**Mol an Óige National School**

**Ennistymon**

**Roll Number 20313J**

**School Plan for Irish**

Introduction

1. This plan was devised in the school year 2016 / 2017. All teachers in the school from Junior Infants to 6th class were involved in the process. The plan addresses the needs of the teachers, the school and the curriculum
2. The plan is necessary
* For us to have a clear vision for the irish language and to help us to implement the curriculum for the Irish language in a manner suitable to our school.
* To insure there is continuity in our implementation from the first day a student starts in Infants class to the day they complete 6th class
* So that every teacher has a clear understanding of our aims regarding the Irish language and that we will have definite guidelines for teaching and using the language
* As a school facility for new teachers and substitute teachers
* To ensure that the curriculum is implemented effectively
* To increase the use of the Speaking for Communication method in the school

School Environment

There are strong signs of tradition in evidence in the school. Great emphasis is placed on festivals and feasts associated with Irish Tradition. E.g. St Brigid’s Day, St John’s Day. The Irish culture of music, dancing, hirling, gaelic football and irish week in the community is strongly emphasised in the school

Vision and aims

Our school vision for the Irish language is

* That the pupils will enjoy mastering it
* It is our aim that teachers will often use Irish in their communications thus encouraging pupils to use the language informally
* On leaving our school, we hope our pupils will have a positive approach to the Irish language and that they will have achieved a good standard of listening, speaking reading and writing

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Aims:
Our main aims for the Irish language in your school are

* That it is used as the language of communication as often as possible during each school day
* That pupils achieve a high standard in speaking, reading and writing the language
* That their skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing will be developed in an integrated manner.
* That they will develop an understanding of our culture through speaking our language
* That Irish is used in different contexts for social communication
* That teaching Irish be interesting and that pupils enjoy it.
* That listening skills and oral skills be developed and their self confidence in using Irish be encouraged.
* Pre-reading and pre-writing skills to be encouraged.
* Reading and writing skills development at a level suitable to his / her ability
* To encourage an interest in Irish language and culture
* Communication skills to be developed through language games and tasks
* That the social, aesthetic, creative, emotional and cognitive skills of the pupil be developed
* That the Fluency, correct pronunciation of the pupil language be encouraged
* That the use of Irish for communication be encouraged
* That Irish as a "living language" in the school be realistic and related to the life of the pupil

Theme of Plan
The plan is under the following headings
1.1 A communicative approach
1.2 Functions of the language
1.3 Threads of the curriculum
1.4 Integration of the threads
1.5 Terms, strategies and teaching
1.6 Informal Irish - using Irish throughout the school day.

1.1 In the curriculum for Gaeilge emphasis is placed o communication and on using Irish as a normal live language. Communication is people together talking and listening
The teacher creates situations and an environment in the classroom and school where it is necessary for the pupil to communicate in Irish. A communicative approach puts emphasis on using Irish as early and as often as is possible during a lesson. Tasks, language, games and an enjoyalbe atmosphere created by the teacher enables the pupil to communicate in Irish using the four skills 0 listening, talking, reading and writing. Great emphasis is placed on the aim of communication in every part of the lesson and even though the pupils do drills and repetition, they know they are practicing for communication. Pupils listen to normal and natural Irish conversation on CDs in the senior classes.
The class is divided into three teaching and learning periods
1. Pre-communication period
2. Communication period
3. Post communication period.
Pre-communication period: At the beginning of the lesson through actions and games the teacher makes the language input enjoyable and encourages the pupil e.g. learning vocabulary, language games, guided activities and grammar games
The communication period: The teacher creates a need for the language to be used to develop the child’s ability to communicate and to give them a chance to create a new language for themselves. This is achieved with communication activities - tasks to undertake, problems to solve, communication games, fill the gaps in taped conversation, role play in different situations, social interaction, drama, sketches and discussions in Irish
Post communication period: Pupils are enabled to revise the language done in the lesson through post communication activities e.g. grammar practice, language analysis, extra games, a new task. Communication is central to all teaching and learning. the pupil must use the language to learn it effectively.

1.2. Language Function

The meaning of Language Function is the use of the language to achieve a communication aim e.g. give an invitation, request something, seek permission, convey a wish etc. This is at the core of the Irish curriculum and must be fulfilled in every aspect of communication be it pupils listening, speaking, reading or writing (Curaclam na bunscoile – Teanga lth 18)

The categories of language function

Social communication

Give and receive information

To give or ask a point of view

To impress a person

To put structure on a conversation

To seek clarification in conversation

The school staff adjusted these to suit our school (Addendum!)

1.3 Threads of the Curriculum

These give help to teachers in planning their work. Listening and speaking are the threads in the curriculum for infants to 2nd class

Oral language. Listening

We understand in our school that listening is all important. Pupils hear the language informally e.g. in class when teacher is greeting them. Also in our school, they hear Irish spoken by the teachers throughout the day, in class, playground etc. The whole school day is permeated with informal speaking of Irish. Listening is also emphasised during class formally e.g. poems, rhymes, songs, taking guidance, following orders.

