

GEOGRAPHY PLAN

Whole School Plan for SESE Geography

Introductory Statement and Rationale

- (a) Introductory Statement: The Principal and staff met and planned to implement 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. The plan was reviewed and updated in October 2008.
- (b) Rationale: We recognize 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. 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 organized teaching and learning in Holy Family NS Newport.
- (c) Vision: 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 environment.

Aims:

We aim:

- To endorse the aims of the SESE Geography curriculum.
- 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 backgrounds 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

1. Strands and Strand Units : Each teacher is familiar with the strands and strand units, content objectives for her class level and indeed for each other's class levels.

The three strands of the Geography curriculum are:

- Human Environments,
- Natural Environments
- Environmental Awareness and Care.

We are aware that one of the key messages in this Geography Curriculum is that children start developing geographical concepts by exploring their local, immediate environment. In this way, the children get a strong sense and appreciation of their own place. This will be reflected in our teaching at all levels.

Strands	Junior and Senior Infants
Skills and concepts development	<p><u>A sense of place and space</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myself, family, friends • School • Picturing places <p><u>Geographical Investigation skills</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questioning, observing predicting investigating and experimenting, estimating and measuring, analyzing, recording and communicating.
Human Environments	<p><u>Living in the local community</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • my family and community • homes • school • people at work • people at play <p><u>People and places in other areas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • become more aware of people living in other areas • differences in homes outside the locality • develop knowledge of links between the school or local community and people in other places
Natural Environments	<p><u>Local and Natural environment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore the school grounds through the seasons i.e. hedgerows, waste ground • explore water in the locality i.e. rainfall, puddles, seashore • observe and collect natural materials in the local environment • record through pictures and communicate orally their experiences of the local environments <p><u>Weather</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • observe and discuss a variety of weather conditions • Record weather observation daily (Junior Infants) and weekly (Senior Infants) using a weather chart. • Explore the effects of weather on humans, plants and animals. • Discuss the clothes used for different types of weather • Recognize the change in seasons <p><u>Planet Earth in space</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and discuss the sun, moon and stars • Recognize the differences between day and night
Environmental awareness and care	<p><u>Caring for my locality</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe and develop a pride and appreciation for our school, town and locality • Appreciate that people share the environment with plants and animals • Develop a sense of responsibility for taking care and enhancing our environment • Identify discuss and implement ways of improving and caring for the environment

First and Second Classes

Strands	First and Second Classes
Skills and concepts development	<p><u>A sense of place and space</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in the area • Local buildings • Natural features <p><u>Maps, Globes and graphical skills</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow the children to use simple picture maps, globes and aerial photographs <p><u>Geographical Investigation skills</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questioning, observing predicting investigating and experimenting, estimating and measuring, analyzing, recording and communicating
Human Environments	<p><u>Living in the local community</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My family and community • Homes and shelter • School • People at work • People at play <p><u>People and places in other areas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become more aware of people living in Ireland, Europe and other areas (namely Kenya in First Class & India in Second Class) • Become aware of the location of Newport and Mayo and neighbouring counties. • Differences in homes outside the locality • Develop knowledge of links between the school or local community and people in other places
Natural Environments	<p><u>Local and Natural environment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore natural features in the local environment such as bogs, beach, river and mountain (Focus on The Shannon in First Class and Croagh Patrick in Second Class as well as other local features through field trips) • Explore water in the locality i.e. rainfall, puddles, seashore • Observe and collect natural materials in the local environment such as pebbles, sand and stones • Record through pictures and sketches and communicate orally their experiences of the local environments

