



Drama Policy

Introductory Statement

This plan was formulated by staff to provide a coherent approach to the teaching of Drama across the whole school. It is envisaged that this plan will benefit the teaching and learning of Drama in Navan Educate Together National School.

Rationale

At Navan Educate Together National School, we believe that drama provides children with ways to explore their own feelings, their cultural background, how they relate to the world around them and to develop new concepts. Language plays an important role in drama. The drama curriculum also contributes to developing the child's confidence in English and Irish.

This document will also serve as a basis for each teacher's long term and short term planning. It will also serve to inform new or temporary teachers and parents and other partners in the education process, of the approaches and methodologies which we use in Drama.

Vision

In Navan Educate Together NS we are committed to the all-round development of each child.

Through drama, we hope 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 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 other
- 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.

Curriculum Planning

1. Strand and strand units

There is only one strand in the Drama Curriculum. The strand is sub-divided into three units.

Strand	Strand Units
To explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring and making drama • Reflecting on drama • Co-operating and communicating in making drama

2. 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 his/her class and draw up a drama contract so as to ensure the conditions described above are adhered to. Children will be taught to understand that when the drama lesson is ended so too is the world of make-believe that is created.

The focuses of our Drama curriculum are process drama and drama subject links, where children will explore topics as wide as life itself. The children will explore all strand units through dramas linked to the curriculum areas and individual teacher's planning.

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

As drama is a holistic activity it is difficult to separate the form from the content, the affective from the cognitive and 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 teacher has only to act as a facilitator pointing out possibilities of certain directions and avenues but leaving much of the responsibility for the exploration and its enjoyment to the child.

3. Children with Additional Needs

We feel that Drama offers children with additional 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 all children are included in group work and are encouraged to engage fully with the topic being

covered. The children will learn from one another and receive encouragement from peers and teachers in line with the ethos of the school. Children from the Rainbow Rooms will seek opportunities to integrate with the children from mainstream classes during drama activities, where appropriate to the child's needs.

4. Linkage and Integration

All three strand units in Drama have a natural linkage and are taught as a unit rather than individual units. Each lesson can include aspects of making and exploring, reflection, co-operation and communicating.

Other areas of learning will be enhanced by their integration with the drama programme. Learn Together, English, Gaeilge, SESE, the Arts curriculum, and the Aistear curriculum will be integrated with Drama where possible.

5. 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 him/her to create the drama contexts and to modify the curriculum content in order to facilitate effective learning. In Drama, most assessment is done through teacher observation. The children will also self and peer assess.

6. Equality of Participation and Access

Equal opportunities will be given to all children in the school, keeping in line with the school ethos, across all drama strands and activities in class based drama lessons, school assemblies or performances.

7. Interculturalism

Through the drama curriculum children will have the opportunity to explore and to learn about drama from a wide range of countries and cultures reflecting our diverse pupil population.

Organisational Planning

1. Timetable

The recommended time per week to spend on the Arts (Drama, Visual Arts & Music) is 2hrs 30mins for Infant classes and 3 hours for 1st-6th class. Class teachers may decide to teach formal drama lessons or integrate drama with other curriculum subjects where appropriate.

A block timetabling of drama may take place in the build up to concerts, assemblies etc. (for example winter concert in December, end of year concerts, Learn Together assemblies)

2. Resources

See Appendix 5 for a list of drama resource books for Drama.

3. Health & Safety

The safety and wellbeing of the children in Navan Educate Together NS is, as always, of paramount importance. No child may attempt anything in drama which might pose a risk of his/her own health and safety or that of anyone else.

4. Individual teachers' planning and reporting

The whole school plan and curriculum strand and strand units for Drama will provide the information for individual teachers and for their class planning, both long and short term planning. Teachers will report on work completed in their monthly report (Cuntas Míosúil)

5. Staff Development

Teachers work closely together and share their talents and strengths. Some teachers may undertake summer courses in Drama. If the opportunity for future training arises, teachers will avail of this opportunity.

6. Parental involvement

In Navan Educate Together NS we welcome parental involvement. Parents who have a particular interest or skill in Drama are encouraged, when needed, to come to the school and give their expertise/help in the delivery of the Drama curriculum.

