

St Clare's Primary School

Drama Whole School Plan

Introductory Statement and Rationale: This plan is a record of our decisions regarding Drama. It reflects the Primary Curriculum, 1999. It is intended to guide teachers in their individual planning for Drama. Drama is a subject and is for all teachers and all children. Process Drama explores the real world through the fictional world

Vision and Aims: Our school recognises that Drama education is part of a balanced curriculum which aims to develop the whole spectrum of the child's intelligence. We seek to develop pupil's aesthetic, intellectual, emotional, creative and cultural development Drama experiences.

Aims: Ref: Primary School Curriculum for Drama

To enable the child to become Drama literate

To enable the child to create a permanent bridge between make-believe play and the art form of theatre

To develop the child's ability to enter physically, emotionally and intellectually into the Drama world in order to promote questing, empowering and empathetic skills

To enable the child to **develop the social skills** necessary to engage openly, honestly and playfully with others

To enable the child to co-operate and communicate with others in solving problems in the Drama and through the Drama

To enable the child to understand the structures and modes of Drama and how they create links between play, thought and life

To enable the child to acquire this knowledge of Drama through the active **exploration of themes drawn from life** (past and present),

To enable the child to begin the process of translating a knowledge of Drama into the active exploration of life themes from Drama literature, leading to the appreciation of world Drama culture.

Curriculum Planning - Strand and Strand Units

Drama has one strand at each class level - Drama to explore feelings knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding.

The objectives at each for each strand unit (Refer Curriculum handbook) The strand is divided into three strand units.

Exploring and Making Drama, Reflecting on Drama, Co-Operating and Communicating in Making Drama.

Approaches and Methodologies

Belief is central to all Drama and should be characterised by a willingness to believe in the Drama itself, sincerity in playing roles and characters, a willingness to accept the fictional consequences of Drama and a willingness to explore. Teachers will focus on the building of belief when beginning a new Drama activity.

The strand 'Drama to explore feeling, knowledge and ideas leading to understanding' will be important for teachers in this school in informing the content that they choose for Drama activities.

Content for Drama will come from life experience. It will be from something that the children have experienced, something that they have read, something that emerged in another subject area, a worry or concern that the teacher might have or something generally that the teacher wants them to explore.

Teachers will **carefully select a fictional lens** or for their chosen content. A character or story will be selected that the children will easily believe in, whose context will allow for the realisation of the content to be explored.

Stimuli such as the following will be used in our school as starting points for the creation of a Drama. These are in keeping with the **Drama activities 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; pp. 66-91** in the Teacher Guidelines.

Story

Poems

Newspaper Captions

Pictures

Painting

Photographs

Objects

Elements are used organically through the Drama. Belief will be built as roles/characters develop. Action, place and time will be developed as the Drama is framed in its fictional lens. The element of tension is the one which teachers will have to think about. Tension will often have to be injected e.g. by adding a mysterious character/secret/surprise/problem/tension of time or urgency/limitations of space/temptation of a dare or a challenge/tension of inappropriate behaviour.

We recognise the usefulness of Drama strategies. Below is a table showing some suitable strategies for the class level. This is not an exhaustive list rather a suggestion. Teachers have the freedom to introduce other strategies that they might find useful for their own particular class or for a particular dramatic context.

Class Level Suggested Strategies

Junior & Senior Infants - Defining the Space, Still Images, Teacher in Role, Mimed Narration, Whole Group improvisation, Hot seating.

1st & 2nd Classes - Defining the Space, Mimed Narration, Teacher in Role, Whole Group Improvisation, Still Images, Thought Tracking, Paired Improvisation, Improvisation in threes, Hot seating

3rd & 4th Classes - Defining the Space, Teacher in Role, Mimed Narration, Still Images, Thought Tracking, Improvisation in Pairs, Briefing, Conscience Alley, Whole Group Improvisation, Small Group Improvisation, Ritual, Flashback/flash forward

5th & 6th Classes - Defining the Space, Teacher in Role, Mimed Narration, Still Images, Thought Tracking, Improvisation in Pairs,

Briefing, Conscience Alley, Whole Group Improvisation, Small Group Improvisation, Hot seating, Ritual, Flashback/flash forward,

The safe environment is important for effective drama work to take place. In our school each class may develop a drama contract. To build confidence and further embed the safe environment, classes will play appropriate warm up games to develop various drama skills necessary for their drama work. **Discussion about the contract and the safe environment may be included where appropriate both before and after the drama activity.**

We see reflection as being of vital importance to the drama process. We will strive to ensure that reflection takes place at the appropriate points in the drama experience. We will also strive for a balance of methods of reflection using discussion, writing, visual arts, speaking, listening, doing, & questioning. A list of drama reflection methods is to be found in the appendix.

