

**St. Molaga's N.S.**

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## **Drama Curriculum Policy**

### **Introductory Statement**

Five staff members and the principal of St. Molaga's National School were involved in the drawing up of this plan. Prior to creating this plan, all staff attended two days of In-Service training on Drama.

### **Rationale**

At St. Molaga's National School, 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 relate to the world around them. Language plays a critical role in drama. The Drama curriculum contributes to developing the child's confidence in English, Gaeilge and also in other languages.

### **Vision**

We are committed at St. Molaga's National School 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 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.

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(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 communicating in making drama

### **STRAND AND STRAND UNITS**

#### **Strand Unit reflecting on drama**

<b>THIRD AND FOURTH CLASSES</b>	<b>FIFTH AND SIXTH CLASSES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use reflection on and evaluation of a particular dramatic action to create possible alternative courses for the action</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn, through drama, the relationship between story, theme and life experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn, through drama the relationship between story, theme and life experience</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the sharing of insights arising out of dramatic action to develop the ability to draw conclusions and to hypothesise about life and people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the sharing of insights arising out of dramatic action to develop the ability to draw conclusions and to hypothesise about life and people</li> </ul>

### **Strand Unit: Co-operating and communicating in making drama**

<b>THIRD AND FOURTH CLASSES</b>	<b>FIFTH AND SIXTH CLASSES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop, out of role, the ability to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the drama</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop, out of role, the ability to co-operate and to communicate with others in helping to shape the drama</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop, in role, the ability to co-operate and to communicate with others in helping to shape the drama</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop, in role, the ability to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the drama</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop fictional relationships through interaction with the other characters in small-group or whole-class scenes as the drama text is being made</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop fictional relationships through interaction with the other characters in small-group or whole-class scenes as the drama text is being made</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> </ul>

### **Strand Unit: Exploring and making drama**

<b>THIRD AND FOURTH CLASSES</b>	<b>FIFTH AND SIXTH CLASSES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enter into the fictional dramatic context with the same spontaneity and freedom that he/she has earlier applied to make-believe play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enter appropriately and with facility, whether watched or unwatched, into the fictional dramatic context</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discover how the use of space and objects can help in building the context and in signifying dramatic themes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discover how the use of space and objects helps in building the context and in signifying the drama theme</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore how the fictional past and the desired fictional future influence the present dramatic action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore how the fictional past and the desired fictional future influence the present dramatic action</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Become aware of the rules that help maintain focus in the dramatic action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Become adept at implementing the 'playing rules' that maintain focus in dramatic action</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin, as a member of a group, to include in drama activity the elements of tension and suspense</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help to plan dramatic activity to include the particular tension and suspense appropriate to the theme being explored</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distinguish between various genres, such as comedy, tragedy, fantasy</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin the process of using script as a pre-text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Become comfortable with script and understand the basic process by which script becomes active</li> </ul>

### **Examples:**

**History Topics** (Third and Fourth Class) which can be integrated with Drama in the classroom:

### **History:**

#### **Third Class**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Suggestions and ideas</b>
Helen of Troy	Imagine that you are one of the thirty soldiers chosen to hide inside the woden horse. Conscience alley: Attack or not attack?
St. Brigid	Re-telling and re-enacting the various stories about St Brigid: e.g: Brigids visit to the King of Leinster
We Must Be Brave	Ghandi: Refusing Ghandi from various places: Group improvisation  Teacher/ child in role as Ghandi speaking to the crowds, children in role as the crowd

