



SCOIL FIONNTÁIN NAOFA

Whole School Plan for

Drama



Plean Scoile Drámaíocht

Introductory Statement and Rationale

(a) Introductory Statement

This Drama Plan was developed in August and September 2021 to replace an earlier Drama Plan that was in existence within the school. This plan was developed and formulated in consultation and collaboration with all of the teaching staff in the school.

(b) Rationale

The guiding principles which reflect the teaching of Drama in our school are

- Drama is both a subject and a methodology and in this regard it will be integrated with/into other subject areas.
- Drama is for all pupils and teachers alike.
- Process drama explores the real world through the fictional world/through a fictional lens.

This plan is intended to assist our teachers with their Drama planning and is a record of our intent and decisions regarding our teaching of Drama in the school. It has been formulated with clear and direct reference to the 1999 Primary Curriculum for Drama.

Vision and Aims

(a) Vision:

Scoil Fionntáina Naofa, Shanahoe recognises that Drama education is part of a balanced curriculum which aims to develop the whole spectrum of the child's intelligence. We also seek to develop the child's aesthetic, intellectual, emotional, creative and cultural lives through engagement in positive Drama experiences

(b) Aims: We endorse the aims of the 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), whether they have their source in other curricular areas or in general areas relevant to the child's life
- 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.
- To form the criteria with which to evaluate the drama texts, written or performed, to which he/she is continually exposed.

CURRICULUM PLANNING

Strands and Strand Units:

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

The strand is divided into three separate **strand units**

- Exploring and Making Drama
- Cooperating and communicating in making Drama.
- Reflecting on Drama.

The outline of the objectives at each level for each strand unit are detailed in the tables below:

Exploring and Making Drama	
Junior and Senior Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● develop the instinct for make-believe play into Drama ● develop the ability to play in role as an integral part of the action ● experience how the use of space and objects can help to create the reality of the make-believe world ● experience how the fictional past and the desired fictional future influence the present Dramatic action ● develop awareness of how he/she, as part of a group, helps to maintain focus in the Dramatic action ● develop awareness of tension in the Drama
1 st & 2 nd classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● use the ability to play at make-believe to enter fully into participation in Drama ● use his/her emerging awareness of the differences in people in order to begin to develop an understanding of the relationship between role and character ● experience how context is built and a Drama reality created through the use of space and objects ● experience how the fictional past and the desired fictional future influence the present Dramatic action ● develop the ability to help maintain the focus in the Dramatic action ● begin to see how tension adds to Drama the suspense that ensures the interest of the participants

3 rd & 4 th classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● enter into the fictional Dramatic context with the same spontaneity and freedom that he/she has earlier applied to make-believe play ● understand the relationship between role and character and develop the ability to hold on to either role or character for as long as the Dramatic activity requires ● discover how the use of space and objects can help in building the context and in signifying Dramatic themes ● explore how the fictional past and the desired fictional future influence the present Dramatic action ● begin, as a member of a group, to include in Drama activity the elements of tension and suspense ● begin the process of using script as a pre-text
5 th & 6 th classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● enter appropriately and with facility, whether watched or unwatched, into the fictional Dramatic context ● extend playing in role and in character to include the ability to accept and maintain a brief that has been decided on by either the teacher, the group or himself/herself ● discover how the use of space and objects helps in building the context and in signifying the Drama theme ● explore how the fictional past and the desired fictional future influence the present Dramatic action ● become adept at implementing the 'playing rules' that maintain focus in Dramatic action ● help to plan Dramatic activity to include the particular tension and suspense appropriate to the theme being explored ● distinguish between various genres, such as comedy, tragedy, fantasy ● become comfortable with script and understand the basic processes by which script becomes action

Co-Operating and Communicating in Making Drama	
Junior and Senior Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● develop the ability, out of role, to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the Drama ● develop, in role, the ability to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the Drama
1 st & 2 nd classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● develop, out of role, the ability to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the Drama ● develop, in role, the ability to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the Drama ● develop fictional relationships through interaction with the other characters in small-group or whole-class scenes as the Drama text is being made ● re-enact for others in the group a scene that has been made in simultaneous small-group work
3 rd & 4 th classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● develop, out of role, the ability to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the Drama

