

DRAMA

DRÁMAÍOCHT.

Introductory Statement.

This policy was formulated by the teaching staff with advice from the Primary Professional Development Service.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School.

Ss. Peter & Paul's cherishes all children equally and to aid them in achieving their true potential (physically, emotionally, academically and spiritually) the school provides a comprehensive drama programme as drama enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively and to communicate with others effectively which are essential elements of the School's ethos.

Rationale.

In Ss. Peter & Paul's we believe that Drama can make a unique contribution to the development of the child. Its purposes, and the particular character of its activity, provide the means by which the child can achieve an enhanced awareness of self and can experience a unique model of learning. It can

- give each child the opportunity to approach new knowledge through the dimension of imaginative activity and experience
- give each child the opportunity to approach knowledge in the ways that are most suitable to him/her
- facilitate the child's imaginative, intellectual, emotional and physical development in a contemporaneous and holistic way
- foster the child's creativity, invention, insight, discovery and problem-solving through exploring actively the intuitive and the spontaneous
- allow the child, through the dramatic fiction, to experience, understand and practise the life skills need in reality
- promote empathy with the ideas, attitudes and feelings of others.

Mission Statement Context.

The content of educational drama is life. It encompasses the entire range of a child's experience and every facet of his personality; and because it constitutes a unique way of learning it will be an indispensable part of the child's experience in our school. This understanding and role of drama in the life of the child is very much in keeping with our Mission Statement which states that the school will seek to develop the total child: his physical, spiritual, emotional and academic aspects.

Aims. (the following aims apply to both the Irish & English language).

- create the motivation and interest that can spur the child to research, and thus foster an attitude that views knowledge as essential in adapting his perception of the world
- provide the means by which the child can relate knowledge, in a special way, to way, to previous learning and experience
- help the child to see pattern and unity in seemingly disparate pieces of knowledge encountered in different subjects
- making what is close and make close what is distant at both a cognitive and an affective level, so that aspects of life can be explored closely enough to afford effective examination but distant enough to provide safety for the child
- give the child a rich oral language experience in both English and Irish and afford the opportunity to experiment with different registers of language.
- give the child experience of drama as an art form
- develop skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing
- help the child to assimilate and accommodate the experience of other cultures
- explore various genre
- help the child to assimilate a changing environment through anticipating psychological development and through allowing him to transcend immediate experience by tying out other worlds through drama
- help the child to work collaboratively
- give the child through drama sense of enjoyment, satisfaction and achievement
- help child develop problem solving skills
- develop self-esteem
- develop child's imagination and creatively
- develop appreciation and accommodate other people's prints of view.

Outline of Programme.

Junior & Senior Infants.

Pupils through drama lessons learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They began to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

Speaking and listening: In infants pupils learn to speak clearly, thinking about the needs of their listeners. They work in small groups and as a class, joining in discussions and making relevant points. They also learn how to listen carefully to what other people are saying, so that they can remember the main points. They learn to use language in imaginative ways and express their ideas and feelings when working in role and in Drama activities.

Reading: Children's interest and pleasure in reading is developed as they learn to read confidently and independently. They focus on words and sentences and how they fit into whole texts. They work out the meaning of straightforward texts and say why they like them or do not like them.

Writing: Children start to enjoy writing and see the value of it. They learn to communicate meaning in narrative and non-fiction texts and spell and punctuate correctly. Teachers will ensure that work in speaking and listening, reading and writing is integrated.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING.

Knowledge, skills and understanding.

Drama.

To participate in a range of Drama activities, pupils should be taught:

- a) use language and actions to explore and convey situations, characters and emotions
- b) create and sustain roles individually and when working with others
- c) comment constructively on Drama they have watched or in which they have taken part.

Breadth of study.

Drama activities.

The range should include:

- a) Working in role
- b) Presenting Drama and stories to others (for example, telling a story through tableaux or using a narrator)
- c) Responding to performances.

READING.**Knowledge, skills and understanding.**

Literature.

To develop their understanding of fiction, poetry and Drama, pupils should be taught to:

- a) identify and describe characters, events and settings in fiction
- b) use their knowledge of sequence and story language own they are retelling stories and predicting events
- c) express preferences, giving reasons
- d) learn, recite and act out stories and poems
- e) identify patterns of rhythm, rhyme and sounds in poems and their effects
- f) respond imaginatively in different ways to what they read (for example, using the characters from a story in Drama, writing poems based on ones they read, showing their understanding through art or music).