The Pirate Queen	<p>The life of Grace O' Malley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Group improvisation: the conversation between Grace O' Malley and the Lord Deputy</li> <li>-Teacher in Role/children in role: the meeting of Elizabeth and Grace. The children could improvise as messengers, soldiers, reporters or servants and report the conversation between Grace and the Queen.</li> </ul>
I have a dream	<p>Group improvisation: I have a dream speech, imagine that you are a person in the crowd at Martin Luther's "I have a dream speech" in Washington (Flashback)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Teacher in role/ child in role</li> </ul>
The Vikings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Children in role as archaeologists, finding artefacts at Wood Quay</li> <li>-Debate on the building and construction on the Wood Quay site</li> </ul>
The Normans/Life in the Castle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Props: life in a castle</li> <li>-Characters: Servants, Baron, Lady..etc</li> <li>-In groups draw the castle that you live in: Dangers of the location of the castle. Tension: Siege or attack on the castle</li> </ul>
Annie Moore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Leaving Queenstown, challenges ahead</li> <li>-Life on the ship</li> <li>-Arriving at Ellis Island- Statue of Liberty, marking of the sick and the healthy. Perhaps Annie made a friend on the voyage, who has been sent to the infirmary or sent home</li> <li>-Life in America: What will happen to Annie? Outline the rest of Annie's life</li> <li>-Photostory 3 could be used to create a slide show of Annie's journey (Stimulus)</li> <li>-Writing home of her adventures in America</li> </ul>
The Race to Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Life on the spaceship</li> <li>-Leaving your family (Conscience alley)</li> <li>-Walking on the moon (Still imagery)</li> </ul>

#### Fourth Class:

Topic	Suggestion and Ideas
The Great Flood	<p>Group improvisation: Meeting of the animals, discussing a solution to the drought. Still images. Creating the tension and solving the problem. Caption making can also be used to give notice of the meeting. Giving children roles of importance: Chairperson of the meeting..etc</p>

Deirdre of the Sorrows	In character as Déirdre, conflict between her and Conor.
Life in Ancient Egypt	Discovering King Tutankhamen's tomb. Improvisation of Howard Carter's discovery and Lord Carnarvon. Looting the tomb/ saving the hidden treasure. -Discussing the curse: team of archaeologists questioning the curse surrounding the tomb.
The Romans	Life as a soldier. Building the Colosseum/ amphitheatre. Life in Italy. (Improvisation)
The Celts	Discovering Celtic treasures. Using Ogham to decode secret messages.  Children of Lir (Myth associated with Celts: History All around me). See "Discovering Drama" Paula O' Keefe for lesson plans on this topic
Pompeii	-Archaeologists discovering the ruins of Pompeii. Describing what you saw and what you found (Still images of finds) -Escaping Pompeii when Mount Vesuvius erupted (Improvisation, conscience alley: leaving Pompeii escaping Pompeii)
Life During World War II, Caring for the Wounded	-Time machine: Discovering a time machine that transports you back to these times.

Other topics which can be integrated with the drama curriculum include: Stories (Found in class readers, class novels etc) and poems both in Gaeilge and English. Music, responding to musical excerpts. Scenario's in S.P.H.E. Visual arts, responding to paintings and sculptures

### **Integration of Drama and S.P.H.E 5<sup>th</sup> Class**

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Suggestions/Ideas</u>
<u>Myself and others</u>	Getting to know each other through role play/interview in pairs- likes/dislikes, hobbies/interests, important people in their lives etc. Reflection- Writing a character profile on person they've interviewed.
<u>Feelings</u>	Mime: How do you know what I'm feeling? Why are you feeling that way? Mirror Images Using a colour or a number to say/grade how you're feeling.

<u>Influences</u>	Creating a group improvisation on being part of the gang/ peer pressure. Creating an advertisement for television/radio.
<u>Decision- Making</u>	Group improvisation about decision-making situations: Conflict/situations when you feel pressurised/taking sides/resolutions. Reflection: How did we make the decision/solve the problem? Conscience Alley: Effects of our decisions. One child in a group is given a problem, others try to help resolve the problem.
<u>Bullying</u>	Group Improvisation: How to deal effectively with Bullying. In each group have the 'bully', the 'victim', the 'onlookers' and the 'trusted adults'. Possible dilemmas to be explored: Saying no to a bully, telling and being ignored and the fear of reprisals.
<u>Feeling safe and unsafe</u>	Discuss safe solutions for a variety of risky situations and create improvisations around them.
<u>Strangers</u>	Story as stimulus (Stay Safe Programme). Pick out the key moments in the story and write their own safety rules. Create still images of these rules. Hot-Seating: Children that were approached by strangers.

