Physical Education Policy

Introductory Statement
This Physical Education policy for Ballaghlea N.S. was formulated by the Principal and staff after whole staff input and discussion.

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.

Vision
We envisage that through PE children will be given the opportunity to develop their physical skills and competencies to their full potential, appropriate to their age and ability in a safe and supportive environment. The planning and management of the PE curriculum in our school will always have the children as the focus of attention through the provision of a broad, balanced and differentiated programme of physical activities.

Aims
We endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for PE

- to promote the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development
- of the child
- to develop positive personal qualities
- to help in the acquisition of an appropriate range of movement skills in
- a variety of contexts
- to promote understanding and knowledge of the various aspects of
- movement
- to develop an appreciation of movement and the use of the body as an
- instrument of expression and creativity.

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.

- It was acknowledged that as a school we need to look more closely at the following areas:
    1. The 'Understanding and Appreciation' element of all strands
    2. Have a list of folk dances for each class (from Dancin' Time CD)

Junior & Senior Infants: *'A bird flew into the woods'*
'Skip to my

1st & 2nd Class: *'Shoe the Donkey'*
'German Clap Dance'
'An damhsa mór'

3rd & 4th Class: *'Walls of Limerick'*
'The shoemakers dance'
'Shoe the Donkey'

5th & 6th Class: *'Walls of Limerick'*
'Shoe the Donkey'
'German Clap Dance'

Approaches and Methodologies

Among the teaching approaches we will use for teaching PE are

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

Direct-teaching approach

The direct-teaching approach involves the teacher in telling or showing children what to do and in observing their progress. It allows for practice of skills within a games situation where the teacher decides on the nature of the practice and the time allocated to it or the number of repetitions.

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'.

Integration

The teacher should consider how objectives can be achieved through integration. Physical education has many objectives which are developed by other subjects such as Gaeilge, English, art, music, mathematics and especially social, personal and health education.

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

- Individual, pair, group and team play -younger children and special needs children will need more individual attention
- Station teaching -groups moving around different stations and having one teaching station

Structure of a PE lesson:
Most of our lessons will follow the following format:
Warm Up Main Activity Cool Down

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 ongoing achievements are recognised and areas of difficulty are identified. Children may be asked to self assess and peer assess where appropriate. Teachers report annually to parents at parent-teacher meetings and end of year reports. Any concerns about a child's progress in PE will be communicated to the principal and parents as necessary.

- We will assess
    - 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

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

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.

Children with Different Needs
The child with special needs will experience the enjoyment of participation and progression through the various stages of the PE programme according to his ability (often with the assistance of the SNA). A safe and secure environment will be provided for PE appropriate to the child with special needs. Specialist advice may be sought (e.g. OT) to identify the appropriate activities.

Equality of Participation and Access

- In planning for PE we will pay attention to the following areas in order to promote equality throughout the physical education curriculum.
    - All children from first 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 and the use of the playground during breaks will be incorporated as an integral part of the school's programme.
    - Special needs children will participate fully in our PE programme. Lessons and activities will be adapted to suit the needs and abilities of these children.

- Every child will have access to all PE activities provided by the school and lack of financial resources on behalf of the child will not hinder his participation.

Organisational Planning

Centre
As there is no hall facility at our school, all classes attend The Mattie McDonagh Centre, Ballygar on a rota basis for Term 1 and Term 2

Timetable
Tues: 9.30am - 10.30am 3rd / 4th class
(Week 1) 10.45am - 11.45am Junior & Senior Infants

Tues: 9.30am - 10.30am 5th / 6th class
(Week 2) 10.45am - 11.45am 1st / 2nd class

The Board of Management covers the cost of the centre rent and bus hire to the centre.

