



Introductory Statement and Rationale

(a) Introductory Statement

The PE plan for Feakle NS was formulated in consultation with the staff and brought to the attention of the Board of Management for adoption.

(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. *We aim to provide these learning opportunities to the children in our school to maximise active learning experiences and approaches to the benefit of each individual child.*

Vision and Aims

(a) Vision

We seek to assist the children in our school in achieving their potential through the opportunities they receive to physically educate themselves through the strands of the PE curriculum and to promote physical activity throughout 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
- 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.

1. Strands and strand units

¹ Page 2, PE Curriculum, 1999

² Page 10, PE Curriculum, 1999

³ Pages 11,12, PE Curriculum, 1999



- 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**
- **Teachers are aware that they may use the [Link to PE Curriculum Progression document](#)**
 - The school will also use the PE lesson plans prepared by the Primary School Sports Initiative.

- Teachers will choose a range of activities for all strands for each class. Where possible, children will have access to the following six strands each year – Athletics, Dance, Gymnastics, Games, Outdoor and Adventure Activities and Aquatics.

We will endeavour to create a PE rich environment in the school: We have an inventory of PE equipment which is kept in a central location in the school.

- We will ensure there is continuity and progression from class to class by:
 - *Developing appropriate warm-up activities for indoor and outdoor work at each level – with strand specific mobility, strengthening and flexibility exercises appropriate to each class level.*
 - *We will record the content covered at each level which will briefly detail the level of engagement with each strand (Cúntas Míosúil)*

2. [Approaches and methodologies](#)

- We will use a combination of the following approaches:
 - Direct teaching approach⁴
 - Guided discovery approach⁵
 - Integration⁶
 - Fundamental Skills

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

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



Structure of a PE lesson:

Warm Up

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

Station teaching will 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 hall/play area into Grids to allow for small group activity and yet all children will be involved

Cool Down

3. Assessment and record keeping

The teachers in the school constantly assess in the PE lessons delivered as we identify progress and difficulties by observing, listening, asking questions and giving feedback to pupils. This will ensure that on-going 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
 - 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

4. Children with different needs

- 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 Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with General Learning Difficulties produced by the NCCA.
- Fundamental Skills.



SAMPLE: POTENTIAL AREAS OF DIFFICULTY FOR STUDENTS WITH MILD GENERAL LEARNING DISABILITIES¹⁰

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

- We will 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.

Appendix



- 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.

5. Equality of participation and access

(Refer to school's Equality Policy)

- 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 to the best of their ability.*
 - *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 i.e. one particular group or class will not be allowed unlimited access to larger yard areas.*
 - *When grouping children for physical education the school will endeavour not to group children solely on the basis of gender whenever possible.*
 - *As a staff we will help children to build positive attitudes towards all activities.*
 - *We will take into account the needs of girls and boys when promoting the health related fitness of children.*
 - *We will enter both boys and girls teams in inter-school competitions and where necessary (if we have insufficient numbers) we will take the opportunity to enter mixed teams.*
- Identify provision required, as and where necessary, for inclusion of the following



- Children experiencing any form of disadvantage
- 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 Scoil Mhuire An Fhiacail not to charge for in-school curricular activities.” However, when organising the aquatics strand, this school is unable to meet the 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. 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.*

6. Linkage and integration

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

- Linkage and integration:
 - Linkage can take place within physical education in that many activities transcend strands and are of benefit to the child irrespective of the strands or subjects being covered. Within the content of the curriculum, footnotes below the strand units suggest where linkage and integration might take place in the PE class.
 - Linkage is inherent to the P.E. process. The teacher will consider how objectives can be achieved through linkage and integration.
 - Teachers are encouraged to integrate P.E. with other subjects. Integration is encouraged where it is natural and where children’s learning can be maximised. Where possible a thematic approach for integration is a model supported by the school. The school sees particular opportunities for integration with other subjects such as Gaeilge, English, Art, Music, Mathematics and especially SPHE

Organisational Planning:

7. Timetable

In this school the infant classes will have two sessions of PE each week – each session half hour in duration. All other classes will have one hour class of PE per weeks. All classes attend swimming between January and April; Fifth and Sixth attend for six weeks, third and fourth for five, first and second for five, and Junior and Senior Infants get four. Below is an example of the grid used for all classes.

The Games, Outdoor and Adventure activities and Athletics strands are done at a time when it is hoped the weather will be fine and will allow the PE lessons to be based outside.

September-October	November-	January-March	April-June
-------------------	-----------	---------------	------------



	December		
Games		Games	Games
Athletics	Gymnastics	Dance	Athletics- April and May
		Aquatics	Outdoor and Adventure activities-June

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 areas¹¹' – PE being one of the curricular areas.

This school will use its discretionary time for the weeks of 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.

8. Code of ethics

(Refer to school's Child Protection Policy based on the Department of Education and Science guidelines accompanying the 'Children First' guidelines.

