



SESE: Geography

Introductory Statement:

This plan was formulated by all staff in Rathcoole ETNS in June 2020 to ensure all areas of the Geography curriculum are being covered and that every class grouping is clear on areas to be covered in a particular year.

Rationale

- To provide a coherent approach to the teaching of Geography throughout the school
- To provide the children with adequate opportunities to develop their skills and understanding of concepts as envisaged in the Primary School Curriculum.

Vision

Geography helps children to make sense of their surroundings and wider world. By studying their local environment and other areas children learn about people and places and the interrelationships between them. Geography provides opportunities to acquire a range of investigative, graphical and other skills. It draws upon a wide range of other disciplines and it encompasses a very broad field of knowledge and investigation.

As we are in temporary accommodation outside of our permanent site, we will focus on the immediate environment around this temporary site until we move to the permanent location in Rathcoole.

This policy conforms to the principles outlined in the 1999 primary curriculum documents. This document will also serve as a basis for each teacher's long term and short-term planning. This Geography plan will also serve to inform new or temporary teachers and parents and other partners in the education process, of the approaches and methodologies that we use in Geography

Aims

The following are the aims we hope to achieve by introducing this policy:

- to develop knowledge and understanding of natural and human environments in the locality, region, Ireland, Europe and the world
- understand some of the natural, social or economic processes which create, sustain or change environments
- study the impact of environmental conditions on the lives of people in the locality and in other areas, and come to appreciate some of the ways in which humans use, modify or influence their environments

- engage in active exploration of local and other environments as an intrinsic element of learning
- acquire the ability to use and understand appropriate investigative methods in the study of natural and human features and phenomena in local and other environments
- develop a sense of place: an understanding and appreciation of the major characteristics of different places
- develop a sense of space: an understanding of how natural and human features are located and distributed in local and other environments and how and why they relate to each other
- develop an appropriate cognitive map of the local area and extend the process to wider geographical settings
- acquire an ability to understand, develop and use a growing range of plans, maps and globes
- develop an ability to acquire, analyse and communicate geographical knowledge using a wide variety of sources, including oral, written and graphical forms, models and globes, information technology and other media
- extend, refine and apply artistic, linguistic and mathematical skills
- learn that the sharing, responsible use and conservation of the Earth's natural and human resources are necessary for the continued existence of life
- develop aesthetic sensitivity to the natural and human elements of the environment and to the repercussions of human actions
- learn of and come to value the diversity of peoples, cultures and societies in Ireland and throughout the world, acquire an awareness of human interdependence and develop empathy with others
- use and value creative, innovative thinking in the exploration and/or resolution of human and environmental issues.

We endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for Geography through the ethos of Educate Together National Schools.

Curriculum Planning and Content:

1. Strands and Strand Units

The teachers are familiar with the strands/strand units/content objectives for the relevant class level(s).

Refer to Curriculum Guidelines:

- Infant Classes pg. 24- 27
- First and Second Classes pg. 34-43
- Third and Fourth Classes pg. 54-61
- Fifth and Sixth Classes pg. 72-84

The teachers will use the curriculum to formulate their long/short term plans, ensuring that they are covering all strands and the specific strand units relevant to their class level as listed below:

Junior Infants

- People at work in the school & local community
- Journeys – routes around the school/my journey to school
- Routes/Transport – trail of Kildare's shopping areas
- Pinpoint Rathcoole/ Saggart on a map of Ireland.

Senior Infants

- Homes – different types of homes/houses in the locality ●
- Other types of buildings near the school.

First Class

- Development of Rathcoole – how it has changed in terms of housing – become aware of the other areas nearby
- Afterschool activities – what is available, what are children involved in?
- Look at & examine different signposts, symbols & their meanings.

Second Class

- Rathcoole – focus on buildings/settlement use/infrastructure/mapping services
- Focus on photographs – present & past/signposts

Third Class

- Study ordnance survey maps of the area & photographs of natural features in Rathcoole
- Study ordnance survey maps of contrasting area – note symbols
- Investigate & become familiar with natural features of the area
- Influence of physical features on the area
- Name & discuss local clubs
- Look at transport facilities
- Different signposts & symbols and their meanings.

