculum. We also seek to encourage children to lead active healthy lives by encouraging physical activity through out the school.

(b) Aims

We endorse the aims of the [Primary School Curriculum for PE](#)²

- 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

¹ Page 2, PE Curriculum, 1999

² Page 10, PE Curriculum, 1999

- 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.

[The Broad objectives of the PE curriculum](#)³ have been considered. (See appendix 1)

Short Term Aims

- To participate in an Active School Week each year.
- Work towards and apply for our second Active School Flag.
- During lunch time we will encourage structured play for each classroom, two day in the week.
- To devise trails (orienteering) in conjunction with SESE
- To introduce and implement the Land Paws and Bizzy Breaks

1. Strands and strand units

- 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**
- Each teacher will make herself familiar with the curriculum objectives for her class
 - The school will also use the PE lesson plans prepared by the Primary School Sports Initiative.
- Teachers will choose a range of activities from all strands for each class grouping. Where possible, children will have access to the following six strands each year – Athletics, Dance, Gymnastics, Games, Aquatics and Outdoor and Adventure Activities.

Aquatics

- From January 2013, teachers will implement the Land Paws Programme.
- Where possible, all children in the senior classroom (3rd - 6th) will participate in swimming lessons every second year.
- The strands of Hygiene and Water Safety in Aquatics will be taught in an integrated manner with the SPHE Curriculum. We use the Irish Water Safety materials (cd-rom, posters and fliers) as a resource to support our Water Safety programme.

³ Pages 11,12, PE Curriculum, 1999

PE rich environment

We will endeavour to create a PE rich environment in the school:

- Camera- to record children partaking in physical activities.
- CD's and CD ROM's- e.g. PSSI lessons, IWS Material, Dance music
- Suitable Websites- e.g Cúl 4 Kidz
- Posters/Photographs/Newspaper cuttings
- Playtime access to Sports equipment

These will be used to raise children's awareness of various forms of physical activity and as a way of developing an understanding and appreciation of the strands of the curriculum.

2. Approaches and methodologies

- We will use a combination of the following approaches:
 - Direct teaching approach⁴
 - Guided discovery approach – teachers questions⁵
 - Integration⁶

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

- Individual, pair, group and team play⁷
- Station teaching⁸
- Using a play area divided into grids⁹

Structure of a PE lesson:

Warm Up: pulse raising activities, stretching and strengthening/mobility exercises

Main Activity – running, jumping, throwing, rolling, striking an object, kicking, playing small sided games, orienteering, dancing etc

This main activity will take place at individual, pair and small group levels to enhance skill development.

⁴ Page 43, PE Teacher Guidelines

⁵ Pages 43,44, PE Teacher Guidelines

⁶ Page 45, PE Teacher Guidelines

⁷ Page 51, PE Teacher Guidelines

⁸ Page 51, PE Teacher Guidelines

⁹ Page 54, Teacher Guidelines

Station teaching may be used to teach a specific skill and to enable the children experience a variety of activities in the PE lesson

We will divide our play area into grids to allow for small group activity and yet all children will be involved

Cool Down: slower activities to reduce heart rate and prepare children for their return to the classroom

3. Assessment and record keeping

The teachers in the school constantly assess in the PE lessons delivered as we identify progress and difficulties.

- We will assess
 - Willingness to participate in activities
 - Readiness to engage with a certain activity
 - The level of competence of a child in carrying out an activity
 - Interest in and attitude to activity
 - Willingness to cooperate in individual, pair and group activities
- 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 the children, other teachers, parents and other professionals.

4. Multi-class teaching

- On occasion, mixed ability grouping will be used, where the more competent children will act as mentors for the less able children.
- On other occasions, children will be grouped according to ability, where they can complete activities which will challenge them at their level.
- Follow-up activities to a basic lesson will be introduced, where one group has an opportunity to practise again what was covered in the basic lesson, while the other group moves ahead and develops further the content of the basic lesson.

The development section of the PSSI lessons may be used to challenge the older/more able children and to allow for differentiation. Use of grids and station teaching will facilitate this differentiation.

- When/where possible, support personnel provided by sports or dance organisations may be used to help with group teaching, e.g. Tag Rugby Coach, FAI Soccer Coach

5. Children with different needs

(See Appendix -2)

- Teachers will endeavour to support and ensure the participation of children with special needs by planning to include all children in PE activities. This will mean we have to focus on the abilities of each child. We will refer to the Guidelines for Teachers of Students with General Learning Difficulties produced by the NCCA if deemed necessary.
- 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 also plan to include children who may have physical disabilities by planning to include them in all PE activities and by adapting the activities as necessary.
- Children with exceptional 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 forging links with local clubs (if links have not been established already) so the child(ren) 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 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.

