



Oylegate NS

Geography Policy

Introductory Statement:

This policy was formulated following a consultative process which took place over a period of months. The Principal, class teachers, resource teachers and learning support teacher were involved in drafting this policy.

Rationale:

This policy was devised:

- To enhance planning
- To benefit teaching and learning in our school
- To conform to principles outlined in the primary curriculum
- To review the existing plan for geography in light of the 1999 Primary School Curriculum.

Vision and Aims

a) Vision

We seek to assist the children in our school in achieving their potential.

b) Aims

- 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 (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.

This Geography Policy will be addressed under the following headings

A. Curriculum Planning:

1. Strands and strand units
2. Skills development
3. Children's ideas
4. Approaches and methodologies
5. Linkage and integration
6. Multi-grade teaching
7. Assessment and record keeping
8. Children with different needs
9. Equality of participation and access

B. Organisational Planning:

10. Timetable
11. Resources and ICT
12. Health and safety
13. Individual teachers' planning and reporting
14. Staff development
15. Parental involvement
16. Community links

A. Curriculum Planning

Infant Classes, First and Second Classes

1. Strands and Strand Units

Strands

Human environments

Natural environments

Environmental awareness and care

Strand Units

- Living in the local community
- People and places in other area

- The local natural environment
- Weather
- Planet Earth in space

- Caring for my locality

3rd – 6th Classes

Strands

Human environments

Strand units

- People living and working in the local area
- People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland

Explored through a selection from the sub-units

- People and communities
- Natural environmental features and people
- Settlement: homes and other buildings
- People at work
- Transport and communication

- People and other lands

- An environment in another European country
- An environment in a non-European country

- Country, regional and national centres
- Trade and development issues

Natural environments

- The local natural environment
- Land, rivers and seas of Ireland
- Physical features of Europe and the world
- Rocks and soils
- Weather, climate and atmosphere
- Planet Earth in

Environmental awareness
And care

- Environmental awareness
- Caring for the environment

2. Skills Development

Infant Classes, First and Second Classes

Skills and concepts development

A sense of place
and space

- A sense of place
- A sense of space

Maps, globes and
graphical skills

- Using pictures, maps and globes

Geographical investigation
skills

- Questioning
- Observing
- Predicting
- Investigating and experimenting
- Estimating and measuring
- Analyzing
- Recording and communicating

3rd to 6th Classes

Skills and concepts development

A sense of place
and space

Geographical
investigation
skills

- Using pictures,
maps and models
- Maps and globes

Maps, globes and
graphical skills

- A sense of place
- A sense of space
- Questioning
- Observing
- Predicting
- Investigating and

experimenting

- Estimating and measuring
- Analysing
- Recording and communicating
- Evaluating

3. Children's ideas

- We use the children's ideas of place and space as a starting point for all geography activities.
- We find out what children know already by using self-assessment strategies e.g. concept mapping, brainstorming or rubrics (e.g. KWL). This embraces assessment for learning but may also include assessment of learning strategies e.g. talk and discussion; questioning; listening; problem-solving tasks; drawings; teacher designed tasks and tests;

4. Approaches and Methodologies

- Active learning
- Problem solving
- Developing skills through content
- Talk and discussion
- Co-operative learning
- Use of the environment

- Teachers will follow the recommended sequence for geography – local, regional, national, European and global and then reflect it back to their own location.

- In learning about places, approaches and methodologies used may include: photographs, internet and e mail, (See pp. 64-67 Teacher Guidelines)

- In learning about the environment, approaches and methodologies used may include: fieldwork, exploratory trails and photographs (See pp. 68-73 Teacher Guidelines)

- Fieldwork is incorporated into the geography programme where possible (See pp. 74-80 Teacher Guidelines)

- When investigating human environments, approaches and methodologies used may include: fieldwork, surveys, photographs, artefacts, interviews and environmental audit (See pp. 81-96 Teacher Guidelines)

- When investigating natural environments, approaches and methodologies used may include: fieldwork, trails, photographs (See pp. 97-115 Teacher Guidelines)
- In learning about other places, approaches and methodologies used may include: artefacts, atlases, globes, interviews, photographs, school twinning (See pp. 116-126 Teacher Guidelines)
- Mapping skills and mapping concepts are developed as part of the geography programme through use of: local maps, plans, photographs, internet and models (See pp. 127-144 Teacher Guidelines)
- Maps, globes and atlases are selected and used in the school by class teachers (See pp. 145-154 Teacher Guidelines).
- Teachers will try to embrace a mix of all above methodologies.

