



Rathcormac National School Science Policy.

1. Introduction

At Rathcormac National School, we recognise and value the importance of science in fostering curiosity, creativity, and problem-solving skills in our pupils. This policy outlines our approach to teaching and learning in science in accordance with the Primary School Curriculum (1999) and the Department of Education and Science guidelines. It ensures that all pupils receive a broad and balanced science education, enabling them to develop scientific literacy and a love for learning.

2. School Vision and Aims

Our vision is to provide an engaging, inquiry-based science education that nurtures curiosity and prepares pupils to become responsible global citizens.

Our aims are to:

- Foster a positive attitude towards science and encourage curiosity about the natural world.
- To encourage each child to behave responsibly to protect, improve and cherish the environment.
- To promote sustainable development.
- Develop scientific knowledge, skills, and understanding through practical and hands-on experiences.
- Promote environmental awareness and responsibility.
- Encourage collaborative learning and teamwork through science investigations.
- Ensure inclusivity and accessibility for all pupils, catering to different learning styles and abilities.

3. Methodologies

Our science teaching will be based on active learning strategies, including:

- Inquiry-based learning: Encouraging pupils to ask questions and explore scientific concepts through investigation.
- Hands-on experiments: Providing practical experiences to reinforce scientific principles.
- Cross-curricular integration: Linking science with subjects such as Mathematics, Geography, and SPHE.
- Outdoor learning: Utilising the school garden, local environment, and field trips to enhance scientific understanding.
- Group work and collaboration: Encouraging teamwork and communication through shared investigations.
- Use of ICT: Integrating digital resources, simulations, and research tools to support science learning.
- Organising school wide Science Week activities for each class.
- Developing Skills: The following skills to be developed in each pupil:
 - Questioning
 - Observing
 - Predicting
 - Estimating and Measuring
 - Analysing
 - Recording and communicating.

4. Resources

Rathcormac NS currently uses the Let's Discover Programme and Small World programmes across the school which includes textbooks and full online digital resources to enhance lessons.

To support effective science teaching, Rathcormac National School will ensure:

- A well-stocked science resource area with appropriate materials and STEM equipment.
- A sign in/out lending system in place in Science Press for resources /equipment.

- All resources available labelled in the Science press/ room and on display.
- An inventory of equipment available on display in Science Press.
- Staff notify intention to use on internal Staff Communications.
- School kitchen available for science activities/experiments. Staff notify intention to use on internal Staff Communications. (Notice board in staffroom/WhatsApp/E mail.
- Access to technology, including interactive whiteboards, ipads/ tablets, and online educational resources.
- Science Journal in middle/older classes (Let's Discover)
- The use of the school grounds, local environment, and community resources for fieldwork and investigations.
- Provision of and awareness of CPD (Continuous Professional Development) for teachers to stay updated on best practices in science education.
- Booking and organisation of school/class workshops such as those organised by SEIA/Marine Institute/Green Schools Programme.
- Integration of science/STEM activities for classes during Wellbeing Week sessions. (Trialling in Term2/3 of school year 2024/25.

5. Community Links

We will continue to foster strong links with the community to enhance science learning, including:

- Visits from local scientists, engineers and environmentalists.
- Local Gardeners seasonal visits.
- Participation in initiatives such as Green Schools, Science Week and Engineering Week.
- Engaging with local businesses and organisations for educational partnerships, for example The Rathcormac Tidy Towns group.

6. Parental Involvement

We believe that parental involvement enhances science education. We will:

- Provide information on how parents can support science learning at home.
- Attend and present projects at annual science fair in Sligo ATU and exhibitions where pupils can showcase their work and projects.
- Invite parents with scientific backgrounds/skillsets to share their knowledge and experiences/and or assist with Science Fair exhibitions.
- Use the school website to keep parents informed about science activities.

7. Success Criteria/Assessment.

The effectiveness of our science policy will be assessed through:

- Pupil engagement and enthusiasm for science activities.
- Participation in and engagement with Science Week.
- Evidence of hands-on and inquiry-based learning in classrooms.
- Assessment of pupils' scientific knowledge, skills, and understanding.
- Positive feedback from pupils, parents, and teachers.
- Teacher observations.
- Participation and achievement in science-related initiatives and competitions.

8. Review and Implementation

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness and alignment with current educational standards. All teachers will be responsible for its implementation, with support from the school leadership team.

Approved by:

Principal: Geraldine Connell

Board of Management: Shon Hean

Date: 30/9/2025