

Our Lady's G.N.S.: **Whole School Plan for Physical Education**

Introductory Statement and Rationale:

(a) Introductory Statement:

This plan was originally formulated by the Principal and staff of Our Lady's G.N.S. at an in-service planning day in accordance with the P.E. curriculum to set out our approach to the teaching and learning of P.E. The plan forms the basis for teachers' long and short-term planning. It also informs new and temporary teachers of the approaches and methodologies used in our school.

(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

In our school we seek, through the teaching of P.E. to provide the children with learning opportunities through the medium of movement. This will contribute to their development by helping them to lead full, active and healthy lives.

(b) Aims and objectives:

We endorse the aims of the [Primary School Curriculum for P.E.](http://www.curriculumonline.ie/getmedia/ca8a385c-5455-42b6-9f1c-88390be91afc/PSEC05_Physical-Education_Curriculum.pdf) available at http://www.curriculumonline.ie/getmedia/ca8a385c-5455-42b6-9f1c-88390be91afc/PSEC05_Physical-Education_Curriculum.pdf :

- 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.

Please refer to <http://nccaplanning.ie/> for detailed content objectives, strands and strand units.

Reviewing the P.E. Plan

In January 2018, Mrs Lane (Principal) in consultation with the staff, assigned Ms. O'Neill, to facilitate the review of the P.E. Plan, as part of Ms O'Neill's Assistant Principal II duties. During the P.E. Plan Review, Ms O'Neill collaborated with staff at Staff Meetings, Curriculum Planning Meetings dedicated to whole-school planning, Management Meetings, through email and one-to-one meetings. Our agreed policy is set out in this document.

Child Protection/Safeguarding

We prioritise meeting our statutory obligations under the Children First Act, 2015 and implement best practice as set out in the updated Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 and our own school's Child Safeguarding statement.

Active School Flag 2018-2020

International research proves that active children focus and learn better, present fewer discipline problems, achieve higher test results and enjoy school more. For these reasons, our school participated in the Department of Education and Science Active School Flag Programme initiative from 2018-2020 with a view to evaluating and improving our PE Programme, and being awarded our first Active School Flag flag in June 2020. This was coordinated by Ms. O'Neill and Ms. Macken, in collaboration with management, staff, students and parents. ASF is a Department of Education and Skills initiative. The Active School Flag (ASF) is awarded to schools that strive to achieve a physically educated and physically active school community. The process aims to get more schools, more active, more often. Schools wishing to achieve the ASF begin the process by self-evaluating their current provision across 3 areas: Physical Education, Physical Activity and Partnerships.

We achieved and sustain the following Active School 'success criteria' by June 2020:

- Reviewed our Whole-School PE Plan
- Created a Whole-School Standardised PE Timetable
- Created a dedicated section on school website for PE/Active School
- Provide all pupils with one hour of formal P.E. per week
- Provided teachers with bound copies of PSSI PE lesson plans, to be stored in PE Equipment Room
- Prioritise one PE strand each year for further development (2018-2020)
- Teach at least 5 PE strands each year
- Ensure that children with special educational needs will play a full role in PE
- Discuss progress in PE at Parent-Teacher Meetings

- Include progress in PE in the Annual School Report
- Engage in CPD in PE
- Carry out a PE equipment audit yearly
- Facilitate the use of sports equipment during break times
- Choose an Active School Committee with responsibility for liaising with staff, distributing equipment, tidying Equipment Room etc.
- Train senior pupils as Playground Leaders
- Provide classroom based physical activity breaks on wet days
- Provide short physical activity breaks (Go Noodle, Just Dance etc.) on a regular basis i.e. as lesson transitions
- Reinforce the message that all children require 60 minutes of moderate physical activity daily
- Agreed an Active School slogan
- Incorporate physical activity into school calendar events
- Participate in a non-competitive running event for a number of weeks during the school year
- Establish an Active Schools Committee and assign leadership roles therein
- Acknowledge all physical activity achievements during and outside school hours (at Assembly etc.)
- Created an Active Schools and Active Stars noticeboard and suggestions box
- Created a local Club Directory
- Plan an Active School Week yearly and include children in the design and organization of same
- Staff and pupils wear tracksuits during Active School Week
- Promote physical activity in a cross-curricular way during Active School Week
- Promote active travel during Active School Week
- Created an Active School Walkway
- Give physical activity tasks as homework during Active School Week
- Organise a FUN whole school event during Active School Week
- Invite parents to participate in Active School Week activities

- Use local amenities for physical activity during Active School Week i.e. Marlay park, Meadowbrook Swimming Pool
- Invite sports clubs or physical activity providers to give taster sessions in our school during Active School Week or at any point during the school year
- Senior children created an Active School Newsletter in 2019

We were awarded our Active School Flag in 2020. The flag will remain valid for a period of 3 years after which time, as a staff, we will decide when we wish to re-apply for the Renewal Active School Flag.

