



SESE: History

Introductory Statement

This policy was formulated in January 2020 by the teaching staff of Rathcoole Educate Together NS in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Primary School Curriculum 1999. Through the formulation of this policy, a common understanding of the purpose of the subject and how it will be implemented in this school has been created among the staff. Therefore, it will form the basis for teachers' long and short term planning. It will also inform new and temporary teachers of the approaches and methodologies used in the teaching of History in our school.

Rationale

As stated in the Primary School Curriculum 1999, History is not the story of the past but rather our attempt to reconstruct and interpret elements of the past which are of interest to us. History gives children a knowledge of past human experiences at family, national and international levels. Pupils also develop an understanding, appropriate to their age, of time and chronology, change and continuity, cause and effect. They acquire skills appropriate to their developmental stages so that they may interpret evidence in a critical way. They also acquire open, critical and responsible attitudes to the world around them.

The study of History in particular enables children to investigate and examine critically significant events in their own immediate past, the past of their families and local communities, and the history of people in Ireland and other parts of the world. Historical themes and topics develop empathy with other people and a deeper understanding of past and current, political and economic interactions. We view History as having a distinct but complimentary role together with geography and science within SESE and as a contributor to the wider child-centred curriculum.

Vision

As our school is based in Rathcoole , an area of historical importance and interest, it is our vision that we will open the children's minds to their rich local heritage. The teachers in RETNS seek to assist the children in achieving a broad, balanced and coherent history education from Junior Infants to Sixth class. We feel that this is essential if a child is to become a confident, informed, critical and responsible adult member of society. We hope that by providing opportunities for children to experience a rounded historical education that is not solely focused on the transmission of a body of knowledge but that allows children to work as historians, we will help children to understand more fully the world in which he/she lives and how events and personalities have shaped the home and locality and wider environments in which the child exists.

Aims

We endorse the aims of Social, Environmental and Scientific Education as outlined on page 12 of the SESE History Curriculum

We endorse the aims of the SESE History Curriculum:

- To develop an interest in and a curiosity about the past.
- To make the child aware of the lives of women, men and children in the past and how people and events had an impact on each other.
- To develop an understanding of the concepts of change and continuity.
- To provide for the acquisition of concepts and skills associated with sequence, time and chronology, appropriate to the developmental stages of the child.
- To allow the child to encounter and use a range of historical evidence systematically and critically.
- To foster a willingness to explore personal attitudes and values and to promote an openness to the possibility of changing one's own point of view.
- To provide opportunities for the child to communicate historical findings and interpretations in a variety of ways.
- To foster sensitivity to the impact of conservation and change within the local and wider environments.
- To help the child recognise and examine the influences of the past on the attitudes and behaviour of people today.
- To encourage children to recognise how past and present actions, events and materials may become historically significant.
- To enable the child to acquire a balanced appreciation of cultural and historical inheritances from local, national and global contexts.

(SESE History Curriculum Statement Page 12)

Curriculum Planning

Strands and Strand Units

Each teacher is familiar with the strands, strand units and content objectives for his/her relevant classes. We are aware that infant classes to second class have to cover all strands and strand units and content objectives. From third to sixth class there is a menu curriculum from which we have chosen strand units. We are aware that we have to carry out two in depth studies each year from third class to sixth class level, one local and one national/international. Certain strand units are revisited throughout the school and covered in depth as the children progress; these strand units are recorded in the teachers' planning. Equal emphasis is given to each strand and strand unit. A full range of objectives will be covered during each year.

A theme-based integrated approach to SESE is taken where appropriate.

Our topic plan for senior classes is appended.

Infant classes

Strand	Strand Unit
Myself and My family	- Myself - My family
Story	- Stories

First and Second Class

Strand	Strand Unit
Myself and My Family	- Myself - My Family - When my grandparents were young - Games in the past - Feasts and festivals in the past
Story	- Stories
Change and Continuity	- Continuity and change in the local environment

We ensure that stories covered in the story strand will:

- Introduce children to the lives of women, men and children from a range of social, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds
- Include stories from a wide range of human experience (e.g. economic, technological, scientific, artistic, social cultural etc.)
- Come from local, national and international contexts

