

Scoil Íde

Whole School Plan

Geography

Whole School Geography Plan

Scoil Íde

Clondalkin.

■ Introductory Statement and Rationale

(a) Introductory Statement

In this plan we will establish our school goals for the teaching and learning of Geography, within the SESE curriculum at Scoil Íde, Clondalkin. Ms Violet Walsh, whose Post of Responsibility is Geography co-ordinated the review of the Geography Whole School plan from February 2012 to May 2012 with the support of staff members, Martina O'Malley, Marie O'Neill & Orla Ní Odhráin,. The planning framework drafted by the Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP), School Development Planning Support(SDPS) National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and the Department of Education (DES) and The Literacy and Numeracy Strategy 2011 were used as guidelines for reviewing the Whole School Plan for Geography. The following table synopsis how we have reviewed and worked on Geography over that period. It is hoped that the plan will be a useful tool for teachers providing them with clear guidelines and ensuring consistency and continuity in practice throughout the school. This plan will form the basis of long and short term planning for teachers.

(b) Rationale

Geography is the study of the Earth, its inhabitants and the inter-relationships between them in the context of place, space and environment. It is concerned with the interaction of humans and the wider world. By studying their local environment, children learn about people and places and the connections between them. Geography encourages children to appreciate the interdependence of individuals, groups and communities and so promotes an understanding of and respect for the cultures and ways of life of people, throughout the world. Finally, it should be noted that Geography has a distinct but complementary role with Science & History, within SESE. This plan was 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 planning in Scoil Ide, Clondalkin.

■ Vision and Aims

(a) Vision

The Primary School Curriculum celebrates the uniqueness of the child, as it is expressed in each child's personality, intelligence and potential for development. It is designed to nurture the child in all dimensions of his life-spiritual, moral, cognitive, emotional, imaginative, aesthetic, social and physical.

Our school's Geography plan is designed to enhance and enrich the lives of all our pupils in Scoil Íde.

(b) Aims

Our school hopes that through the Geography programme each child will be enabled:

- To develop knowledge and understanding of local, regional and wider environments and their relationships
- 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 toward the environment, and involvement in the identification, discussion, resolution and avoidance of environmental problems
- To develop an understanding of appropriate geographical concepts

Our school specifically aims to:

- To develop a knowledge and understanding of the Geography of Clondalkin.
- To develop Geography trails in the locality.
- To use all appropriate methodologies in the teaching of Geography in our school i.e. talk and discussion, active learning, fieldwork, use of the environment

Curriculum Planning

1.Strands and Strand Units

The curriculum is divided into four sections: Infant classes; First and Second classes; Third and Fourth classes; and Fifth and Sixth classes. It is divided into three strands: Human Environments; Natural Environments and Environmental Awareness and Care. Each of these strands is further sub-divided into a number of strand units or topics which contain particular objectives.

In line with the 'menu curriculum' (p. 48 Curaclam na Bunscoile) Scoil Íde will teach aspects of all three major strands and strand units each year and content objectives will be chosen in such a way that the child will receive a comprehensive coverage in geography over a two year period.

Geography Curriculum

Strands and Strand Units

	Human Environment	Natural Environment	Environmental Awareness and Care
Junior and Senior Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Living in the local community</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The local Natural Environment</i> • <i>Weather</i> • <i>Planet Earth in Space</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Caring for my locality</i>
First and Second Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Living in the local community</i> • <i>People and</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The local Natural Environment</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Caring for my locality</i>

	<i>Places in Other areas</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather • Planet Earth in Space 	
Third and Fourth Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in the local area • People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland • People and Other lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local Natural Environment • Land, rivers and seas of my county • Rocks and Soils • Weather, Climate and atmosphere • Planet Earth in Space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Awareness • Caring for the Environment
Fifth and Sixth Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in the local area • People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland • People and Other lands • County, regional and national centres • Trade and Development issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local Natural Environment • Land, rivers and seas of Ireland • Physical features of Europe and the World • Rocks and soil • Weather, Climate and atmosphere • Planet Earth in Space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Awareness • Caring for the Environment

Agreed locations for strand unit

People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland

3 rd class	Co. Wicklow	or	Co. Fermanagh
4 th class	Connemara and Aran Islands	or	Westport, Achill and Croagh Patrick
5 th class	Glens of Antrim and Giant's Causeway	or	Golden Vale
6 th class	The Burren	or	The Bog of Allen

