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# PHYSICAL EDUCATION POLICY (P.E.)

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## Contents

1. Introductory Statement .....	4
2. Rationale .....	4
3. Vision .....	4
4. Aims .....	4
5. Development of Physical Literacy (Move Well, Move Often, PDST, 2017) .....	5
6. Broad objectives .....	6
Social and personal development .....	6
Physical and motor development.....	6
Knowledge and understanding .....	7
Creative and aesthetic development.....	7
Development of health-related fitness.....	7
Development of safety .....	8
7. Strands and Strand Units .....	8
9. Approaches and Methodologies .....	9
a) Direct-teaching approach.....	10
Direct instruction is the use of straightforward, explicit teaching techniques, usually to teach a specific skill. It is a teacher-directed method, meaning that the teacher stands in front of a classroom and presents the information. ....	10
b) Guided-discovery approach .....	10
c) Integration.....	10
10. Structure of a PE lesson .....	11
11. Assessment and Record Keeping.....	11
12. Differentiation .....	12
13. Children with Different Needs.....	12
14. Organisational Planning .....	13
15. Code of Ethics .....	14
16. Coaching.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

18.	PE facilities & equipment .....	15
19.	ICT .....	16
20.	Health and Safety.....	16
21.	Staff Development.....	16
22.	Parental Involvement.....	17
23.	Community Links .....	17
24.	Related Policies.....	17
25.	Success Criteria.....	17
26.	Implementation .....	18
27.	Review.....	18
28.	Ratification and Communication .....	18

## **1. Introductory Statement**

This Physical Education policy for Our Lady of Lourdes N.S. was formulated by the Principal, Deputy Principal and staff. It was reviewed in 2022 and has been ratified by the Board of Management. It is informed by the PE curriculum statements and the experience and expertise of the staff. This plan is a statement of the aims and objectives, principles and strategies for the implementation of the PE programme in Our Lady of Lourdes N.S.

## **2. 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. 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 Board of Management.

## **3. Vision**

We envisage that through PE, children will be given the opportunity to develop their physical literacy to its full potential, appropriate to their age and ability, in a safe and supportive environment. The PE vision is to promote enjoyment of and participation in various forms of physical activity. 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, inclusive and differentiated programme of physical activities.

## **4. Aims**

We endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for PE as follows;

- 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 fundamental movement skills (FMS) 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.

## 5. Development of Physical Literacy (Move Well, Move Often, Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST), 2017)

Physical literacy is the underlying goal of all physical activity. Physical literacy addresses the whole child and respects each pupil as an individual.

- The physically literate child can be described as having the motivation, confidence, movement competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take part in physical activity throughout their personal lifelong journey.
- Physical literacy includes four essential and interconnected elements whose relative importance may change throughout life. Physical Literacy gives pupils the tools they need to take part in physical activity and sport, both for healthy life-long enjoyment and for sporting success.
- Research shows that being physically active later in life depends on feeling confident in an activity setting; and that confidence, as an adult, most often comes from having learned fundamental movement

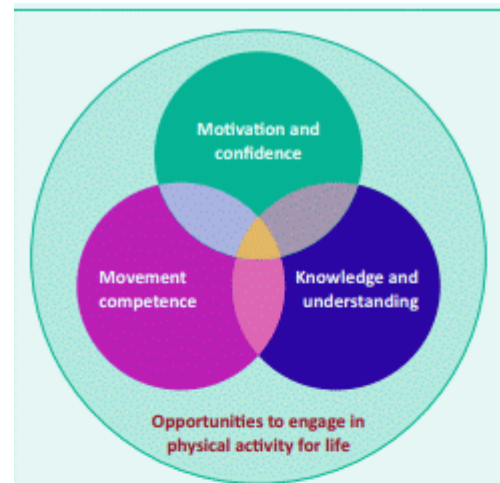


Figure 1: The Four Domains of Physical Literacy

**Movement Competence** (Physical) refers to an individual's ability to develop movement skills and patterns, and the capacity to experience a variety of movement intensities and durations. Enhanced movement competence enables an individual to participate in a wide range of physical activities and settings.

**Motivation and Confidence** (Affective) refers to an individual's enthusiasm for, enjoyment of, and self-assurance in adopting physical activity as an integral part of life.

**Knowledge and Understanding** (Cognitive) includes the ability to identify and express the essential qualities that influence movement, understand the health benefits of an active lifestyle, and appreciate appropriate safety features associated with physical activity in a variety of settings and physical environments.

**Opportunities to Engage in Physical Activities for Life** (Behavioural) refers to an individual taking personal responsibility for physical literacy by freely choosing to be active on a regular basis. This involves prioritising and sustaining involvement in a range of meaningful and personally challenging activities, as an integral part of one's lifestyle.<sup>3</sup>

and sports skills as a child. This is important because physical inactivity has been identified as the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality causing an estimated 6% of deaths globally (WHO, 2010).

