



Muslim National School

Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave

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GEOGRAPHY POLICY

Introductory Statement

This policy was formulated in 2005 by the staff of Muslim National School. It was revised and redrafted in 2015 with the most recent update being in the first term of the school year 2021/22. It incorporates the key messages, skills, content and methodologies of the Geography curriculum. The plan forms the basis of each teacher's long and short-term planning in Geography. It informs new or temporary teachers of our approaches and methodologies in this subject area. In December 2021 the under-review policy was shared with all school stakeholders for a two-month consultation. Opinions/ thoughts/ insights were welcomed by either verbal or written communication. This has informed this current policy.

Rationale

We, at the Muslim National School, recognise that Geography is an integral part of the Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) of pupils. At the Muslim National School, SESE provides opportunities for each child to explore, investigate, and develop an understanding of the natural, human, social, and cultural environment in which they live. 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 policy is drawn up in keeping with the 1999 Primary School Curriculum and conforms to the principles outlined in this curriculum. The immediate environment will always be studied first with subsequent extensions to regional, national and global environments with emphasis on Islamic communities.

Vision

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 environment.

Furthermore, we wish to enhance the child's sense of geographical awareness by developing an appreciation of people from a diversity of cultural, ethnic, social and religious backgrounds.

Aims

Through the implementation of this policy, the staff at the Muslim National School aim to:

- endorse the aims of the SESE Geography curriculum.
- develop knowledge and understanding of local, regional, and wider environments and their interrelationships
- encourage an understanding and appreciation of the variety of natural and human conditions on the Earth
- develop empathy with people from diverse backgrounds and an understanding of human interdependence
- 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)
- encourage the development of a sense of place and spatial awareness
- encourage the development of caring attitudes and responsible behaviour towards the environment, and involvement in the identification, discussion, resolution and avoidance of environmental problems
- develop an understanding of appropriate geographical concepts.

Content

The three strands of the Geography curriculum are:

- Human Environments
- Natural Environments
- Environmental Awareness and Care

Contents of strands and strand units for each year group:

Table of Content Junior/Senior Infants			
Month	Strands	Strand Units	Topics
September	Human environments	Living in the local community	My family and home My School
October	Natural environments	Weather	Autumn
		The local natural environment	
	Environmental awareness and care	Caring for my locality	The story of rubbish (integrated with science)
November	Natural environments	Weather	Winter
	Human environments	My family and community	People who keep us safe in winter
		People and places in other areas	The Inuit

December	Human environments	Living in the local community	Community helpers
January		People and places in other areas	Saudi Arabia
February	Human environments	Living in the local community	Community helpers
	Natural environments	Weather	Spring
March	Human environments	Living in the local community	People at play
			People at work
	Natural environments	The local natural environment	Spring growth
		Planet earth in space	Space
April	Environmental Awareness and Care	Caring for my locality	Environmental awareness - Spring Clean Month (integrated with science)
	Human environment	Living in the local community	Safe/ unsafe play spaces
May	Natural environments	Weather	Summer
		The local natural environment	Water (integrated with science)
	Human environments	Living in the local community	Community helpers
June	Natural environments	Planet earth in space	Day and night
	Human environments	Living in the local community	School: My new teacher/ class

Month	Strands	Strand Units
September	Human Environments	Living in the local community
	Environmental Awareness & Care	Caring for my Locality
	Natural Environments	The Local Natural Environment
October	Natural Environments	The Local Natural Environments
	Human environments	Living in the local community
November	Human Environments	People and places in other areas
	Natural Environments	Weather
	Natural environments	Planet earth in space
	Environmental awareness and care	Caring for my locality
December	Environmental awareness and care	Caring for my locality
	Natural environments	Planet earth in space
January	Human environments	Living in the local community
	Human environments	Living in the local community
February	Natural environments	Weather
	Human Environments	People and places in other areas
March	Natural environments	Planet earth in space
	Environmental Awareness & Care	Caring for my locality
April	Environmental Awareness & Care	Caring for my Locality
	Human environments	Homes and shelter
May	Environmental awareness and care	Caring for my locality
	Human environments	People at play
	Natural environments	Weather
June	Environmental awareness and care	Caring for my locality
	Natural environments	The local natural environment
	Human environments	People at work

