



## **Holy Family Senior School Drama Policy**

### **Introductory Statement**

Holy Family Senior School is a community where pupils, teachers and parents/ guardians work together to ensure that all pupils feel happy and valued and are afforded every opportunity to flourish as learners and individuals. This policy was drafted by the Arts Committee in collaboration with staff.

### **Rationale**

This plan sets out our whole school approach to the teaching and learning of Drama and the management and organisation of the subject in our school. We believe that Drama provides children with ways to explore their emotions and how they relate to their world around them. Language is central to the drama curriculum and we aim to develop children's confidence and competence in language through drama.

### **Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School**

"Holy Family Senior School aspires through a holistic approach to achieve the full potential of each student, with particular concern for those who are disadvantaged or marginalized." (H.F.S.S. Mission Statement)

It is our intention that the procedures identified in this policy will contribute to best practise in Drama.

The guiding principles which inform the teaching and learning of drama in our school are:

1. Drama is for all teachers and all children
2. Drama is used to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas which leads to understanding.
3. Active enjoyable participation is fundamental to the drama curriculum
4. Drama enhances and enriches the child's life

**Drama is a specific subject which is discretely visible on class timetables**

**Drama is for all teachers and all children**

**Process Drama explores the real world through the fictional world**

## **Vision and Aims**

### **(a) Vision**

Our school cherishes all pupils equally, and to aid them in achieving their true potential we endeavour to develop confidence and enable each child to explore their emotions and engage with their environment in a safe and creative manner through drama

### **(b) Aims**

- We endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for drama

*To enable the child...*

- *to become drama literate*
- *to create a permanent bridge between make-believe play and the art form of theatre*
- *to develop his/her ability to enter physically emotionally and intellectually into the drama world in order to promote questioning, empowering and empathetic skills*
- *to develop the social skills necessary to engage openly, honestly and playfully with others*
- *to cooperate and communicate with others in solving problems in the drama and through the drama*
- *to understand the structures and modes of drama and how they create links between play, thought and life*
- *to acquire this knowledge of drama through the active exploration of themes drawn from life whether they have their source in other curriculum areas or general areas relevant to the child's life*
- *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.*

## **Guidelines (content of policy)**

This drama plan will be addressed under the following headings:

### **Curriculum Planning**

- 1. Strands and Strand Units**
- 2. Approaches and Methodologies**
- 3. Children with different needs**
- 4. Linkage and integration**
- 5. Assessment and record keeping**
- 6. Equality of participation and access**

### **Organisational planning**

- 7. Timetable**

- 8. Resources and ICT**
- 9. Health and safety**
- 10. Individual teachers' planning and reporting**
- 11. Staff development**
- 12. Parental involvement - Home School Links**
- 13. Community links**

### **1. Strands and Strand Units**

Teachers will familiarise themselves with the curriculum for their class level and the core curriculum for Holy Family Senior School.

There is only one strand in the drama curriculum – ‘Drama to explore feeling, 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.

### **Strand Unit: Exploring and Making Drama**

2 <sup>nd</sup> class The child should be enabled to...	3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> class The child should be enabled to...	5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> class The child should be enabled to...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the ability to play at make-believe to enter fully into participation in drama</li> <li>• Use his/her emerging awareness of the differences in people in order to begin to develop an understanding of the relationship between role and character</li> <li>• Experience how context is built and a drama reality created through the use of space and objects</li> <li>• Experience how the fictional past and the desired fictional future influence the present dramatic action</li> <li>• Develop the ability to help maintain the focus in the dramatic action</li> <li>• Begin to see how tension adds to</li> </ul>	<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> <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> <li>• Discover how the use of space and objects can help in building the context and in signifying dramatic themes</li> <li>• Explore how the fictional past and the desired fictional future influence the present dramatic action</li> <li>• Become aware of the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enter appropriately and with facility, whether watched or unwatched, into the fictional dramatic context</li> <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> <li>• Discover how the use of space and objects helps in building the context and in signifying the drama theme</li> <li>• Explore how the fictional past and the desired fictional future influence the present dramatic action</li> <li>• Become adept at implementing the ‘playing rules’ that</li> </ul>

