

**WholeSchool Plan for**

# **Drama**

**Limerick School Project NS,  
O'Connell Avenue,  
Limerick City.**



## Drama School Plan

### ■ Introductory Statement and Rationale

#### (a) Introductory Statement

The staff of Limerick School Project NS has drawn up this whole school plan in drama in consultation with school stakeholders. This plan is for the information of teachers, others who work in the school, the Board of Management, Department of Education and Skills and other interested parties in the school community.

#### (b) Rationale

We, the staff at Limerick School Project, are writing this document as a record of our agreement to adopt a whole school, coherent approach to the teaching of drama. We will endeavour to deliver a broad-based and balanced programme as laid out in the 1999 Primary School Curriculum.

We recognise that the importance of drama lies in the nature of the learning experience it affords the child. It is the intention that our drama programme will expand the children's means of exploring, expressing and coming to terms with the world they inhabit in a structured and enjoyable way.

### ■ Vision and Aims

#### (a) Vision:

*We seek to assist the children in our school in achieving their potential through the teaching of drama and in so doing enhance the quality of the child's life through the dramatic experience. Each individual child is encouraged to perform and participate in the dramatic experience to each individual child's own potential.*

#### (b) Aims:

We aim through this plan, drawn up in accordance with the drama curriculum, to set out our approach to the teaching and learning of drama. This plan will form the basis for teachers' long and short term planning. It will also inform new or temporary teachers of the approaches and methodologies used in our school.

*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.*

**(c) Broad Objectives:**

When due account is taken of intrinsic abilities and varying circumstances, the drama curriculum should enable the child to:

- *Develop the ability to enter physically, mentally and emotionally into the fictional drama context and discover its possibilities through cooperation with others;*
- *Develop empathy with and understanding of others and the confidence needed to assume a role or character;*
- *Experience and create an atmosphere where ideas, feelings and experiences can be expressed, where conflict can be handled positively, and life situations explored openly and honestly;*
- *Develop personal adaptability, spontaneity, the ability to co-operate, verbal and non-verbal skills, and imagination and creativity, in order to ensure that the drama text reflects real life in a fresh and valid way;*
- *Develop the ability to decide what course is likely to lead to significant drama action;*
- *Develop the ability to steer the drama towards areas that are likely to lead, through whatever genre, to insights into the subject matter to be explored;*
- *Develop the ability to co-operate with others in solving, out of role, the problems that are presented in making the drama;*
- *Develop the ability to use drama to promote or express a view on a subject on which he/she may have strong views or feelings;*
- *Develop the ability to use drama to examine and explore unfamiliar material so as to reach an understanding of the patterns, meanings and concepts contained in it;*
- *Develop concern, curiosity and understanding of the increasingly sophisticated patterns that comprise drama content and of the increasingly refined insights that can flow from it;*
- *Use drama to explore actively the human aspect of all learning as a means of curricular integration;*
- *Become aware of subtexts, which manifest themselves involuntarily, in drama and in life. Begin to develop, through active story-making in drama, an appreciation of plot and theme so that these can form the basis of an understanding of drama literature and how it relates to text-making in a specific time and place;*
- *Begin to be able to discern the covert or overt messages in drama texts, ranging from advertising to Shakespeare, through becoming aware of how values and attitudes are woven into drama;*
- *Begin to develop the ability to assess critically the validity of the meanings hidden in drama texts and what can be learned from them.*

## ■ **Content of Plan**

This Drama Plan will be addressed under the following headings:

Curriculum Planning:

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

Organisational Planning:

- **Timetable**
- **Resources**
- **Health and safety**
- **Individual teachers' planning and reporting**
- **Staff development**
- **Parental involvement**
- **Community links**

## ■ **Strand and Strand Units:**

### **Strand**

The content is presented in one **strand** at each level:

*Drama to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding.*

The title of the strand defines the nature of drama. The learning experience encompasses both the cognitive and the affective abilities of the child and involves an exploration that will lead to a greater understanding of himself/herself and of the world.

There is a continuity, progression and consistency from class to class. Stimuli may include:

- Stories
- Poetry
- Pictures/Photographs
- Objects
- Issues from the SPHE curriculum
- Aspects of life in the past, present, future
- Needs and concerns of pupils

### **Strand units**

Within the strand the detailed elements of content are presented in three strand units which describe aspects of drama exploration, experience and activity. The strand units are:

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

Strand units and content objectives for class levels are to be found in the Primary School Curriculum as follows:

- Infant classes pp.13-17
- First and second class pp. 19-23
- Third and Fourth class pp. 25-31
- Fifth and sixth class pp. 33-39.

