



# Tireolas

## Geography Policy

### Introductory Statement:

This policy was formulated following a consultative process which took place over a period of months. The Principal, class teachers, resource teacher and S.E.T. involved in drafting this policy. This plan will form the basis of each teacher's long and short term planning in Geography and so will influence teaching and learning in individual classrooms. It will also inform new or temporary teachers of our approaches and methodologies in this subject area.

### Rationale:

As we recognise that Geography is an integral part of the Social, Environmental and Scientific Education of our pupils. In our school SESE provides opportunities for the child to explore, investigate and develop an understanding of the natural, human, social and cultural environment in which he/she lives and of those in the wider world. \*( pg 2-5 TG for further info)

The distinct role Geography plays in SESE is one of helping the child understand and appreciate the physical and human features of their immediate and wider environments. This plan is drawn up in response to the 1999 Primary School Curriculum, to conform to the principles outlined in this curriculum and to review our practices in light of these principles. As a whole school plan it guides the organised teaching and learning in Scoil Chiarain Naofa This policy was devised:

- To provide clear guidelines for teachers
- To insure consistency throughout the school
- To conform with legislation

### Vision and Aims

- a) **Vision** In line with our school ethos we believe that the Geography Curriculum enables children to make sense of the natural and human environments in which they

live and in the wider world. As such, Geography is pivotal to each child's rounded environmental education. Geography prepares pupils to contribute and play a role in their communities by encouraging them to appreciate the interdependence of people. Geography promotes an understanding of and respect for different cultures and ways of life. The Geography curriculum fosters children's responsibility for the immediate and wider environments. We seek to assist the children in our school in achieving their potential.

**b) Aims**

- 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 (mapping and other non-verbal, non-numerical forms of data presentation)
- 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.

## **Curriculum Planning**

### **Infant Classes, First and Second Classes**

#### **1. Strands and Strand Units**

##### **Strands**

Human environments

Natural environments

Environmental awareness and care

##### **Strand Units**

- Living in the local community
- People and places in other area
- The local natural environment
- Weather
- Planet Earth in space
- Caring for my locality

# Curriculum Planning

3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Classes

## Strands

Human environments

### Strand units

- People living and working in the local area
  - People living and working in a contrasting part or Ireland
  - People and other lands
- Explored through a selection from the sub-units
- People and communities
  - Natural environmental features and people
  - Settlement: homes and other buildings
  - People at work
  - Transport and communication
- An environment in another European country
  - An environment in a non-European country
- Country, regional and national centres
  - Trade and development issues

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Natural environments

- The local natural environment
- Land, rivers and seas of Ireland
- Physical features of Europe and the world
- Rocks and soils
- Weather, climate and atmosphere
- Planet Earth in

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Environmental awareness

And care

- Environmental awareness
- Caring for the environment

## 2. Skills Development

### Infant Classes, First and Second Classes

Skills and concepts development

A sense of place  
and space

- A sense of place
  - A sense of space
- 

Maps, globes and  
Graphical skills

- Using pictures, maps and globes
- 

Geographical investigation  
Skills

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

### 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Classes

#### Skills and concepts development

A sense of place  
And space

- Observing
- Predicting
- Investigating and  
experimenting

Maps, globes and  
graphical skills

- A sense of place
- A sense of space
- Using pictures,  
maps and models
- Maps and globes

Geographical  
investigation  
Skills

- Questioning

their own local  
environment

- Estimating and measuring
- Analyzing
- Recording and communicating
- Evaluating

We are aware that the children's knowledge and sense of awareness is extending to wider environments at county, regional, national and international level. This then is reflected back to our own locality.

When choosing countries to study under the strand "Human Environments" these are our considerations:

- Pupils from international communities in our school.
- b. Staffs own experience of and interest in other countries.
- c. Current resources already in place for other countries.
- d. Consideration of the history curriculum with possibilities of integration in mind.

We never forget the children's growing knowledge of

The spiral nature of our curriculum is evident now as wider global environments are introduced at this level. In addition more complex geographical issues are explored in the above curriculum. \*In order to ensure continuity of content and to avoid unnecessary duplication, teachers will select content objectives and places of study collectively. As is recommended in the curriculum, children will have the opportunity to explore one European and one non European country per annum from 3rd class to 6th class. We will endeavour to include at least one developing country when choosing a non European environment over this four year period.

## 2. Skills Development

We are aware that the development of Geographical skills is of equal importance to strand content in this curriculum. The skills working as a Geographer are :

- A sense of place and space
- Maps , globes and graphicacy
- Geographical investigation skills .( Questioning , Observing , Predicting , Investigating and experimenting , Estimating and measuring , Analysing , Recording and communicating , Evaluating)

These skills will be developed through the content of the strands and strand units. Strategies for development of these skills will involve the children being actively involved in fieldwork, trails and outdoor investigations as suggested in Teacher Guidelines starting on page 68.

- A sense of place and space will be developed through direct and indirect experiences first in relation to the child's own home and immediate surroundings but will later extend to include wider environments.

- The use of maps, globes and atlases will be used in age appropriate way from infants to 6th class and will encompass a wide range of graphical activities.