Swimming

The school has regard to both the physical and mental development of each of its pupils. Believing that a healthy body promotes a healthy mind, the school arranges for a 6 week course of swimming instruction in Roscommon swimming pool for students from 1st to 6th class during the school year.
Attendance at this course fulfils the Aquatics Module of the PE Curriculum as laid down by the Department of Education and parents defray the cost of the course and also that of the transport to and from the pool. If a parent is unable to do this, the board will offer to defray the cost for them.
Should a child be unable to attend the course, due to ill health or any other reason, he/she will travel with the class to the pool and remain under the supervision of the class teacher.
Pupils attending the course at any given time will be from sixth to first class. Two or three parents will be requested to accompany teachers and pupils to the pool to help with supervision.
All children attending the course should wear their tracksuit. (Swimming togs may be worn under tracksuits coming to school). Each child must have a suitable bag to carry his/her swimming gear.
All items brought to the pool must be clearly labelled with the child's name. This includes the bag, tracksuit, socks, underwear and shoes.
Each child must have their own togs, towel, hairbrush and swim cap, all of which must also be marked.
While in the pool, pupils must endeavour to obey the instructor's orders at all times and comply with the School Code of Conduct.
Teachers of all classes should remain on the viewing deck during the lesson in order to supervise the overall group and pupils who may need to use the toilets during the lesson.
The permission from parents to the school to let children go swimming is covered in the Annual Consent Form.

Roscommon swimming pool is used for the aquatics Strand. With the consent of the BOM a small fee is charged for swimming lessons. However no child will be denied access due to lack of financial resources.
From time to time we will endeavour to access water sports such as Canoeing through our school tours.

Playground Games

List of games that teachers teach as part of their P.E. lesson

Hurling & Football coach

The hurling coach Francis Lyons attends the school for 1 hr. weekly in the first and last term. 1st - 4th attend every week.

The football coach Frank Quinn attends the school once weekly in the first term. Children from 3rd - 6th class attend. The class Teacher remains with the class at all times.

Code of Ethics
All coaches who work with the pupils will be given a copy of our Child Protection Policy. Coaches/Instructors must provide a Garda Clearance certificate to the principal prior to commencement.

PE Equipment
List of PE equipment attached.

Facilities:
- School yard
- Grass areas
- Basketball court
- Access to Roscommon swimming pool
- Access to Mattie McDonagh Centre, Ballygar

Health and Safety
We have a school Health and Safety Policy which will be adhered to at all times in PE activities. Issues identified as being health and safety issues in a PE context include warm-up at the start of all physical activity, practising in confined spaces, use of equipment, accidents, supervision, activities involving the whole school yard, procedures for dealing with accidents …etc.
It is important to acknowledge from the beginning that while the following procedures will eliminate unnecessary hazards they cannot remove all risks due to the physical nature of the subject.

When engaging children in PE all members of staff will ensure that the following safety aspects will be taken into consideration:
- All children should wear suitable footwear and school P.E. uniform during a PE lesson (school hoody, navy tracksuit bottoms).
- 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. All accidents should be recorded in our Red Incident book which is located in the office.
- 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

The First Aid Kit is located in the Mattie McDonagh Centre store room and in each

classroom.

Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting
Teachers' preparation will be based on this plan and the planning of individual teachers will feed into the overall school plan.
Teachers will also be familiar with the content and methodologies outlined in the plan. There should be clear progression as children move from class to class.
Strands covered in PE each month are recorded on the Cuntas Miosúil. Short term planning is done on a fortnightly basis and describes how the objectives are met in the week-to-week delivery of the curriculum.

Staff Development
Staff will be encouraged to participate in in-service training. The Board of Management may fund these courses.

To date staff have engaged with the following initiatives:

- Buntús Programme
- Summer Courses.

Parental Involvement
Parents have a responsibility to support and encourage their children to participate in all strands of the curriculum. Sports Day which takes place in May/June each year. All parents are invited to attend and also are informed of all school matches.
The PE policy is available on line for parents to view.

Community Links
We encourage the children to take part in local sports activities and clubs and will always pass on information. We hope to pass on to the children that sport is for all and that there are many activities locally in which the children can take part e.g. swimming, athletics, soccer, Gaelic football and camogie hurling, horse riding, golf, badminton, dancing.