P.E. strands and strand units:

- Teachers are familiar with the strands/strand units and content objectives for each class level. Refer to Curriculum p.15 – 64.
- Our school has a Standardized P.E. Timetable which is displayed clearly in the Equipment Room. All teachers have a copy of same. This facilitates learning i.e. gymnastics equipment taken out and used by all over the course of six week block etc..
- Teachers may choose a range of activities for each class and will access PDST website or hard copies of PSSI P.E. plans stored in the Equipment Room.
- All children have access to five strands each year – Athletics, Dance, Gymnastics, Games, Outdoor and Adventure Activities. Some children have access to a sixth strand (aquatics/swimming lessons). Every effort will be made to ensure that each class avails of this opportunity, at least once over the course of eight years in our school.
- Teachers will ensure continuity and progression from class to class through following the guidelines in the PSSI plans.
- In multi-class situations, lessons will be structured to take into consideration the age range and physical strength of the pupils.

Further information regarding teaching of strands:

Aquatics

- Approximately, two classes have access to the Aquatics Strand 2018/19 only. They received seven swimming lessons in Meadowbrook DLR Swimming Pool. We endeavour to arrange a ‘fun swim’ for as many classes as possible during Active Week each year. The Irish Water Safety programme, ‘PAWS’ is delivered in Senior Infants, 2nd Class, 4th Class and 6th Class each year as part of the Physical Education Programme. Staff have been provided with PAWS Teaching Packs, which remain in the relevant classrooms from year to year. Staff are aware of the online PAWS resource available at edcolearning.ie .

Outdoor and education activities

- Each class has a 20 minute lesson in the school playground each week, fulfilling the ‘undertake physical challenges’ and ‘undertake co-operative (trust) activities’ objectives of the Outdoor and adventure activities strand.
- Senior class teachers will endeavour to source and outdoor education centres for their yearly school tours i.e. Zipit, Loughcrew Adventure Centre. All classes will use our local amenity, Marlay Park, for adventure trails and forest walks, outdoor activities and activities that foster respect for the environment. Staff will avail of CPD in orienteering in 2020.
- One class each year (to be decided in June of each school year) will avail of ten cycling lessons provided by Cycling Safety. As the focus of these lessons is primarily on safety, rather than cycling fitness, only five of these lessons will be counted as PE lessons while the other five will count as SPHE lessons.

Gymnastics

- 5th and 6th Classes will assist with setting up and putting away equipment for gymnastics. Staff engaged in CPD in gymnastics in 2019.

Games

- As the Games strand is particularly broad, comprising minor games, field games, court games, ball games, stick games, racket games and more and as our facilities are particularly conducive to teaching this strand, it was agreed that some extra lessons would be devoted to this strand.

Dance

- Céilí/Irish Dancing which is a Seachtain na Gaeilge event, is part of our dance strand.

Athletics

- Athletics is a central part of our yearly Sports Day.

Approaches and Methodologies:

- We use a combination of the following approaches: Direct teaching, Guided discovery, Use of the Environment and Integration.
- To encourage maximum participation by each child we may use the following strategies
 - (a) Individual, pair, group and team work
 - (b) Station teaching
 - (c) Using a play area divided into grids
 - (d) Multi-task teaching (setting a common task but allowing children to operate at different levels)
 - (e) Use of local facilities i.e. Meadowbrook DLR and Marlay Park
 - (f) Integration of P.E. in line with thematic teaching

Assessment and Record Keeping:

Throughout the P.E. lesson, the teacher is involved in various forms of assessment of children's work. Teachers assess:

- (a) Pupils' responses to instructions and suggestions
- (b) Interest in and enthusiasm for lesson
- (c) Skill level

Assessment tools used include teacher observation and teacher designed tasks as children work individually in groups and as part of a team. This information on the child's progress and achievement in P.E. is recorded in teachers' Assessment Folders and communicated to other teachers, parents and other professionals if required and forms part of class and school planning. Records are stored in the strong room and kept for eight years after the child leaves the school. Each teacher submits a monthly Cuntas Míósúil detailing content covered in PE each month. The child's progress in PE is communicated to parents at Parent/Teacher meetings and on the end-of-year report. There is a designated noticeboard in the school for PE and sports, including a PE Feedback/Comments Box. Active School has designated, regularly updated pages on the school website.

