**Kilmacthomas Primary School**

**Physical Education Policy**

**Introductory statement**

This plan for the teaching of physical education in Kilmacthomas Primary School was compiled in consultation with all teaching staff in September 2020.

**Rationale**

Physical Education provides children with learning opportunities through the medium of movement and contributes positively to their overall development by helping them to lead full, active and healthy lives. We aim to provide optimum learning opportunities for the children in our school by maximising active learning experiences and approaches which benefit each individual child. In addition, Physical education explicitly teaches the necessary knowledge and skills for working with and relating to others, and provides the learning opportunities to develop these skills. It enables the development of leadership and teamwork skills and encourages students to transfer knowledge to other learning areas.

**Vision**

Physical Education is distinguished from other curricular areas by its primary focus on the body and on physical experience and is an integral part of the educational process, without which the education of the child is incomplete. In Kilmacthomas Primary School, we have a vision to implement a diverse range of experiences that provide regular, challenging physical activity for the balance and harmonious development and general well-being of every child within our school community. Through our physical education programme, our children can experience the joy of physical exertion and the satisfaction of achievement while developing skills and positive attitudes that enhance self-esteem.

Physical education provides opportunities to develop desirable personal and social attributes: the concept of fair play, the acceptance of success and failure, and the ability to co-operate in group situations. These opportunities contribute to the understanding and promotion of a healthy life-style. Physical education, as an integral part of the total curriculum, provides vital opportunities for the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of the children in our school.

We aim to provide Physical Education opportunities which meet the physical needs of each child and their need for movement experiences, challenges and play. We aim to lay strong foundations for the children’s physical literacy by explicitly teaching our students fundamental movement skills. We strive to build a desire for daily physical activity in all of the children so that they will be motivated towards participation in physical activities in adult life. To fulfil these needs, our Physical Education programme is built on the principles of variety and diversity. We aim to provide a wide variety of movement activities (including locomotor, stability and manipulative fundamental movement skills) appropriate to the level of development of each individual child.

**Aims**

We endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for Physical Education

* 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.

**Strands and strand units**

Teachers in Kilmacthomas PS are familiar with the strands/strand units/content objectives for the relevant class level according to the curriculum. Teachers choose a range of activities from all strands for each class. As the children progress through the school, they will experience opportunities to refine and develop their skills, abilities, knowledge and appreciation in each strand.

All staff members will endeavour to ensure continuity, progression and consistency from class to class by following the recommendations in the curriculum. Where appropriate, the Special Education teacher may assist in P.E. lessons.

The content for each band can be found on the following pages of the curriculum.

o Infant classes pp. 16-23

o First and Second classes pp. 24-34

o Third and Fourth classes pp. 38-46

o Fifth and Sixth classes pp. 48-59

o Aquatics: Junior Infants-Sixth pp.62-64

The strands across the P.E. Curriculum for all classes are: Athletics Dance Gymnastics Games Outdoor and Adventure activities, and Aquatics. These strands are further divided into strand units:

**Athletics** - Running Jumping Throwing Understanding and appreciation of athletics

**Dance** - Exploration, creation and performance of dance, understanding and appreciation of dance

**Gymnastics** – Movement, understanding and appreciation of gymnastics

**Games** - Sending, receiving and travelling, creating and playing games, understanding and appreciation of games

**Outdoor & Adventure Activities Adventure** - Orienteering Activities, Outdoor challenges, Understanding and appreciation of outdoor and adventure activities

**Aquatics** – Hygiene, Water safety, Entry to and exit from the water, Buoyancy and propulsion, Stroke development, Water-based ball games, Understanding and appreciation of aquatics.

**Developing the Physically Literate pupil in Physical Education**

We use the Move Well, Move Often resource to support the teaching of Physical Literacy in Kilmacthomas Primary School. 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: Movement Competence, Motivation and Confidence, Knowledge and Understanding, and Opportunities to engage in physical activity for life.

Physical Literacy gives pupils the tools they need to take part in physical activity and sport, both for healthy lifelong enjoyment and for sporting success. To become physically literate, pupils need to master fundamental movement skills (FMS) through a series of developmental stages. FMS are the basic building blocks of movement and are an essential part of everyday life and recreational activity. It is only when these skills are mastered that a child can go on to develop specialised movement skills, which will allow them to reach their potential in sports-specific endeavours.

**Fundamental movement skills**



In Kilmacthomas Primary School, we recognise that it is important to teach a balanced range of locomotor, stability and manipulative skills across the strands during the year. Our whole school plan for PE reflects this approach.

