

## Has the plan promoted the key considerations when implementing the geography programme?

- Geography is about developing a sense of space and place
- Children's ideas of place and space are used as the starting point
- Knowledge and skills are of equal importance
- The primary resource for geography is the environment, starting with the local, then regional, national, European and global.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### (a) Roles and Responsibilities

The plan be supported, developed and implemented by the staff, pupils, Board of Management and parents of Scoil na mBuachaillí. Mr. David O'Brien will co-ordinate and evaluate the progress of the plan, encourage and accept feedback on its implementation and report to staff on findings.

### (b) Timeframe

The plan will be implemented in September 2007.

## REVIEW

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the Geography curriculum.

### (a) Roles and Responsibilities

The plan will be reviewed by the following:

*Teachers / Pupils / Parents / Post holders/plan co-ordinator / BoM/DES/Others.*

Mr. David O'Brien has responsibility for co-ordinating the review.

### (b) Timeframe

The plan will be reviewed at staff meetings or at inservice planning days.

## RATIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION

Ratification by Board of Management at the next Board of Management meeting .



February 2008



## TITLE OF POLICY

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Geography

## INTRODUCTION

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The following were consulted in drawing up this policy:

- Teachers
- Board of Management

## RATIONALE

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We decided to focus on Geography in order

- to benefit teaching and learning of geography in our school
- to conform to the principles outlined in the Primary School Curriculum
- to coordinate the good work already being done in the school
- to inform teachers when preparing long term and short term plans.
- to inform new teachers / temporary teachers of the approaches and methodologies used in our school
- To provide a coherent approach to the teaching of Geography across the whole school

## RELATIONSHIP TO SCHOOL'S MISSION

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Our mission statement

1. Scoil na mBuachaillí, Cloich na Coillte has a Catholic Ethos, promotes Irish language and culture, is caring-centred and respects different colours, creeds and intellect.
2. Every pupil is encouraged to achieve his full potential – socially, personally and intellectually – in a happy, secure learning environment.
3. The discipline in our school encourages and fosters respect and self-esteem among the pupils.

purchased.

- Information about in-service courses, school visits, etc are communicated to all.
- All teachers are encouraged to attend in-service courses and there is an opportunity at staff meetings to share the expertise acquired at these courses.
- Colleagues, who may need assistance, given help or advice on the preparation and implementation of the Geography curriculum are encouraged to speak to Mr. O'Brien (Post of Responsibility Holder) or the Principal.

## 15. Parental involvement

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*Refer to Primary School Curriculum; Your child's learning, Guidelines for Parents (NCCA); The What, Why and How of children's learning in primary school, NCCA DVD (2006)*

Parents can support their child in fostering an interest in geography- by encouraging their son to become involved in the activities held in the school throughout the year, bring their child to local / national places of geographical interest, watch programmes on the television with their child or listen to programmes on the radio etc etc

## 16. Community links

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- Members of organisations/individuals in the community will be asked to support the school's geography programme - e.g. ENFO, Mr. Michael Harte (School Resource Teacher), Timothy Crowley, Maurice McCarthy, Dermot Draper, Gerald Butler, Tadhg O'Driscoll (School Resource Teacher) etc.

## SUCCESS CRITERIA

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### How will we know that the plan has been implemented?

- Teachers' preparation will be based on this plan.
- Procedures outlined in this plan consistently followed.

### Has the plan achieved its aims?

Means of assessing the outcomes of the plan include

- Teacher/parent/ feedback
- Children's feedback
- Inspectors' suggestions/report

## 11. Health and safety

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(Refer to school's Health & Safety Policy and Preparing for fieldwork, Geography Teacher Guidelines pp.74-78)

- What health and safety issues pertain to activities connected with the Geography curriculum e.g. handling artefacts, going on trails, visits to museums, ruins, archaeological sites ...?

Consideration is given to the following when planning for geography:

- Hidden dangers if children are moving around the classroom
- Storage facilities
- Access to, and transport of, equipment
- Ventilation of the classrooms
- Appropriate volume levels when using audio equipment and video equipment.
- Safety when planning and undertaking Field Trips.