Multi-class teaching:

In a multi-class situation lessons are geared to the age/size/ability of the children. The following strategies may be used:

- setting a common task but allowing children to participate at different levels
- grouping children by ability/mixed ability

Children with Special Needs:

- Teachers support and ensure the participation of children with special needs by facilitating the level of capability of the child and by providing a safe and secure environment appropriate to the child. Activities may be modified and specialist advice may be sought to identify appropriate activities.
- A child with exceptional ability/talent for P.E. may be challenged by tasks appropriate to her level of ability.

Equality of participation and access:

- The P.E. class may be used as an opportunity to integrate the culture of all pupils e.g. Folk Dancing, Games/Yard games from different cultures.
- We ensure that every child has access to and participates in all P.E. activities provided by the school.
- **In order to ensure that each child is fully included, teachers rather than children, will select partners and teams in PE lessons and in after-school sports, as much as possible.**

- Our yearly Sports Day is non-competitive, enabling all children to enjoy sport in a fun environment.
- A Clubs Directory created by a senior class in 2019, in order to inform parents about local children's sports clubs, is on the school website.

Pupil Leadership

Pupil voice and leadership is at the core of our PE Programme. Staff work with pupils through our Active School Committee to increase the range of opportunities and programmes that support a greater number of pupils to adopt positive physical activity behaviours. Listening to the voice of the child fosters healthy relationships with peers and staff and contributes to cognitive development, emotional development and well-being.

Linkage and Integration:

Linkage:

Many playground games can be planned as part of the games strand.

Integration:

There are many opportunities to integrate P.E. with other subjects at all class levels and across each strand and strand unit.

- Maths:
The strand units provide opportunities to develop an understanding of many mathematical concepts i.e. symmetrical shapes in gymnastics, ¼ turns etc. in gymnastics, counting scores in games, /estimating/measuring distance of throwing activities in athletics.
- S.P.H.E:
The P.E. programme promotes positive attitudes towards physical health and activity i.e. SPHE strand unit Taking Care of My Body, games and athletics provide valuable opportunities for the child to learn to accept decisions and rules and to develop the concept of fair play. Water safety lessons will be integrated with SPHE.
- Language:
The use of a rich vocabulary based on discussion of rules and principles of play, appraisal of performance and interpretation of instructions helps to develop and enrich language.
- Gaeilge:
Is féidir gnáthorduithe a thabhairt, ceisteanna a chur, fearas a ainmniú, foclóir oiriúnach a úsáid agus damhsaí a mhúineadh trí Ghaeilge. Bíonn céilí againn i rith Seachtain na Gaeilge
- S.E.S.E:
Origin of dance music, skipping games and history of games and sports may be explored. Mapping skills are taught and the study of the environment, weather and terrain may be undertaken through outdoor activities.

- Music:
Dance music may be integrated with the music strand.

Organisational Planning:

An hour per week is allocated to P.E., split into a 40 minute hall lesson and 20 minute Playground lesson. The outdoor basketball court and front yard may be used. Local amenities, such as, Meadowbrook DLR and Marlay Park are also used. A Standardized P.E. Timetable (see below) has been created and a copy of this is hung in the PE Equipment Room and on the door of the PE Hall. One or two classes each year avail of seven swimming lessons each year. The management at Meadowbrook DLR are unable to provide lessons for the remaining classes at the time of the P.E. Plan review, but will endeavour to provide a 'fun swim' for each class, each year. There will be a Sports Day and an Active Week each year in the summer term.

