



## **SN Tulach Uí Chadhain**

### **School Curriculum Plan** **Drama**

#### ***Introduction:***

All the staff at Scoil Naomh Bríde was involved in drawing up this plan as we endeavour to deliver a comprehensive and balanced Drama curriculum. We believe that drama can make a unique contribution to the development of the child. It is our intention that the Drama programme we deliver will expand the children's means of exploring, expressing and coming to terms with the world they inhabit in a structured and enjoyable way.

#### ***Rationale***

The purpose of this plan is to provide practical guidance for teachers, parents and other relevant persons on the provision of effective Drama education in our school. This plan will form the basis of each teacher's long & short term planning in Drama, including our approaches and methodologies in this area. This document seeks to review current practice of the teaching of drama and to develop a coherent and integrated school policy for drama.

#### ***Vision & Aims:***

At Scoil Naomh Bríde we are committed to the all-round development of each child in our care. We hope through the teaching of Drama activities we can help children develop confidence and enable each child to explore their emotions and engage with their environment in a safe and creative manner. Through the use of drama, we aim to promote strong communication and social skills and help children to deal with day to day experiences in a positive way. Drama activities help children to make connections between the imaginative life and the real world, to organise and express ideas, feelings and experiences in dramatic form. 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. Scoil Naomh Bríde, as a multi- grade setting, supplements the discrete teaching of Drama with careful integration and Linkage strategies to incorporate Drama into the school day, particularly in Gaeilge and Aistear. Further details of these strategies are outlined later in this document.

We endorse the aims of the 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 form of theatre.
- To develop the child's ability to enter physically, emotionally and intellectually into the drama 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.
- 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 curriculum 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.

### *Planning & Organisation*

Each teacher will be given a copy of this school plan and will be encouraged to 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. Drama lessons delivered will be recorded in the Cuntas Míósúil. This record of lessons will be used to review and direct future planning.

### *Strands and Strand Units*

Each teacher will prepare a yearly plan for drama which will be informed by strands and strand units of the drama curriculum. Teachers are aware of the strands, strand units and content objectives for their class.

### *Approaches and Methodologies:*

#### **Prerequisites in Making Drama**

In order to make the drama process effective three prerequisites are necessary:

- Content
- the fictional lens
- a safe environment.
- **Content** will supply the subject matter of the drama. This will be based on some aspect of life, on the child's experience or on the content of some other curriculum area.
- By using the **fictional lens** the teacher can look at the content through the medium of a 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 the particular dilemma, location or situation suggested by the action.
- In order to increase children's confidence, allay their fears and dissipate their inhibitions they must be allowed to make the drama in a **safe environment**, where what they do is valued and validated by other children and by the teacher.

#### **The elements of Drama**

Drama is characterised by certain features that give it its unique power. These may be called the elements of drama. They are:

- belief
- role and character

- action
- place
- time
- tension
- significance
- genre

School planning for drama considers a range of methodologies and approaches to provide a varied and stimulating learning environment for all pupils. We will ensure that approaches and methodologies used will address the prerequisites and core elements of drama as listed. Teachers will detail approaches and methodologies their short-term planning. The following are examples of methodologies that may be used:

- A practical approach to the teaching of drama that incorporates the pre-requisites, strand and strand units and the elements of Drama.
- Drama games: Many drama games are useful in helping to establish trust, confidence and a sense of playfulness, and some are used to help the children experience some aspect of the drama. Games can also promote the social integration of the class.
- Still image and montage: Groups compose a still picture to illustrate an idea or capture a moment. In montage such an image is set against a contrasting image or a contrasting soundscape in order to question the content of the still picture. This strategy can help greatly in reflection and in slowing down the drama
- Hot-seating: A character sits in the centre while the others ask questions about his/her life and he/she answers as the character. The person asking the questions can act as themselves or in the role as journalists.
- Thought-tracking: Some of the class do actions silently or make still images while the others speak their thoughts aloud about them, either simultaneously or individually.
- Sound-tracking: Some of the class do actions silently or make stills while the others make the sound-track to go along with them.
- Voices in the head: At a moment of choice for a particular character others in the group articulate the conflicting voices the character can hear in his/her head.
- Improvisation: The spontaneous dramatic enactment of a fiction.
- Conscience Alley/ Thought Tunnel: This is used when a character is faced with making a decision. The class forms two lines facing each other. One person (usually the teacher) takes on the role of that character as each member of the group speaks their advice. It can be organised so that those on one side give opposing advice to those on the other. When the character reaches the end of the tunnel he/she makes their decision.