6. Equality of participation and access

- In planning for PE we are going to pay attention to the following areas in order to promote gender equity throughout the physical education curriculum.
 - All children from infants to sixth class will partake in all six 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.
- We will take into account the needs of girls and boys when promoting the health related fitness of children.
- Every child will have access to all PE activities provided by the school and lack of financial resources on behalf of the child will not hinder their participation.
 - “In line with Department of Education and Science recommendations, it is the policy of St. Eunan’s N.S. not to charge for in-school curricular activities.” However, when organising the aquatics strand, this school is unable to meet the full cost of running an adequate aquatics programme. As a result, the B.O.M. has given permission to charge a nominal fee to each child.

7. Linkage and integration

Linkage:

- Linkage can take place between many of the strands in physical education e.g. Running in both Athletics and Games, Confidence and competence in the water in Aquatics and Water-based Outdoor Activities.

Integration:

- Theme based activities may be used to support integration
 - Subject-specific
 - Gaeilge in usáid sna ceachtanna, m.sh. Ordaithe agus teoracha
 - Geography – Map work in Orienteering
 - Music – responding to music in Dance and Gymnastics
 - SPHE- e.g Safety and Hygiene
 - ICT – see section 10 of this plan
 - Language - The effective use of questioning from the teacher will develop the vocabulary associated with PE. Allowing the children to analyse their own performance will allow them understand and appreciate the activities of PE better and thus physically educate themselves in a more meaningful way.

Organisational Planning:

8. Timetable

- In this school each class will have one session of PE each week – each session will last one hour

Discretionary curriculum time ‘affords the teacher and the school the flexibility to accommodate different school needs and circumstances and to provide for the differing aptitudes and abilities of the children it serves. It can be allocated, at the teacher’s and at the school’s discretion, to any of the six curriculum areas¹⁰ – PE being one of the curricular areas.

- Our year grid is attached to the school plan as Appendix 3 and forms part of each teacher’s yearly scheme.

This school will use part of its discretionary time for the pool-based activities undertaken to facilitate the Aquatics programme in the school - in order to cover the time travelling to and from the pool.

- The school organises an Active Schools Week in term 3 (Sports Day is held during this week) where children engage in a wide variety of PE activities with an emphasis on enjoyment, fun and participation. Members of any given team will be drawn from across all class levels to promote whole-school spirit and co-operation.

9. Code of ethics

In line with our school’s Child Protection Policy based on the Department of Education and Science guidelines accompanying the ‘Children First’ guidelines, School SPHE plan, and the Irish Sports Council Code of Ethics, Good Practice for Children’s Sport document the following will apply.

- If coaches from a local or a national sporting organisation are invited into the school to work with the children as part of their PE class, they will be used to support the class teacher in the implementation of some of the PE curriculum strands in the school. They will not replace the class teacher and ultimate responsibility for the class lies with the class teacher. The class teacher will in turn support the coach on certain occasions when this will lead to maximum benefit for the children in the class.
- 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

¹⁰ Introduction to the Primary School Curriculum, page 68

sexual abuse of any kind or threat of such abuse is totally unacceptable within sport, as in society in general'¹¹

10. PE equipment and ICT

- Our school has a detailed inventory of equipment and resources available for PE. This list is attached as appendix 4.
- ICT** (Refer to p. 101 Teacher Guidelines)
- In order to ensure a PE rich environment the use of the school's digital camera will be vital in recording PE activities. The display of these pictures in the school will give an opportunity to children to see themselves and others in action.
 - All internet usage follows the strict guidelines laid down by the school in our Internet Usage Policy. This covers the use of appropriate software and the access to safe websites. Teachers will visit websites prior to children being referred to them.
 - The effective use of ICT will create opportunities for pupils to discuss and talk about their own and others' performance in PE.
 - We can endeavour to use ICT effectively to develop other strands of the PE Curriculum in our school through the use of
 - ✓ Digital camera,
 - ✓ Map software such as googleearth.com
 - ✓ Educational software
 - ✓ Internet resources

11. Health and safety

In keeping with our school health & safety policy, issues in a PE context including warm-up at the start of all physical activity, practising in confined spaces, use of equipment, accidents, supervision, activities involving the whole school yard have been considered and procedures for dealing with accidents have been established. 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 have to wear suitable footwear and clothing during a PE lesson. Children will be encouraged not to wear jewellery 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 and carry 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.

¹¹ Page 9, Section 1.3, Code of ethics in Irish Sport, Irish Sports Council

- Running activities will not finish at a wall or pole
- 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

The First Aid Kit is kept in the hygiene room and is restocked when necessary with items. The medical conditions of all children are detailed by their parents/guardians on the school enrolment form. Teachers will only treat a child according to the school Health & Safety Policy. Their parents/guardians will be contacted and in the event of an emergency, an ambulance/doctor will be called.