Our Lady's G.N.S Standardised P.E. Timetable

Month(s)	Strand
*September	<p><u>Athletics</u> x2 lessons</p> <p><u>Outdoor and adventure activities</u> x 2 lessons</p> <p><u>Outdoor and adventure activities:</u> Playground P.E. weekly</p>
*October- December	<p><u>Games</u></p> <p><u>Outdoor and adventure activities:</u> Playground P.E. weekly</p>
January-February (until mid-term break)	<p><u>Gymnastics</u></p> <p><u>Outdoor and adventure activities:</u> Playground P.E. weekly</p>
February -March	<p><u>Dance</u></p> <p><u>Outdoor and adventure activities:</u> Playground P.E. weekly</p>
April-May	<p><u>Athletics</u></p> <p><u>Outdoor and adventure activities:</u> Playground P.E. weekly</p>
June	<p><u>Outdoor and adventure activities:</u> Playground P.E. weekly and further outdoor and adventure activities</p> <p>5th and 6th Class endeavour to participate in outdoor and adventure activities on yearly School Tour</p> <p>Athletics and Games strands covered on Sports Day</p>

*Teachers may choose to teach September lessons in October/November and vice versa as Athletics and Outdoor and adventure activities are weather dependent. All P.E. lessons-40 mins. Playground P.E.-20 mins.

Community Links :

At the time of the P.E. Plan review, Leinster Rugby and Cycling Safety come into our school to teach tag rugby and cycling. This time is deducted from official P.E. time, in line with Primary School Curriculum suggested weekly time allocation. However, some discretionary time may be allocated to P.E. during weeks when outside bodies teach these lessons. All personnel must be Garda vetted and informed of our policy, particularly in relation to picking of teams. From year to year, the school participates in community or national initiatives i.e. 1km run, Walk on Wednesdays (WOW).

Extra-curricular Activities:

We will endeavour to create a P.E. rich environment in the school. This will be done through provision of extra-curricular sports and also additional coaching within school hours i.e. tag-rugby coaching. We will encourage children to share their sporting achievements at our weekly Assembly. This will raise the children's awareness of various forms of physical activity and will contribute to development of an understanding and appreciation of all strands of the curriculum.

The school encourages children to join local clubs in the area which are linked to the P.E. programme such as GAA, athletics, soccer, gymnastics and Irish dancing. Extra-curricular sports activities provided by the school include table tennis, Gaelic football, camogie and basketball. Teams are entered into relevant competitions. Selected children participate in the yearly running meeting in Santry. The school has an Extra-curricular Sports Policy. Our Clubs Directory is available to view on the school website.

P.E. Equipment:

The equipment which is appropriate for the P.E. curriculum is stored safely and is available to all teachers. Large equipment is stored in a room off the hall and smaller equipment in the Sports Equipment Room in the corridor leading to the hall. Each year one designated teacher (Ms O'Neill at the time of this review) is in charge of keeping the Equipment Room tidy, maintaining equipment and facilities, pumping balls and purchasing new equipment.

Health and Safety:

See School Health & Safety Policy. Teachers will ensure that when children are taking part in P.E. activities and using equipment, they will do so in a safe manner with regard to their own safety and the safety of others.

Individual Teachers Planning and Reporting:

Teachers will use the information and guidance in the Whole School Plan, the curriculum documents and The PDST lesson plans, in their long and short-term planning, using the strands, strand units and thematic approach.

Staff Development:

All staff attend in service training and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) where possible (summer courses etc.). CPD has been provided to the staff in gymnastics in 2019. Our school is a member of the IPPEA (Irish Primary Physical Education Association), which keeps us up-to-date with local and national PE news, events and initiatives.

Parental Involvement:

Parents are invited to be involved in various activities e.g. accompanying children to extra-curricular activities etc. Any parent with specialist skills and who is Garda vetted may be invited to work with children and teachers. At the time of this review, two parents assist with GAA coaching after school and one parents assistes with basketball coaching after school. Parents are invited to view their children's extra-curricular competitions.

Success Criteria:

We will know that the plan has been successfully implemented when:

- Teacher's preparation and practice is based on this plan and procedures outlined are consistently followed. Evidence of this is in teachers' plans, assessment records and cuntais mhíosúla.
- The current extra-curricular programme continues to be made available to the children and developed where possible.
- Positive feedback is given by children, teachers and parents (questionnaires to be drafted as part of Renewal Active School Flag, should the school participate in this).
- Maintain and develop our community links
- Active School Success Criteria are sustained.

Resources

- www.pdst.ie
- Irish Water Safety PAWS programme
- <https://activeschoolflag.ie/>

Implementation:

This plan will be implemented by the Board of Management, Principal and staff, supported by coaches, parents and children.

Review:

As this plan is always a work in progress, it was reviewed in October 2023.

Ratification :

The plan was ratified by the Board of Management in January 2020