

## **Drama Policy**

### **KILGARVAN CENTRAL SCHOOL**



### **Introductory Statement**

This plan is intended to facilitate the development of drama on a whole school basis as a subject in the school. The plan is a response to the requirements of the revised curriculum for primary schools and should be seen as a starting point from which the provision of drama, in accordance with curricular requirements, will develop over future reviews and through on going classroom practice. While individually teachers have been including drama in their work, this plan seeks to detail a whole school approach.

### **Rationale**

Drama provides children with ways to explore our cultural heritage and new dimensions of a changing world. Language plays a critical role in drama. The Drama Curriculum contributes to developing the child's competence and confidence in English, Irish and other subjects.

The purpose of this plan is to provide practical guidance for teachers, parents and other relevant persons on the provision of effective drama in our school.

### **Vision**

We are committed to the all-round development of each child in our care. We hope through Drama to help the child develop confidence and enable each child to explore their emotions and engage with their environment in a safe and creative manner. We envisage that in Drama each child will be given the opportunity to develop their drama skills and competencies to their full potential, appropriate to their age and ability in a safe and supportive environment.

### **Aims**

We endorse the aims of the Primary School Drama Curriculum :

- To enable the child to become drama literate.
- To enable the child to create a permanent bridge between make-believe play and the art of form theatre.
- To develop the child's ability to enter physically, emotionally and intellectually into the drama world in order to promote questioning, empowering and empathic 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 explore, clarify and express ideas, feelings and experiences through a range of arts activities
- To provide for aesthetic experiences and to develop aesthetic awareness in the visual arts, in music, in drama, in dance and in literature
- To develop the child's awareness of, sensitivity to and enjoyment of visual, aural, tactile and spatial environments
- To enable the child to develop natural abilities and potential to acquire techniques
- To practise the skills necessary for creative expression and for joyful participation in different art forms
- To enable the child to see and to solve problems creatively through imaginative thinking and so encourage individuality and enterprise
- To value the child's confidence and self-esteem through valuing self expression
- To foster a sense of excellence in and appreciation of the arts in local, regional, national and global contexts , both past and present
- To foster a critical appreciation of the arts for personal fulfilment and enjoyment.

## **Curriculum**

<b>Strand</b>	<b>Strand unit</b>
Drama to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas leading to understanding	Exploring and making drama Reflecting on drama Co-operating and communicating in making drama.

### **Pre-requisites for making drama**

Content  
The fictional lens  
Creating a safe environment

### **Elements of Drama**

Belief	Time
Role and character	Tension
Action	Significance
Place	Genre

All teachers are familiar with the strands, strand units and content objectives for their class levels. Curriculum objectives area at the core of each Drama lesson, and teachers refer to the curriculum objectives in their own planning.

The content objectives are laid out on the following pages in the Curriculum Handbook.

Infant Classes pgs. 14-17

First and Second classes pgs. 20-23

Third and Fourth classes pgs. 26-31

Fifth and Sixth classes pgs. 34-39

## **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.

Content for Drama will come from life experience. It will be from something that the children have experienced, something 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 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
- Paintings
- 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.

In our school, 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

### **1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Classes**

- Defining the Space
- Mimed Narration
- Teacher in Role
- Whole Group Improvisation
- Still Images
- Thought Tracking
- Paired Improvisation
- Improvisation in Threes
- Hot Seating

### **3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> 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

### **5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> 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 during discussion, writing, visual arts, speaking, listening, doing and questioning.

### **Children with Different Needs**

It is the policy of our school that all children will participate in Drama activities. Drama activities will be differentiated in order to meet the needs of the children in individual classes. This will be done by careful grouping of children, consciousness by the teacher of the children's abilities, when giving briefs and by providing opportunities for different methods of reflection.

### **Linkage and Integration**

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

Integration of drama is encouraged in other subject areas where it is natural and where children's learning can be maximised. Certain subject areas are amenable to drama activities e.g.

- Rólímir
- SPHE
- History
- Geography
- Oral Language Development

### **Assessment and Record Keeping**

In Kilgarvan Central School, we recognise the importance of assessment and record keeping in the delivering of the Drama Curriculum. Much assessment will focus on the children's learning and how best to inform subsequent planning and teaching. Teachers will observe which areas children are achieving in and which areas need further development.

Teachers should approach assessment in Drama by referring to the Curriculum Statement p 43-44 and examine children's engagement in terms of the three strand units. E.g see below

- Exploring and Making Drama - the extent of which the child enters into a role or a character and develops it in the context of the action
- Reflecting on Drama - the extent of which they use reflection to create alternative courses for the action or the quality of the insights they gain from the Drama experience
- 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 / out of role discussion about the Drama as the action takes place

Teacher observation will be essential to all assessment in Drama. Other forms of assessment will include basic teacher designed tests and tasks, projects and recording of children's work.