<p>drama the suspense that ensures the interest of the participants</p>	<p>rules that help maintain focus in the dramatic action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin, as a member of a group, to include in dramatic activity the elements of tension and suspense</li> <li>• Begin the process of using script as a pre-text</li> </ul>	<p>maintain focus in dramatic action</p> <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> <li>• Distinguish between various genres, such as comedy, tragedy, fantasy</li> <li>• Become comfortable with script and understand the basic process by which script becomes active</li> </ul>
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### Strand Unit : Reflecting on Drama

<p>2<sup>nd</sup> class The child should be enabled to...</p>	<p>3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> class The child should be enabled to...</p>	<p>5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class The child should be enabled to...</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use reflection on a particular dramatic action to create possible alternative courses for the action</li> <li>• Experience, through drama, the relationship between story, theme and life experience</li> <li>• share insights while experiencing the drama or insights that arise out of the drama</li> </ul>	<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> <li>• learn through drama, the relationship between story, theme and life experience</li> <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>• 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> <li>• Learn through drama the relationships between story, theme and life experience</li> <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

<p>2<sup>nd</sup> class The child should be enabled to...</p>	<p>3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> class The child should be enabled to...</p>	<p>5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class The child should be enabled to...</p>
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<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> <li>• develop, in role, the ability to co-operate and to communicate with others in helping to shape the drama</li> <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> <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>• develop, out of role, the ability to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the drama</li> <li>• develop, in role, the ability to co-operate and to communicate with others in helping to shape the drama</li> <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> <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>• develop, out of role, the ability to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the drama</li> <li>• develop, in role, the ability to co-operate and to communicate with others in helping to shape the drama</li> <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> <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>
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## 2. Approaches and Methodologies

Every teacher is aware of the elements of drama

1. Belief
2. Role and character
3. Action
4. Place
5. Time
6. Tension
7. Significance
8. Genre

At the beginning of every new school year, teachers will agree the ground rules of drama with their class and collaboratively draw up a 'Class Drama Contract', so as to ensure that children willingly enter into the drama, work with others in sincerity and respect, and 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 was created. This is to ensure that children are comfortable to explore a wide range of topics, some which in other circumstances may be too sensitive to bring up.

Teachers will use the methodologies listed below and incorporate them into a cross-curricular approach to drama

- Still-image
- Thought-tracking
- Hot-seating
- Conscience alley
- Sound-tracking
- Caption-making
- Defining space
- Living picture
- Mime
- Narration
- Teacher-in-role
- Briefing
- Small-group improvisation
- Ritual
- Flashback

### **3. Children with Different Needs**

Drama is for all children and all children will be invited to participate in the drama lesson. Class teachers will decide the level at which their class is able to access the Drama curriculum and plan accordingly. Teachers will ensure that content is differentiated if or where necessary and will begin each lesson by referring to the rules and conditions of the class drama contract. Children with special needs, learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural needs and physical disabilities will be encouraged to engage fully with the topic/theme being addressed and teachers will ensure that they are included and are participating in the lesson. SNAs will assist where necessary and teachers will be sensitive in choosing topics/material for the drama.

### **4. Linkage and Integration**

All three strands in drama are normally covered in each lesson and are so closely linked it would be difficult to teach them 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.

### **Overall Agreement on Uniformity of Approach to Content**

### **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 curriculum content in order to facilitate effective learning. Assessment is undertaken in drama through teacher observation and children's self-assessment, this may include two stars and a wish and thumbs up or thumbs down. Teachers will be cognisant of this self-reflection and respond to it when they feel it is appropriate. It will also be done through teacher-designed tasks and tests or projects. Recording of children's work may occasionally be undertaken.