## **6. Broad objectives**

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

### **Social and personal development**

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

### **Physical and motor development**

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

### **Knowledge and understanding**

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

### **Creative and aesthetic development**

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

### **Development of health-related fitness**

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

## Development of safety

- adopt safe practices in all physical activities.

## 7. 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 children will experience all six strands in each year.

## 8. Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS)

FMS will be taught developmentally across the school, guided by the Move Well, Move Often: PDST publications. Two teachers have completed training in Fundamental Movement Skills in association with Limerick Sport partnership.

The following are the FMS that will be taught

<b>Locomotor</b>	<b>Stability</b>	<b>Manipulative</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Walking</li><li>• Running</li><li>• Hopping</li><li>• Skipping</li><li>• Jumping (height)</li><li>• Jumping (distance)</li><li>• Dodging</li><li>• Side stepping</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Balancing</li><li>• Landing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Catching</li><li>• Throwing</li><li>• Kicking</li><li>• Striking with the hand</li><li>• Striking with an implement</li></ul>



Fundamental Movement Skill		Physical Education Strand					
		Athletics	Games	Dance	Aquatics	Outdoor & Adventure	Gymnastics
Locomotor	Walking	✓		✓		✓	
	Running	✓	✓			✓	
	Hopping	✓		✓			✓
	Skipping	✓		✓			✓
	Jumping (height)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Jumping (distance)	✓	✓	✓			✓
	Dodging		✓				
	Side stepping		✓				
Stability	Balancing		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Landing	✓	✓	✓			✓
Manipulative	Catching		✓				✓
	Throwing	✓	✓				✓
	Kicking		✓		✓		
	Striking with the hand		✓				
	Striking with an implement		✓				

## 9. Approaches and Methodologies

The teaching approaches we will use for teaching PE are as follows;

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

#### a) Direct-teaching approach

Direct instruction is the use of straightforward, explicit teaching techniques, usually to teach a specific skill. It is a teacher-directed method, meaning that the teacher stands in front of a classroom and presents the information.

#### b) 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.

#### c) 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 Gaelige, English, visual arts, music, mathematics and especially Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE). 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

- 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.

## **10. Structure of a PE lesson**

Most of our lessons will follow the following format:

- 1) Warm up
- 2) Introduction of the FMS
- 3) Main activity
- 4) Review of the FMS
- 5) Review main activity
- 6) Warm down

## **11. Assessment and Record Keeping**

Various forms of assessment are used by the teacher in our school to ensure that on-going achievements are recognised, areas of learning difficulty are identified and the progress of each child is recorded. The teachers in the school constantly assess in the PE lessons by observing, listening, asking questions and giving feedback to pupils. 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.

Teachers will assess the pupils

- 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
- Checklists
- Teacher-designed tasks

## **12. Differentiation**

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.

## **13. Children with Different Needs**

Our school's vision encourages an inclusive PE programme for children of all abilities, needs and levels. The children with special needs will experience the enjoyment of participation and progression through the various stages of the PE programme according to their ability. The SNA's will provide assistance to the children if necessary. The teacher will encourage maximum participation in the PE lesson and provide the children with the opportunity to benefit from a balanced PE programme. A safe and secure environment will be provided for PE that is appropriate to children with special needs. The selected PE tasks and activities will be designed

so that they are appropriate for the children and allow for inclusion within the PE lesson. Specialist advice may be sought (e.g. O.T., physio) to identify such appropriate activities. If necessary, teachers will be encouraged to refer to appropriate resources and/ or to seek the advice of specialists when planning PE activities for children with special needs. We link with the Sports Inclusion Officer with Limerick Sports partnership for CPD courses and new resources.

## 14. Organisational Planning

One hour per week has been allocated as the minimum time allotted for PE. Teachers may allocate two half hour periods as this provides the children with an opportunity to be active on two occasions in the week. At the teacher's discretion, a portion of a teacher's discretionary time may be allocated to PE.