### **Ideas for SPHE (6<sup>th</sup> Class) integration with Drama in the classroom**

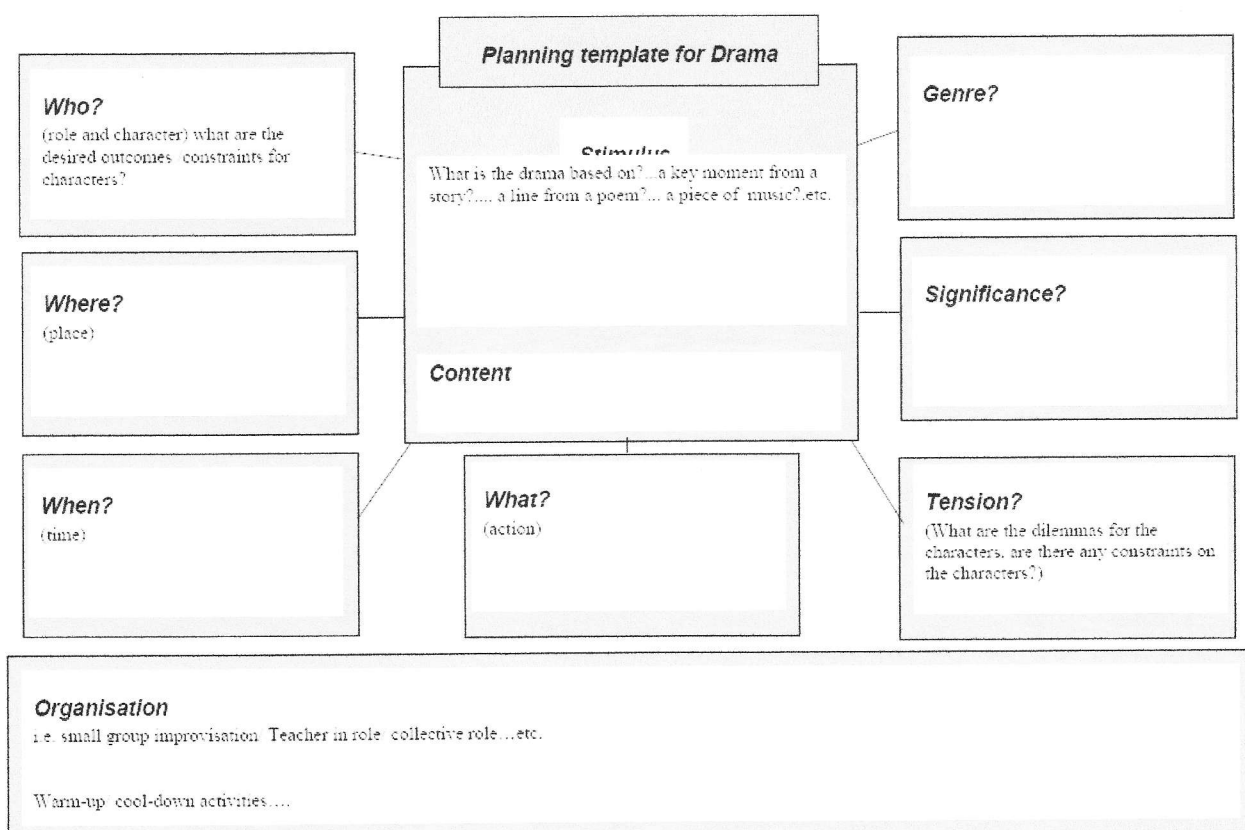
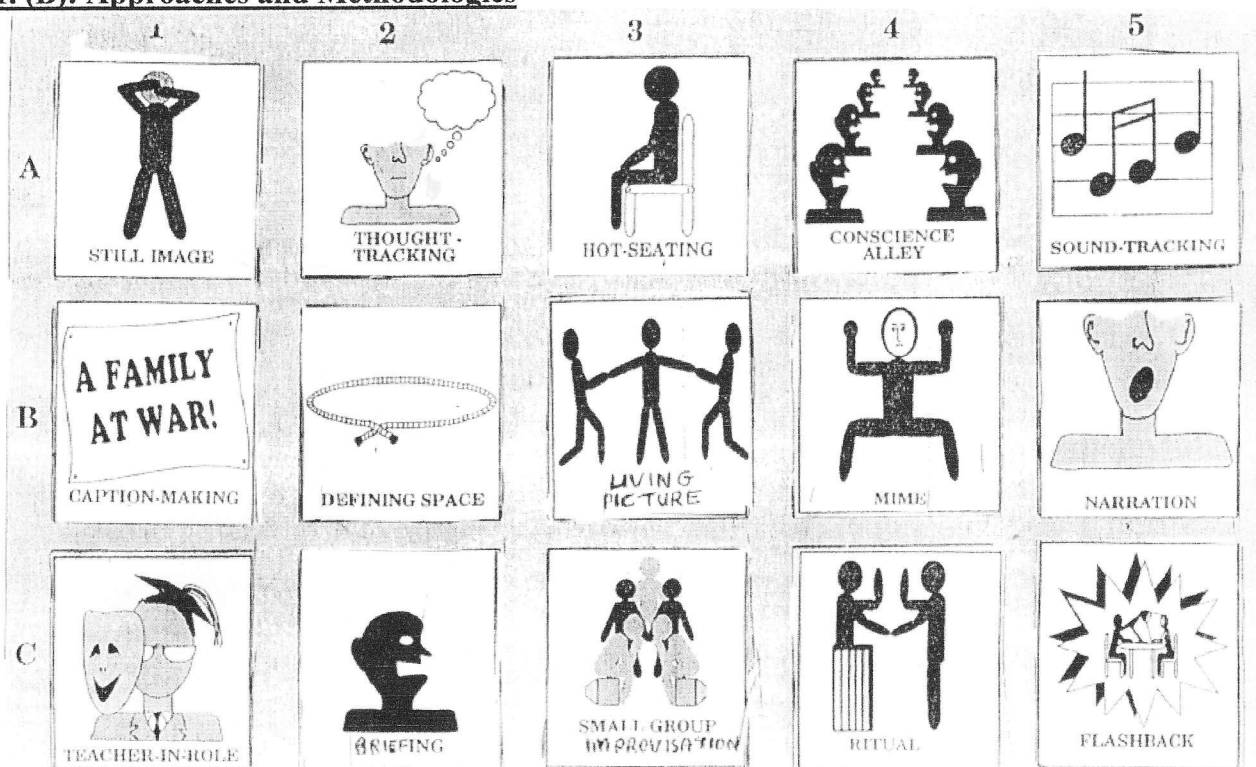
Topic	Suggestions
Peer Pressure	Role play 2 scenarios – one succumbing to peer pressure the other standing up to the pressure.
Developing self confidence	Improvisation – various scenarios – taking back a faulty item of clothes, sending back a cold dinner in a restaurant.
Health and Well being	Conscience Alley – to take alcohol/drugs or not. Role play teenage groups being offered substances.
Food and Nutrition	Debate on Healthy vs Unhealthy foods Short script play using costume for food groups.
Feelings and Emotions	Mime– pick emotions from a box and mime for class ( Charades type activity)

