P.E. Policy Darley N.S. 2025

Introductory Statement and Rationale

a. Introductory Statement
The P.E. Policy for was reviewed by the staff of Darley NS in the 2024/25 school year.

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 lives. 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 by the promotion of physical activity throughout the school. In Darley N.S. we work in single / multi-class situations and so seek to amend the curriculum and lessons bearing in mind our facilities and class groupings. We intend to incorporate the messages of the curriculum in our lessons.

Key Messages
- the importance of enjoyment and play
- maximum participation by all children
- the development of skills and understanding of skills
- a balance between competitive and non-competitive activities
- providing opportunities for the positive experience of each child
- providing activities equally suitable for boys and girls

b. Aims
We endorse the aims of the Primary School curriculum for P.E.
- 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.

1. The Curriculum



- The strands/strand units/content objectives for the relevant class levels are found in the curriculum documents.
- In our school we have children with various special needs including hearing impaired children. We support these children and fully integrate them in our lessons.
- Teachers will choose a range of activities for all strands for each class. Where possible, children will have access to the six strands each year- Athletics, Dance, Gymnastics, Games, Outdoor and Adventure Activities and Aquatics.

2. PE rich environment

- We will endeavour to create a PE rich environment in the school. We are aware of our limited space for PE activities but will do our best to make use of the space we have by introducing a range of games and activities such as rounders, Olympic Handball, soccer, tennis, unihoc, basketball and skipping. We also provide the children with playground markings to encourage pupils to participate in small group games at break times.
- 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 in our fortnightly notes & Cúntas Míosúil.
- We will use the resource materials designed by the PDST for Fundamental Movement in PE.

3. Approaches and Methodologies

We will use a combination of the following approaches:

- Direct teaching approach e.g.. teaching a specific skill such as "volleying" in tennis.
- Guided discovery approach e.g.. children creating their own sequence in dance

- Integration e.g.. Geography and Outdoor and Adventure Activities –directional and spatial awareness through orienteering.

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 e.g.. assistance from the SNA
- 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 to suit the particular group of children

Possible Structure of a PE lesson:

- **Warm Up activities**
- **Main Activity** – physical literacy & fundamental movement skills e.g. 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.
- **Cool Down activities**

The structure of the lesson will vary depending on the activity being taught.

4. 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 by observation:
  - 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.
  - Feed back and pupil reflection.

5. Multi-class teaching

- There are many times in the combination and multi-grade class when children will be required to work independently of the teacher. In some multi-age classrooms small flexible heterogeneous groups are regular features of classroom life.

- Team teaching, when available, will be used to assist in larger class groupings. SNAs will assist pupils requiring additional input.

- 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. The children with exceptional ability will, on occasion, be encouraged to assist their classmates in achieving proficiency in the activities they are undertaking.

- 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. Developing and forging local club links will be a central part of our SSE process (2023-2026).

- All children will be encouraged to participate in all PE activities through the use of co-operative fun activities. We will also give encouragement and acknowledge good effort wherever possible. Our main aim is to set activities close to each child's ability level but at the same time challenging them to improve their performance. Reasonable targets will be set for all children at individual, pair and small group levels.

6. Physical Literacy

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. 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. 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 a range of specific movement skills as a child.

What are the Fundamental Movement Skills? FMS are the basic building blocks of movement and a core element of physical literacy, because enhanced movement competence enables pupils to participate in a wide range of physical activities and settings, for a variety of intensities or durations. 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. FMS are divided into the following three categories.These skills are explicitly taught as part of a PE lesson and developed through individual, paired and group activities.

Locomotor Skills Transporting the body in any direction from one point to another	**Stability Skills** Balancing the body in stillness and in motion	**Manipulative Skills** Control of objects using various body parts
• Walking • Running • Hopping • Skipping • Jumping for height • Jumping for distance • Dodging • Side stepping	• Balancing • Landing	• Catching • Throwing • Kicking • Striking with the hand • Striking with an implement

7. School Self Evaluation 2023-2026

Promoting and nurturing well being through physical activity is the key aim of our SSE and SIP process. Equipping pupils with inclusive, whole class games affords participation for all pupils during break times, encouraging a cohort of pupils who do not partake in ball based sports to get involved in physical activity. As part of our SSE plan we encourage children in our school to forge links with sports clubs in our community. Sampling and taster sessions of a varied array of physical activities, available in the community, encourages and provides pupils with a personal choice to partake in meaningful physical activity.

8. Equality of participation and access

- In planning for PE we are going to pay attention to the following areas in order to promote gender equity throughout the physical education curriculum.
  - All children from infants to sixth class will partake in all six strands of the curriculum.
  - We will provide equal access for all children to physical education equipment and facilities.
  - When grouping children for physical education the school will endeavour not to group children solely on the basis of gender whenever possible.
- 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. We endeavour to find physical activities which suit the interests of our special needs children. This is done in consultation with the special education teacher(s), class

teacher & SNAs. Pupils from our Hearing Impaired class are fully integrated with their mainstream peers during PE. Pupils from the ASD special class will be integrated based on their individual needs.

- 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. This is especially prevalent in relation to aquatics.
- The Darley N.S. Parents' Association are very active in raising money to cover the costs of PE activities & transport costs to and from the Swimming Pool. The B.O.M. has given permission to charge a nominal fee to each child to cover the cost of swimming lessons. 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.

9. Linkage and integration

- Linkage and integration e.g. dance and gymnastics
- Integration e.g. dance and music
- Maths & PE
- PE & SESE
- PE & SPHE
- PE & School Self Evaluation.

10. Organisational Planning: Timetable

PE is timetabled for one hour per week as follows. (Weather dependent)

Class	Day
Infants	**Monday & Wednesday 30min sessions**
1st class	**Monday**
2nd class	**Wednesday**
3rd & 4th class	**Thursday**
5th & 6th class	**Tuesday**

11. Aquatics

Our Board of Management has agreed that first to sixth classes attend swimming lessons for a six week period in the second/third term of school. Pupils travel to Coral Leisure Centre in Monaghan Town.

12. Timetabling

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

This school will use its discretionary time during the 6 weeks of aquatics. This is to facilitate the time taken travelling to and from the pool.

13. Playtime

All children are encouraged to play and enjoy their break times. Senior pupils use the tarmac pitch area & astro turf pitch. Younger pupils use the area at the front of the school. A range of activities and sports are encouraged and resources are provided to encourage participation. Our student council assist the junior classes by providing activities during two break times weekly. The school organises an annual sports day which always reflects the aims and objectives of the PE curriculum.

14. Health and safety/Child Protection

We have a school Health and Safety Policy and a Child Safeguarding and Risk Statement 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 clothing during a PE lesson. Children will not be allowed wear any additional jewellery, apart from a watch and stud earrings, as per school policy.
- 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 mentally ready for.
- Child Safeguarding guidelines must be strictly adhered to during changing before and after swimming lessons.
- All coaches must be garda vetted by the school before taking up their role as coach in the school.
- A First Aid Kit and accident report book are available in the staffroom.

15. 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 acquainted with the content and methodologies

outlined in the plan. There should be clear progression as children move from class to class.

16. Success criteria

Key messages

- 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

17. Implementation

Roles and Responsibilities

The Principal 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 regularly so 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

18. Ratification and Communication

A review of the PE policy was undertaken by staff during the 2025/26 school year, in line with our SSE plan.

The PE Policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on 22nd January 2025 and will be available on the school's website.

Chairperson:_____ Date: 22nd January 2025

Principal:_____ Date: 22nd January 2025