Third and Fourth Class

* At least two strand units from each strand to be covered each year

Strand	Strand Unit
Local Studies	- My Family

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Homes - My School - Games and pastimes in the past - Feasts and festivals in the past - Buildings, sites or ruins in my locality - My locality through the ages
Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Myths and legends - Stories from the lives of people in the past
Early people and ancient societies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stone age peoples - Bronze age peoples - Early societies of the Tigris and Euphrates valleys - Egyptians - Greeks - Romans - Celts - Early Christian Ireland - Vikings - Central and South American peoples - Asian peoples - African peoples - North American peoples - Australasian peoples
Life, society, work and culture in the past	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Life in Norman Ireland - Life in medieval towns and countrysides in Ireland and Europe - Life in the 18th Century - Life in the 19th Century - Life during World War 2 - Life in Ireland since the 1950s
Continuity and change over time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food and farming - Clothes - Homes and houses - Transport - Communications - Shops and fairs - Schools and education - Caring for the sick

Fifth and Sixth Class

* At least two strand units from each strand to be covered each year

Strand	Strand Unit
Local Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Homes - Schools - Games and pastimes in the past - Feasts and festivals in the past - Buildings, sites or ruins in my locality - My locality through the ages
Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Myths and legends - Stories from the lives of people in the past
Early people and ancient societies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stone age peoples - Bronze age peoples - Early societies of the Tigris and Euphrates valleys - Egyptians - Greeks - Romans - Celts - Early Christian Ireland - Vikings - Central and South American peoples - Asian peoples - African peoples - North American peoples - Australasian peoples
Life, society, work and culture in the past	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Life in Norman Ireland - Life in medieval towns and countryside in Ireland and Europe - Life in 18th Century - Life in 19th Century - Life during World War 2 - Life in Ireland since the 1950s - Language and culture in late 19th and early 20th Century Ireland
Continuity and change over time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Homes, housing and urban developments - Nomadism - Food and farming - Clothes - Transport - Communications - Energy and power

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshops and factories - Schools and education - Literature, art, crafts and culture - Caring for the sick - Barter, trade and money
Eras of change and conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Renaissance - The Reformation - Traders, explorers and colonisers from Europe - The Great Famine - The Industrial Revolution - Changing land ownership in 19th Century Ireland - Changing roles of women in the 19th and 20th Centuries - World War 1 - Modern Ireland
Politics, conflict and society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 16th and 17th century Ireland - Revolution and change in America, France and Ireland - O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation - 1916 and the foundation of the state - Northern Ireland - Ireland, Europe and the world, 1960 to the present

Please see Appendix for strand unit details for 3rd - 6th classes.

In selecting strand units, we will endeavour to ensure that:

- The locality of the school is reflected in the programme
- Children are introduced to the lives of women, men and children from a range of social, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds
- Studies from a wide range of human experience are included
- Local, national and international contexts are included

We recognise that the curriculum recommends that in each year one strand unit in local history and one strand in national or world history is studied in more depth over a longer period and this has been taken on board in the development of our policy.

We will strive to ensure a balance between the development of skills and the acquisition of knowledge in our teaching of history.

We understand that a strict adherence to a chronological treatment of Strand Units is not recommended in this curriculum because of the constraints this would impose on curricular planning. We are aware that the development of children's chronological understanding can be fostered through the use of timelines and use timelines at all class levels.

We endorse the emphasis this curriculum places on the exploration of personal and family history at this level and are conscious of the sensitivities some aspects of these topics will require.

We agree that through local history children can readily acquire and practice historical research skills. They become familiar with and learn to value the local environment. They also learn to appreciate the elements of the past which have given them and their locality a sense of identity.

Skills and Concepts Development

As outlined in our vision for history in our school, we are aware of the importance of providing opportunities for the children to work as young historians in order to develop a wide range of skills and concepts. Each teacher is aware of the aspects of Working as a Historian that apply to each class level.

[Infants:](#) (Pg 18 History Curriculum Statement)

Through completing the strand units of the History Curriculum, Infants should be enabled to develop the following skills:

- Time and chronology
- Using evidence
- Communication

At Infant level, strategies we will use to develop the child's skills to work as a young historian will include:

- Sequencing activities – ordering objects/pictures; sequencing of artefacts from their own personal lives; sequencing of elements in a story etc.
- Discuss the sequence of events in simple stories about the past.
- Use of simple timelines to record sequence of events in personal history and in stories.
- Using evidence – artefacts from their own personal past: clothes, toys, birthday cards, photographs etc.
- Allowing children opportunities to communicate an awareness of stories about the past in a variety of ways: listening to and retelling stories, drama, art work and ICT.