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● develop, in role, the ability to co-operate and to communicate with others in helping to shape the Drama ● develop fictional relationships through interaction with the other characters in small-group or whole-class scenes as the Drama text is being made ● enact spontaneously for others in the group a scene from the Drama, or share with the rest of the class a scene that has already been made in simultaneous small-group work
5 th & 6 th classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● develop, out of role, the ability to co-operate and to communicate with others in helping to shape the Drama ● develop, in role, the ability to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the Drama ● develop fictional relationships through interaction with the other characters in small-group or whole-class scenes as the Drama text is being made ● enact spontaneously for others in the group a scene from the Drama, or share with the rest of the class a scene that has already been made in simultaneous small-group work

Reflecting on Drama	
Junior and Senior Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● develop the ability to reflect on the action as it progresses ● experience the relationship between story, theme and life experience ● share insights gained while experiencing the Drama
1 st & 2 nd classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● use reflection on a particular Dramatic action to create possible alternative courses for the action ● experience, through Drama, the relationship between story, theme and life experience ● share insights while experiencing the Drama or insights that arise out of the Drama
3 rd & 4 th classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● use reflection on and evaluation of a particular Dramatic action to create possible alternative courses for the action ● learn, through Drama, the relationship between story, theme and life experience ● use the sharing of insights arising out of Dramatic action to develop the ability to draw conclusions and to hypothesise about life and people
5 th & 6 th classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● reflect on a particular Dramatic action in order to create possible alternative courses for the action that will reflect more closely the life patterns and issues being examined ● learn, through Drama, the relationship between story, theme and life experience ● use the sharing of insights arising out of Dramatic action to develop the ability to draw conclusions and to hypothesise about life and people

The school recognises that the strand units and the content objectives for Drama are interlinked and therefore we encourage all teachers at each class level to plan for all of the objectives over the course of a year.

The Prerequisites for Making Drama: Content, Fictional Lens and a Safe Environment

Content will supply the subject matter of the drama. This will be based on some aspect of life, on the children's experience or on the content of some other curricular area.

By using the **fictional lens**, the teacher can look at the content through the medium of story and frame it as a dramatic fiction. He/she can then suggest that the children improvise an enactment in which they engage with characters who find themselves in a particular dilemma, location or situation, suggested by the action.

A **safe environment** is crucial in order for children to feel safe and happy in the Drama environment and to increase confidence and participation in the subject. To ensure this occurs, the children and teacher will agree upon a **Drama Contract** at the beginning of the school year. The children will be given the opportunity to suggest items for the contract and once the contract has been finalised it will be signed and displayed in the classroom to remind children of proper/appropriate conduct during/for Drama lessons.

Elements of Drama

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.

Role and Character: The benefit of role and characterisation is that the child learns to view the Drama world from the point of view of someone different from himself/herself. This promotes understanding and empathy, and this empathy will in turn enhance the child's ability to understand characters increasingly distant from both his/her own personality and/or reality.

Action: Action springs from the interaction between character and situation. In the Drama, characters and situations are chosen so that certain unresolved tensions, questions or choices result. The action of the Drama lies in the resolution of these.

Place: The element of place has two defining characteristics in Drama. Firstly, the place where the fictional action happens. Secondly, the use of real place, or the space available, to represent this.

Time: All Dramatic action, like all human existence, takes place in a dimension of time. The content objective of the curriculum '*Experience how the fictional past and the desired fictional future influence the present dramatic action*' encompasses this.

Tension: Tension is essential to the Drama because it is tension that drives forward the action of the Drama. It arises when characters in the Drama are faced with conflicting needs, choices and desires, and this leads to uncertainty.

Significance: Significance could be described as the underlying relevance that a piece of Drama has to some facet of life.

Genre: Naturalistic drama is the genre that imitates most accurately the details of life. It is the genre that will come most easily to children. This is very evident in the propensity that young children have for make-believe play.

Approaches and Methodologies

Drama Games will be used as warm-ups and to motivate students to engage in Drama lessons and learner experiences. Drama games that may be used include (sample):

- Mirror Images
- Chinese Whispers
- Fruit Salad
- One Word Conversation
- Keeper of the Keys
- Good Morning Your Majesty
- Eye Argument
- One Word Game
- Jump
- Eyes Closed, Eyes Open
- Story or Die

Refer to the book '*101 Drama Games and Activities*' by David Farmer.