Breath of Study

Literature

The range should include:

- a) stories and poems with familiar settings and those based on imaginary or fantasy worlds both in English & Irish
- b) stories, plays and poems by significant children's authors
- c) retellings of traditional folk and fairy stories (e.g. Three Little Pigs)
- d) stories and poems from a range of cultures
- e) stories, plays and poems with patterned and predictable language
- f) stories and poems that are challenging in terms of length or vocabulary
- g) texts where the use of language benefits from being read aloud and reread.

1st to 6th Class.

Children learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purpose and audiences. They read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how language works.

Speak and listening: Children learn how to speak in a range of contexts, adapting what they say and how they say it to the purpose and the audience. Taking varied roles in groups gives them opportunities to contribute to situations with different demands. They also learn to respond appropriately to others, thinking about what has been said and the language used.

Reading: Children read enthusiastically a range of materials and use their knowledge of words sentences and texts to understand and respond to the

meaning. They increase their ability to read challenging and lengthy texts independently. They reflect on the meaning of texts, analysing and discussing them with others.

Writing: Children develop understanding that writing is both essential to thinking and earning, and enjoyable in its own right. They learn the main rules and conventions of written English and start to explore how the English language can be used to express meaning in different ways. They use the planning, drafting and editing process to improve their work and to sustain their fiction and non-fiction writing. This is linked to the English/Irish curriculums. Teaching will ensure that work in speaking and listening, reading and writing is integrated.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING.

Knowledge, skills and understanding.

Drama

To participate in a wide range of Drama activities and to evaluate their own and others' contributions, pupils should be taught to:

- a) create, adapt and sustain different roles, individually and in groups
- b) use character, action and narrative to convey story, themes, emotions, ideas in plays they devise and script
- c) use Dramatic techniques to explore characters and issues (for example, hot seating, flashback)
- d) evaluate how they and others have contributed to the overall effectiveness of performance.

Breadth of study.

Drama activities.

The range should include:

- a) improvisation and working in role
- b) scripting and performing in plays
- c) responding to performances.

READING.

Knowledge, skills and understanding.

Literature

To develop understanding and appreciation of literary texts, pupils should be taught to:

- a) read stories, poems and play aloud.

Breath of Study

Literature

The range should include:

- a) play scripts.

WRITING.

Breath of Study

The range of forms of writing should include narratives, poems, play scripts, reports, explanations, opinions, instructions, reviews, commentaries.

IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY.

PLANNING.

We intend to meet the General Aims as outlined in our policy and deliver the Revised Curriculum requirements in a variety of ways. A three tier structure is employed to effectively shape and co-ordinate the drama Curriculum and involves long, medium and short term planning.

Long term planning concentrates on the school's broad curriculum framework and identifies suitable units of study with a clear focus for learning. It generates year by year projections and supports cross-curricular links reflecting the overall aims of the school. It ensures curriculum balance and coverage.

Medium term planning involves the learning objectives within a sequence of linked units of study incorporating progression and development. It identifies the opportunities for assessment and outlines recording and reporting procedures. It also outlines the use of resources and details the community links and involvement with various support agencies. The appropriate use of information technology and efficient monitoring and evaluation processes are also identified.

Short term planning illustrates the main focus for learning for each lesson and suggests suitable teaching methods that enable the learning objectives to be met. Allows for teacher monitoring and details differentiated activities. References the requirement to gather evidence of pupil attainment.

An example of a Planning Template is attached to this policy.

PRACTICE/METHODOLOGY.

Drama within the school is incorporated into all areas of the curriculum, where feasible.

There are many Drama strategies which can be successfully employed in the classroom to illustrate a certain point, perhaps lasting only a few minutes and involving some of the class at the front, performing for the other.

The following are some of the strategies that may be used:

- Hot Seating
- Tableaux
- Through Tracking
- Forum Theatre
- Sculptor and Statue
- Improvising in pairs
- Performance poetry
- Script writing and reading
- Reflecting on Drama they have watched or taken part in
- Circle Time.

Work in Hall, involves the whole class and together with the strategies above may include:

- role play
- group improvisation
- performance
- watching performances

Over the years staff ensures what a wide range of Drama activities take place, ensuring full coverage of the requirements for Drama. Time can be found within English/Irish lessons on occasion, in place of them.

Drama is also delivered in the Halla as part of each class's allocation of halla time.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING.

Assessment

Assessment is done by keeping of records of individual children's contributions in Drama which have been particularly noteworthy. For example a child who does not normally contribute in class may start to do so in the Dramatic environment. This is noted by the teacher.

These informal diary entries are maintained in the long term, and any child for whom there has been no comment may be observed specifically.

Work done in role is also useful such as letters, diaries, pictures and evaluation.

Reporting

Reporting is in line with the school's policy. Full reports to parents take place once a year and will include reference to work in Drama.

ROLE OF THE CO-ORDINATOR.