Table of Contents 3rd and 4th Class

Month	Strands	Strand Units
September	Environmental Awareness & Care	Caring for the environment
	Human Environments	People living and working in the local area
	Human Environments	People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland
October	Human Environments	People living and working in the local area
	Natural Environments	The Local Natural Environment
	Human Environments	People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland
November	Human environments	County, regional and national centres
	Natural Environments	Weather, climate and atmosphere
	Natural environments	Planet earth in space
December	Human environments	People and other lands
	Environmental Awareness & Care	Environmental awareness
January	Natural environments	Land, rivers and seas of my county
	Human environments	County, regional and national centres
February	Human environments	People and other lands
March	Human environments	County, regional and national centres
	Environmental Awareness & Care	Environmental awareness
April	Environmental Awareness &	Caring for the environment

	Care	
	Environmental Awareness & Care	Environmental awareness
	Human environments	People living and working in the local area
May	Human environments	People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland
	Natural environments	Rocks and soils
June	Environmental Awareness & Care	Environmental Awareness
	Natural environments	Weather, climate and atmosphere
	Natural environments	Planet earth in space

Table of Contents 5th and 6th		
Month	Strands	Strand Units
September	Environmental Awareness & Care	Caring for the environment
	Human Environments	People living and working in the local area
	Human Environments	People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland
October	Human Environments	People living and working in the local area
	Natural Environments	The Local Natural Environment
	Human Environments	People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland
November	Human environments	County, regional and national centres
	Natural Environments	Weather, climate and atmosphere

	Natural environments	Planet earth in space
December	Human environments	People and other lands
	Natural environments	Physical features of Europe and the world
	Environmental Awareness & Care	Environmental awareness
January	Natural environments	Land, rivers and seas of Ireland
	Human environments	County, regional and national centres
February	Human environments	People and other lands
	Natural environments	Physical features of Europe and the world
March	Human environments	County, regional and national centres
	Environmental Awareness & Care	Environmental awareness
April	Environmental Awareness & Care	Caring for the environment
	Environmental Awareness & Care	Environmental awareness
	Human environments	People living and working in the local area
May	Human environments	People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland
	Natural environments	Rocks and soils
June	Environmental Awareness & Care	Environmental Awareness
	Human environments	Trade and development issues

Skills and Concepts

The development of geographical skills is of equal importance to strand content in this curriculum. The skills of Geographical Investigation – a sense of space and

place, and mapping and graphical skills – will be developed through the content of the strands and strand units. The skills and concepts outlined in the 1999 curriculum are as follows:

- Questioning
- Estimating and measuring
- Observing
- Analysing
- Predicting
- Recording and communicating
- Investigating and experimenting
- Evaluating

Strategies for development of these skills will involve the children being actively involved in fieldwork and outdoor investigations. Maps, globes, and atlases will be used in age- appropriate ways from Infants to 6th class. By following the content of this curriculum and by developing their geographical skills, the children in our school are given opportunities to work as geographers at every class level.

Children's Ideas

Children's ideas of places and spaces will be used as a starting point for all geographical activity. Children show what they already know through:

- Talk and discussion
- Questioning and listening
- Annotated drawings
- Brainstorming
- Concept maps

Approaches and Methodologies

The key methodologies of the Primary Curriculum in the teaching of Geography will be utilised:

- Active Learning
- Problem-solving
- Developing skills through content
- Talk and discussion
- Co-operative learning
- Use of the environment
- Geography trails around school and local area

Teachers will follow the recommended sequence for geography – local, regional, national, European and global and then reflect on their location.

Linkage

When studying the local environment, children will study both the natural and human environments and the effect one has on the other. When studying distant places under the Human Environment strand, children will also learn about the

natural environments of these places. The strand Environmental Awareness and Care is by its nature, linked strongly with the other two strands.