### Elements

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

### ■ 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. There isn't a thematic approach throughout the school but rather themes are developed within classes that are age appropriate. Varied resources ensure variety of themes throughout, ensuring none are repeated but continuity of methodologies allow for natural progression throughout the school.*

*In infant and junior classes the stories and fictional incidents that constitute the fictional lens and through which the content is mediated will be stories of animals, toys, fathers, mothers, simple journeys, bus stops and all the other fictional transformations that allow the child to try out in safety, situations encountered in the real world. Later, when the child is no longer afraid of fantasy and fairy-tale, these can be added to the fictions used.*

*From the middle classes onwards factual stories from history or current news may be used more and more. By the time they reach sixth class, children should have begun to understand the essential relationship that drama has with life, and the basis should be laid for an enlightened choice of significant action. In senior classes especially, existing fictions such as stories, poems, play scripts or videos can be used as pretexts, providing content that has already been mediated through a fictional lens by the writer or director. Drama strategies, while a useful tool in drama, should be used selectively within the drama. They should not in themselves be seen as the basis for a drama lesson.*

Many strategies can be used in drama. The following is a list:

- **Drama Games**-these can help to establish trust, confidence and a sense of playfulness. They can promote the social integration of the class.
- **Still image and montage**-This strategy can help greatly in reflection and in slowing down the drama.
- **Hot-seating**-can help clarify aspects of character for all concerned but has a limited use.
- **Thought-tracking**-Can be useful for reflection on the meaning of particular significant moments.

- **Sound-tracking**-Teacher Guidelines pg. 83
- **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.*

The making of drama involves entering the drama world with as much honesty, authenticity and spontaneity as possible. Since children have different emotional and physical needs, this process will have different emphases in different classes and with different groups of children.

Children can be encouraged to reflect on the drama through writing, visual arts, listening, doing, questioning etc.

#### ■ **Children with Different Needs:**

Strategies, lessons and approaches will be chosen and/or adapted to ensure that all children have equal access to drama lessons irrespective of special needs. Each class will work on a drama contract at the beginning of the year which will outline the acceptable behaviour during drama lessons, therefore ensuring confident participation by all.

#### ■ **Linkage and Integration:**

Particular attention will be given to possibilities for integration. This process will help extend the child's understanding of both the drama curriculum and the subject areas with which they would be integrated. Sample areas for integration will include:

- Gaeilge-ag déanamh agallaimh agus drámaí beaga bunaithe ar na téamaí sa Ghaeilge.
- English-Close links with the Oral Language programme, active responses to stories, poems etc.
- History-characters from history, certain time periods etc
- Geography-explore incidents in other countries through drama, dramatise stories from other countries, interviews, the local environment as a stimulus for drama.
- Music-express feelings created by music in a dramatic way.
- Art- use of pictures as stimulus for drama, represent some work from drama in art.
- SPHE - encourage team work, co-operation, empathy, respect for others and their personal space etc.
- PE - integrate drama with the gymnastics strand, sports theme in drama e.g. feelings experienced in sport, winning and losing, team work etc.

#### ■ **Assessment and Record Keeping:**

The assessment of the drama curriculum at Limerick School Project will involve observing certain crucial areas of each child's ability and more importantly his efforts. These areas include:

- The child's ability to engage with the task in hand.
- The child's attitude and enjoyment of the subject.
- The child's ability to work in a group/with a partner/alone.
- The child's ability to describe his own process.
- The child's ability to self-evaluate.

Actual assessment of the above points will be carried out using the following practical guidelines:

- **Teacher observation:** By observing closely on a day to day basis the children's involvement in the various drama activities, the extent to which they are developing the ability to use drama skills and concepts to maximise their learning experiences can be monitored.
- **Teacher designed tasks:** The assessment of children's ability to perform particular tasks will involve teacher observation in a way that is focused on a particular aspect of children's involvement with drama.
- **Work samples:** To include art work or written work and other examples of children's response to, reflection on and extension of their drama experience.
- **Performance:** For the class and occasionally for the whole school at assemblies.