Agreed locations for strand unit

People and other lands (Europe)

3 rd class	Spain	or	Greece
4 th class	France	or	Lithuania
5 th class	Poland	or	England
6 th class	Germany	or	Norway

Agreed locations for strand unit

People and other lands (Non- Europe)

3 rd class	Nigeria	or	North America
4 th class	Brazil	or	New Zealand
5 th class	China	or	South Africa
6 th class	Australia	or	India

2. Skills Development

In order to ensure that there is a balance between skills development and the acquisition of knowledge, geography topics are introduced and discussed in increasing detail in each class. For example, discussion and pictorial reading of weather with Infant classes will provide a foundation for more detailed discussions in subsequent years.

The following strategies are used by each class teacher to develop the child's skills and concepts development

- A sense of place and space
- Maps, globes and graphical skills
- Geographical investigation skills

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
- Evaluating (5th and 6th)

3. Children's Ideas

We will endeavour to use the children's' ideas of place and space as a starting point for many geography activities.

To find out what children know already we will use KWL charts (what I know? what I want to learn? and what I have learned?), concept mapping, brainstorming, , drawings, talk and discussion, pictures, photographs, questioning, listening, problem-solving tasks, teacher-designed tasks and tests.

4. Approaches and Methodologies

Our Geography Curriculum asserts that one of the keys to successful Geography teaching is the use of a broad range of classroom approaches and methodologies. We plan to use the key methodologies of the Revised 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

Teachers follow the recommended sequence for geography-starting at the local level, then moving to regional, national, European and global.

Place is central to geography. When children are engaged in the exploration of the locality they should be encouraged to :

- Discover where places and features are located
- Study distribution patterns and look for order and reason in them
- Identify links and lines of communication
- Search for causes, relationships, and changes that occur
- Photographs, internet, e-mail, exploratory trails and interviews help greatly to stimulate the pupil's interest.

The following approaches and methodologies will be involved in the review of the implementation of the Geography Plean Scoile.

- learning about the environment- fieldwork, exploratory trails, photographs.
- investigating human environments-observing and sketching features in the landscape, conducting a land use/ traffic survey, photographs, artefacts, interviewing people living and working in the area, conducting an environmental appraisal, plotting routes
- investigating natural environments-recognising and examining features in photographs, using stimulations and models, observing and sketching features in the environment, conducting experiments and investigations, keeping a wildlife garden.
- Map skills and mapping concepts- local maps, plans, photographs, internet (ICT), models

The children should have opportunities to visit and explore the local environment.

Fieldwork is important for a number of reasons:

- It stimulates children's' interest in the environment
- It enables the pupil to come to know the locality in which he/she lives and to develop a

sense of what is distinctive about his/her place

- It encourages a questioning, critical approach to geography. Children are stimulated to ask questions, to recognise and investigate patterns in order to develop critical thinking skills.
- It provides real situations in which geographical skills are seen to be necessary and relevant.
- Fieldwork fosters the critical foundation on which a sense of care of the environment is based.
- It involves group work which encourages the development of many of the social skills outlined in the SPHE programme.
- It provides children with a basis from which they can begin to compare and contrast the features of other environments in Ireland and other parts of the world.
- Geographical fieldwork can be used to integrate many elements of the primary curriculum, including Science, language and Mathematics

5. Linkage and Integration

Linkage:

- Wherever possible teachers will explore the possibility for linkage across the Geography Curriculum. All geographical studies will encompass elements from at least two and even three strands. Study of each unit will provide opportunities for the simultaneous development of geographical skills and concepts.

Integration:

- We will seek opportunities for integration across the Geography, History and Science Curriculum. Other links can be made between geography and other curricular subjects. A list of possible integrated themes are as follows:

Visual Arts:

- Geographical themes may give stimulus for art work e.g. journeys
- Artists and their work from other countries

English/Literacy:

- Recording of information found in factsheets or projects.
- Stories from other countries

Oral Language:

- Extension of vocabulary using Geographical terms. Discussing, debating and reporting information found.

Maths/ Numeracy

- Measuring distances on maps.
- Making data graphs of information found, using co-ordinates in map work.

Drama:

- Role play and conscience alley as a way to develop ideas and attitudes of Geographical topics. Present debates for and against Geographical issues.
- Stories of travel and exploration.