Fourth Class

- Focus on local place names – origins & meanings
- Study area photographs of the area & make comparisons
- Contrast roads/services/infrastructure in the past with the present ● Identify areas that contrast with Rathcoole

Fifth Class

- Focus on postal service in Rathcoole
- Investigate local industries
- Draw attention to farming/allotment & food production.

Sixth Class

- Fieldtrip to one of the local industries ●
- Explore Rathcoole & surrounding area ●
- Project work.

The following topics will be covered in Third & Fourth Class

Map Skills

- Learn provinces & counties of Ireland
- Learn rivers, lakes & mountains of Ireland
- Revise Islands & heads of Ireland

Country focus & map skills Third Class

- European: Poland
- Non-European: Canada

Country focus & map skills Fourth Class

- European: Sweden
- Non-European: India

Country Focus & Map Skills Fifth Class

- European: Great Britain
- Non-European: Cuba

Country Focus & Map Skills Sixth Class

- European: Latvia/Lithuania
- Non-European: Nigeria

Human Environments

- Third Class - People living in contrasting part: Donegal
- Fourth Class - People living in contrasting part: Cork

Weather

- Third Class: Water, Effects of different types of weather
- Fourth Class: Water cycle, Rain Gauge

Maps, Globes & Geographical Skills 5th & 6th Class

Map Skills – Revision

- Revise provinces & counties of Ireland
- Revise rivers, lakes & mountains of Ireland
- Revise islands & heads of Ireland

Map Skills – Topics

- Learn continents, some countries, cities & important physical features
- Fifth Class: Learn countries & capital cities of Europe
- Sixth Class: Learn major rivers & mountain ranges of Europe

Suggested Countries to be studied at each class level

Class Level	European Country	Country of the World
1 st	Spain	Australia/New Zealand
2 nd	France	Japan
3 rd	Poland	Canada
4 th	Sweden	India
5 th	Great Britain	Cuba
6 th	Lithuania/Latvia	Nigeria

[*Due to our collaborative and thematic approach to planning and teaching, we are ensuring that the curriculum is delivered using a spiral approach.](#)

Geographical skills:

Geography also incorporates a distinctive set of skills which allow us to explore and understand the Earth's environments. The geographical skills listed below will be developed as work is completed on the strands and strand units of the Geography Curriculum;

- A sense of place and space –*A sense of place; A sense of space*
- Maps, globes and graphical skills –*using pictures, maps and models, maps and globes*
- Geographical investigation skills- *Questioning, observing, predicting, investigating and experimenting, estimating and measuring, analysing, recording and communicating and evaluating*

Many of the skills developed in geography such as individual observation, estimating measuring, predicting and analysing, will be complemented by similar skills in the science curriculum.

Approaches and Methodologies:

Lessons will be planned to cater for all individual learning styles.

Each class teacher will ensure a variety of methodologies from the following list are implemented;

- Talk and discussion
- Active learning
- Collaborative learning
- Problem solving
- Skills through content
- Using the environment

- Co-operative learning
- Photos & artefacts
- ICT
- Guided discovery
- Interviews/surveys
- Maps, globes and atlases
- Simulation and models
- Fieldwork
- Story
- Aistear

Linkage and Integration:

The development of other certain topics in other subjects can be enriched through the understanding of Geography and the world around us. Opportunities for integrated studies within SESE and with other areas of learning should be identified in planning; much work in the study of natural environments will utilise scientific skills and processes while the study of human environments will present opportunities for integration with units in the history curriculum.

Examples include:

Science- Environmental awareness, Living things; materials

History: Local Studies, Continuity and change over Time; Eras of Change and conflict- Traders, explorers and colonisers from Europe. The Great Famine, Changing land ownership in 19th Century Ireland

Gaeilge: Place names

PE: Orienteering

Art: Designing and making SPHE:

People in our community

Multi- Grade Teaching:

The whole school plan ensures that a thematic approach is adopted and the curriculum is being met for all class levels. Should a multi-grade situation arise within our school, we would use a thematic approach to our teaching ensuring linkage and integration and appropriate classroom organisation.