Children with Different Needs

All pupils will participate in Drama activities. Drama activities will be differentiated in order to meet the needs of the children when necessary. This will be done by careful grouping of children, consciousness by the teacher of children's abilities when giving briefs and by providing opportunities for different methods of reflection.

4. Linkage and Integration

Linkage is inherent to the Drama process. All activities in Drama will include exploring and making Drama, reflecting on Drama and co-operating and communicating in making Drama.

Teachers are encouraged to **integrate Drama with other subjects** in a way that complements curriculum aims and objectives in both subjects. Integration is encouraged where it is natural and where children's learning can be maximised. The school will use opportunities for integration in all subjects.

5. Assessment and Record Keeping

We recognise the importance of assessment and record keeping in the delivery of The Drama Curriculum. Teachers will observe which areas children are achieving in and which areas need further development. Teachers will approach assessment in Drama by referring to the Curriculum Statement p 43-44 and examine engagement in terms of the three strand units.

1.Exploring and making Drama - the extent to which the child enters into a role or a character and develops it in the context of the action

2.Reflecting on Drama - the extent to which they use reflection to create alternative courses for the action or the quality of the insights they gain from the Drama experience

3.Co-operating and communicating in making Drama - the child's ability to contribute to the shaping of the Drama, both individually and in group in-role and out-of-role discussion about the Drama as the action takes place

Teacher observation will be central to all assessment in Drama.

Other forms of assessment will include basic teacher-designed tests and tasks, projects, Using tablets to record children's work.

Progress will be recorded and communicated in teachers own notes, Cúntas Míosúil, end of year report and at parent teacher meetings.

Equality of Participation and Access: Equal opportunities will be given to all children regardless of gender, ethnic background, socio-economic status across all strands and activities.

Timetable: Infant class will have a minimum of 50 minutes of Drama per week while 1 to 6 classes will have a minimum of one hour per week of Drama. Teachers may also choose to block times for Drama at particular times of the year. Teachers will ensure that pupils attending supplementary teaching are included.

Resources and ICT: Drama books, basic props, Classroom tablets, suitable stimuli (music, poetry, stories, visual images, newspaper captions) are all available. Resources are held in relevant classrooms

or centrally in the teachers' resource library in the staffroom. Drama may also be taught in the school hall. We also will use the Glens Centre and the Bee Park on occasion .We will use the external support of the school based drama teacher (Tori Lee) as a resource.

Health and Safety (Ref: Health and Safety Policy)

Care and attention will be given to the following:

Hidden dangers if children are moving around the classroom, Amount of space for children to sit or stand when engaged in Drama work
Particular care will be needed when children are setting up the Drama space, Appropriate volume levels when using audio equipment or when engaged in a very loud activity.

Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting: Each teacher will access this school plan online and will refer to it when doing their long term and short term planning. The elements of Drama should be carefully considered in the short term planning of Drama.

As mentioned in the integration section teachers in the school approach much of their teaching thematically and are encouraged to do so with Drama also.

Other possibilities are Halloween, Christmas, History topics ...etc.

Staff Development: Teachers have access to reference books, resource materials, equipment and websites dealing with Drama. Drama will be on the agenda at some staff meetings to review the policy and also give an opportunity for members of staff to share Teachers will be informed about upcoming courses in the education centres and other bodies providing professional development through the staffroom notice board/Aladdin.

Parental Involvement: Parents may be involved within the classroom if a parent has particular expertise in Drama. Parents will be invited to classroom presentations of improvisations or other work created in small group settings and school concerts or musicals.

13. Community Links : Manorhamilton has a Drama Society and Theatre .There are many actors and theatre groups locally which can occasionally be considered as resources as support for Drama.

There are many dramas and events held in the Glens Centre and Hawk's Well Theatre, Sligo or we invite real drama groups to perform in the school. We aim to provide a minimum of 1 real drama spectator experience for each class each year. We have a school concert/musical/Christmas play every year in our school hall/Glens or Bee Park. Every class gets at least 2 such experiences to perform over their 8 year cycle in the school.

Success Criteria: Teachers' preparation based on this plan and the procedures outlined in this plan followed. Teacher/parent feedback Children's feedback, Inspectors' suggestions/reports will aid assessment in drama.

Review Due May 2018 The content of this whole school plan for Drama will be reviewed during the school year 2020.

Ratification and Communication: This school plan for Drama will be posted on our website and amended as required following agreed revisions.

Updated and amended September 2017