

# **Scoil Íosagáin**

**Policy on:  
Drama**

# Drama Policy

## Scoil Íosagáin, Upperchurch NS

### Introduction Statement

\* All teachers of Scoil Íosagáin were involved in drawing up this plan. Prior to creating this plan, all staff attended 2 days of In-service training on Drama in Thurles, as well as a visit from PCSP Cuiditheor Fidelma Morris for one day.

### Rationale

At Scoil Íosagáin, we believe that Drama provides children with ways to explore our cultural heritage and new dimensions of our changing world. It also helps children to explore their own emotions and how they related to the world around them. Language plays a critical role in drama. The drama curriculum contributes to developing the child's confidence in English, Irish and also in other languages.

### \* Vision

We are committed at Scoil Íosagáin 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.

### 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 dram world in order to promote questioning, 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.

**This Drama Plan will be addressed under the following headings:**

**1. Curriculum Planning:**

Strand and strand units  
Approaches and methodologies  
Children with different needs  
Linkage and integration  
Assessment and record keeping  
Equality of participation and access

**2. Organisational Planning:**

Timetable  
Resources  
Health and Safety  
Parental Involvement  
Community links

**1. Curriculum Planning:**

**1(a): Strand and strand units**

There is only one strand in the Drama Curriculum.

It is through Drama “to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas leading to understanding.”

This strand is sub-divided into three units:

- Exploring and making drama
- Reflecting on drama
- Co-operating and communicating in making drama

For a list of objectives for strand units as taught in each class, please see glance cards in the appendix of this document.

In addition we have agreed that the following pieces will be used as a stimulus for drama in each class:

1. Primary School Curriculum Drama 1999
2. Primary School “Your Childs learning” Guidelines for Parents
3. PCSP Drama In-School Review & Preparation Pack
4. Jnr/Snr Infants – little Red Riding Hood
5. 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Class – Goldilocks & 3 Bears
6. 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Class – Children of Lir
7. 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Class – Oisín & Tír na nÓg

### 1(b): 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. Each year the teacher will agree the ground rules with the class, so as to ensure the conditions described above, i.e. a willingness to enter into the drama, to work with others in sincerity and with respect, and to explore together situations which may arise. Children will be taught to understand that when the drama lesson is ended so too is the world of make-believe that is created. This allows children to explore a wide range of topics, some of which in other circumstances may be too sensitive to bring up.

The school will produce a Christmas concert every 2<sup>nd</sup> December whereby. Infants & 1<sup>st</sup> will perform a play. The 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> class perform the Nativity. 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> performs a play also. In the alternate year the school puts on a Nativity Play and Christmas Carol service in the church.

However, the main focus of our drama Curriculum is process drama where children will explore topics as wide as life itself. Exploring these topics will involve children in such activities as:

- The spontaneous making of drama scenes (improvisation)
- Entering into other lives and situations
- Engaging with life issues, knowledge and themes through drama
- Honing and shaping drama scenes for the purpose of communicating them to others
- Living through a story, making it up as they go along. Solving problems in the real and fictional worlds, co-operating with others and pooling ideas
- Thinking about and discussing the patterns in life so that the outcome of encounters and plots will reflect their perception of how life is or might be.

All of this will take place at a level suitable to the age of each child.

Because drama is a holistic activity it is difficult to separate the form from the content, the affective from the cognitive, the social development from the personal. Nevertheless we believe that educational outcomes will derive from two main sources:

The knowledge and insights gained from bringing the child's experience to bear on the examination of a particular aspect of life through drama

The personal skills, social skills and drama skills that children gain when they enter effectively and create the world of drama.

These skills are as natural to the child as playing, the teachers has only to act as facilitator pointing out possibilities of certain directions and avenues but leaving much of the responsibility for the exploration and its enjoyment, to the child.

### 1(c): Children with different needs

We felt that drama offers children with special needs an opportunity to participate as fully as possible in the work of the class, to learn in a team and to excel. Teachers will ensure that these children are not over-looked in group work and that they are encouraged to engage fully with the topic being covered. Other children will also learn from the special needs child and teachers will look for opportunities to point this out.

### 1(d): Linkage and integration

All three strands in drama are normally covered in each lesson and are so closely linked as to be difficult to be taught as separate units. Drama is fundamentally about exploring and creating, all work is always reflected on and reviewed and this can only be best achieved in an environment of co-operation and clear communication. Drama is very often linked to other subject areas particularly English, Gaeilge and languages as well as History, R.E. and SPHE, Geography, Music, Visual Arts.

### 1(e): Assessment and Record-Keeping

Assessment will help the teacher to monitor children's learning and development. It provides the teacher with the means of identifying the needs of individual children and enables her to create the drama contexts and to modify curriculum content in order to facilitate effective learning. Most assessment is done in drama through teacher observation. It will also be done through teacher-designed tasks and tests or projects. Recordings of children's work may occasionally be made. Children will be encouraged to self-assess during the reflecting on Drama strand unit in the curriculum.

### 1(f): Equality of participation and access

All children have equal access to drama within our school.

## **2. Organisational Planning:**

### 2(a): Timetable

Each class is time-tabled to have half an hour formal teaching time in Drama each week. In addition to this, Drama is integrated into the Curriculum in English, Irish, History, R.E. and S.P.H.E. Class teacher may decide to block drama times if deemed appropriate.

### 2(b): Resources

We have a good stage and hall, with lighting in the local community centre which is used at Christmas for formal drama. We have a small room for props and costumes. Every second Christmas we add to our drama props and costumes. We are near the Source Theatre Thurles and the Excel in Tipperary Town. We sometimes invite touring companies into school like Clan Cluana every 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> year.

The following Drama books are available in the Resource Room:

“Speaking and Listening” – Prim Ed

“I’m a Meteor” – by Starways

“Listening & Speaking 6<sup>th</sup> Class” – Folens

“100+ ideas for Drama”

#### 2(c): Health and Safety

The safety and well-being of our children is, as always, of paramount concern. Children are never unaccompanied while on stage, there is always a teacher present, and no child may attempt anything in drama which might pose a threat to her own health or that of anyone else.

#### 2(d): Individual teachers’ planning and reporting

Teachers will consult the whole school plan and curriculum documents for information and guidance for long & short-term planning.

#### 2(e): Staff development

Teachers work closely together and share their talents and strengths generously with each other –something which enriches practice throughout the school. The school also welcomes any PCSP support which is available and has benefited from this greatly in recent years.

#### 2(f): Parental involvement

The school always welcomes parental involvement and in fact many parents have enriched us by their talents. These have included, making costumes, providing props. They also provide an amazing and very appreciative audience for plays.

#### 2(g): Community links

A local amenity such as the Community hall is used for both drama classes & performances.

#### 2(h): Success criteria

This plan will be deemed successful when all classes enjoy drama and all children have the opportunity to explore their world in safe creative manner. We believe that Drama helps to create confident children and success is evident in the children themselves.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

The responsibility for implementing this plan lies with the Principal, Vice Principal, as well as with every class teacher.

**Ratification**

This plan was ratified by the Board of Management on December 2010 and communicated to staff members it will be reviewed every 2 years.

Signed *D. Cunningham*  
Chairperson, Board of Management.

Signed *Alma Quinn 17<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2010.*  
Principal.