Safety and protection	Conscience Alley – not wearing a helmet, using lights, crossing at correct/incorrect place. Role play – bullying – class can interject with what should happen next. Could use captions to move from one part of a role play to the next. Bullying Hot Seating a bully and the person being bullied.
Making Decisions	In groups children pull out a scenario from box and then improvise . Could use mime also.
My friends and Other People	Script play with narration on theme of loyalty, trust, honesty, forgiveness, jealousy etc.
Communicating/Relating to Others	Role play good and bad communication. Games – listen games – What have you Heard? – reflect on same
Media Education	Newspaper/TV adverts – devise short scenarios to depict ads. Others guess what ad it is. Children devise their own ads.

These resources are not exhaustive- other stimuli include stories, poetry, pictures/photographs, objects, issues from SPHE curriculum, and aspects of life in the past, present, future: needs/concerns of pupils.

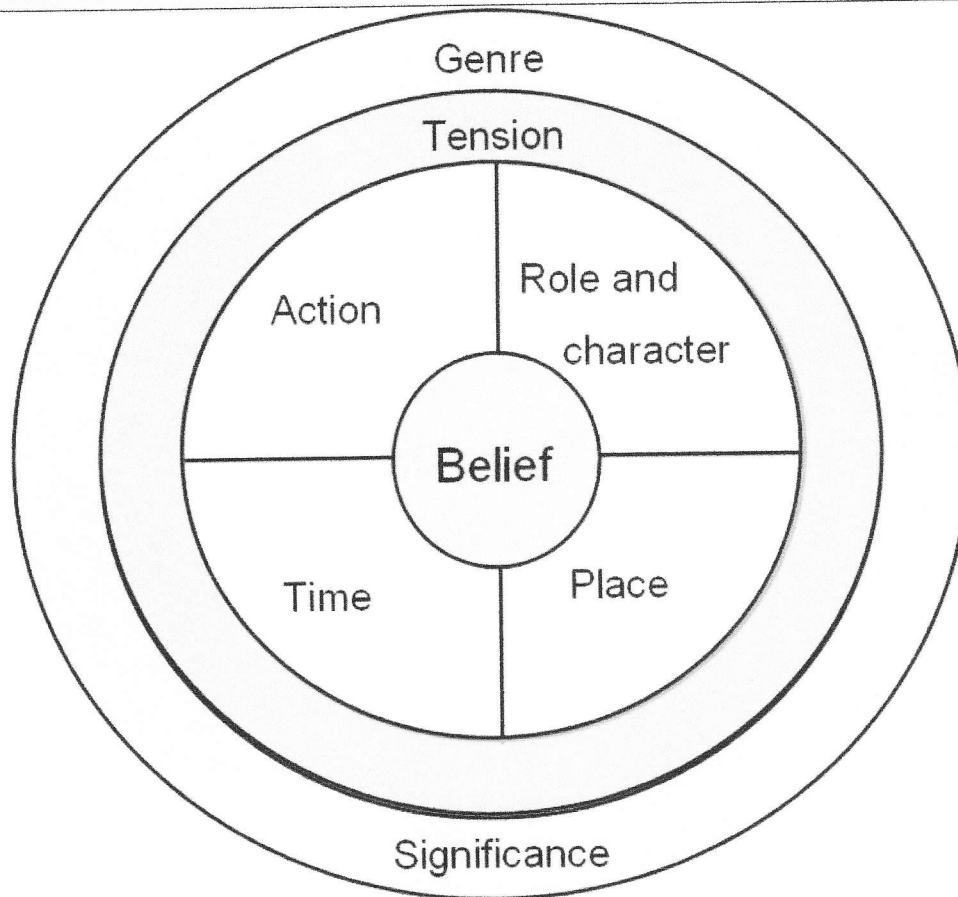


## 1. (B): Approaches and Methodologies



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 describes above, i.e. a willingness to enter into the drama, to work with others in sincerity 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.

### 5. The Elements of Drama



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 the content, the affective, 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 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 feel 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 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.

#### **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 him/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 teach-designed tasks and tests or projects. Recording of children's work may occasionally be undertaken.

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

All children have equal access to drama within our school. When parts are being chosen for school plays preference will always be given to children who have not had a main part before.

## **2. Organisational Planning:**

### **2(a): Timetable**

Each class is time-tabled to have 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 SPHE.

### **2(b): Resources**

We sometimes invite touring companies into school and attend drama productions.

The following drama books are available in the staff room:

‘Step by Step’ Educational Drama, Úna McCabe  
‘With Drama in Mind’ Patrice Baldwin.  
‘Classroom Drama, A Practical Guide’ Úna McCabe  
‘Aaargh to Zizz 135 Drama Games’ Graeme K. Talboys  
‘101 Drama Ideas’ Anna Scher & Charles Verrall

All Materials from the Drama inservice days are available on the PPDS website.  
<http://www.ppds.ie/pcsparchive/drama/Drama%20Planning%20Pack.pdf>

### **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 to his/her own health or that of anyone else.

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

Each teacher has a folder containing our agreed plan for Drama.

### **2(e): Staff development**

Teachers work closely together and share talents and strengths generously with each other- something which enriches practice throughout the school.

### **2(f): Parental involvement**

Parents provide an amazing and very appreciative audience for drama.

### **2(g): Community Links**

We are closely linked to the Transition Year productions of Loreto Secondary School Balbriggan and they help us in any way they can.

### **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 a 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 and with every class teacher

### **Timeframe**

The plan will be reviewed in the Spring Term of 2011.

### **Ratification and Communication:**

This plan was ratified by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_.