## **6. Equality of participation and access**

Equal opportunities will be given to all children in the school, across all drama strands and activities

## **7. 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

In accordance with the DES guidelines Drama is a part of the Arts Curriculum. This is allocated the following time:

1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> classes – 3 hours per week. One third of this time should be used for Drama. Therefore 1 hour per week.

**However, to facilitate the new time allocations for the numeracy and literacy strategy it is at the discretion of the teacher to use some of the time from the arts subjects on occasion.**

## **8. Resources and ICT**

Most drama will take place in the classroom.

School productions will access the stage in the Halla and the church for Nativities.

There is a costume and props room behind the stage and all teachers can access this if required. The teachers must take responsibility for anything they borrow and ensure it is returned.

There are some reference books for supporting drama in the classroom in the Teacher's Resource Room.

### **Use of I.T.**

Information and communication technology may be integrated with Drama through the use of the Interactive whiteboard, digital camera, photo-copier, DVDs, CDs and the internet.

## **9. Individual teachers' planning and reporting**

Individual teachers will design an Arts plan specifically for their own class.

Strands covered in Drama each month are recorded on the Cúntas Míosúil.

The Cúntas Míosúil will be very relevant in recording what has been covered and in reviewing and developing the school plan for the following years.

## **10. Staff development**

The school will access the PDST Drama Cuiditheoir through the Regional Curriculum Support Service to support the staff in certain strands if necessary. Visiting teachers may be used to supplement and support the work of the class teacher. These are recognised as up-skilling opportunities for the teachers involved. Teachers will be notified of courses relating to Drama available in the area.

## **12. Community links**

- The Parents' Council in the school support the teachers in the making of costumes and props. They help manage the props room.

- Outside theatre groups are welcomed into the school whenever possible.
- We have close links with Glór and access appropriate drama there when possible.

**(a) Success Criteria**

**This policy is considered successful if there is wide implementation of this plan resulting in enhancement of pupil learning in the following ways:**

**Teachers**

- Teachers' preparation is based on this plan.
- Procedures outlined in this plan are consistently followed.
- Continuity of content and methodology will be evident in teachers' preparation and monthly report.

**Pupils**

- Increased confidence and competence
- Greater willingness to participate in class
- Experiencing of mathematics as an enjoyable pursuit
- Improved mathematical skills
- Enhanced standards in
- Increased involvement in problem solving
- Greater use of and accuracy in estimation
- Involvement of parents in homework
- Use of ICT
- Improved presentation of work

The achievement of these success criteria will be assessed through

- Greater evidence of Drama throughout the school.
- Used in assemblies, large scale productions etc.
- There will be evidence of planning for drama as a discrete part of the Cúntas Miosúil.

**(b) Roles and Responsibility**

**Roles**

**Person(s) Responsible**

Co-ordinator

Helen Whyatt

Policy Review

Arts team

Timetabling

Class teachers

Props and costumes

Arts team with parents

Whole school productions

Jillian Bridge, arts team and parents

**(c) Timeframe for Implementation**

The procedures outlined in this policy will be in operation by the staff of Holy Family Senior School from Term 2 in 2017. This plan is supported, developed and implemented by all staff. Feedback on plan is encouraged from other teachers and from parents, through dissemination of the plan through email and the school website.

**(d) Timeframe for Review**

The policy will be reviewed again in Term 3 2019 which will give the policy over 18 months to be implemented. The view will take into account the opinions of teachers and pupils.

(e) Responsibility for Review

The plan will be reviewed on a regular basis by staff at staff meetings and planning days. The review will be instigated by the Arts Committee in Holy Family Senior School.

(f) Ratification and Communication

This draft policy will be posted on our website for a period of two weeks and parents will be invited to comment and contribute. The policy will then be presented to the Board of Management for ratification. The ratified policy will be posted on our website and will also be available in hard copy form in reception. Parents will be notified of this in a newsletter.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