Appendices

The following appendices are attached to this policy.

Appendix 1: Glossary of Drama Terms

Appendix 2: Sample Drama Contract

Appendix 3: Warm Up Games

Appendix 4: Opportunities for Cross-Curricular Integration

Appendix 5: Drama Resource Books

Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibility for implementing this plan lies with the Principal and with every class teacher.

Success Criteria

We believe that drama helps to create confident children and success is evident in the children themselves.

Ratification

This policy will be subjected to periodic review.

This plan was ratified by the Board of Management on 23rd November 2022.

Chairperson: Anthony Mackey

Principal: Eleanor Barker

Appendix 1: Glossary of Drama Terms

Brief - a suggestion or instruction given to one character, of which the other characters may or may not be unaware, which has the purpose of giving a new direction to the drama.

Content - the subject matter of a drama, based on the child's general experience and needs or drawn from the content of some other curriculum area.

Exposition – introduces background characters and events.

Fictional lens - the choice of fictional characters and the situation they are placed in that creates the dramatic context for the enactment.

Framing - the process through which a fiction is transformed in to directions and suggestions for an enactment. (It is through this process that the drama text is distanced sufficiently from the children to be safe but remains close enough to be explored effectively.)

Genre - the form of dramatic expression — naturalistic, comic, absurd, etc.

Improvisation - the spontaneous dramatic enactment of a fiction.

Mantle of the Expert - the process by which the teacher implies that the children are 'experts' in some particular topic so as to encourage them to research that topic within the drama

Narrated mime - Storytellers read a narrative directly to the audience while the rest of cast moves forward in turn to create the characters, animals, inanimate objects, weather, and scenic elements.

Plot - the coherent series of incidents that, together with the theme, make up the drama.

Pre-text - an effective starting point that will launch the dramatic world in such a way that the participants can identify their roles and responsibilities and begin to build the dramatic world together.

Process Drama - the process by which drama texts are made. A process drama is a teaching and learning method in which both the student and teacher are working in and out of role.

Role - pretending to be someone or something other than oneself.

Scene - a short play, an improvised text or a dramatic action.

Soundscape - A soundscape is the use of sounds which are combined to create mood and atmosphere.

Teacher-in-Role - the teacher taking a role in the drama and moulding it from within.

Tension - the expression in drama of the conflict inherent in the needs and desires of the different characters in the drama that drives the action forward.

Text - a class text is the selection, enactment and linking of scenes in the drama, and all the class activities related to this a drama text is an enacted drama fiction, watched or unwatched, whether it takes place in the class or in a theatre - like situation, a written text is a script that describes a dramatic action.

Theme - the underlying patterns by which the plot of the drama is connected to life.

Appendix 2: Sample Drama Contract

We, _____ class in Navan Educate Together, agree to the following rules during our Drama lessons:

- During drama lessons we value and respect one another.
- We develop ideas co-operatively with others.
- Remember to participate - Give it a try!
- Always watch and listen during a performance.
- Make sure you speak loudly and clearly.
- Always use the space sensibly and safely.
- Create a non-judgemental space – listen to the ideas of others.

Appendix 3: Warm Up Games

Bus Stop - Set out 3-5 chairs in front of the class to act as a bus stop. Each child in the group will choose a card with character details. One at a time, students will come up to the bus stop and interact with one another in character. Keep in mind how these characters might interact with one another, body language etc. The group's aim is to identify the roles. As the group identifies each character, that person catches their bus by re-joining the class, everyone else moves up a seat, and someone else joins the bus stop.

Change the Action - The pupils must copy your previous action every time you shout change, so: Teacher claps hands. Pupils sit still. Teacher shouts change and begins to pat his/her head. Pupils begin to clap their hands. Teacher shouts change again and begins to stamp his/her feet. Pupils now pat their head. This is a good concentration builder.

Charades – Choose a player to start. The player thinks of a word that the others should be familiar with. The player then acts the word or phrase they've chosen in front of the other players. The first person to guess the word or phrase gets a point. Picture cards can be used with younger students to choose a charade.