### *Linkage and Integration*

Integration is an important element in the teaching of Drama. Teachers may often use themes and topics from other subjects as the stimulus for making Drama. It is also expected that drama

will be taught as part of instruction in other subjects, particularly English, Irish SPHE and SESE as it is a core methodology in the instruction of those subjects. Therefore, drama lessons may not take place in a discrete place in the timetable but rather throughout the teaching of other subjects.

### *Assessment*

A variety of assessment methods will be used in accordance with the school's assessment policy. Our visiting teacher will help in providing feedback to teachers and children. The visiting teacher will be made aware of the importance of praise as well as constructive suggestions for improvement. Teachers will be ultimately responsible to assessing children's progress and reporting on this as part of their usual reporting procedures.

### *Children with different needs*

Drama offers learning opportunities that are crucial to children with special educational needs. In Scoil Naomh Bríde opportunities will be provided for children with special educational needs to participate as fully as possible in the class, to show their capabilities and independent achievement. Through the use of differentiation, children will engage fully with topics being covered while encouraging these children to reach their own individual potential. Drama has so many positive learning benefits for children with SEN. Drama is a co-operative activity, it provides a valuable experience in turn-taking and in working with others in order to achieve particular goals. Activities in the strand unit 'Co-operating and communicating in making drama' provide learning opportunities that are crucial to children with special needs. Crucially it can contribute to the child's language development in extending their vocabulary and expressive ability while the physical dimension of drama will also assist non-verbal expression. Furthermore, elements such as place and time, spatial awareness are cultivated through drama activities. Most importantly drama gives such scope for self-expression and self realisation, the contribution drama can make to any child's self-esteem is invaluable.

### *Timetable:*

The integrated approach to the teaching of drama will be widely used at all levels of our school. Some elements of the drama curriculum may be taught in an integrated approach through other subjects. Time will be allocated in blocks for specific aspects of arts education also where appropriate. In keeping with the recommendations in the Primary School Curriculum Introduction (pg.70) a minimum two and half hours per week is devoted to Arts education in the infant classes and a minimum of three hours per week for classes for 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>. This time may be banked to dedicate an extended period of time less frequently as deemed appropriate by individual teachers. This will allow for more intensive periods of work towards occasions such as the Christmas Plays or Dramas for special occasions

### *Assessment and Record Keeping*

The assessment of the Drama curriculum at Scoil Naomh Bríde will involve observing certain crucial areas of each child's ability and their efforts in drama activities.

We will assess:

- Willingness to participate in activities
- Readiness to engage with a certain activity

- The level of competence of a child in carrying out an activity
- Interest in and attitude to activity/enjoyment of the subject
- Willingness to cooperate in individual, pair and group activities
- The child's ability to self-evaluate.

Assessment will take place in accordance with our assessment policy and teachers will provide details of assessment procedures in their short-term planning. Details of learning in Drama will be recorded in each teacher's Cuntas Míósúil

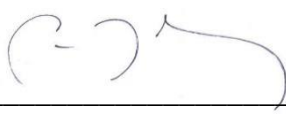
### *Success Criteria*

We will review this whole school plan for Drama in the future using the following criteria:

1. How individual teacher preparation, planning and teaching reflects this plan
2. Are a range of stimulating methodologies being used?
3. Are we assessing children's drama learning
4. How well are drama concepts learnt by children
5. How well are children's drama skills progressing

### *Ratification and Review*

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management in May 2024 and will be reviewed every 3 years. The policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent's Association.

Signed  \_\_\_\_\_

**Date: 16/5/2024**

**Chairperson, Board of Management**

Signed  \_\_\_\_\_

**Date: 16/5/2024**

**School Principal**