**Resources for Teaching Physical Education**

Teachers in Kilmacthomas Primary School will utilise the following core resources to support planning for and teaching a broad and balanced programme of Physical Education:



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**The role of the teacher is to:**

* Help each child to develop a positive self-image and sense of fair play and cooperate with others
* Ensure that the child experiences a variety of vigorous and challenging activities
* Foster a stimulating and secure environment in which the child can be creative and imaginative
* Link physical education activities with other curricular areas when appropriate
* Evaluate the programme and assess the progress of each child
* Provide information to parents, in line with school policy, about the class programme for physical education
* Have due regard for safety by ensuring that each child adopts safe practices
* Teachers will devise a balanced programme in line with this plan which meets the needs of each child in their class
* Where possible, children will have experience the following five strands each year through the focus point of a fundamental movement skill – Athletics, Dance, Gymnastics, Games, Outdoor and Adventure Activities. Aquatics will be provided for a six-week block for all classes each year

**Continuity and Progression**

**Teachers will ensure there is continuity and progression from class to class by**

* Utilising appropriate warm-up activities relative to each class level.
* Following the structure of the PSSI lesson plans.
* Recording the content covered at each level in each strand (Cúntas Míosúil)

**Approaches and Methodologies**

Teachers will use a combination of the following teaching approaches:

* Direct teaching approach
* Guided discovery approach
* Integration
* Teachers will use methodologies that encourage maximum participation by the child such as individual, pair, group and team work, station teaching or using a play area divided into grids.

**Children with Different Needs**

In Kilmacthomas Primary School we recognise that physical education is important in the curriculum for students with Special Educational Needs and disabilities. Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities depend on teachers to manage their learning and to provide support. In Kilmacthomas Primary School, inclusive P.E. ensures that all pupils experience a sense of belonging during the lesson. This includes feeling respected, valued for who you are, and feeling a level of supportive energy and commitment from others. It is important to create and encourage a positive environment and to provide pupils with opportunities to enjoy physical activity with others, so that they will, in the future, approach activity as a means of socialisation and integration in the community.

Many children with SEN experience difficulty with basic coordination, balance, left and right orientation, rhythm, and spatial and body awareness. These skills can be addressed and improved through physical education. As it is a practical subject, it is particularly suited to the learning styles of many students with general learning disabilities. Students who experience difficulties and frustration in academic areas of their school life can enjoy and acquire personal achievement and satisfaction in the physical education curriculum.

Physical education is a student-centred curriculum that challenges each student at his/her personal level. It is also a very sociable subject involving a high level of appreciation and acceptance of others. Physical education can enable students with general learning disabilities to acquire and enjoy many physical skills during their school life, and so widen the possibilities for recreation and socialization in their adult lives. It provides the student with an avenue to enjoy life and social interaction. All children will be encouraged to participate in all PE activities through the use of co-operative fun activities. We will provide 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. Teachers will endeavour to support and ensure the participation of children with Special Educational Needs and disabilities through an inclusive approach to planning for PE.

In order to make our PE curriculum inclusive and accessible, the following ideas may be considered when planning for inclusion of students with disabilities and Special Educational Needs:

-Skills, concepts and activities will need to be redefined and broken down into progressive stages to meet the varying abilities of these students.

-Learning expectations should be reasonable in meeting the balance between familiar and unfamiliar skills and activities.

-Realistic targets should be set, appropriate activities and equipment should be chosen, and sufficient time should be given to bridge the gap between applying familiar skills and learning and applying new skills and concepts.

-Positive reinforcement should be given frequently, the ability of the students should be emphasised, and appropriate activities should be provided in order to improve the self-esteem and confidence of these students.

**Exceptionally Able Children**

Children with exceptional ability or 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 progress 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.

**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
* Self-assessment
* Peer assessment

Assessment is used to provide information on individual children, assist the teacher in planning a programme and facilitates communication with other teachers, parents and other professionals. Assessment for learning to provide feedback to children, improve learning and inform practice Assessment of learning which helps to identify the milestones children reach and the progress they make to report to parents, other teachers and the children themselves.

The assessment criteria used for each activity forms part of class and school planning. Teachers will refer to the PDST teacher checklists, peer observation checklist and Individual Assessment Profiles from the Move Well Move Often website and resource pack. Assessment information is shared with parents at Parent Teacher meetings and in end-of-year school reports. The school will communicate home school link emails as well as take home activities and PE homework. If concerns are noted during the year parents may be contacted. Information is shared between teachers during the year as need arises and in particular in the case of formulating Individual Education Plans for children with special needs.