[First and Second classes:](#) (Pg 26 History Curriculum Statement)

Through completing the strand units of the History Curriculum at this level, First and Second class pupils should be enabled to develop the following skills:

- Time and chronology
- Change and continuity
- Cause and effect
- Using evidence
- Synthesis and communication
- Empathy

Strategies we will use to develop the child's skills to work as a young historian at First and Second class levels will include:

- Sequencing activities – placing objects or pictures in historical sequence to distinguish between the past, present and future.
- Exploring instances of change and continuity in personal life, family and immediate local environment; looking at features that have changed or remained unchanged.
- Through examining the actions of a character in a story, discuss the reasons for change and the effects of change.
- Use of simple historical evidence – photographs, objects, memories of older people, buildings, stories and songs. To help the children to distinguish between fictional accounts in stories, myths and legends and real people and events in the past.
- Allowing children opportunities to communicate an awareness of stories, people and events from the past in a variety of ways: writing, drama ICT etc.
- Discuss the feelings of characters in stories from the past to develop empathy.

Third and Fourth classes: (Pg 40 History Curriculum Statement)

Through completing the strand units of the history curriculum at this level, Third and Fourth class pupils should be enabled to further develop the following skills:

- Time and chronology
- Change and continuity
- Cause and effect
- Using evidence
- Synthesis and communication
- Empathy

Strategies we will use to develop the child's skills to work as a young historian at Third and Fourth class levels will include:

- Using simple timelines to record information about people and events in the past.
- Understand and use date conventions when studying the past, including day, month and year; use common words and phrases associated with time – old/new, older/newer, before/after, later/earlier, a long time ago, a very long time ago.
- Using pictures, photographs and artefacts where possible, children will develop an understanding of change and continuity by exploring similarities and differences between the past and the present e.g. washboard/washing machine.
- Examining and using a wider range of historical evidence, some of which is connected with local history – photographs, pictures, objects, memories of older people, buildings, stories, songs, written sources, films, other media, ICT.
- Encouraging children to ask questions about a piece of evidence.
- Enabling children to summarise information and make simple deductions from a single source of evidence.
- Providing opportunities for children to use evidence and imagination to reconstruct elements of the past e.g. a game played by grandparents when they were young/appearance of an ancient rath and communicate this understanding in a variety of ways – oral language, drama, writing, art work, modelling, ICT.
- Through story and drama, imagine and discuss the feelings and motives of people in the past to develop empathy for them.

Fifth and Sixth classes: (Pg 60 History Curriculum Statement)

Through completing the strand units of the history curriculum at this level, Fifth and Sixth class pupils should be enabled to further develop the following skills:

- Time and chronology
- Change and continuity
- Cause and effect
- Using evidence
- Synthesis and communication
- Empathy

Strategies we will use to develop the child's skills to work as a young historian at Fifth and Sixth class levels will include:

- Use of timelines to develop an understanding of time and chronology so as to place people, objects and events within a broad historical sequence.
- Use words, phrases and conventions associated with the recording of dates and time such as BC, AD, age, period – Stone Age/Early Christian Ireland/Georgian period etc.
- Examine and use critically a wide range of historical evidence.
- Enable the children to develop some skills in the location and selection of evidence.
- Encourage children to ask questions about a piece of evidence.
- Encourage children to compare accounts of a person or event from two or more sources.
- Encourage children to use their imagination and evidence to reconstruct elements of the past e.g. events of a 19th-century school day/emigration scene during famine times, and communicate this understanding of the past in a variety of ways – oral language, drama, writing, art work, modelling, ICT.

The teachers in Kildare Town ETNS will endeavour to include a balance between the development of these skills and the acquisition of knowledge when planning for the short and long term.

Approaches and Methodologies

Our History Curriculum states that one of the keys to successful history teaching is the use of a broad range of classroom approaches and methodologies. We are aware of the variety of approaches and methodologies outlined as particularly suited to history and will endeavour to employ as many as we can as appropriate to our individual circumstance.

The range will include:

- Story (pgs 65-71 TG)
- Personal and family history (pgs 72-75 TG)
- Using artefacts-visitors bringing artefacts e.g butter churn (pgs 81-86 TG)
- Drama and role-play (pgs 109-113 TG)
- Using pictures and photographs-Mayo News archives, Westport Historical Society journals (pgs 87 -98 TG)

- Use of the environment – Westport town and Westport House, Heritage Walk and centre (pgs 104-108 TG)
- Oral evidence-questionnaires, interview, special visitors (pgs 77-80 TG)
- Documentary evidence (pgs 104-108 TG)
- Use of ICT (pg 114 TG)
- Aistear

We actively use our local environment and will continue to make further use of this immediate resource by developing SESE trails for use with each class grouping. We will continue to build up resources and artefacts for other strands of the curriculum.