Even years- e.g. Sept 2022

September	October	November	December	January
<b>Strand:</b> Games <b>FMS:</b> Running	<b>Strand:</b> Athletics <b>FMS:</b> Skipping	<b>Strand:</b> Games <b>FMS:</b> Throwing	<b>Strand:</b> Dance	<b>Strand:</b> Gymnastics <b>FMS:</b> Jumping for distance
February	March	April	May	June
<b>Strand:</b> Gymnastics <b>FMS:</b> Balancing	<b>Strand:</b> Dance <b>FMS:</b> Walking	<b>Strand:</b> Games: <b>FMS:</b> Kicking	<b>Strand:</b> Games:	Active Week <b>Strand:</b> Outdoor adventures and activities
Aquatics 1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> class 6 weeks (January -June)				

Odd years - . E.g., Sept 2023

September	October	November	December	January
<b>Strand:</b> Games <b>FMS:</b> Dodging	<b>Strand:</b> Athletics <b>FMS:</b> Side stepping	<b>Strand:</b> Games <b>FMS:</b> Catching	<b>Strand:</b> Dance	<b>Strand:</b> Gymnastics <b>FMS:</b> Hopping
February	March	April	May	June
<b>Strand:</b> Gymnastics <b>FMS:</b> Landing	<b>Strand:</b> Dance <b>FMS:</b> Jumping for height	<b>Strand:</b> Games: <b>FMS:</b> Striking with the hand	<b>Strand:</b> Games: <b>FMS:</b> Striking with an implement	Active Week <b>Strand:</b> Outdoor adventures and activities
Aquatics 1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> class 6 weeks (January - June)				

The above is a guide to the planning and teaching of P.E. in our school.

Discretionary curriculum time affords the teacher and the school the flexibility to accommodate different school needs and circumstances and to provide for differing aptitudes and abilities of the children in our school. It will be allocated at the teacher's and the school's discretion to the PE curriculum.

In line with Department of Education and Science recommendations, it is policy of our school not to charge for in-school activities. There will be a nominal fee to each child for swimming lessons.

## 15. Code of Ethics

All teachers and coaches who work with the pupils will be given a copy of our Child Safeguarding statement. Coaches/Instructors must provide a Vetting disclosure certificate to the Principal prior to commencement of any activities with the children in our school.

## **16. Coaching**

Every year our school welcomes coaches from the GAA, the FAI and Basketball Ireland for a six-week period.

## **17. Active Flag**

During the school year 2021-2022 Our Lady of Lourdes NS hope to achieve its first Active School Flag. Various initiatives are run in the school as part of the Active School Flag programme. These include

- The great Walkway challenges
- Active breaks
- Playground leaders
- Active School Week which includes Sports day, Taster sessions in Outdoor activities, obstacles courses, games etc.

In conjunction with Limerick Sports Partnership the school takes part in the Sports Hall Athletic initiative with competitions held in March in the UL Sports Arena and the Marathon Kids programme in February for Fifth and Sixth class.

## **18. PE facilities & equipment**

Facilities:

Our Lady of Lourdes N.S has an indoor hall, an outdoor concreted area, playground soft-surface area and grass area. We use the Bawnmore Swimming pool for our swimming classes.

PE Equipment:

Large PE equipment is kept at the back of the school hall. Small equipment is stored in cupboards at the back of the hall. PE planning resources are shared on Aladdin.

## **19. ICT**

ICT can be used to supplement and research specific areas within the PE curriculum. The internet can be used to source information to extend the children's knowledge and appreciation for activities which they are experiencing in PE lessons e.g. pdst.ie.

## **20. Health and Safety**

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 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.
- 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

First Aid Kits are located in the school office beside the hall.

## **21. Staff Development**

Teachers will be made aware of in-service course in the Limerick Education centre, Mary Immaculate College of Education and in other venues. Time will be allocated at staff meetings to discuss any aspects of the PE plan/ policy/ curriculum. All teachers and classes have access to websites, reference books, and resource materials such as the Move Well, Move Often PDST publication 2017.



## **22. Parental Involvement**

Parents have a responsibility to support and encourage their children to participate in all strands of the curriculum. Parents are encouraged to enrol their children in local sports club through the dissemination of club information within the school.

## **23. Community Links**

The school constantly encourages pupils to become involved in sports and recreation clubs within the wider community and promotes active lifestyles outside of school. Contact details for local organisations are posted on our website for parents to access.

## **24. Related Policies**

- Healthy Eating Policy: The school acknowledges the link between physical fitness, nutrition and the food choices that children and parents make. We implement a positive healthy eating policy which encourages a balanced diet.
- SPHE Policy
- Wellbeing Policy Statement/Plan

## **25. Success Criteria**

The criteria for evaluating the success of our PE policy 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.

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.

## **26. Implementation**

The class teachers will be responsible for the implementation of the PE curriculum/ programme in their classes. This will be supported by the Principal, Special Educational Needs (S.E.N.) teachers, Special Needs Assistants (S.N.A.’s) and the Board of Management of the school.

## **27. Review**

It will be necessary to review this PE plan/ policy on a regular basis to ensure its’ implementation in our school. This plan will be reviewed in 2019 and every two years thereafter.

## **28. Ratification and Communication**

This PE plan was communicated to and ratified by the Board of Management of Our Lady of Lourdes N.S. at its meeting

held on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson, Board of Management