**Equality of Participation and Access**

1. We will endeavour to ensure that all children from infants to sixth class will partake in all six strands of the curriculum during their primary education. Aquatics will be provided for a six-week block for 2nd-6th class each year.
2. 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. Our yard is divided into sections for safety reasons. Each classroom has their own area on the yard and each class are given equipment to play basketball/soccer in the yard and field during break and lunch times.
3. When grouping children for physical education the school will endeavour not to group children solely on the basis of gender whenever possible.
4. As a staff we will help children to build positive attitudes towards all activities.
5. We will take into account the needs of girls and boys when promoting the health-related fitness of children.
6. 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.
7. We will endeavour to celebrate multiculturalism through PE whenever possible, e.g. through including a variety of different types of Folk Dance or Games from other countries, from time to time.
8. All children are encouraged to participate in school team sports. Selection of school teams are decided by the PE coordinator and teachers. While it is hoped that all children would get to participate, the management team will consider the following when selecting the team. This includes participation and interest shown at training sessions, level of ability and previous performances.
9. Large sporting events such as the Olympics, World Cup, Special Olympics etc will be used to look at the customs and sporting culture of some of the participating countries. However, at the same time the school will acknowledge the special place that Gaelic Games holds in our culture. Gaelic Games should be given particular consideration as part of the Games programme.
10. In Kilmacthomas Primary School, we have a strong partnership with Kilmacthomas GAA club and together we will provide training in football for 3rd – 6th class throughout the year. Competitions such for both boys and girls will be entered every year to promote Gaelic Games in our school.
11. We will provide for and include:
* 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.

**Code of Ethics**

* 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 should undergo Garda Vetting and 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.
* 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’ (2011) produced for all personnel working with children.

**PE Equipment and ICT**

* The equipment is stored in our PE room. Each teacher has the responsibility to ensure that all equipment is returned to the room after each lesson. Any breakages have to be reported to the post holder as soon as possible. The post holder will inspect the room once a month.
* The post holder in consultation with 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.
* The school will have a dedicated sports noticeboard and school website with a link where school and local sporting events will be advertised. The use of pictures and videos will be vital in recording PE activities. The display of these pictures on the sports noticeboard and school website will give an opportunity to children to see themselves and others in action.
* The use of ipads as a diagnostic tool for teacher is extremely valuable as children can view their own performances while still involved in a PE lesson. They can make immediate changes to the quality of their movements which in turn will enable them assess themselves in a more meaningful way. For example, this is particularly true when investigating the theme of balance in the gymnastics strand. Use will also be made of a digital video camera from time to time to enable children view their performance of certain activities in the PE classroom. The teachers will initiate discussion of same with the pupils and field any questions the child may have as to how the quality of their performance could be enhanced.

**Health and Safety (Refer to schools Health and 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.
* 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
* Children will not be forced to do activities they are not physically or psychologically ready for.
* There will be at least one person on staff with a current First Aid qualification.
* The First Aid Kit is kept in a press in the staff room 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 in the office and teachers are made aware of any cases of which they need to be vigilant.

* Their parents/guardians will be contacted in emergency situations and if necessary, their family doctor as outlined on the enrolment form. Detailed leaflets are made available to all staff on specific conditions such as asthma, diabetes and allergic reactions etc.

**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.

Teachers will plan based on the strands and the specific Fundamental Movement Skill as outlined on the yearly timetable. Teachers will select one/two teaching points each week to encourage fundamental movement skill proficiency based on the class level. External providers will be made aware of the FMS to enhance the children’s learning.

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

**Parental Involvement**

We will ask all parents to support 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 certain aspects of the PE curriculum and to partake in school sport, we may need the

assistance of parents in a supervisory capacity, transporting children to sporting events eg: GAA matches and Athletics and helping with supervision etc.

Support for PE homework is also encouraged.

**Community Links**

We are very much aware of the school’s role in the local community, and we are also conscious of the fact that the expertise of people in Kilmacthomas and the surrounding areas is an invaluable resource to any school. We link with the community whenever possible. 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. Also, when Waterford/Kilmacthomas are playing in the football and/or hurling Championship, we will hold a blue and white/blue day in celebration where children will be encouraged to dress up in their county/club colours colours.

The school will also be decorated with flags, bunting and children’s art work.

**Ratification and Communication**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ This plan will be communicated to all staff by email.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson of the Board of Management Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_