	<p><u>Weather</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe and discuss a variety of weather conditions using charts and suitable vocabulary • Begin to associate cloud cover and other conditions with different types of weather • Make weather predictions • Explore the effects of weather on the lives of people (clothes, homes, farming and other work and travel) • Observe and record the influences weather and seasonal changes have on people, animals and plants in the locality • Contrast weather in the locality with that in other areas <p><u>Planet Earth in space</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and discuss the sun, moon and stars, day and night • Recognize the sun as a source of heat and light • Develop familiarity with the spherical nature of the earth (through the use of the globe and pictures of the earth from space)
Environmental awareness and care	<p><u>Caring for my locality</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe and develop an awareness of living things in a range of habitats in local and wider environments • Begin to realise that people, animals and plants depend on each other • Identify strategies for improving and caring for the environment (recycling in school and in the home, anti-litter campaigns, and the tidy towns competition in the broader community) • Identify ways to protect and conserve our environment (pollution, vandalism, water and energy conservation)

Resources for First and Second Classes

Earthlink and supplementary texts include All Around Me, What a Wonderful World, Geography Quest 1 & 2, Internet, Atlases, globes, aerial photos, the local environment.

The plan to follow can be used in the event of there being four **straight** (not split) classes of 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th.

3rd Class

Strand	Strand Units/ Topics
<i>Human environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in the local area • People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland <p>- <i>Maynooth</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and other lands <p>- <i>Italy</i> - <i>Mexico</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County, regional and national centres
<i>Natural environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local natural environment • Lands, rivers and seas of my county • Rocks and soils • Weather, climate and atmosphere • Planet Earth in space
<i>Environmental awareness and care</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental awareness • Caring for the environment

4th Class

Strand	Strand Units/ Topics
<i>Human environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in the local area • People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland <p>- <i>Dublin</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and other lands <p>- <i>France</i> - <i>China</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County, regional and national centres
<i>Natural environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local natural environment • Lands, rivers and seas of my county • Rocks and soils • Weather, climate and atmosphere • Planet Earth in space
<i>Environmental awareness and care</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental awareness • Caring for the environment

5th Class

Strand	Strand Units/ Topics
<i>Human environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in the local area • People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Golden Vale, Cork</i> • People and other lands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Great Britain</i> - <i>Australia</i> • County, regional and national centres • Trade and development issues
<i>Natural environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local natural environment • Lands, rivers and seas of my county • Rocks and soils • Weather, climate and atmosphere • Planet Earth in space
<i>Environmental awareness and care</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental awareness • Caring for the environment

6th Class

Strand	Strand Units/ Topics
<i>Human environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in the local area • People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The Burren, Co. Clare</i> • People and other lands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The Netherlands</i> - <i>Africa</i> • County, regional and national centres • Trade and development issues
<i>Natural environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local natural environment • Lands, rivers and seas of my county • Rocks and soils • Weather, climate and atmosphere • Planet Earth in space
<i>Environmental awareness and care</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental awareness • Caring for the environment

N.B. It is essential to remember, at this point, that whilst the class teacher can use these tables of topics in his/ her planning, a great many more topics than listed in the tables may, in reality, be covered during geography lessons throughout the school year.

The plan to follow can be used in the event of there being **split** (not straight) classes situations.

3rd Class

(in a split class situation, possibly with 2nd class and/or 4th class)

Strand	Strand Units/ Topics
<i>Human environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in the local area • People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Clonmel, Co. Tipperary</i> • People and other lands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Spain</i> - <i>Peru</i> • County, regional and national centres
<i>Natural environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local natural environment • Lands, rivers and seas of my county • Rocks and soils • Weather, climate and atmosphere • Planet Earth in space
<i>Environmental awareness and care</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental awareness • Caring for the environment

4th Class

(in a split class situation, possibly with 3rd class and/or 5th class)

Strand	Strand Units/ Topics
<i>Human environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in the local area • People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Island life, including Aran and Clare Islands</i> • People and other lands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Norway</i> - <i>Tanzania</i> • County, regional and national centres • <i>Trade and development issues *</i> (only if combined with 5th class).
<i>Natural environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local natural environment • Lands, rivers and seas of my county • Rocks and soils • Weather, climate and atmosphere • Planet Earth in space
<i>Environmental awareness and care</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental awareness • Caring for the environment

5th Class*(in a split class situation, possibly with 4th class)*

Strand	Strand Units/ Topics
<i>Human environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in the local area • People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Limerick</i> • People and other lands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Italy</i> - <i>New Zealand</i> • County, regional and national centres • Trade and development issues
<i>Natural environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local natural environment • Lands, rivers and seas of my county • Rocks and soils • Weather, climate and atmosphere • Planet Earth in space
<i>Environmental awareness and care</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental awareness • Caring for the environment

It is unlikely that 6th class will be placed in with a split class situation. However, in the event of this, the plan for 6th class in a straight class situation may be employed.