Speaking:

The speaking of Irish in our school is a priority. We want our pupils to have the ability to converse comfortably and simply on topics that are of interest to them. We constantly afford them situations to converse in Irish. They are encouraged to speak it informally throughout the day and in a structured way in class e.g. Role play, language games, stories.

Reading:

Pre-reading skills are fully developed to interest the pupils in the written work. Books and Storybooks are used to this end. This preparation for literacy begins in infants with poems, songs, picture doors, stories, labels in the classroom, large books and using Irish in class management. In 1st and 2nd class, this is extended print in their surroundings and interactive reading.

In Mol an Óige reading in Irish gives pleasure and information to the pupil. As well as the class reader, books with a variety of texts and genres are provided for pupils. Large books are used from junior infants and their own self decorated books in Senior Infants and 1st class. Most of thier reading in these classes is based on their writing in these books. In 2nd class, pupils begin to read small simple books in Irish. Textbooks aren’t used until 3rd class and the Bualadh Bos series is in use. The classroom assistant who is employed byt eh schoool for infant classes helps in Irish reading with classes 2 – 6.

Labels and phrases in Irish are placed strategically in the classroom, orders and short notices are used throughout the school e.g. “Siúl go ciúin” As the school year progresses, more complete sentences are displayed e.g. Tá dath buí ar an mballa. Stories, poems and listening tasks are used to lay a foundation in reading. The children are also exposed to the written word in the school environment e.g. Cuir do bhruscar isteach anseo.

Writing:

Writing is started only when pupils have mastered will the basics of speaking the language. It begins informally in Senior Infants with the copying of phrases and words. It is based on listening, conversation, rhymes, poems and stories that are familiar.

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The amount they write increases from year to year. We understand in our school that practice is necessary to improve their functional and creative aspect of writing

Spelling:

This begins phonetically in 1st class. In 3rd class a formal scheme is used and continued to end of school.

Grammar:

This is done informally from Junior infants through listening to Irish being spoken in the classroom and throughout the school environment. It is taught formally from 3rd class onwards using the “Bualadh Bos” scheme

Writing:

This is developed from 3rd class with tasks like answering questions on stories, practice on writing grammar points. “Fill in the gap” exercises, writing conversations, matching pictures to sentences, crosswords, putting words and sentences in order, observing mistakes and differences, putting phrases into sentences, letters and cards, story writing and personal news in story form. The development of writing skills in Irish and English is done simultaneously according to the teacher’s themes and schemes

1.4 Integrating the strands

In Mol an Óige listening and speaking Irish are seen as the basis for literacy. Listening, speaking, reading and writing are developed together.

1.5 Themes, strategy, methods

Themes: See addendum 3

Strategy:

* Rhymes and poems
* Action songs and songs
* Stories
* Short sketches and role play
* Simple games
* Language games
* Drills
* Stories

Methods:

Direct method: e.g. “Seo peann”

Continuous method: D’eirigh mé ar maidin, Ghlan mé m’fhiacla, D’ith mé mo bhricfeasta”

Complete answer method: Responding to the teacher, CDs, visitors to the class, Bingo

Audio visual Method. Pictures, posters, videos

1.6 Informal Irish: (Addendum 4) School Policy for the development of Irish is that every teacher speaks the language informally during the school day.

In class every effort is made to help the pupil express their hopes, desires, feelings and complaints in Irish. Roll time, break time, lunchtime, going home time and messages being delivered

Irish music is used to create a positive atmosphere towards Irish in the classroom.

2.1 Teacher’s Plan

Each teacher is responsible for their own plan, using the 10 themes as set out in the curriculum for Irish. They each are responsible for a fortnightly plan and a monthly report.

2.2 Equipment

* Toys
* Dressing up box
* Pictures and posters
* Cards of various types
* Puppets
* CDs
* Computers.

2.3 Different abilities

Pupils with special needs – listening, and speaking skills are emphasised. For students who qualify to be exempt from learning Irish the special needs teacher works with them or if remaining in the classroom they have their own assignments

2.4 Integration with other subjects:

This happens with art and P.E. in every class. Irish is also used in weekly assembly and on special feasts and festivals: St Brigids day, St Patricks day, Bealtaine, Samhain etc.

Assessment: Teachers constant observation

Tasks and tests devised by teacher and in Bualadh Bos schemes.

Collection of pupil’s work in main lesson books.

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2.6 Homework

This begins formally in 3rd class based on work done in class. It depends on the pupil’s ability and support at home

2.7 Staff development

This happens at in-service days in the teachers centre and knowledge received there is shard to all staff by teacher attending

2.8 Parents and Irish

For the most part, the majority of parents haven’t Irish but are well disposed towards the language. At parent / teacher meetings the progress and ability of the pupil is discussed

2.9 Equality

In our school, boys and girls are given the same opportunities. We have pupils from a variety of cultures and all are respected.

Criterion for success

Pupils using the language outside of lessons

Positive feedback from staff and pupils

Teachers preparation following the plan

Implementing the plan

1. Every teacher is responsible
2. This plan is being implemented since January 2017

Plan review

1. The principal and teacher with post of responsibility for Irish
2. The success or otherwise of the plan is discussed once a term at staff meetings
3. As per the implementation of the NPLC and with support from P.D.S.T.