Cross The Circle - Everyone is numbered around the circle as 1,2,3. When you call their number, everyone must cross the circle in role as.....a ballerina.....a lion.....a moonwalker.....someone who's stuck in the mud.....a spy.....whatever you can think of.

First Letter, Last Letter - The teacher chooses a category, e.g. animals. The first child names an animal (lion). The second child in the circle/row must name an animal starting with the last letter of the previous word (n). This continues until all children have had a turn.

Follow the Leader - Arrange the class into a single file line. The person at the front is the leader and chooses the movement as they lead the group around the space. This could be star jumps, moon walking, tip toeing like a ballerina. The rest of the class has to copy the movement and follow the line around the space. The teacher instructs the leader to go to the back of the line, and the new leader chooses the movement. This rotation continues until everyone in the class has had a turn as the leader.

Fortunately, Unfortunately... - The children sit in the circle. The teacher or a student starts off the story. Each person must add a sentence, changing the fate of the main character, e.g. Unfortunately, the plane's engines failed. Fortunately, the pilot had a parachute. Unfortunately, the parachute would not open. Fortunately, there was a haystack underneath. etc.

Master Master, Who Am I? Blindfold a volunteer. A pupil selected by you must approach them quietly, disguise their voice and ask "Master Master, Who Am I?" If the volunteer guesses correctly, they get another go. If they are wrong, the successful "voice" gets a turn.

Mirror - Pair students up and assign them as either partner A or B. Student A is the first leader. This student will begin moving, exploring levels and space, as well as the speed of movement. Student B is to mirror every movement. Students complete the task without talking to one another, developing communication through eye contact and focus. After some time, switch to partner B leading. They now do the same as partner A did.

One Sentence Story – The children sit in a circle. One child starts off the story with “Once upon a time...”. As the story continues around the circle, each child adds another line. A variation on this is using a ball or beanbag and the person who catches the ball/beanbag must continue the story instead of moving around the circle.

Pass the Object – One child picks up an imaginary object and completes an action, giving a clue to its identity. They then “pass” the imaginary object to another child. When the child receives the object, they must act accordingly (e.g. if the first child alluded to the object being heavy, the second child must continue this drama). The imaginary object is passed around the room until the teachers calls “stop” and the child try to name the imaginary object.

Quick Change Artist - Have everyone sit in a circle and choose one person to be the quick change artist. Have the artist go out of sight and change something on him/herself that is visible (i.e.-put jumper on inside out, change hair, tie/untie shoes...). When the artist is done, have him/her walk into the middle of the circle and turn around slowly to give everyone a chance to see what has been changed. Then go around the circle having each person guess what has been changed. The first person to guess correctly is the next artist.

Rhythm Detective - Have students sit in a circle. Explain that one person is the rhythm leader and is going to lead the rhythm. Everyone else has to follow this person’s rhythms (such as clapping, clicking fingers, using the floor/ knees like drums). Choose one student to be the rhythm detective, who leaves the room while the rhythm leader is selected. While the rhythm detective is out of the room, the rhythm leader begins the rhythm. The rest of the class is to follow the rhythm leader’s rhythm. When the rhythm changes, the rest of the class need to adopt it quickly so that the detective does not easily identify the leader. Bring the detective back in. The detective stands in the middle of the circle and has three guesses to find the rhythm leader. Once the detective has made three guesses, the rhythm leader is revealed and the game begins again with a new rhythm leader.

Splat - Students stand in a circle, with one person in the middle. The person in the middle is the splatter boss! The boss calls names one at a time, and the person called has to duck immediately. The two people on either side of the called person have to shout “Splat!” and point at where the person was. If the called person ducks in time, they are safe. If not, they are out. If the student ducks out of the way in time, the last student to say “Splat!” is out. Students can also get out if they point or yell out when it isn’t their turn or if they point the wrong way.

The Wind Blows - Put chairs in a circle. Turn one chair to face out. Choose someone to stand in the middle. They (or you) can call: “The wind blows for..... everyone wearing a watch, everyone wearing blue, everyone with their ears pierced, everyone with a dog etc. If the statement applies to a pupil, they must get up and change places. The caller finds a seat. The last pupil left standing, becomes the new caller. No one can change places with the person sitting next to them.