Progress will be recorded and communicated in teachers own notes, Cúntas Miosúil, 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.

### **ICT**

Information and communication technology may be integrated with Drama through the use of the Interactive whiteboard, digital camera, photo-copier, DVDs ,CDs and the internet. Children may watch still images of themselves, videos of themselves in the drama lesson back on the IWB to assist with the reflection session. Children may create power points/ photo stories writing the script to accompany the ICT resource.

### **Organisational planning**

#### **Timetable**

- Infant classes will have a minimum of 50 minutes of Drama per week
- 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> classes will have a minimum of one hour per week

This time allocation may be broken down at the discretion of the individual teacher.

Teachers may also choose to block times for drama at particular times of the year.

Timetables will all record the time allocation for Drama.

Children are prepared for a Christmas show featuring acting, drama, dance and music which will occur on alternate years.

### **Resources**

Appendix 1

### **Code of ethics**

All teachers and coaches working in the school context will be expected to adhere to the school Child Protection Statement. They should always ensure that they treat children with integrity and respect and that the self-esteem of children is enhanced. All adult actions should be guided by what is best for the child and carried out in the context of respectful and open relationships.

## **Health and Safety**

As well as all curricular areas of work, the Drama Curriculum will maintain due care to our schools Health and Safety Policy.

Care and attention will be given to the following:

- Hidden dangers if children are moving about the classroom
- Storage facilities
- Ventilation of the classrooms
- 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**

Individual teachers will design a drama plan specifically for their own class.

Strands covered in Drama each month are recorded on the Cúntas Míósúil.

The Cúntas Míósúil will be very relevant in recording what has been covered and in reviewing and developing the school plan for the following years.

## **Staff development**

Teachers have access to reference books, resource materials, equipment and websites dealing with Drama included at the back of this policy.

Drama will be on the agenda at staff meetings from time to time during the year. This will allow for review of the policy and also give an opportunity for members of staff to share ideas that are working for them.

Teachers will be informed about upcoming courses in the education centres and other bodies providing professional development through the staffroom noticeboard.

## **Parental involvement**

Parents have a responsibility to encourage their children to participate in all strands of the Drama curriculum. Parents may view the Drama policy in the school office or on the school website.

## **Community links**

Children will get the opportunity to view productions at the Carnegie Arts Centre, Kenmare. This usually occurs at Christmas. Other productions on local history will sometimes take place in the INEC, Killarney. Children will get the opportunity to view these productions if deemed appropriate and are curriculum related. Children are encouraged to take part in the "Leiriú" aspect of Scór na bPáistí for their local GAA Club.

### **Success Criteria**

Will this plan make a difference to the teaching and learning of Drama in our school?

- How will we know that the plan has been implemented?
  - Teachers' preparation based on this plan
  - Procedures outlined in this plan consistently followed
- Has the plan achieved its aims? What are the indicators? (Refer to Aims)  
Means of assessing the outcomes of the plan include:
  - Teacher / parent feedback
  - Children's feedback
  - Inspectors' suggestions / reports
  - Have we sufficient resource materials available to staff in Kilgarvan Central School?
  - Acquisition of resource materials and books to assist teachers in their work in this area

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

It will be the responsibility of the school staff to implement the programme.  
The Board of Management will support the plan.

### **Review**

Teachers, Principal and the Board of Management will be involved in this review.

### **Ratification**

Ratified by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairperson)

Date : \_\_\_\_\_



## **Appendix 1**

### **Drama Resources**

#### **Junior / Senior Infants**

- Dress Up Box
- The Snowman by Michael Morpurgo
- Classroom Drama - A Practical Guide
- Drama Warm Ups & Circle Games

#### **1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> Classes**

- Primary School Curriculum Drama and Teacher Guidelines
- Chatterbox
- Drama Games from Drama In Service Days 1 + 2
- Inspirational Ideas for Drama
- Primary Curriculum Support Programme :
  - Games! Games! Games!
  - Work in Still Images
  - Mime 1 and 2
  - Improvisations
  - Drama Strategies
  - Methods of Reflection
  - Getting Drama started in your Classroom
  - Recommended Drama Booklist
  - List of Useful Poetry Books
  - List of Resource Books for Drama
  - Suggested Websites for Drama
  - Using Story as a Pre-Text for Drama

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> / 4<sup>th</sup> Classes**

- Box of Props
- First List Improvisation Cards
- Resources from [adei.ie](http://adei.ie) and [pdst.ie](http://pdst.ie)
- The Drama Ideas Bank
- Resources from CPD Summer Course

#### **5<sup>th</sup> / 6<sup>th</sup> Classes**

- Box of Props including wigs, glasses, bags etc
- Selection of Books to use as Stimulus
- 'Inspirational Ideas Drama' for 9 – 11 year olds by Harry Potter
- Book 5 Primary Plays (Folens)