## 12. Individual teachers' planning and reporting

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- The whole school plan and the curriculum documents for Geography provide information and guidance to individual teachers for their long and short-term planning as follows:
  - Individual teachers will refer to the school policy when preparing their long and short-term plans.
  - Teachers will plan using a variety of approaches - e.g. using the strands and strand units, using a thematic approach etc.
  - The Cúntas Míosúil will be used to review and develop the whole school plan/individual preparation for following years. This will be organised by Mr. O'Brien (Post Holder with responsibility for Geography)

## 14. Staff development

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- Teachers have access to reference books, resource materials, instruments, equipment and websites dealing with geography.
- Mr. O'Brien (Post of Responsibility Holder) will take responsibility for monitoring developments, research new methodologies, arrange for demonstrations, create opportunities to try out materials/instruments and assess whether or not they should be

4. We endeavour to develop supportive and open communication among pupils, teachers, parents, Board of Management and the community.
  5. We aim to have a staff that will continue to be committed, progressive and creative.
- Our policy has an understanding of the characteristic spirit of the school and reflects the school's ethos.

## AIMS

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We endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for Geography

- 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
- 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
- To enable the child to acquire a balanced appreciation of cultural and historical inheritances from local, national and global contexts.

## POLICY CONTENT

The Geography Plan will be addressed under the following headings:

### Curriculum planning

- Strands and strand units
- Skills development
- Children's Ideas
- Approaches and Methodologies
- Linkage and integration
- Multi-grade teaching
- Assessment and record keeping
- Children with different needs
- Equality of participation and access

### Organisational planning

- Timetable
- Resources and ICT
- Health and Safety
- Individual teachers' planning and reporting
- Staff development
- Parental involvement
- Community links

## CURRICULUM PLANNING

### 1. Strands and strand Units

Teachers are familiar with the strands/strand units/content objectives for their class level(s) - these can be found in the Curriculum handbook

**Note: all strands and strand units must be covered each year but not all content objectives need to be addressed within a strand unit.**

Refer to Curriculum

- Infant classes pp. 17-27
- First and Second classes pp. 29-43

Rang 5 / Rang 6: 1 hour

## 10. Resources and ICT

- Resources are purchased centrally by the principal or by David O'Brien (Post Holder) - on the request of class teachers/ resource teachers. Mr. O'Brien / Mr. Harte (Post of Responsibility Holder) is responsible for the maintenance and update of Geography equipment. However all staff may request equipment at any time.
- There is an inventory of resources, equipment and instruments available to all teachers for geography. This is updated on a yearly basis by all members of staff. Each teacher has a copy in their classroom.
- The resources for Geography are centrally stored - Resource Library books, CD ROMs, DVDS etc, though some teachers have equipment in their own classrooms.

### ICT (Refer to pp. 155-156 Teacher Guide- lines)

- ICT will play a major role in the Geography plan: for example - the use of CD ROMs, Videos, DVDs, Apple iMac, Opus Pro XE (Multimedia Authoring Software) and Hyperstudio.
- What appropriate software is currently available in the school?
  - Opus Pro XE
  - Hyperstudio
  - Microsoft Word and Creative Writer
  - Plus many content rich software - please refer to inventory for information on this.
- The Internet can be used to access websites. Children's work e.g. Opus Pro projects can be downloaded from the website, and other children's work and photographs are available to one and all on [www.snbclonakilty.com](http://www.snbclonakilty.com)
- E-mail may be used **by the teacher only** to contact other schools, interpretative centres, industries, meteorological agencies, embassies, charities and NGOs that focus on development work.
- We have an Acceptable Usage Policy to ensure safe Internet usage.

## 9. Equality of participation and access

(Refer to school's Equality Policy)

- Gender issues that need to be considered in relation to the teaching of geography are e.g. addressing the role of women in local, national and international contexts.
- Identify provision required, as and where necessary, for inclusion of the following:
  - Children experience any form of disadvantage - the Rental Scheme ensures that all children (1st - 6th) have access to the same books / resources / trips etc as other children.
  - Children whose first language is not English: we are fortunate to have the services of a Language Support Teacher who helps to integrate the children into all subjects/aspects of the curriculum/school life.

### Interculturalism

- The geography class will be used as an opportunity to integrate the culture of all pupils e.g. Travellers, international pupils... etc. The geography programme in our school celebrate difference as well as promoting cultural awareness.
- A display to be erected at the school door of Welcome signs and flags of the different nationalities in our school.
- It is hoped that a map would also be erected showing the countries where the children come from.

## ORGANISATION PLANNING

### 10. Timetable

- Discretionary curriculum time is used occasionally for SESE.