The co-ordinator for Drama has a fundamental role and is responsible for:

- co-ordinating the production, monitoring and revision of the school's Drama Policy.
- arranging appropriate staff development and training
- liaison with support agencies and community links
- effective planning ensuring continuity, progression, coverage and balance
- the availability of essential resources e.g. the hall, scripts, text books, puppets, costumes
- co-ordinating school productions and performances
- arranging suitable Theatre trips and visits by Theatre groups e.g. Clan Cluain

MONITORING AND REVIEW SCHEDULES

The implementation of this Drama policy is monitored and an efficient system is in place to ensure that the whole school commitment to the teaching of Drama is maintained. Continuity and progression, duration and intensity of the units of study are constantly being analysed in order to amend and improve the learning environment for our pupils.

This document and its implementation is constantly under scrutiny and will be formally reviewed in June 2010.

RESOURCES.

Space

The school halla is a designated area for Drama with its own stage. Room 1 in the Junior School is available for Drama lessons. Classes may also use their own classrooms where the Drama is appropriate. The play ground/green area are also appropriate.

Scripts

There are several scripts to be found in books available in the Resource Office. Irish Scripts: Treo Nua, RI imirt, Cluich Simpi.

Costumes/Make-up/Staging.

There is a stage with lighting available for drama productions. Costumes are available in the store room annexed to the Resource office.

I.C.T.

Video Camera/Digital Camera/Projectors/D.V.D.'s

MONITORING ACCESS.

Sen / Equal Opportunities.

Every child, regardless of race, creed, or special needs, will have equality of access to a broad and balanced Drama curriculum. All individuals have the opportunity to experience successes and develop a true appreciation of their own cultural origins and that of others.

Gender stereotyping and racism are constantly challenged and questioned within Drama, both implicitly, e.g. in areas such as the formation of groups in the classroom, and explicitly in the content of the work undertaken.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

These guidelines are in addition to the school's health and safety policy which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

Teachers should be aware of the following points:

- the use of appropriate footwear e.g. pupils should not wear socks or slippery shoes in the hall.
- children should only operate technical equipment under close supervision
- any areas which may be dangerous for pupils e.g. the stage when I use
- guidelines on entering and leaving the hall e.g. line up outside the hall

Drama Contract: c.f. enclosed page.

SUPPORT AGENCIES.

The school is supported by and makes use of a range of support services. Touring companies are encouraged to visit the school each year and theatre trips are made. The school received classroom support from personnel with Drama expertise e.g. Stella O Sullivan.

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Appropriate use of information communication technology is encouraged within Drama to enhance research, recording and communication within and outside the school, particularly the Internet.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Use will be made of parental expertise in drama where feasible. Parents will be invited to attend school productions. E.g. Poetry morning, nativity Plays.

COMMUNITY LINKS AND PARTNERSHIPS.

The school is actively involved in forging links with the wider community and in particular with the Clonmel Junction Festival. The school invites members of the community to attend school productions and other Drama events.

DRAMA CONTRACT.

- Respect each other.
- Allow others to express themselves.
- Concentrate.
- Consider feelings of others,
- Have fun and enjoy ourselves without hurting others.
- Communicate.
- Take turns.
- Co-operate and work together.
- Show respect for each other.
- Help one another.
- Listen to each other.
- Positive behaviour/positive comments.
- 'Pass if we need time to think'.

This contract can be adapted to different age groups.

The Benefits of Drama.

The teacher, depending on age, will discuss the following benefits of participating in Drama with children.

- I can learn to participate and be part of a group.
- I can learn to take my turn and co-operate with others in a group activity.
- I can develop my communication and social interaction skills in a range of contexts.
- I can learn to make choices and decisions.
- I can gain confidence, satisfaction and self-esteem from seeing my responses and initiatives acted upon by others.
- I can develop a range of emotional responses to situations and being to come to terms with my feelings.
- I can become more aware of the impact of my feelings, actions and behaviour on others.
- I can become aware that other people may have a different perspective and begin to empathise with their feelings.
- I can learn how sequences of events are connected.
- I can gain access to subjects that deal with human experience, which might otherwise remain remote.
- I can develop my understanding of symbolism and representational thought.
- I can develop creative, flexible thinking and apply this relevantly and purposeful.
- I can explore and take risks within the make-believe, and learn to embrace the unexpected.
- I can apply practical skills, concepts and factual knowledge in relevant contexts similar to real life.
- I can learn to associate having fun with taking part in a shared group experience with other people.
- I can learn to enjoy and appreciate being part of an audience.
- I can develop higher order thinking skills, such as, synthesising, predicating, hypothesising, inferring and critical thinking.
- I can develop oral language.