Integration

Teachers will consider possibilities to integrate the SESE subjects at all levels. Teachers create their own integrated topics by referring to the Teacher Guidelines in Geography, History and Science. Theme based planning is used to support integration and is recorded in the individual teachers' planning. Geography may be integrated through the Aistear programme in junior and senior infant classes.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment in Geography seeks to achieve a balanced picture of the children's progress in the acquisition of knowledge and skills, and in the development of important positive attitudes. Samples of assessment techniques in use include:

- Teacher observation of the children's learning
- Teacher-designed tasks and tests
- Work samples, portfolios, e.g. finished projects and investigations
- Teacher questioning
- Checklists
- Quizzes

Differentiation

It is important that all children experience a rounded, challenging and interesting 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 use a range of 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 differentiated for the less able and the more able students.

Different ways of recording and communicating findings will be encouraged, such as drawing, digital technology, written records, oral reports, and models. All children benefit from active involvement in the environment, so all will be encouraged to participate in fieldwork. Children will be provided with opportunities to work co-operatively.

Equality of Participation and Access

All children will have equal opportunities to participate in Geography lessons and activities. All pupils are included in all aspects of the subject. Geography class is used as an opportunity to integrate and celebrate the culture of all the pupils.

Timetabling

In order to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy in National Schools time allocation for SESE subjects at the school is 2 hours 15mins per week for Infant classes and 3 hours per week for 1st to 6th Class.

On occasion, time will be blocked as appropriate. This might occur when working on an integrated project or exploring the local environment. In junior and senior infant classes Geography may be taught as part of the Aistear programme.

Resources and ICT

The school recognises the valuable role that the local area and local amenities can have in the teaching of geography. In addition, there are many resources in the school including maps, globes and atlases.

Classes have access to the internet and individual devices so that they can use many online geographical resources including Google Earth, Google Maps and scoilnet.ie.

Health and Safety

A Health and Safety policy is in place at the school which covers safety considerations relating to teaching and learning and out-of-school activities.

Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting

Teachers will consult this policy and curriculum documents when they are drawing up their short-term plans.

Cúntais Míósúil will assist in recording work covered, in evaluating progress in Science and informing future teaching. These are kept in individual teachers' planning folders and in a central folder in the principal's office.

Staff Development

Teachers have opportunities to attend in-service workshops and summer courses that may extend their understanding of Geography as a distinct subject and as part of SESE. Teachers are made aware of Geography CPD which is available.

Parental Involvement

Parents have an important role to play helping their children as they explore the various aspects of the local environment. Parents are welcome to view results of projects, surveys, investigations in the school or read about them in the school newsletter or on our school website.

Community Links

People in the local community who have an interest and knowledge in the environment may be welcomed to speak to the children. The local library may be used as a resource along with other local buildings and natural environments.

Success Criteria

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

- Implementation of the Geography curriculum will be evident in each teacher's work
- Continuity of content and methodology will be evident in teachers' preparation
- Ongoing assessment will show that pupils are acquiring concepts taught and an ability to engage with others in a manner appropriate to their age range and ability
- Inspectors' suggestions/reports
- Teacher/parent feedback
- Children's feedback

Roles and Responsibilities

- The policy will be supported, developed, implemented and reviewed at regular intervals by:
 - The Board of Management
 - The principal
 - The staff of the Muslim National School
 - The parents/guardians of children at the Muslim National School
- The principal will co-ordinate the progress of the policy, encourage and accept feedback on its implementation. Feedback will be reported to staff members as appropriate.

Communication

This policy will be made available to all staff and parents. It will be also placed on Aladdin.

Ratification

The ratified policy is on Aladdin.



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This Policy was approved by the Board of Management at its meeting on 30th January, 2025

Signed: 221 Tawashi

Date: 30/01/2025

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: John Danell

Date: 30/01/2025

School Principal