



The Role of the External Provider in Primary School Physical Education

This IPPEA policy is intended to guide school communities (principals, teachers and parents) as they work with External Providers (EPs) to implement the Physical Education Curriculum within curriculum time.

What is an External Provider (EP)?

- (a) A qualified second level PE teacher
- (b) National Governing Body (NGB) coach eg: GAA, FAI
- (c) Another qualified coach/teacher eg: dance

What is Physical Education (PE)?

'Physical education provides children with learning opportunities through the medium of movement and contributes to their overall development by helping them to lead full, active and healthy lives' (Physical Education Curriculum, 1999, p.2)

What are the responsibilities of the EP?

The PE Curriculum recommends that: *'The coach should support the role of the teacher in the implementation of a programme which will benefit the individual child and the class'* (Physical Education Teacher Guidelines, p.27, 1999).

The IPPEA recommends that EPs:

- Liaise with principals and class teachers regarding the suitability of their expertise vis-à-vis the school plan and individual class plans
- EPs should always work directly alongside a designated class teacher.
- Support the class teacher where competence, confidence, knowledge or skills in teaching a particular activity may be a challenge to them
- Present their lesson plans to class teachers
- Help to establish community/club links

What are the responsibilities of the class teacher?

The IPPEA recommends that the class teacher:

- Provides EPs with information and assistance regarding the needs of the children
- Adopts an active role in lessons where an EP is delivering or facilitating
- Provides and receives feedback from EPs before/during/after PE lessons
- Develops their teaching skills/content knowledge through active observation and interaction with the EP
- Evaluates the contribution of the EP within the context of their class plan for PE

What are the responsibilities of the school principal?

The IPPEA recommends that the school principal and/or post holder:

- Assesses the suitability of the EP to work with primary school children by ensuring that the EP works within the guidelines documented by the Code of Ethics (Irish Sports Council, 2000) and government Child Protection Policy (DES, 2001)
- Ensures that the EP is suitably qualified in their particular activity area
- Ensures that the EP is covered by the school's insurance policy
- Evaluates the contribution of the EP within the context of the school's PE plan on a regular basis
- Provides induction for the EP regarding school policies, procedures and expectations

The IPPEA recommends that schools should carefully consider the involvement of EPs to deliver parts of the curriculum, especially if requesting parents and guardians to pay a fee for this service.

References:

- Association for Physical Education (afPE) & Sports Coach UK (2005). *Adults Supporting Learning: a framework for development* Department of Education and Science (2001) *Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures*
- Government of Ireland (1999) *Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children*, Dublin: Stationary office
- Government of Ireland (1999) *Primary school physical education curriculum* Dublin: Stationary Office
- Government of Ireland (1999) *Physical education teacher guidelines*. (pp. 2-3): Dublin: Stationary Office.
- Guidelines for using Contracted External Providers for Physical Education and School Sport (2008). Premier Council for Active Living New South Wales
- Irish Sports Council (2000) *Code of Ethics for Good Practice in Children's Sport*

***The IPPEA wishes to acknowledge members of the former Physical Education Action Group (PEAG) for their significant work in the formulation of this document. The PEAG merged with the IPPEA in March 2009**