



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth

Physical Education (PE)

Junior Cycle Level 1

Priority Learning Unit (PLU)

Prepared by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)

PLU 6: Physical Education (PE)

Physical exercise and movement improve concentration, mood, sleeping, and eating patterns. The ability to work as an individual, to develop personal skills and to work as a member of a team, are important aspects of PE. The usual considerations apply when teachers are planning their students' PE learning activities. Issues such as safety, as well as students' medical and physical needs all need to be taken into account. Recommendations from relevant professionals may need to be sought in choosing equipment and movement which are appropriate for the students' needs.

At the beginning and end of each PE session, warm-up and cool-down periods which are important for anyone about to engage in physical exercise can be especially beneficial in awakening the senses before the lesson begins and relaxing the student, both physically and mentally, before returning to the classroom or moving on to other learning activities. Along with the recommendations from the relevant professionals, advice about what is required for some students who need their limbs moved for them will be helpful. It is also important to note that the starting point for some students will be to tolerate the acoustics/smells/temperature of PE environments.

It is important that a positive attitude to a healthy lifestyle is promoted. Reflection on the amount of time students spend on physical activity, as well as on their dietary habits informs programmes that will provide the greatest benefits. Health-related physical activity that includes cardiovascular exercise where possible is vital to develop fitness levels, where it does not compromise underlying health conditions. Some students need motivation to engage in physical exercise. It is important that the reward offered is commensurate to the amount of effort required of the student.

The development of gross motor skills (the ability to control large muscles of the body for sitting, crawling, walking, running, and other activities) and fine motor skills (smaller actions such as grasping a ball, holding a bat, picking up a bean bag) are important because they underpin not only learning within the PE PLU but other Level 1 PLUs.

Fundamental movement skills (FMS) are the foundational movement patterns that involve various body parts. They can be broken down into three categories—locomotor skills (running, hopping, swimming); balance skills (keeping the body in one place but balancing in different ways); and object skills (kicking, throwing, pushing). FMS are developed as the student participates in the PE PLU.

Students following a JCL1LP should be given many opportunities to experience the fun, enjoyment and social aspects of physical exercise. In this area their sense of team and their participation as team members are desirable outcomes.

The PE PLU is made up of the following elements:

- Movement skills (athletics/gymnastics)
- Co-operative activity (games)
- Creative movement (dance)
- Aquatics.

A student will work on learning outcomes based on their strengths, interests and needs as indicated in their SSF. A student may achieve a learning outcome at any one of the eight progression pathways. Curriculum content from any curriculum area can be used to achieve the learning outcomes.

Element	Students should be able to...
Movement skills	<p>6.1 move whole or some body parts (arms, head, track with eyes etc.) voluntarily</p> <p>6.2 move whole or some body parts to explore immediate environment</p> <p>6.3 move purposefully/with intent</p> <p>6.4 develop consistent movements to have an effect on equipment or in response to a stimulus</p> <p>6.5 refine gross motor skills, supported by equipment where appropriate</p> <p>6.6 refine fine motor skills, supported by equipment where appropriate</p> <p>6.7 move whole body or individual limbs in a range of directions and at different speeds¹</p> <p>6.8 become aware of sensory signals as prompts for movement</p> <p>6.9 participate in activities which promote cardiovascular exercise and fitness</p>
Co-operative activity (games)	<p>6.10 participate in physical activities in parallel with/alongside others</p> <p>6.11 engage in an activity requiring joint attention with one or more people</p> <p>6.12 explore equipment and/or elements of traditional and invented games or sports in circuit activities</p> <p>6.13 participate in games with one or more people</p> <p>6.14 show awareness of, or interest in, being part of a team</p> <p>6.15 support and/or play sports for enjoyment as a member of the community</p>
Creative movement (dance)	<p>6.16 observe the movements of another and attempt to copy or imitate with sight of self in a mirror²</p> <p>6.17 move whole or parts of body creatively in response to stimuli</p> <p>6.18 develop awareness of pathways and directions of movement³</p> <p>6.19 link two or more movements to create a sequence of movements</p> <p>6.20 interact with another/others to create co-ordinated movements</p> <p>6.21 move with control/poise showing awareness of others and the environment</p> <p>6.22 express emotional response to stimuli through movement</p>
Aquatics	<p>6.23 explore water in different situations and environments</p> <p>6.24 enter and exit a swimming pool safely</p> <p>6.25 tolerate and adjust to water moving over body</p> <p>6.26 explore the effects of water buoyancy on self/others and other objects/floatation devices</p> <p>6.27 move through water in different directions—forwards, backwards, sideways, jumping, using swimming strokes, etc.</p> <p>6.28 practise breath control—blowing and holding breath</p> <p>6.29 float on back and front in water</p> <p>6.30 move on the flat of the back through water</p>

¹ In some instances this may include controlling the speed of a wheelchair.

² The ability to achieve this without sight of self is a later developmental step.

³ In a straight line, around cones/markers in a zigzag direction, etc.



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