What are you doing? - Arrange students in a circle, and have one student in the centre. The student in the centre begins miming an activity, such as watering the garden, shopping, playing the piano, etc. The next student in the circle steps in and asks, “What are you doing?” to which the first student responds with something different from what they are actually doing – e.g. if the student is miming walking the dog, they might say, “I’m playing the piano.” This new activity is what the next student has to mime. The new student begins acting out their given activity until the following student asks “What are you doing?” This continues until everyone has had a turn.

Appendix 4: Opportunities for Cross-Curricular Integration

These are only suggested topics/themes for class groups. These suggestions do not replace class teachers' individual planning and preparation. It is the responsibility of all teachers to ensure the topics chosen align with the class curriculum in relevant subjects where cross-curricular integration occurs. Sample process dramas will be made available to teachers on the school's shared drive

Junior & Senior Infants

History Links	Geography Links	Science Links	Learn Together
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing up • Old or new? • The story of milk • Long ago and now • Sequencing/ordering fairy-tales and other short stories • My family • What happens next? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My school • In the woods • Weather • The doctor • People who help us • Recycling and the environment • The 4 seasons • Travelling and maps • Homes and the house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Me, my face • The 5 senses • Materials • The barn owl • The squirrel • The oak tree • Nocturnal animals • Polar bears • Penguins • Fox • Pets • Animal homes • Farm animals • Animal babies • Cat family • Life cycle of different animals • Forces/movement 	<p>Stories with a moral, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rainbow Fish • The Little Red Hen • The Boy Who Cried Wolf • The Tortoise and the Hare • The Three Little Pigs <p>Celebrations, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christmas • Eid • Diwali • Hanukkah <p>Ethics and the Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring • Summer • Autumn • Winter

Drama in the infant classroom will have many cross-curricular links with Aistear – please see the relevant school Aistear plan for details of the themes

1st and 2nd Class

<u>SESE</u>	<u>Learn Together</u>
Oisín i dTír na nÓg – sequencing the story, narrated mime of the journey, creating Tír na nÓg.	- Moral and Spiritual (love)
Gráinne Ní Mháile (Granuaile) – the life of a pirate, a day on a pirate ship, designing a treasure map for others to follow.	- World Habitat Day
Homelessness – exploration of the five senses during different weather conditions.	- Belief Systems (naming ceremonies)
Hibernation – re-enacting the journey of an animal as it prepares for hibernation, helping the squirrel hide his huts, helping the bear set up his cave.	- Famous People
Christmas around the world – still images of Christmas in different countries.	- Friendship/Anti- Bullying
Hospitals – a day in the life of a doctor/nurse/patient, role-play a hospital visit, interview a doctor/nurse.	- Ethics and the Environment (winter)
Late Late Toy Show – putting together a mini toy show performance.	- Story with a Moral
Fionn and the Giant’s Causeway – sequencing, role-play as Fionn and the Giant, hot seating.	- Belief Systems (Religious Leaders)
Life Cycle of a Butterfly	- Drama based on Learn Together picture books
Sporting Heroes – hot seat as one of the characters, charades, interview the character.	