Methodologies used in our teaching of Drama in the school will include

- Talk and discussion
- Active learning
- Collaborative learning
- Problem solving
- Skills through content
- Using the environment
- Make – believe play to process drama

In addition to these methodologies we will use different **Drama strategies and conventions** in our teaching of Drama to include

- Still Image
- Thought Tracking
- Defining Space
- Mime
- Narration
- Hot-Seating
- Improvisation
- Briefing
- Flash Forwards/Flash Backwards
- Conscience Alley
- Soundscaping
- Ritual

- Captions
- Teacher in Role

To reflect our multi-grade context, below is a **suggested outline** of when these different strategies and conventions will be incorporated into our teaching of Drama within the school. A cumulative/spiral approach will be adopted as reflected below:

Stage	Suggested Strategies and Conventions
Junior	Defining the Space, Still Images, Teacher in Role, Mimed Narration, Whole Group improvisation, Hot seating, Improvisation in Threes
Middle	Defining the Space, Mimed Narration, Teacher in Role, Whole Group Improvisation, Still Images, Thought Tracking, Paired Improvisation, Improvisation in threes, Hot seating
Senior	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,

Assessment

Our assessment in Drama will include the following

1. Reflecting on Drama: 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 including discussion, writing, Visual Arts, speaking, listening, doing, & questioning.

2. Teacher Observation: Teacher observation will enable the teacher to identify the Drama experiences most appropriate to the children's learning and Drama needs. Also, it will enable the teacher to identify the particular content that is most successfully mediated through Drama.

3. Teacher Designed Tasks and Tests: The assessment of children's ability to perform particular tasks will involve teacher observation in a way that is focused on particular aspects of the children's involvement with Drama.

4. Self-Assessment: Self-assessment in Drama will tie in with reflecting on Drama. Children in the middle and senior classes will reflect on their Drama experiences using the self-assessment rubric (See 'Appendix' of this plan).

Children with Different Needs:

In keeping with the ethos of our school, each individual is helped to develop to his/her full artistic and dramatic potential. This will be achieved by teachers varying the level and pace of Drama lessons to suit individual needs, in order to ensure that every child reaches his/her full dramatic potential. The work assigned to the children will be carried out at an appropriate pace within a specific time range. Drama tasks and learner experiences will be modified and adapted to suit individual needs within classrooms, in order for all children to be able to fully engage and participate in Drama lessons. Different props may be used for children who are experiencing difficulty.

Linkage and Integration:

Linkage: The three different strand units namely Exploring and Making Drama, Cooperating and Communicating in making Drama and Reflecting on Drama will be linked seamlessly in different Drama lessons.

Integration: A concerted effort will be made to integrate the Drama curriculum with other subject areas. We also regard Drama as being a key methodology as well as being a subject area.

Gaeilge: Drámaíocht/ról ghlachadh/rólimirt maidir leis na téamaí éagsúla ón gcuraclam.

English: Direct integration of Drama & Oral Language Development-discrete oral language lessons. Drama strategies such as hotseating, thought tracking, mime etc. will be employed during English lessons in order to increase engagement with the texts bring read. Mime sequences and actions to accompany poetry being studied.

History: Drama Schemes based on different periods and events from History. Please refer to yearly schemes for details regarding same.

Music: Creating a mime sequence to accompany an excerpt of Music. Miming different instruments as they are being played in an excerpt.

Visual Arts: Paintings and Drawings being used as the stimuli for Drama activities and lessons.

SPHE: Drama activities/strategies such as role play, improvisation and though tracking will be used as methodologies when delivering the SPHE curriculum. Drama activities are used as a methodology in the teaching and delivery of the SPHE curriculum in our school as referred to in our Plean Scoile for SPHE and in our short and long term planning for the subject area.

Timetable:

One hour per week is allocated to the teaching of the Drama curriculum.

Resources:

- A range of different props
- Drama resource books available in the school including
‘*Step by Step Educational Drama*’
‘*Step by Step Together Educational Drama*’

'Discovering Drama: Theory and Practice for the Primary School'

'Drama Lessons for the Primary School Year'

'I'm a Supernova: Drama & Language Activities'

'Classroom Drama: A Practical Guide'

'101 Drama Games and Activities'

- Bank of Christmas Plays and Productions (developed/added to on an annual basis).

Information and Communications Technology:

Each mainstream teacher has an interactive whiteboard which may be used to support the Drama curriculum in the following ways

- By providing images and video footage as the stimulus for Drama lessons
- By providing backdrops/scene settings
- By providing Music and sound to accompany Drama lessons and learner experiences.