Also refer to SPHE plan; Code of Ethics, Good Practice for Children's Sport)

- 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.
- All outside coaches must provide Garda vetting creditation.
- 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'¹²
- 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.

¹² Page 9, Section 1.3, Code of ethics in Irish Sport, Irish Sports Council



9. After school activities

After school activities that are offered in this school include Hurling and Camogie and Football. All children are welcome to attend after school clubs. These clubs are run by members of the local GAA club. There may be training in GAA and athletics.

School Activities and Competitions

Cumann na mBunscoil Hurling and Camogie and Football.

INTO Mini Sevens

Indoor Camogie and Hurling Competitions organised by Cumann na mBunscoil

Local cross country competitions

10. PE equipment and ICT

- *(Refer to pp. 104-105 Teacher Guidelines)*
- *Our school has a detailed inventory of equipment and resources available for PE. This list is compiled by the post holder and is checked and updated at the beginning of each school year.*
- *It is stored in a room/store in the hall. Any breakages have to be reported to the post holder as soon as possible. Each teacher will be given a copy of the equipment list and will be informed of any changes to it throughout the year.*
- *The Principal and the staff will have the responsibility to purchase the PE equipment for the school and to apply for equipment from different organisations who give free equipment to schools (Buntús Packs available in Local Sports Partnerships in sixteen regions, Catch and Kick, FAI etc.)*
- *The BOM, on the recommendation of the Principal (informed by the PE post-holder) will sanction a budget for updating of PE equipment annually - subject to funds being available. At present, there is a dedicated PE grant. The Principal will also request, on occasion, additional funds from the Parents Association.*

11. Health and safety

(Refer to school's Health & Safety Policy)

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 have to wear suitable footwear and clothing during a PE lesson. Children will not be allowed wear any 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.*
- *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*
- *Children will not be forced to do activities they are not physically or mentally ready for.*

There will be at least one person on staff with a current First Aid qualification and the BOM will fund the course fees. The First Aid Kit is kept in the staffroom and is restocked regularly with items only recommended by First Aid personnel. A second portable kit is also available when children are participating in PE outside the school grounds. The medical conditions of all children are detailed by their parents/guardians on the school enrolment form. These are then transferred to a central file and any cases teachers need to be vigilant of are also kept in a separate book in the staffroom in order that the teachers have immediate access to information on the conditions and resulting procedures to be followed. Teachers will not treat a child unless it will make the difference between life and death. Their parents/guardians will be contacted and if necessary, their family doctor as outlined on the aforementioned enrolment form. Detailed leaflets are made available to all staff on specific conditions such as asthma, diabetes and allergic reactions etc.

12. Individual teachers' planning and reporting

The whole school plan and the curriculum documents for PE will lay out the structure and format that teachers will follow in addition to the aims and objectives of the primary school curriculum. While these documents are vital for planning, it is important that teachers do not rely on them exclusively as it is necessary to adapt the PE plan to your own class level and experience. It is vital that all teachers plan individually while at the same time ensuring that their class plans co-ordinate and feed into the overall school plan.

The Cuntas Miosuil will be very relevant in reviewing and developing the school plan for the following years. Once the individual cuntas miosuil have been evaluated it should be obvious to the staff which elements of the curriculum were being implemented.

13. Parental involvement

(Refer to Primary School Curriculum, Your child's learning, Guidelines for Parents)



. 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. We will encourage sporting endeavour at all times.

In order to implement swimming lessons and to partake in school sport, we may need the assistance of parents in a supervisory capacity, transporting children to sporting events and helping with supervision. As with any curricular plan in the school, parents can inspect it in the office.

14. 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.

The school will develop/maintain links with a variety of local sporting clubs?

We will also make reference to famous sports people from our community and invite suitable people into the school to talk to the children as long as the content is in keeping with the sentiments of the curriculum. If a **local team or individual** has had a notable victory, they will be invited in to the school to share the victory with the local children.

How will we know that the plan has been implemented?

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 needs to be reviewed on a regular basis.

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

Success criteria

- The importance of enjoyment and play
- Maximum participation by all children
- The development of skills and understanding
- A balance between competitive and non-competitive activities
- A balance between contact and non-contact activities
- Providing opportunities for achievement for each child
- Providing activities equally suitable for boys and girls.

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



- Second level feedback

Implementation

(a) Roles and Responsibilities

The school staff will co-ordinate the progress of the plan, encourage and accept feedback on its implementation and report to staff on findings

The plan will be monitored and evaluated as the school year nears an end and we can reflect meaningfully on how well the PE programme has been taught and received in the school. The following will be consulted in appraising the PE plan

- Teachers
- Pupils
- Parents
- Post holders
- BOM/DES Inspectorate

Ratification and Communication

The PE plan has been ratified by the Board of Management on and parents can inspect the plan in the school office.

Signed:

Phil Canny. Chairperson