Assessment and Record Keeping:

Assessment in Geography informs teaching and learning by providing information on what children have learned and how they learn. It will allow the teacher to recognise achievement and indicate areas of difficulty. Learning in geography involves the acquisition of knowledge about environments and at the same time development of geographical skills and the cultivation of important attitudes and values. Valid assessment in geography therefore must attempt to measure the child's achievements and progress in all these aspects of learning.

The teacher will use the following assessment methods:

Teacher Observation:

Much can be learned from observing and noting the child's response in a variety of situations, including:

The response the child makes to teacher's questions and suggestions

The interaction of the child with others in discussion and group work

The reaction of the child to learning materials (Geography Curriculum pg94)

Teacher Designed Tasks and tests

Children should engage in a wide range of activities, including;

Oral, written or pictorial accounts and descriptions of environmental factors observed or studied.

Predicting outcomes of an investigation

Analysing objects and processes

Completing teacher-designed revision tests on a unit or units of work

Undertaking a range of outdoor tasks

Observing accurately inside and outside the classroom

Using maps and globes (Please see Geography Curriculum, pg94 for full range of activities)

Work samples, portfolios and projects

The diverse learning activities in which the child will be engaged in the geography curriculum will provide a range of work from which samples may be selected.

Portfolios are particularly suited to the assessment of Geography and provide positive reinforcement for the learner. Samples of children's work (scrapbooks, copybooks, projects and photographs) may be maintained by the child or class teacher.

Curriculum profiles

Curriculum profiles comprise a number of indicators of achievement, i.e. a short sentence which outline the range of geographical knowledge, skills and attitudes which might be expected of the child at different stages. The teacher seeks to mark his/her observation of children and their work to the indicators in the profile as learning progresses or as work is completed on a unit. In this way, the profile may be used to assist the teacher in arriving at a professional judgement of the child's progress.

The class teacher will keep these records in his/ her file throughout the year. At the end of the school year s/he will summarise these records for the yearly report card. This will be kept in the child's file until s/he is eighteen years of age. The class teacher shares this information with the parents during parent-teacher meetings and the end of year report card.

The teacher can communicate this information to the child through positive reinforcement, praise, demonstrations and discussions.

Children with Additional Needs

The teacher chooses the most suitable form of differentiation based on the individual needs of the child from the following;

- Differentiating learning objectives
- Differentiation by support
- Differentiation by resource
- Differentiation by outcome ● Differentiation by grouping
- Differentiation by teaching style
- Differentiation by task
- Differentiation of pace

Children from the Special Class will be integrated when appropriate. The staff will encourage reverse integration to begin with as a means to encourage this process at the child's level. The aim will be that the children will integrate in the mainstream classroom on an increased basis when it is deemed suitable and beneficial to the child.

Timetable

The Primary Curriculum dictates that a minimum 3 of hours per week or 2 hours 15 minutes per week for infant classes is allocated to SESE. Teachers have the option to block- allocate time for the three SESE subjects, for example when working on a project, using a thematic approach. Discretionary curriculum time may be used for SESE, at the discretion of the class teacher.

Parental Involvement:

- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are informed about the Geography Plan at the beginning of each school year and can access it through the website.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Community members and guest speakers with particular skills may be invited to the school to support teaching and learning and assist with Geography activities in collaboration with staff members.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) may be asked to accompany children on school fieldwork trips.

Resources:

Resources are currently being reviewed and all future resources will be stored in a central location. Aistear resources will be kept in boxes by themes and will be added to over time. All mainstream classrooms have Interactive Whiteboards and there are a wide range of resources available on-line.

The following resources are available in various classrooms in the school:

- Maps, atlases & globes of Ireland, Europe & The world

Relevant School Policies:

- Science Policy
- History Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Parental Involvement policy

- Other Curricular Policies/Guidelines

Success Criteria:

The successful implementation of our Geography policy depends on the following;

- Informing all staff of the existence of the plan and ensuring that it is put in place in each class
- Feedback at monthly curriculum planning meetings
- Teachers arranging guest speakers and fieldwork trips to accompany various strands of the curriculum
- Feedback from teachers / pupils / parents / community

Implementation:

Roles and responsibilities: This plan will be implemented by all staff members and will be implemented with effect from its most recent review date of March 2020.

Date of Creation	March 2020
Date of Last Review	March 2023
Date of Next Review	January 2025



Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

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Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: 18.06.2021