Safety, Health and Welfare

Teachers will at all times be mindful of the school's Safety, Health and Welfare Statement when planning for and teaching Drama. Pupils will be encouraged to safeguard their own welfare/wellbeing by following classroom and out of class rules and those set down in the 'Drama Contract'. Pupils will abide by the rules and guidelines as agreed in the 'Drama Contract' that was negotiated and signed at the start of the year.

When planning for Drama consideration is given to the following

- Safe use of props, resources and equipment.
- Safe storage facilities for props, resources and equipment.
- Safe access to and transport of props, resources and equipment.
- Ventilation of the classroom.
- Adequate amounts of Drama space for children to sit, stand and move in when doing Drama/creating Drama.

Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting:

Annual planning i.e long term plans by teachers will cover all strands and strand units. Each teacher plans fortnightly for Drama in their short-term planning documents. This short-term planning document doubles as a Cuntas Míosuil. Teachers will ensure that children have opportunities to undertake work in the three strand units of the Drama curriculum i.e they will be exposed to a broad, balanced and relevant Drama curriculum. Time for Drama teaching will be blocked for instance at the time of Christmas plays and productions and for this reason Drama may not be timetabled/planned for the following month i.e January.

Staff Development:

Time is set aside when needed at staff meetings for Drama planning/decision making. Sharing of information and expertise etc. is done at these meetings. Courses on Drama Education offered by Laois Education Centre or other organisations such as the Association for Drama in Education in Ireland (www.adei.ie) are communicated to the staff by Principal.

Parental Involvement:

Home School links are facilitated at parent teacher meetings and through 'End of Year Reports'. In conjunction with the school plan for Drama, teachers are available by appointment to discuss any Drama related concerns with parents. This Whole School Plan for Drama is available to view on the school's website.

Parents will be invited to attend plays and Drama productions in the school.

Community Links

Theatre trips will be organised on an annual basis for the children to local venues such as the Dunamase Arts Centre in Portlaoise. Different productions will be selected for different age groups.

Success Criteria

This plan is intended to make a positive difference to teaching and learning in Drama in our school.

We will know that this plan is achieving its aims when:

- Pupils have a positive attitude towards and an appreciation of all aspects of Drama
- Pupils have an interest in expression through Drama
- Pupils engage actively in Drama lessons and activities.
- Pupils explore different elements of the Drama curriculum in a meaningful way.
- Our classroom planning is closely aligned with the content of this Drama plan.
- Our classroom teaching/practice is closely aligned with the content of this Drama Plan.
- We receive positive feedback from the Inspectorate regarding our teaching of Drama in the school.

Review

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the Drama curriculum in the school. The Principal will have the responsibility for coordinating the review. The review will provide an opportunity to report on findings and to take feedback from the staff and to amend both policy and practice accordingly (if required).

The Drama Plan will be reviewed again in **October 2023**.

Implementation

Roles and Responsibilities

The plan will be implemented and developed by the teachers and supported by the Board of Management. The principal will coordinate and monitor the progress of the plan in the classrooms through formal and informal discussions with the teachers, by encouraging and accepting feedback on its implementation and by reporting to staff on findings. All staff will be provided with a copy of this plan and a copy will be put on the school's website.

This policy was adopted and ratified by Board of Management of **Scoil Fionntáin Naofa, Shanahoe** at its meeting on 27 September 2021

Signed by the Chairperson of the Board of Management:

Micheál Delaney

Chairperson of the Board of Management

APPENDIX

Assessment

Student Name:

Date:

Class:

Creating	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely
I co-operate with others				
I listen to the teacher				
I listen to my classmates				
I ask questions if I don't understand				
I plan and organise drama				
I rehearse scenes to improve them				
I use my imagination when creating drama				
I include drama skills to make the drama better				
I put effort into the creative work and always stay on task				
Performing				
I concentrate and stay focused when performing				
I'm good at spontaneous improvisation				
I'm good at planned improvisation				
I help other actors in performance				

I create interesting characters				
I stay in character for the whole performance				
I consider the audience when I'm performing				
I use space well				
I'm loud enough for the audience to hear				
I change my language depending on the character				
I use performance skills like mime				
I use drama forms like freeze frames				

Response

I know when my work is good and when it needs improving				
I tell others what is good about their work				
I tell others how to improve their work				
I give reasons for what I think				
I read texts (poems, pictures) and understand them				
I use drama language				

TARGETS

My Targets for next term are;

1 .

2 .