- The geographical investigation skills will be included in various indoor and outdoor Investigation work.

6 By following the content of this curriculum and by developing the geographical skills the Children in our school are given opportunities to work as geographers at every class level.

Children's ideas

\*We plan to use the children's ideas of places and spaces as a starting point for all geographical activity.

\*We find out what the children already know by

- Talk and discussion
- Play and experimenting
- Enquiry process and Questioning
- Annotated drawings
- Brainstorming
- Concept maps
- Concept cartoons

We do this to build on the children's previous knowledge or to challenge the existing ideas if they are not accurate.

## 3. Approaches and Methodologies

- Active learning
- Problem solving
- Developing skills through content

- Talk and discussion
- Co-operative learning
- Use of the environment
  
- Our teachers will follow the recommended sequential approach for Geography whereby local areas are first studied followed by regional, national, European and global studies.
  
- We plan to use the key 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.
  
- \*In learning about our own natural and human environments we are using these methodologies specific to Geography:
  
- Fieldwork
  
- \* We have completed a Geographical Environmental audit of our school grounds and immediate locality and identified features and trails that can be focused on when embarking on local environmental studies.

4. Places of interest
5. .Local Area of Doorus./
6. The sea/
7. Aughinish
8. The Burren



9.

- : Atlases, maps and globes Interviews ICT Photographs School
- Electronic Maps: Internet has good interactive maps. 6. Linkage and Integration Linkage: When we are studying the local environment, we will study both the natural and human environments and the effect one has on the other. When we are studying distant places under the Human Environment strand, we also learn about the 8 natural environments of these places. The strand Environmental Awareness and Care is by its nature, linked strongly with the other two strands.

## 10. Linkage and Integration

At each class level the teachers will seek to integrate Geography with other curricular areas. Aspects of Geography will be dealt with in the context of English, Gaeilge, S.E.S.E., Visual Arts and Drama. Teachers will make provision for this linkage in their short-term planning. Linkage:

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When we are studying distant places under the Human Environment strand, we also learn about the 8 natural environments of these places.

The strand Environmental Awareness and Care is by its nature, linked strongly with the other two strands.

Integration: We will explore possibilities to integrate the SESE subjects at all class levels, We will refer to the Teacher Guidelines in Geography , History and Science in order to choose topics or themes for SESE integration.

In particular the use of environmental trails in Geography will complement the study of living things in Science while the strand of Environmental Awareness and Care is common to both curricula.

The use of trails will also lead to the study of how places and features have been shaped by the actions of people in the past and so integrate naturally with Local studies in History.

Opportunities that exist for integration with other subject areas are :

- SPHE : The development of the child's sense of identity sand citizenship • Mathematics ; The skills outlined in mapping and graphicacy
- Visual Arts: Aesthetic awareness in the environments and Making drawings.
- Physical Education: Outdoor and adventure activities.
- Language: Discussion of ideas and relationships in Geography. The language of location, direction and position.

## 11. Multi-grade teaching

- Using a thematic approach
- Integration with other subjects: SESE – history and science; SPHE; Maths; Language programme; Visual Arts; PE
- Selection of text books
- Classroom organization.



## 6. Assessment and Record Keeping

Children's progress in Geography is assessed through:

- Teacher observation
- Teacher designed tasks and tests
- Portfolios and projects
- As in all subject areas Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning of SESE Geography
- We as a staff have a common understanding of its purpose and the ways in which the progress of children in geography will be assessed, documented and reported.
- Assessment in geography in our school will fulfil the following roles :
  - A diagnostic role – to identify areas of difficulty in order to respond to the needs of the child.
  - A summative role- to establish the outcomes of learning after completing a unit of work.
  - An evaluative role – to assist teachers in assessing their own practice, methodologies, approaches and resources.
- We recognise that assessment techniques used in Geography must seek to assess progress in a) Children's knowledge of the environment and of the world. b) Children's ability to use geographical skills c) Children's development of attitudes
- The assessment tools we will use will range from the informal means to the more structured approaches. \*Methods we will use are ; #
- Teacher observation of the children's learning as the geography curriculum is implemented
- Teacher designed tasks and tests at the end of units of work. • Work samples eg. Finished projects and investigations. These records will inform the teacher of the progress of the child; the effectiveness of teaching methodologies employed and will also inform future planning. The assessment records will form the basis for reporting and discussing the child's progress with parents.
- This information will be relayed at Parent Teacher Meetings and in annual school reports.

## 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. This will be recorded in the teacher's yearly notes. The requirements of children with special needs will be taken into account when planning class lessons and related activities. The S.N.A. supports particular children and groups as directed by the class teacher. Children who experience bereavement and loss, serious illness or other major personal and loss, serious illness or other major personal situations

are supported and consideration is given to meeting their individual needs in the most appropriate manner.

## **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. We provide an equal educational experience for both boys and girls as we recognise that stereotyped expectations of gender roles can inhibit children's educational achievements. Children with special needs will be included in all activities.

It is important that all children experience a rounded environmental education. Geography plays a pivotal role in this education and so we will do our best to ensure that every child will have opportunities to engage in learning activities appropriate to their abilities.

