

Scoil Mháirtín, Kilworth, Co. Cork

Whole School Plan for Geography

Introductory Statement and Rationale

Introductory Statement

This policy was created by the teaching staff of Scoil Mhairtin in 2017. It is our response to the 1999 Primary School Curriculum to conform to the principles outlined in this curriculum statement and to review our practices in the light of these principles. As a whole school plan it will guide and organise the teaching and learning of this subject area and will serve as the basis for all long and short term plans in Geography. It will also guide our approach for new teachers joining the school.

Rationale

We, in Scoil Mhairtin, recognise that Geography is an integral part of the Social, Environmental and Scientific Education of our pupils. “SESE provides the opportunities for the child to explore, investigate and develop an understanding of the natural, human, social and cultural environment in which s/he lives and those of the wider world” (T.G Pg. 2-5)

Vision and Aims of our Geography Policy

We endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for geography

- To develop knowledge and understanding of local, regional and wider environments and their interrelationships
- To encourage an understanding and appreciation of the variety of natural and human conditions on the Earth
- To develop empathy with people from diverse environments and an understanding of human interdependence
- To develop the ability to use a range of communicative methods, especially those concerned with the development of graphicacy
- To encourage the development of a sense of place and spatial awareness
- To encourage the development of caring attitudes and responsible behaviour towards the environment, and involvement in the identification, discussion, resolution and avoidance of environmental problems
- To develop an understanding of appropriate geographical concepts

Additional Aims of the Geography Curriculum that relate to

Scoil Mhairtin

Approaches and Methodologies

- Use of the Environment
- SESE Trails in the Local Environment: Kilworth village, Glenseskin Woods, Goat`s Parlour Waterfall, Ballard and the Araglin and Funcheon rivers.
- SESE Trails of the School Garden and neighbouring GAA pitch-identification of trees and other plants.
- Celebration of Tree Day
- Natural/ Human Environment- school, homes, towns, villages and townlands
- Geographical Investigation Skills explored

Skills and Concepts Development

- Maps, globes and graphical skills
- Mapping as a skill from infants to sixth
- Maps of the locality, county, Ireland, Europe, World
- Simple maps of locality and wider environments
- Mapping simple routes of areas in the locality and in the school, routes in a story, routes from home to school
- Photos-aerial, satellite images
- Map construction and associated problems
- Use of ICT in mapping

Curriculum Content

- Integration within SESE
- Selection of topics/themes for integration within SESE

Infants to Sixth

- Strand and Strand Units from History, Geography and Science explored through a thematic approach
- Suggested topics- Home, School, Food, Animals, Transportation, Communication etc.

This Geography Plan will be addressed under the following headings

Curriculum Planning:

1. Strands and Strand Units

2. Skills Development
3. Children's Ideas
4. Approaches and Methodologies
5. Linkage and Integration
6. Assessment and Record Keeping
7. Children with Different Needs
8. Equality of Participation and Access

Organisational Planning:

9. Timetable
10. Resources and ICT
11. Health and Safety
12. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting
13. Staff Development
14. Parental Involvement
15. Community Links
16. Success Criteria
17. Ratification and Review

1. Strands and Strand Units

As a staff all teachers are familiar with the strands/strand units/content objectives for the relevant class level.

- Infant classes pp. 17-27
- First and Second classes pp. 29-43
- Third and Fourth classes pp. 45-61
- Fifth and Sixth classes pp. 63-84

Overview of the Geography Programme for Infants to Second

All strands and all strand units to be covered every year.

SESE programme in use in classes infants to second:

- Junior Infants – teachers compiling their own SESE programme to fulfil the strands and strand units for JI.
- Senior Infants – What a wonderful world, Senior Infants, CJ Fallon
- First Class – Small World Geography and Science, 1st Class, CJ Fallon.
- Second Class – Small World Geography and Science, 2nd Class, CJ Fallon.