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. (informal)

Implementation

Roles and Responsibilities

Each teacher is responsible for implementing this policy with his/her own class. The PE coordinator, Eimear Mahony, will coordinate the progress of the policy, encourage and accept feedback on its implementation. All members of staff contributed to the formation of this document and it was completed and agreed upon during Croke Park hours in April and May 2013.

This plan will be reviewed in May 2015.

Ratification and Communication

This PE plan was ratified by the Board of Management on _____Oct 2017_____ and is available to parents on our school website or a copy can be viewed in the office.

Organisational Planning
Timetable

Sept/Oct	Nov/Dec	Jan/Feb
• Games • Dance	• Games • Dance	• Gymnastics • Out-door adventure
Mar/Apr	**May/Jun**	
• Gymnastics • Out-door adventure	• Swimming • Athletics	Linkage: All strands are taught termly through linkage

Folk and Creative Dance Plan

Resource	
Resources	1. P.E. Lesson Plans Y1, 3 2. Hurling & Camogie skills manual 3. Gaelic football skills manual 4. GAA code of best practice 5. Physical Education 7-9 6. Dance in Steps (with CD) 7. Irish Basketball teachers pack 8. Action for life Infants-2nd class 9. Basic Skills Series: Phys Ed Grade 3
Other Resources	Action for Life CD – Ceol do Chéilí PSSI CD and website www.ppds.ie Teachers refer to this for many of their lessons
Creative Dance	Each class should do 2 of the lessons outlined on the PSSI CD for PE

Appendix 1: List of playground games
Appendix 5: Inventory of PE equipment

Suggested List of Equipment for Physical Education

Suggested equipment for athletics and games

The ratio of equipment to each child is an important consideration. Where possible, for games lessons each child should have access to the striking implement being used e.g. a tennis racquet per child and a ball per child or per pair of children. Similarly, for throwing and catching practices, each child or pair of children should have a ball.

Some aspects of the athletics programme require little or no equipment, but to provide a comprehensive programme certain basic equipment is necessary:

- A variety of small and large balls may include
    - Tennis ball cores or tennis balls
    - Vinyl balls of varying sizes (115 to 255 mm diameter)
    - Lightweight size 5 balls (suitable for younger children and for volleying practices)
    - Midweight size 5 balls (suitable for throwing, catching, rolling and kicking practices)
    - Coated foam balls (for use with racquets)
    - Foam or plastic mini rugby balls
- Plastic hoops
- Canes
- Skipping ropes
- Big balls
- Beanbags
- Quoits
- Wire skittles, foam hurdles
- Plastic cones, multi markers or space markers
- Braids or bibs
- Plastic racquets, wooden play bats
- Hockey sticks, hurleys, uni-hoc sticks
- Wooden, plastic or alloy relay batons
- Plastic or wire containers
- Ball carrying nets
- Chalk

- Tape
- Stop-watch

Suggested equipment for gymnastics and dance

The ratio of pieces of equipment to child should be considered when selecting apparatus for gymnastics. Gymnastic mats are a basic requirement, and an adequate supply of these is necessary to ensure maximum participation. A mat (6 feet by 4 feet) should be available for every two to four children where possible. Balance benches are another very versatile piece of equipment; between four and six benches would be adequate for most class sizes. The list below may be helpful:

- Selection of music
- Tape recorder
- Hoops
- Plastic cones, multi markers or space markers
- Gymnastic mats
- Portable or fixed climbing frame with attachments
- Balance benches
- Bar box or movement table

Suitable equipment for outdoor and adventure activities

Outdoor education centres may provide a variety of equipment for use by class groups, e.g. stepping-stone courses, wall-climbing courses, rope walls, life jackets, etc.

Within the school it may be possible to construct adventure trails using benches, mats, climbing-frames, etc.

Suggested equipment for aquatics

- Swimming-floats
- Diving-rings
- Diving-sticks
- Weighted diving-hoops
- Ropes
- Pole