6th Class*(in a split class situation, with 5th class)*

Strand	Strand Units/ Topics
<i>Human environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>County Antrim</i> • People and other lands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Greece</i> - <i>U.S.A.</i>

All other strands and strand units will be according to texts and resources chosen by class teacher, as per plan for straight 6th class.

Resources for Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Classes

Texts can include Earthlinks for 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th classes, Geograhly Quests 4, 5 and 6, internet, atlases, globes, aerial photos, Ordnance Survey maps and the local environment.

2. Development

We are aware that 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.

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.

3. 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 (a) talk and discussion, (b) questioning and listening, (c) annotated drawings, (d) brainstorming, (e) concept maps. We do this to build on the children's previous knowledge.

4. Approaches and Methodologies

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.

We have completed a geographical environmental audit of our school grounds and immediate locality, and identified features that can be focused on when embarking on local environmental studies, such as studies of trees, rocks, soils, flora and fauna. The audit results are stored in Mrs Maureen Smith's office.

5. **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 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 levels. Teachers create their own integrated topics by referring to the Teacher Guidelines in Geography, History and Science.

6. **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.

Methods we use:

- Teacher observation of the children's learning as the geography curriculum is implemented
- Teacher-designed tasks and tests
- Work samples e.g. finished projects and investigations.

7. Children with Different Needs

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 differentiated for the less able and the more able students. Different ways of recording and communicating findings will be encouraged, such as 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. Children who have lived in other countries will be invited to share their experiences with the other pupils. Children will be provided with opportunities to work co-operatively.

8. Equality of Participation and Access

Boys and girls will have equal opportunities to participate in Geography lessons and activities (see also our Equality policy).

9. Organisational Planning

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.

10. Resources and ICT

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. These are stored in Ms. Emer O'Malley's classroom.

We have bought software with a geographical focus for use in our computers. We have a selection of geography DVDs/ video resources. We have access to the internet so that we can use the web as a geographical resource, e.g., GoogleEarth.

We use text books as a resource in our teaching of geography. Education resource packs, such as 'Agri-ware', 'Archaeology in the Classroom' and 'Something Fishy', amongst others, can be used to support the curriculum. Environmentalists are occasionally invited to talk to the children and share their knowledge with them (e.g., Gordon D'Arcy, Adrian Fish, Ballycroy park rangers).

11. Health and Safety

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.

12. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting

The curriculum is presented as a two-year cycle. We will introduce SESE integrated topics in a planned way.

Cuntais Míósúil will assist in the evaluating progress in Geography and inform future teaching.

13. Staff Development

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.

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 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.

15. Community Links

People in the local community who have an interest and knowledge in the environment may be invited to speak to the children. The mobile library may be used as a resource. The locally produced booklets “Know Your Roots” and “Newport – Our Own Place” are available as a class resource in the school.

16. Success Criteria

We shall review this whole-school plan in the future under the following headings:

- How methodologies listed in this plan are working in the classroom
- Resources
- How procedures for fieldwork are working in the school
- How well geographical concepts are learnt by the children
- How well the children’s geographical skills are progressing (a sense of place and space, geographical investigation skills, and mapping)

Suggested Geography Field Trips

Junior & Senior infants	School Environs/ Local Seashore
1 st class	The Quay
2 nd class	Local Seashore
3 rd class	Marine Institute, Furnace
4 th class	Black Oak River
5 th class	Windmills in Glenisland, Bog
6 th class	Letterkeen Forest, Shramore, Local Lakes