Human Environments

- Living in the local community
- People and Places in other areas

Natural Environments

- Weather
- Planet Earth in space
- Environmental Awareness and Care
- Caring for my locality

Local Environment

- Local natural environment

Overview of Geography Programme for Third to Sixth

All strands and all strand units to be covered every year

SESE programme in use in classes 3rd to 6th:

- 3rd Class – Small World Geography and Science 3rd Class, CJ Fallon. Extra resource books: Earthlink, 3rd class, Folens and Where on earth?, 3rd class, Folens.
- 4th Class – Small World Geography and Science 4th Class, CJ Fallon.
- 5th Class – Small World Geography and Science 5th Class, CJ Fallon.
- 6th Class – Small World Geography and Science 6th Class, CJ Fallon.

Human Environments

- People living and working in local area
- People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland

Explored through a selection of sub units

- People and communities

Natural Environment

Features and people

- Settlement: homes and other buildings
- Transport and communication
- People and other lands
- County, regional and national centres
- Trade and Development Issues (5th + 6th only)

Local Environment

- Local natural environment
- Mountains, rivers, lakes and seas of my county and province (3rd class only)
 - Mountains, rivers, lakes and seas of Ireland (4th – 6th classes)
- Rocks and soil
- Weather, climate and atmosphere
- Planet earth in space
- Physical features of Europe and the World (5th + 6th)

Environmental Awareness and Care

- Environmental Awareness
- Caring for the environment

It is recommended in the curriculum that children will have the opportunity to explore every year

- A contrasting part of Ireland
- One European country (3rd – 6th classes)
- One Non European country (1st – 6th classes)

To ensure continuity and avoid duplication the specific areas have been selected by the teachers and will be changed when necessary

<u>Class</u>	<u>Local Study</u>	<u>Contrasting Part of Ireland</u>	<u>European Country</u>	<u>Non-European Country</u>
Junior Infants	School environment and school garden.	Fermoy town	Mentioned incidentally	Mentioned incidentally
Senior Infants	School environment and school garden.	Fermoy town	Mentioned incidentally	Mentioned incidentally
First Class	Kilworth village	Cork city	Mentioned incidentally	Australia Mexico

Second Class	Kilworth village	Cork city	Britain	Africa China
Third Class	Glenseskin Woods	Dublin city	Spain	Egypt
Fourth Class	Glenseskin woods	Arranmore Island	Italy	Japan
Fifth Class	Local rivers: Blackwater, Araglen, Funcheon and the Douglas.	The Burren, Co. Clare	France	Mexico
Sixth Class	Local rivers: Blackwater, Araglen, Funcheon and the Douglas.	Rural Tipperary and the town of Cloughjordan and Sligo town.	Greece	China

2. Skills and Concepts development

We are aware that one of the key messages of the geography curriculum is that Knowledge and Skills have equal importance. To ensure that this occurs, every effort will be made by the class teachers to incorporate the skills of working as a geographer into a unit of work.

The Skills

- Developing a sense of place and space
- Mapping and graphicacy
- Geographical Investigation Skills will be developed as work is completed on the strand and strand units of the curriculum as a spiral approach from infants to 6th. Strategies for developing these skills will involve the active participation of each child.

Sense of Place and Space

Sense of Place

- Explore distinctive human and natural features of the locality/county/Ireland.
- Development of an awareness of people in other areas.

Sense of Space

- Record journeys in the immediate and wider environments
- Use of maps
- Use of cardinal points - measure distances
- Develop an awareness of major physical features of Europe and the world

Maps and geography

- Use simple drawings of areas - immediate and wider environment
- Record routes and directions
- Make model building

- Develop an awareness of the globe
- Explore plans and outlines
- Develop aerial perspective
- Use a wide variety of maps, globes, aerial photos and other images

Geographical Investigation Skills

- Questioning
- Observing
- Predicting
- Investigating and experimenting
- Estimating and measuring
- Analysing
- Recording and communicating

3. Children`s Ideas

We plan to use children`s ideas as a starting point for all geography activities. We will do this to build on their previous knowledge and to challenge misconceptions. We find out what children already know by:

- Talk and discussion
- Questioning
- Problem - solving tasks
- Before and after drawings
- Teacher designed tests and tasks
- KWL charts
- Concept maps
- Brainstorming

4. Approaches and Methodologies

We plan to use the 6 central methodologies of the Primary Curriculum in the teaching of geography:

- Active learning
- Problem solving
- Developing skills through content
- Talk and discussion
- Co-operative learning
- Use of the environment

and

- Geographical methodologies: fieldwork, surveys, interviews, maps, photographs and artefacts.