12. Individual teachers' planning and reporting

The whole school plan and the curriculum documents for PE will inform the teacher in their long and short term planning. As our main resource for lesson planning we will use the PSSI materials.

For now, teachers will plan based on the strands as outlined on the yearly timetable in appendix 3.

13. Staff development

Staff have access to resource materials (eg Action for Life) and websites dealing with PE (eg. www.pfds.ie and www.irishprimarype.com)

The school will access the PPDS Cuiditheóir service and inform the Cuiditheóir of our curricular priorities in relation to PE.

The staff members keep themselves informed about PE related training courses organised by the Education Centre and National Governing Bodies.

Staff have attended the PE In-service training seminars.

Staff have received Buntús training through the Donegal Sports Partnership.

Teachers can benefit from their interaction with the local sports coaches e.g. G.A.A. who provide coaching in the locality. Any coaches invited into the school will be there to support the teacher with a view to promoting good practice.

14. Parental involvement

We will ask all parents to support and encourage their children to participate in all strands of the PE curriculum.

We will ask parents with recognised areas of expertise in the area of PE and/or Sport to support us in our efforts if their talents will be of benefit.

In order to implement swimming lessons and to partake in school sport, we may need the assistance of parents in a supervisory capacity helping with supervision.

As with any curricular plan in the school, parents can view it in the office.

15. Community links

We are very much aware of the school's role in the community and we are also conscious of the fact that the expertise of people in the community is an invaluable resource to any school.

Children are encouraged through school to participate in out-of-school sports activities and the staff will inform them of any relevant notices which come to the school from local clubs.

If a **local team or individual** has had a notable victory, they may be invited in to the school to share the victory with the local children e.g. Niamh Brid, The Four Masters, County Donegal Team after winning the Sam Maguire etc.

16. Plan Implementation

Teachers' preparation will be based on this plan and the planning of individual teachers will feed into the overall school plan. Therefore, the school plan is reviewed on a regular basis.

There should be clear progression as children move from class to class.

Success criteria

The following will be indicators of the successful implementation of this plan:

- Children enjoying their P.E. lessons
- 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

Means of assessing the outcomes of the plan may include;

- Teacher/parent/community feedback
- Children's feedback regarding the activity level, enjoyment and skill development of the classes

- Inspectors' suggestions/report
 - Second level feedback
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Ratification and Review

Parents can view the plan in the school office as required. It will be reviewed on an ongoing basis or as the need arises.

Appendix 2

POTENTIAL AREAS OF DIFFICULTY FOR STUDENTS WITH MILD GENERAL LEARNING DISABILITIES¹²

Potential area of difficulty	Implications for learning	Possible strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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).

¹² Page 19, NCCA Draft Guidelines, Book 3 – for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Disabilities

General Adaptation Suggestions – Physical Disability¹³

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)

Boundary/Playing Field:

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

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, color)
- Allow travelling
- Allow two hand dribble
- Use larger/lower basket
- Slow the pace, especially when first learning
- If student uses wheelchair, allow him to hold ball on his lap while pushing wheelchair
- Use beeper ball, radio under basket for individual with visual impairment

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

Actions:

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

Bowling

- Simplify/reduce the number of steps
- Use two hands instead of one
- Remain in stationary position
- Use a ramp
- Use a partner
- Give continuous verbal cues

¹³ Based on: <http://www.pecentral.org/adapted/adaptedactivities.html>

Soccer

Use walking instead of running

Have well defined boundaries

Reduce playing area

If student uses a wheelchair, allow him to hold ball on his lap while pushing the wheelchair

Use a deflated ball, beeper ball, brightly colored ball

Use a target that makes noise when hit

Volleyball

Use larger, lighter, softer, bright colored balls

Allow players to catch ball instead of volleying

Allow student to self toss and set ball

Lower the net

Reduce the playing court

Stand closer to net on serve

Allow ball to bounce first

Hold ball and have student hit it

Tennis

Use larger, lighter balls

Use shorter, lighter racquets

Use larger head racquets

Slow down the ball

Lower the net or do not use a net

Use brightly colored balls

Hit ball off tee

Allow a drop serve

Stand closer to net on serve

Do not use service court

Use a peer for assistance

Appendix 3

TIMETABLE

September-October	November-December	January-March	April-June
Games	Dance	Gymnastics	Games
Athletics	Gymnastics	Dance	Outdoor and Adventure activities
		Games Active School Week	Athletics
Sample plan of work for PE for infant classes			

September-October	November-December	January-March	April-June
Games	Dance	Aquatics	Games
Athletics	Gymnastics	Gymnastics	Athletics
		Dance/Games Active School Week	Outdoor and Adventure activities
Sample plan of work for PE for first to sixth classes			

Note: The above timetable may vary from year to year depending on local events and pool availability.