SPHE:

- Myself and my Family. Discussing roles and responsibilities relating to Geographical issues.
- Myself and the Wider World

PE:

- Folk dances
- Orienteering

Gaeilge

- Treoracha a thabhairt agus a leanúint.
- Léarscáil a tharraingt as Gaeilge

6. Multi-Grade Teaching

- In the multi grade classroom, extra planning is always needed to meet the needs of all pupils. For Geography the class teacher will usually teach the whole class and have different written tasks for the concluding part of the lesson. Teachers will choose from the menu curriculum (see Curaclam na Bunscoile p.48), ensuring that all strands and strand units are covered and as many of the content objectives as possible.

7. Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment is a central part of the everyday learning and teaching process in Geography. It can provide valuable information on the child's progress and on the effectiveness and suitability of the programme and the teaching methods being used. Both formal and informal assessment can be deployed in implementing the Geography programme.

Scoil Íde uses the following tools of assessment to assess a child's knowledge and understanding of environmental matters, the acquisition of Geographical skills and the development of attitudes.

Teacher observation

Teacher observation might focus on

- *the ability of the child to co-operate and work in groups or to work independently*
- *the informal interactions between the child and adults and between the child and other children*
- *the quality of presentation of work*
- *particular interests or aptitudes displayed by the child*
- *the participation and interest of the child in a variety of activities*
- *the level of personal or social responsibility exhibited by the child*
- *the reliability of the child in carrying out established routines*
- *the perseverance of the child in carrying out a task*
- *the child's awareness of the difficulties of others and his willingness to help*
- *the questions the child asks and the responses the child makes to questions and suggestions made by the teacher*
- *various behaviours, for example shyness, leadership ability, level of self confidence, the tendency to be anxious, sense of fair play, assertiveness, aggression, readiness to take*

risks and meet challenges

- *physical and emotional maturity*
- *the ability of the child to engage in assessing her progress and reflecting on his/her learning.*

Scoil Íde uses the following recommended formal tools for assessment in Geography:

- *Teacher designed tasks and tests*
- *Work samples, portfolios and projects*
- *Homework tasks*

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. This information will be relayed at Parent/Teacher meetings and in annual school reports.

Recording assessment:

Children's records

- Copy books
- Check lists
- Children's own work samples
- KWL

8. Children with Different Needs

Scoil Íde caters for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties, children with physical difficulties, children with learning difficulties, and those with exceptional ability.

Differentiation:

- A common lesson content can be used with all pupils, but different groups will work on tasks of varying complexities.
- Topics appropriate to their ability will be planned for the more able/ less able.
- Oral questioning by teacher should range from relatively simple to more challenging.
- Communication skills can vary. Children may record their work by writing, drawing, model-building, computer-aided work, etc.
- Children who are exceptionally able will be encouraged to carry out supplementary studies and recordings.
- Whole class teaching and focused group work
- Discussion work, variety of styles from lower order to higher order questions

9. Equality of Participation and Access:

Scoil Íde recognises and values diversity, and believes all children are entitled to access the services, facilities, or amenities that are available in the school environment. The schools equality policy recognises this.

- Equal opportunities are given to all pupils regardless of gender, race, religion, ethnic background.

- For pupils whose first language is not English, an informal buddy system can operate on tasks and activities and an enhanced use of pictorial and non-text aids.
- For pupils who experience financial hardship, there is limited financial provision within the school for field trips etc.
- For pupils who experience physical/mental or emotional disadvantage within the classroom, the SNA may be available to support the pupil.

10.Organisational Planning

Timetable

Timetable: Our teachers work in keeping with the recommendations in the Primary School Curriculum (page 70) for SESE, i.e. a minimum of two and a quarter hours in Infant years, with three hours for classes 1st – 6th per week. On occasion, time will be blocked as appropriate. This might occur when working on an integrated project or exploring the local environment. The above recommended time allocations may have to be altered to allow for the increased time to be given to literacy and numeracy.

Homework

Homework will reflect an active learning approach and will reinforce information already taught in class through text book, workbook or worksheet exercises. It may also require pupils to undertake some research e.g. looking at maps, the weather forecast or other programme of interest.