Linkage and Integration

We endeavour to use a thematic approach to teaching SESE.

Assessment and record keeping

As in all subject areas, assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning.

Assessment tools:

- Teacher observation
- Teacher designed tasks and tests
- Children`s work and projects
- Curriculum profiles
- Indicators/check lists appropriate to each class level

7. Children with different needs

This geography programme aims to meet the needs of all the children in the school. This will be achieved by teachers varying the pace, content, and methodologies to insure learning for all pupils. Strategies that support differentiation in teaching children with different needs will be used where appropriate.

The requirements of children with special needs will be taken into account when planning class lessons and related activities. SNAs to support particular children and groups as directed by the class teacher.

8. Equality of Participation and Access

We view the geography programme as playing a key role in ensuring equality of opportunity for all children. The programme at each class level will be flexible so that the learning requirements of all children may be addressed. Children with special needs will be included in all activities and no stereotyping of boys and girls will occur.

Organisational Planning

9. Timetable

In keeping with the recommendations of the Primary Curriculum, Geography will be allocated 2 1/4 hours per week in the infant classroom and 3 hours for classes 1st to 6th. Teachers may use discretionary time as appropriate. On occasion, time will be blocked for field work, project work and visiting local museums.

10. Resources and ICT

We have access to the internet so that we can use the web as a geographical resource. Geography resources are located in the library.

11. Health and Safety

We have a health and safety policy in place in the school which covers safety concerns around out of school activities. Teachers will consult with the principal whenever it is proposed to engage children in Geography activities in the immediate environment. Provision will be made for extra adult help where necessary.

12. Individual Teacher`s Planning and Reporting

Teachers will base their yearly plans short term plans on the approaches set out in the whole school plan for geography. Each teacher will have a long term plan for the year and from this will plan fortnightly schemes. (See Small World Geography and Science teacher handbooks for 1st to 6th classes) From infants to 6th, all strands and strand units will be covered every year. Geography will be taught in a thematic way to integrate other curricular areas in a meaningful way. The cuntas miosúla are linked to the short term plans of each individual teacher and are handed up to the principal every month.

13. Staff Development

Teachers will be made aware of and encouraged to take any opportunities for further professional development through participation in courses available in Education Centres or other venues. Teachers will have access to resource materials, reference books and websites.

14. Parental Involvement

Parents have an important role to play as custodians of local knowledge that can be shared with their children as we as a school explore the various aspects of the local environment.

15. Community Links

People in the local community who have an interest and knowledge in the locality may be invited in to speak with the children. Our local visitor to our school is Jim Nash who has wonderful geographical and historical knowledge of Kilworth.

Personnel from charities, the library, national agencies and local groups will be acknowledged and welcomed into our school eg. Dúchas, Heritage Council, Moorepark (Teagasc), Fermoy and Mitchelstown libraries, Muintir na Tíre, Kilworth Village Renewal, Kilworth Community Council and Cork County Council.

Children will be brought on trips to different places of local interest as they progress through the school. Trips to Glenseskin Woods, Moorepark Farm, Kilworth Castle, Funcheon river and museums, galleries and interpretive centres will form part of the geography programme.

16. Success Criteria

This plan shall be reviewed in the future under the following headings:

- Teacher feedback
- Parent feedback
- Children`s feedback
- Formal assessment
- Inspector`s suggestions/reports

16. Ratification and Review

This plan was worked on collaboratively and agreed by all staff in March, 2017.

It was ratified by the Board of Management in 2017 and will be reviewed in 2020.

Signed: _____

Chairperson of the BOM

Date: _____