Linkage and Integration

Linkage

In order to make learning more meaningful for the child and to ensure the simultaneous development of historical skills and to provide for the application of these skills, teachers will explore possibilities for linkage across the History curriculum and will consider and note such opportunities in their classroom planning.

Integration

We agree with the statement made on page 9 of the history curriculum that while history makes an important and distinctive contribution to the development of the child. Historical education complements the growth of the child's geographical and scientific learning. With this in mind, we will ensure to explore possibilities to integrate the SESE subjects. Certain themes are integrated and explored as a whole school approach e.g Harvest time, food and farming, St Brigid and St Patrick. Using integrated themes or topics will be one way we would hope to achieve this. When choosing our European and non European country in Geography we integrated them with our choices under the strand Early People and Ancient societies. For example we will integrate Aboriginal people and Australia, Romans and Italy. Local studies is integrated with geography, English and visual arts.

Multi Grade Teaching

The use of an integrated approach within SESE and the broader curriculum will facilitate blocks of time to be utilised in an efficient way and will be particularly useful in a multi-class situation. Where there are multi-grade classes, the teacher will differentiate the content and activities for the different age levels by setting tasks for the older children that will demand more complexity in terms of content, process and outcome. Using a thematic approach will also be helpful for planning purposes.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment in History must seek to measure and report the child's progress and achievements in all aspects of the curriculum. We will assess the following:

- Progress in children's knowledge about the past
- Children's ability to use and the development of historical skills
- Development of children's attitudes, interests, critical thinking skills

As a staff we have discussed the purposes of assessment in history and reached a shared understanding of the assessment tools we will use. These will include:

- Teacher observation (pgs 79,80 C.S)
- Teacher designed tasks and tests (pgs 80,81 C.S)
- Telling and re-telling of events and stories
- Oral, written and pictorial accounts and descriptions of sites visited or people interviewed
- Construction of timelines varying from simple episodes in a story, lines to more complex lines of historical periods
- Work cards or activity sheets
- Trail booklets which help the child to examine the evidence of the past in the environment or in an exhibition
- Maps of historical sites
- Role play or dramatising a conversation or event
- Speculating on the feelings and emotions of others to create a spoken or written account (integration with English)
- Model making
- Drawings
- Compilation of a book on a particular historical topic or the presentation of project work using information and communication technologies
- Projects completed on historical themes
- Interactive, multi-media computer programs which enable children to explore historical topics
- Results of the child's independent historical research
- Teacher-designed revision test on a unit of work
- Work samples, portfolios and projects (pgs 82,83 C.S.)
- Feedback from pupils and parents

Using a range of these learning activities means that assessment is intimately linked to the teaching and learning process and that the child's progress is assessed in the context of the historical material with which he/she is familiar.

We are aware that the primary purpose underlying assessment in history is to enhance the learning experience of the child.

Children with Additional Needs

We are aware of the distinct role history can play in the harmonious development of each and every child. We will do our best to ensure that all children have the opportunity to experience a rounded historical education. In the same way as we endeavour to provide for individual difference in every

curricular area, we will also strive to make the history curriculum accessible to as many children as possible. In order to do this we will consider:

- Making an effort to create opportunities for hands on practical activities
- Using a mixture of whole class teaching, focused group work or paired work, grouping children across the classes
- Employing a variety of methodologies in the classroom
- More able pupils will be encouraged to carry out research in certain topic areas
- Offer a variety of recording methods

We endorse the emphasis this curriculum places on the exploration of personal and family histories at all levels and are very conscious of the sensitivities some aspects of these topics may require. In instances where it would be insensitive to explore a child's own personal and family history, we will consider the substitution of the personal and family history of another person. The curriculum unit allows for this within the strand unit. My family or a family of a person known to me.

Children from the Daisy room 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.

Equality of Participation and Access

Provision for children with physical/learning difficulties will be made so that they can access the history curriculum.

Children whose first language is not English will be supported in accessing the history curriculum.

Our studies will focus on local, national and international places.

Our history classes will place an emphasis on the lives of ordinary women, men and children of the past as is recommended in the curriculum.

We will consider in our teaching of history the contribution made by women in the past as well as men.