3rd & 4th Class

<u>SESE</u>	<u>Learn Together</u>
Local History: Pick one building e.g. school, castle, house. Be a historian. Teacher in role of you planning a field trip to the building, what you need, what you'll do etc.	- Litter/ Waste Management
Cities and towns of Ireland: Drama style presentation about a city/ town in Ireland/ Make a poster advertising a landmark/ persuasive piece/ presentation about a town	- World Habitat Day
The Ancient Romans: Life in Ancient Rome, games and pastimes, Colosseum, Circus Maximus, a slave working in a villa, what jobs do you think you should do?	- Core Value: Kindness
The Celts: Exploring Celtic myths and legends through Drama e.g. retelling the children of lir or cuchulainn.	- Famous People
Education in Ireland: School in the past from point of view of a student. Reconstruction of a hedge school. Creating a timeline of Irish school history.	- Friendship/Anti- Bullying
Jewish myths and legends: Retelling the legend of Golem and the old man and the figs. Storyboard and sequencing story.	-Fair Trade
Transport: Prepare a one-minute talk about the best form of transport in 21 st century Ireland. What is best and why it is superior to other forms of transport.	- Story with a Moral
The Maori- exploring Maori history through Drama	- Paganism
Stories from around the world: Retell key scenes from each story e.g. Mother Theresa, Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi	- Sikhism
Homelessness: Acting out scenarios about homelessness.	- Democracy
Games and pastimes in the past: Demonstration of different games and pastimes	- Winter
19 th Century Ireland: Life in 19 th century Ireland, the great famine, The GAA, 1798 rebellion	- Discrimination and Prejudice
Tidy Towns: Creating a promotional advert for a tidy towns competition.	- Spring
Other SESE topic suggestions: Stone Age, Ancient Greece, Greek Myths, The Vikings, The Normans, Stories of artists, stories from the past.	- Marriage Ceremonies

5th & 6th Class

<u>SESE</u>	<u>Learn Together</u>
Archaeologists – narrated mime going on a dig, improvisation when two opposing teams arrive at a dig, interview an archaeologist, re-enacting a famous dig.	- Friendship/Anti-Bullying
The Egyptians – role on the wall, creating still images of life in Ancient Egypt, an Egyptian market place, interviewing a famous pharaoh, the pharaohs host a meeting – what shape to build their tombs (e.g. pyramids).	- Rights and Responsibilities (The role of the UN, the right to education, the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, shelter and clothing)
World War 1 – Role on the wall (how did people in Ireland feel?), still images of different years, a family listening to the announcements on the radio, life as a child during WW1, hot seat a soldier.	- Core Value: Respect & Responsibility
China/Chinese Myths – sound tunnel based on parades, interviewing “Nian” the dragon, re-enacting a festival.	- Famous People (Religious leaders, our heroes, Women in STEM, people who have made a difference, people who have fought for change)
The Great Famine – families response to the famine, visiting the workhouse, emigrating to America, the famine ships, interviewing people from different backgrounds.	- Democracy (re-enacting the Dáil)
Pioneers of Technology – rival marketing departments try to convince an investor to support their project.	-Fair Trade (exploring the trade process)
The Solar System – families watching the moon landing live on TV, walking in the shoes of Neil Armstrong, interviewing the astronauts.	- Rites of Passage and Ceremonies
Ancient Greece – Sequencing and mime activities based on Greek myths, retell myths in the form of a bedtime story.	- The Environment (hosting debates, creating TV advertisements)
World War 2 – process drama based on a family living in Britain during World War 2 (learning about the war, the evacuation notice, children leaving on the train, life in the countryside vs the city)	

All Class Levels

The following activities can be used to support class novels/picture books read in class:

- Role on the wall
- Creating a character box (items to represent characters)
- Freeze-frames/Still images of key moments
- Narrated mime
- Interviewing the characters/hot-seat
- Sequencing the story
- Re-enacting scenes

Appendix 5: Drama Resource Books

- *Step by Step: Experiencing Drama* by Joanna Parker and Sarah Fitzgibbons
- *Drama Lessons for Five – Eleven Year Olds* by Judith Ackroyd and Jo Boulton
- *Structuring Drama Work* by Jonathan Neelands and Tony Goode
- *Planning Process Drama* by Pamela Howell and Brian S.Heap
- *Teaching Literacy Through Drama* by Patrice Baldwin and Kate Fleming
- *Tomás na hOrdóige agus Scéalta Eile* by Nóirín Ní Nuadháin
- *The Toymaker’s Workshop* by Jo Boulton and Judith Ackroyd
- *Beginning Drama 4-11* by Joe Winston and Miles Tandy
- *Classroom Drama – A Practical Guide* by Una McCabe
- *With Drama in Mind* by Patricia Baldwin
- *Discovering Drama* by Paula Murphy and Margaret O’Keeffe
- *Drama and Traditional Stories for the Early Years* by Francis Prendiville and Nigel Toye
- *Drama Play* by Kay Hiatt
- *135 Drama Games* by Graeme K. Talboys