■ **Equality of Participation and Access:**

All children in Limerick School Project will be given the opportunity to participate in the drama programme under the following guidelines that:

- Roles will not be imposed on children if they are not comfortable with them.
- Opportunity will be given to all children to explore gender roles.
- Authentic materials from other cultures may be used when appropriate and incorporated into drama activities as the need arises.

■ **Organisational Planning:**

The allocation of time to drama will have two sources:

- In the time allocation given to Arts education
- In its integration with other subjects and curriculum areas.

A time allowance of 3 hours per week will be allocated to Arts. Within this time frame, drama will be assigned 1 hour per week. However, owing to the practical nature of this subject area, blocked time for project work or integrated studies will sometimes be used as an efficient way of managing time.

The most obvious locations for drama are the classroom and the school hall, although there is no reason why, in good weather, effective drama activities cannot be pursued out of doors. Teachers can do drama very successfully in the classroom, but the varied nature of drama activity will also require the facility of the greater space that the school hall can provide.

The allocation of time for the use of this facility can become an important element of the organisational planning of drama in the school. Each class will have a weekly time allocation for drama in the school hall available should the class teacher decide to use it.

■ **Resources:** See Appendix A

■ **Health and Safety:**

Teachers will at all times be mindful of the school's Health and Safety Policy. Children will be encouraged to safeguard their own well-being. Care and attention will be given to the following:

- Hidden dangers if children are moving around the classroom.
- Storage facilities.
- Access to, and transport of equipment/materials.
- Ventilation of the classrooms.
- Amount of space for children to sit or stand when doing drama activities.

■ **Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting:**

Teachers will base their yearly and short-term plans on this drama plan. Work covered will be outlined in the Cuntas Miosúil and will be used to review the school's progress regularly.

■ **Staff Development:**

The principal will notify the staff of any opportunities for further professional development through participation in courses offered by the Education Centres and /or other parties. Teachers may apply to the Board of Management for funding for these courses and the Board will make a decision on such applications based on the needs of the school at that given time. The skills and expertise of the school will be shared in

drama as in other curricular areas, through input at staff meetings, as well as on an informal basis. The staff will also avail of any training provided by the Department of Education and Skills.

■ **Parental Involvement:**

Parents who are involved in drama and who have a particular interest in or expertise in drama are always encouraged to contribute and participate in drama in our school.

Artists (actors /drama groups/theatre groups) in the community may also be invited to perform for the children. All such visits will be discussed in advance with the principal, and the teacher will be present at all times.

■ **Community Links:**

The local community, actors/members of theatre groups, local arts centres and education officers, concert halls, local dramatic events and national support structures are considered as valuable support resources for the drama curriculum e.g. Lime Tree Theatre, Belltable Arts Centre, plays performed by local secondary schools and musical societies and drama groups/theatre groups. We avail of in-school workshops from visiting artists where possible.

■ **Success Criteria:**

The success of this plan will be measured by the following criteria:

- Implementation will be evident in teaching and learning in the classroom.
- Continuity of content and methodology will be evident in teachers' planning and monthly reports.
- On going evaluation through teacher observation and teacher designed tasks.

Means of assessing the outcomes of the plan include:


- Teacher/parent feedback.
- Children's feedback.
- Inspectors' suggestions/reports.

■ **Implementation:**

Each member of staff is responsible for implementing this whole-school plan for drama in their own classes. Clear evidence of this implementation will be evident in teachers' Cúntais Míósúil

■ **Ratification and Communication**

The Board of Management of Limerick School Project has reviewed and ratified this plan in consultation with all school stakeholders, and it is available to all members of the school community.

Signed: 