The time is allocated at each level for Geography is as follows:

Junior Infants / Senior Infants: 45 minutes

Rang 1 / Rang 2: 1 hour

Rang 3 / Rang 4: 1 hour

- Third and Fourth classes pp. 45-61
- Fifth and Sixth classes pp. 63-84.
- There is continuity and progression in the geography programme from class to class.
- From 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> classes, there are locations agreed for the strand unit *People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland* as follows:
  - Rang 3: Waterford
  - Rang 4: Cahir
  - Rang 5: Galway
  - Rang 6: Midlands
- In the strand unit *People and other lands*, the following locations in Europe and one location in another part of the world are agreed per year from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> classes:
  - Rang 3: Spain and Peru
  - Rang 4: Norway and Tanzania
  - Rang 5: Italy and the Netherlands
  - Rang 6: Greece and USA
  -
- Checks are made to avoid gaps and undue repetition between classes in planning, use of textbooks etc.

Class teachers will be conscious of where the new children in their classes come from - and base lessons on these countries. The children may be asked to talk about their homelands.

### Local Geography Audit

#### A. Local Rivers - Rang 1 / Rang 2 / Rang 3 / Rang 6

River Feale and Argideen

- Source ... mouth .... Estuary...
- Nature ..... fish ..... birds .....plants etc
- Animals
- Water supply

#### B. Plan of Town / History - Rang 3 / Rang 6

- Situation and Location on river
- Bay and Estuary
- Latitude and Longitude
- Relationship to other parts of Cork and Country

- Direction to other places and streets / Counties / Countries
- Areas of Town: Residential / Industrial : Recreational / Commercial

### C. Local Headlands - Rang 4 / Rang 5

- Activities
- Amenity areas
- Bays
- Beaches
- Bogs
- Castlefreke
- Dunes
- Fishing places
- Forests
- Golf
- Harbours
- Inlets
- Lakes
- Lighthouse
- Marshland
- Names of local rocks
- Townlands

### D. People at Work - Rang 1 / Rang 2 / Rang 3 / Rang 4 / Rang 5

- Farming
- Fishing
- Industry
- Service
- Tourism
- Kinds of jobs / locations e.g.
  - ◆ Clona Milk
  - ◆ Yogurt Factory
  - ◆ Plastics Factory
  - ◆ Hotels
  - ◆ Shops and Restaurants
  - ◆ Sail cloth factory
  - ◆ Technology park
  - ◆ Lisavaird Coop
  - ◆ Immigrants

- Progress in children's knowledge of environmental matters
- The acquisition of geographical skills
- Development of attitudes

### Identify assessment tools used to gather information about a child's progress

- Teacher observation - informally
- Teacher-designed tasks and tests
- Work samples, portfolios and projects (*consider use of ICT, pictures, paintings, drawings, photographs of children's work*)
- Curriculum profiles

The information gained from the assessments will be used to form part of class and school planning.

### Records

Reports for all children will be kept in child's file in the office. The reports are kept for at least 10 years.

### How do teachers share information with children/parents?

- Information is shared as follows:
  - Parent/Teacher Meetings
  - Summer Report
  - Signing copies / work throughout the year where appropriate
  - Parents can view children's work on display in the school - corridor/classroom or on the internet, on the school website.

## 8. Children with different needs

*(Children with emotional and behavioural difficulties; children with learning difficulties; children with physical disabilities; those with exceptional ability - Refer to Teacher Guidelines p. 43-44)*

- Activities are adapted and modified so that all children can participate meaningfully in the Geography Lesson. If necessary the child's SNA will play a wider role/ responsibility during some Geography activities to enable the child to fully participate in the lessons.
- The school provides challenges for children of exceptional ability - through involvement in Multimedia Authoring / Fís - where the children made their own CD ROMs and films.

## 5. Linkage and integration

### Linkage:

- Opportunities are provided to link one strand with another strand in the geography programme.
- Strands may be linked using a thematic approach: e.g. trails etc.

### Integration:

*(Opportunities for integration are referred to in the Curriculum at the end of each strand unit)*

- Activities to integrate geography with the other SESE subjects – Geography and science are as follows: e.g. experiments, predicting, recording, observing etc.
- Activities to integrate geography with other subjects are as follows: e.g. Maths/data, Art/Model making, drawing, English/Reporting
- Integration is planned and organised by the class teacher in his/her yearly plan/scheme.
- Theme based activities are used to support integration: e.g. local geography trail and orienteering.