11. ICT and Resources

ICT

- The school has a computer room with Geographical software uploaded onto each computer appropriate to Junior and Senior age groups.
- We have completed an environmental audit of the school grounds and immediate locality, and have decided how to use it as a resource.
- We have put in place maps, globes and atlases in our school. We have located large-scale maps of our school and immediate locality for mapping purposes.
- Each classroom laptop and projector affords the opportunity to access a variety of Geographical websites.

Books:

- There is a variety of books available as Geography resources throughout the school.

DVDs

- There are DVDs available to complement class curricula.

Clondalkin Library:

- Clondalkin Library and the school are in close contact with regard to Geographical resources and for assistance in project work.

Inventory:

- An inventory of Geography resources is available to all staff and includes a list of references and resources. The Geography Coordinator is responsible for the purchase of Geography resources.
- Each class from third to sixth has a map of Ireland and Europe and a globe.
- Fifth and Sixth classes also have a map of the World.
- Maps of Clondalkin are also available.

Posters

- There are a large number of Geographical posters available as a resource in implementing the geography curriculum.

Photographs

- Scoil Íde uses Google maps & Google images to sources appropriate photographs.

Weather Instruments

- Rain gauge, thermometer, compass, anemometer are available.

12. Health and Safety

To ensure the health and safety of children and adults, thorough preparation is vital. If we invite parents to help in the supervision of field trips they should be fully briefed on all aspects of the outing and Garda Vetted.

We have a Health and Safety policy in place in our school which covers safety concerns around out-of-school activities, in this subject **fieldwork** (guidance from Geography TG p.74-78).

Follow-up and Evaluation: Discussion, written reports, project work, art work, computer work, completion of trail booklets may be employed.

13. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting

- The curriculum is presented as a two-year cycle. We will introduce SESE integrated topics in a planned way.
- Cuntas Míósúil will assist in the evaluating progress in Geography and inform future teaching.

Teachers have the option of attending any in-service workshops and summer courses that may extend our understanding of Geography as a distinct subject and as part of SESE.

15. Parental Involvement

- Parents are the child's first teacher. As such, they have a very important role in their child's

education. They can be involved in many ways in supporting our Geography Plan.

- 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 help out with supervision during fieldwork when/if needed.
- Parents are welcome to view results of projects, surveys, investigations in the school or read about them in the school newsletter or website
- Grandparents Day – visiting grandparents can share their own life experiences.

Special event – international festival / inter- cultural day

- International festival may be held to celebrate the multiculturalism of our school community.

16. Community Links

- Clondalkin Chamber of Commerce
- Grange Castle Digital Hub – Pfizer, Takeda, Microsoft
- Clondalkin Sports and Leisure Centre
- Liffey Valley Shopping Centre
- The Tidy Towns Committee
- Irish Peatland Conservation Council - www.ipcc.ie
- www.waterwaysireland.org
- www.antaisce.org
- www.enfo.ie
- Dublin Biodiversity
- Clondalkin Library
- Occasionally local people visit classes to share their life experiences with the pupils.

Resources

- Ordnance Survey Office (Phoenix Park)
- Land Registry Office
- Planning Department Dublin County Council
- Transport Providers – timetables

Trails

- Camac Valley
- Royal Canal
- Corkagh Park
- Round Tower

■ Success Criteria

The following criteria will indicate success:

- The implementation of the plan will be reflected in the Cúntas Miosúil.
- The acquisition of Geographical skill will be both age appropriate and cumulative.
- The children's portfolios, copies and projects provide information to the teacher on understanding of content and use of Geographical skills.
- Inspectors' suggestions and reports will be taken on board.
- The plan hopes to promote the key considerations of the curriculum because it contains contributions from all class levels and, as a result, ensures a balance of all the strands.

■ Implementation

(a) Roles and Responsibilities

The plan will be supported, developed and implemented by all the staff. Feedback will be encouraged by the Geography committee-Orla Ní Odhráin (Príomhoide), Marie O'Neill, Martina O'Malley and Violet Walsh (Geography co-ordinator).

(b) Timeframe

The plan will be implemented from September 2012.

■ Review

(a) Roles and Responsibilities

The following will be involved in the review of the implementation of the Geography Plan Scoile.

- Principal
- BOM
- Teachers
- SESE coordinator
- Parents

(b) Timeframe

This will be reviewed as per other subject plans. Our aim is to review this plan in June 2015.

■ Ratification and Communication

This plan was ratified by the Board of Management on _____

The plan will be communicated to all relevant parties.

Chairperson Board of Management _____