At all class levels, we will include the lives of individuals from different social, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds. Class teachers will be encouraged to be culturally responsive and teach about the groups and communities that are in their respective classes. This will include the teaching of Black history, Traveller history and Ability Advocates such as Stephen Hawkins, Temple Grandin and more.

Organisational Planning

Timetable

In keeping with the recommendations in the Primary School Curriculum Introduction (p70) a minimum of three hours will be allocated to SESE per week, from first class to sixth, and two and a quarter hours with infant classes.

On occasion, time will be blocked as appropriate. This might occur when:

- Working on a project
- Exploring the local environment
- Devising and undertaking a local trail

Teachers will consider the use of discretionary curriculum time for SESE when appropriate.

Resources and I.T.

All children have access to the class library which contains a good selection of books.

Members of the local community with a knowledge of local history will engage in history trails with the children and engage in interviews/story telling sessions where possible.

All of the classrooms have interactive whiteboards which have access to the internet so the world wide web can be used as a historical resource.

Health and Safety

Outdoor work will be based in areas that are accessible and safe for all children and staff.

Preliminary visits to the site by teachers may be necessary to identify possible hazards. We will consult the school's safety statement for advice on safety during such activities.

Individual Teacher's Planning and Reporting

Teachers will report on work completed in their Cúntas Miosúil. These are kept in individual teacher's planning folders and uploaded to the school shared drive online.

Teachers will use the Whole School Policy and Yearly plans to inform their classroom planning.

Teachers will use the History Curriculum strands and strand units when planning.

Teachers also keep long-term and weekly/fortnightly plans

Staff Development

Teachers will have access to reference books, resource materials and websites dealing with history.

Staff will be encouraged to research and try out new approaches and methodologies.

Teachers will be encouraged to attend in-service workshops and courses in history.

Community Links

Parents/caregivers/grandparents have an important role to play as custodians of local knowledge that can be shared with the children. Parents are encouraged to help in the delivery of the history programme by:

- a. Participating in interviews and surveys.
- b. Helping out with supervision during fieldwork when/if needed.

- c. Talking with their children about family history.

Parents from other countries will be encouraged to share their heritage with the rest of the school if they so wish and if it is appropriate.

Community Links

People in the local area who have an interest and some knowledge in its history will be invited to speak with the children.

The work of some national agencies relates to aspects of the history programme and we will welcome visits by speakers from these organisations e.g. Dúchas, Heritage Council, National Roads Authority etc.

Places of Historical Interest

Our local area is of immense historical value, linking with our history curriculum. We are very fortunate that our school is located in Rathcoole and so we can actively explore our local environment. Places of historic interest around Rathcoole and beyond include:



Success Criteria

We will use the following criteria to assess the success of this plan.

- Evidence that pupils are engaging in studies from personal to local, national and international history
- That history is defined as an attempt to reconstruct and interpret the past as well as the past itself
- Our yearly and classroom planning is based on the Whole School Plan
- There is a balance between skills and content
- Development of historical skills throughout the classes
- Integrated themes are being developed across the school, using a whole school approach.
- Use of timelines throughout the school
- That the curriculum is spiral and developmental in its structure
- Classes engaged in outdoor observation and trails of the local environment
- Photographs, displays, use of artefacts and evidence in classes
- Procedures outlined in this plan consistently followed throughout the school
- Children's feedback
- Teacher/parent/caregiver feedback
- Inspectors' suggestions/feedback

Implementation

Roles and Responsibilities

All the teachers are responsible for the implementation of the history curriculum in their own classrooms. Teachers will be encouraged to present feedback during staff meeting on review of history.

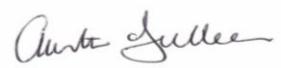
[**Timeframe for review**](#)

Date of Creation	January 2021
Date of Review	January 2022
Date of Next Review	January 2025

History Appendix

The following topics should be covered:

3rd Class	4th Class
Egyptians	Vikings
Romans	Greeks
Australasian peoples – Maori People	Stone Age
Normans	Life in medieval Ireland
Food and farming	Native Americans
Clothes	Homes and houses
My family	Shops and fairs
Homes	My school
	Feasts and festivals
5th Class	6th Class
Early societies of the Tigris and Euphrates valleys	Celts
Early Christian Ireland	Asian peoples
Bronze Age	African peoples
Central and South America – the Aztecs	Life in 1950's Ireland
Schools and education	Communications
Caring for the sick	Transport
Life in the 18 th century	Life in the 19 th century
World War I	World War II
Games and pastimes	My locality – local project (my locality through the ages)



Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)



Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: 18.06.2021