*(Refer to pp. 44-46 Teacher Guidelines)*

## 6. Multi-grade teaching

The following issues will be considered in multi-grade situations (when and if it may arise):

- Using a thematic approach
- Integration with other subjects: SESE – history and science; SPHE; Maths; Language programme; Visual Arts; PE (Teacher Guidelines pp. 45-46)
- Selection of text books
- Classroom organisation.

## 7. Assessment and record keeping

*(Refer to school's Assessment & Record Keeping Policies; Curriculum pp.88-97)*

**What do teachers assess?** *(See p. 92 Curriculum)*

## E. Transport and Communications - Rang 3 / Rang 4

- Old Railway / Model Village
- Buses
- Hackneys / Taxis
- Roads and numbers e.g. N71
- Primary roads
- Secondary roads

## F. Services - Rang 1 / Rang 2 / Rang 3 / Rang 6

- Gardaí
- Wind Energy
- Electricity
- Telecommunications
- Hospital / Ambulance / Medical Clinic
- Fire Brigade
- Civil Defence
- Reserve Forces (F.C.A.)
- Courts
- Recycling and Sewage

## G. School Trail - Junior / Senior Infants / Rang 1 / Rang 2

## 2. Skills and concepts development

- A. The following steps will be taken to ensure that there is a balance between skills development and the acquisition of knowledge throughout the programme: Active Learning / Project Work / Field Trips
- B. The strategies used by each class to develop the child's skills and concepts development under the three headings are noted below:
  - **A sense of place and space**
    - Exploring
    - Develop an awareness
    - Discuss and Record
    - Give and Follow simple directions

- ICT

- **Maps, globes and graphical skills**

- Explore
- Record
- Develop awareness of ..
- Identifying geographical features
- Use of maps and globes
- Orienteering
- Use of ICT and Internet - e.g. Google Earth
- Map of school

- **Geographical investigation skills.**

- Questioning
- Observing
- Predicting
- Investigating and Experimenting
- Estimating and Measuring
- Analyzing
- Recording and Communicating

*(See Curriculum pp. 22-23 Junior & Senior Infants; pp. 34-37 First & Second; pp. 50-53 Third & Fourth, pp. 68-71 Fifth & Sixth)*

### 3. Children's Ideas

- We use the children's ideas of place and space as a starting point for many geography activities.
- Some of the strategies used to find out these ideas, e.g. talk and discussion; questioning; listening; problem-solving tasks; drawings; teacher designed tasks and tests; ....

### 4. Approaches and methodologies

- How are the key methodologies of the Primary Curriculum used as part of the geography programme?
  - **Active learning:** - projects, field trips, research
  - **Problem solving:** - questionnaires, maps, comprehension questions, experiments
  - **Developing skills through content:** - sorting information and deducing

- **Talk and discussion**

- **Co-operative learning:** - groups, pairs, project work, ICT projects
- **Use of the environment:** - local trails, weather station, bat box, bird table

- Teachers follow the recommended sequence for geography – local, regional, national, European and global and then reflecting it back to their own location.
- Approaches and methodologies used in learning about places are e.g. photographs, internet, e mail, books, CD ROMs, DVDs, Videos, Maps, Aerial photographs, talking to people - old and young.

*(See pp. 64-67 Teacher Guidelines)*

- Approaches and methodologies used in learning about the environment are e.g. field-work, exploratory trails, photographs, recording weather etc.

*(See pp. 68-73 Teacher Guidelines)*

- Fieldwork is incorporated into the geography programme in the following ways: school trails, local trails, orienteering etc.

*(See pp. 74-80 Teacher Guidelines)*

- Approaches and methodologies used to investigate human environments are as follows: e.g. fieldwork, surveys, photographs, artefacts, interviews, environmental audit etc.

*(See pp. 81-96 Teacher Guidelines)*

- Approaches and methodologies used to investigate natural environments are as follows e.g. fieldwork, trails, photographs, maps etc.

*(See pp. 97-115 Teacher Guidelines)*

- Approaches and methodologies used in learning about other places are as follows e.g. artefacts, atlases, globes, interviews, photographs, school twinning, internet, books etc.

*(See pp. 116-126 Teacher Guidelines)*

- Mapping skills and mapping concepts are developed as part of the geography programme in the following fashion: e.g. local maps, plans, photographs, internet, models

*(See pp. 127-144 Teacher Guidelines)*

- Maps, globes, atlases are selected and used in the school by the class teachers. Mr. O'Brien (Post of Responsibility Holder for SESE) / Principal can be consulted regarding the purchase of resources.

*(See pp. 145-154 Teacher Guidelines)*