Shane MacCurtain  
Chairperson, BOM

Date: 20/1/20



## APPENDIX A

### Drama Resources

<i>Class</i>	<i>Resource(s)</i>	<i>Lesson(s)</i>	<i>Curricular Links</i>
<b><u>Juniors</u></b>	<i>Step by Step- Educational Drama- Joanna Parkes and Sarah FitzGibbon</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ferdie the Frog</b>-The class meet a shy, young frog who is keen to learn all about them and their world of school</li> </ul>	SPHE Science
<b><u>Seniors</u></b>	<i>Step by Step- Educational Drama- Joanna Parkes and Sara FitzGibbon</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Seasons' Wizard</b>-The people who live together in a small village get very confused when the weather starts getting mixed up .They have to help the Seasons Wizard sort out the problems of the young trainee wizards.</li> </ul>	SPHE Science Conflict Resolution.
<b><u>First</u></b>	<i>Step by Step- Educational Drama- Joanna Parkes and Sara FitzGibbon</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The King of the Sea</b>-The children receive a letter from the king of the Sea asking them to travel to his Palace under the Sea and help him sort out a number of problems including the nasty cough that has struck the young fish.</li> </ul>	SPHE SESE Science
<b><u>Second</u></b>	<i>Step by Step- Educational Drama- Joanna Parkes and Sarah FitzGibbon.</i>  <i>Drama Lessons for Five to Eleven Year Olds-Judith Ackroyd and Jo Boulton</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Grumpy Old Man</b>-This scheme explores what happens when a grumpy man has a beautiful garden which he doesn't wish to share with anyone else. The Old Man and the local children learn how much they can gain if they share and look after what they have together.</li> </ul>	SPHE Science Maths Story-Telling The Seasons Conflict Resolution Creative Writing
<b><u>Second</u></b> Also:	<i>As Above</i>	<b>The Sun Wizard</b> <b>The Sad Clown</b> <b>Suzie and the Snow</b>	
<b><u>Third</u></b>	<i>Step by Step- Educational Drama- Joanna Parkes and</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mystery at the Monastery</b>-The children experience life as a</li> </ul>	History Community Education Creative Writing

	<p><i>Sarah FitzGibbon</i></p> <p><i>Drama Lessons for Five to Eleven Year Olds-Judith Ackroyd and Jo Boulton</i></p>	<p><i>monk in a monastery and have to discover why things start disappearing and going wrong just before the arrival of the Bishop with important news.</i></p>	
<p><b><u>Third</u></b> Also:</p>	<p><i>As Above</i></p>	<p><b><i>The Baker's Shop Lifecycles</i></b></p>	
<p><b><u>Fourth</u></b></p>	<p><i>Step by Step-Educational Drama-Joanna Parkes and Sarah FitzGibbon</i></p> <p><i>Drama Lessons for Five to Eleven Year Olds-Judith Ackroyd and Jo Boulton</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Samir's Life in Ancient Egypt-The Class live through crucial turning points in the life of a young boy in Ancient Egypt as he learns his trade from his father , helps build the pharoh's pyramid and has the honour of becoming the Pharoh's master potter.</i></b></li> </ul>	<p><i>History SPHE Maths</i></p>
<p><b><u>Fourth</u></b> Also:</p>	<p><i>As Above</i></p>	<p><b><i>Red Riding Hood Building the Pyramid</i></b></p>	
<p><b><u>Fifth</u></b></p>	<p><i>Step by Step-Educational Drama-Joanna Parkes and Sarah FitzGibbon</i></p> <p><i>Drama Lessons for Five to Eleven Year Olds-Judith Ackroyd and Jo Boulton</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Your Country Needs You-The class explores life for a family living in London during the Blitz of the Second World War and how it would feel when the children are evacuated to the country. They discover what life is like for the eldest daughter who goes to France as an undercover spy and has to pass on important messages and decipher codes.</i></b></li> </ul>	<p><i>History Geography Creative Writing</i></p>
<p><b><u>Fifth</u></b> Also:</p>	<p><i>As Above</i></p>	<p><b><i>Land Tax The Romans in Britain The Reds and the Greens</i></b></p>	
<p><b><u>Sixth</u></b></p>	<p><i>Step by Step-Educational Drama-</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>What's Wrong with Sam?-Sam's family</i></b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Geography Conflict Resolution</i></p>

	<p><i>Joanna Parkes and Sarah FitzGibbon</i></p> <p><i>Drama Lessons for Five to Eleven Year Olds-Judith Ackroyd and Jo Boulton</i></p>	<p><i>have to move to another part of the country and Sam finds it difficult to come to terms with all the changes in her life. The class have to help her to find a way to deal with the changes she is facing without losing her temper and getting into greater trouble.</i></p>	
<p><b><u>Sixth</u></b> <b><i>Also:</i></b></p>	<p><i>As Above</i></p>	<p><b><i>King Lear</i></b> <b><i>The Lady of Shalott</i></b> <b><i>Where's the Blame</i></b></p>	