- Teachers will use a mixture of whole-class teaching and group work, with different groups set tasks of various complexities.
- Teachers will develop their questioning techniques spanning from simple recall to more complex and analytical skills so that all pupils will have opportunities for success.
- Map work will be graded for the less able and the more able students.
- Different ways of recording and communicating findings will be encouraged: drawing, ICT, written records, oral reports and models. #
- All children benefit from active involvement in the environment so all will be encouraged to participate in fieldwork.
- The exceptional ability child will be encouraged to undertake additional research and recording their geographical findings in a variety of ways.
- Children who were born abroad or who have lived in other countries will be invited to share their experiences with the other pupils.
- Provision will be made for children with physical difficulties.
- We will refer to the NCCA Guidelines in this regard.
- Children with general Learning difficulties will be catered for in the teaching and learning of Geography

## **Organisational Planning**

## **9. Timetable**

As per curriculum guidelines - SESE Infants 2 hours 15 minutes  
1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Classes 3 hours

## **10. Resources and ICT**

- Local library
- School library
- Artefacts brought in by children/parents
- Relevant software
- Visitors
- Useful Websites –

Primary Curriculum Support Programme	<a href="http://www.pcsp.ie">www.pcsp.ie</a>
School Development Planning Support	<a href="http://www.sdps.ie">www.sdps.ie</a>
Irish National Teachers Organisation	<a href="http://www.into.ie">www.into.ie</a>
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment	

Posters / charts

1. Concern
- 2 Maps.
- 3 Globe.
4. Know your World-CD Software.

Instruments / equipment / maps

- 1 Weather Instruments.
3. .Local Area of Doorus.—The Tidal Mills,Farming Prctices,Tourism,The Island,
4. The sea/
5. Aughinish
6. The Burren



## 11. Health and Safety

\*We have a Health and Safety policy in place in our school which covers safety concerning the handling of equipment and out of school activities such as fieldwork (See Geography Teacher Guidelines P 74 – 78 for guidance)

Teachers will consult the Principal whenever it is proposed to engage in fieldwork

. During practical work teachers will be aware of the safety implications of any exploratory or investigative work to be undertaken.

Successful and enjoyable investigations require sensible planning, good supervision and adherence to safety rules. Outdoor work will be based in areas that are accessible for children, teachers and helpers and that are safe.

Preliminary visits by teachers to the site will be necessary to identify potential hazards. If there are apparent dangers then a more suitable habitat will be selected for study. Habitat studies involve children in working with plants and animals, and teachers will be made aware that some children may be allergic to some animals and plants.

When designing investigative activities teachers will find useful safety advice in the Teacher Guidelines for Science and in Safety in School Science ( An Roinn Oideachais 1996). We will also consult the “Be Safe” handbook ( The Association for Science Education) for advice on safety during such activities 12 1

### **12. Individual Teacher’s Planning and Reporting**

Teachers will base their yearly and short term plans on the approaches set out in the whole school plan for Geography.

Teachers will consult this Whole School Plan and the curriculum documents for Geography when they are drawing up their long and short term plans.

Teachers will include all the strands and strand units every year and will select objectives within the strand units each year.. Where it is meaningful and suitable Geography will be taught in a thematic way to integrate with the other SESE subjects of History and Science.

### **13. Staff Development**

Teachers will be made aware of any opportunities for further professional development through participation in courses available in education centres or other venues.

### **14. Parental Involvement**

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

Parents are encouraged to come to the school to help out in the delivery of this programme by a. participating in surveys and interviews b. by helping out in supervision of fieldwork when/if needed c. Talking to the children about their lives, work, cultural and leisure interests.

Parents are invited to celebrate and view results of projects, surveys, investigations in the school or read about them in the school newsletter.

Parents will be encouraged to invite the children to view places of interest like orchards, farms or distinctive natural environments with which they are familiar. Parents from distant lands will be encouraged to share their heritage with the rest of the school if they so wish or if it is appropriate.

### **15. Community Links**

People in the local community who have an interest and knowledge in the environment will be invited to speak to the children. •

The local library will be a source of knowledge for the children. •

Local businesses will be approached to host a visit to a factory or other work –place eg Boston Scientific

- Local farms encourage school visits for local studies of a rural area.

The discussion of farm safety issues will be an essential element in the preparation of such visits.

- The work of some national agencies relates to aspects of the Geography programme. As well as accessing materials produced by these agencies specifically for schools, we will welcome visits by speakers from these organisations. i.e. Bord Na Mona , Duchais , ESB , Tree Council

- Personnel from Concern/ Trócaire / Fair Trade will be invited to speak with the senior pupils about trade and development issues and issues involving the developing world such as famine and fair trade

### **Success Criteria**

The success of this plan will be measured using the following criteria:

- Implementation of the Geography curriculum will be evident in the teacher work
- Continuity of content and methodology will be evident in teachers preparation
- Ongoing assessment will show that pupils are acquiring concepts thought and a ability to engage with others in a manner appropriate to their age and personality

### **Implementation**

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Class teachers are responsible for the implementation of the Geography programme in their own classes.

### **Ratification and Communication**

Ratified by the Board of Management September 2022