5. Linkage and Integration

- Linkage: (Refer to pp. 44-46 Teacher Guidelines)
 - Staff may seek opportunities to link one strand with another strand in the geography programme.
 - Strands may be linked using a thematic approach.
- Integration: (Opportunities for integration are referred to in the curriculum at the end of each strand unit)
- Staff will consider activities that integrate geography with the other SESE subjects – history and science e.g. planned project work, thematic activities that overlap into other subject areas, use of environmental trails.

6. Multi-grade teaching

The following issues will be considered in multi-grade situations.

- 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

- Teachers will assess the child's knowledge and understanding of environmental matters, the acquisition of geographical skills and the development of attitudes (p. 92 Curriculum)

- Assessment tools used to gather information about a child's progress will include:
 - Teacher observation
 - Teacher designed tasks and tests
 - Work samples, portfolios and projects – samples may incorporate drawings and/or, photographs of children's work
- The information gained from these assessments will inform class teacher's future planning
- A record of children's curricular progress in Geography will be kept in the pupils' summer report.
- Teachers share information with children/parents at the parent/teacher meeting.

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)

- Teachers support and ensure the participation of children with special needs as the programme at each class level will be flexible so that the learning requirements of all children may be addressed. This will be achieved by teachers varying the pace, content and methodologies to insure learning for all pupils. This will be recorded in the teacher's yearly notes. The requirements of children with special needs will be taken into account when planning class lessons and related activities. (Refer to the NCCA Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with General Learning Disabilities)
- All classes are organized and activities are adapted so as to include children who may have physical disabilities. The S.N.A. supports particular children and groups as directed by the class teacher.
- Children with exceptional ability/interest in geography are encouraged and supported by being allowed to learn on a wider level through use of ICT and class library.
- Children who were born or have lived in other countries contribute to the geography programme by sharing their experiences with other children orally or through project/written work.

9. Equality of Participation and Access

- Equal opportunities are given to boys and girls to participate in classes/activities.
- Boys/girls have equal opportunities to experience all strands.
- Provision is made for inclusion of the following:
 - Children experiencing any form of disadvantage

- Children whose first language is not English.

Interculturalism

(Refer to Department of Education and Science Intercultural Education in the Primary School Guidelines for schools)

- The geography class is as an opportunity to integrate the culture of all pupils e.g. Travellers, international pupils
- The geography programme in our school celebrates difference as well as promoting cultural awareness.

B. Organisational Planning

10. Timetable

- As per curriculum guidelines for SESE
 - Infants - 2 hours 15 minutes
 - 1st – 6th Classes - 3 hours
- Time may be blocked for SESE e.g. using a cross curricular approach, using three hours for history one week, three hours for geography the following week and three hours for science the week after
- Discretionary curriculum time is used occasionally for SESE.

11. Resources and ICT

- An inventory of resources available for geography has yet to be drawn up. Presently teachers do not have a reference and resources checklist with items marked as appropriate for each class e.g. photographs, maps, atlases, globes, wall charts, posters.
- Resources are purchased centrally. A centralised storage area has yet to be designated.
- Additional resources or materials are needed including: maps (See pp. 164-171 Teacher Guidelines), aerial photographs, local photographs, globes and posters. The school must plan to acquire these additional resources.

ICT (Refer to pp. 155-156 Teacher Guidelines)

- ICT has a role to play in the geography programme, e.g. use of digital camera, Internet (GeoGuessr, www.scoilnet.ie , www.primaryresources.co.uk), DVDs/videos, programmes for word processing and data handling.
- Some appropriate software is currently available in the school (Seterra) This software is stored on PCs and is easily accessible.

- E-mail can be used to contact other schools, interpretative centres, industries, meteorological agencies, embassies, charities and NGOs that focus on development work oylegatens.ias@eircom.net
- There is a code of practice to ensure safe internet usage. Appropriate hardware and software is installed to ensure this safety. Teachers familiarise themselves with material on websites prior to use by the children. There is ongoing monitoring of these sites.

12. Health and Safety

As per advice on excursions and tours.

13. Individual Teacher's Planning and Reporting

Teachers will base their yearly and fortnightly short term plans/Cuntas Míosúil on the approaches set out in the whole school plan for Geography.

14. Staff Development

- Teachers have access to reference books, resource materials, and websites dealing with geography. Presently the Principal is responsible for keeping these resources up to date.
- Teachers will be made aware of any opportunities for further professional development through participation in courses available in education centres or other venues. Teachers are encouraged to attend.
- Teachers are encouraged to share the expertise acquired at these courses at staff meetings/planning days/ISM meetings.
- Time is allocated at staff meetings to discuss aspects of the geography curriculum when the need arises and if time allows.
- Teachers can avail of internal and/or external expertise to inform and upskill the school community.

15. Parental Involvement

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

- Parents can be involved in supporting the geography plan by identifying opportunities for parental engagement with particular strands. Parents with special relevant knowledge may be invited into school to speak to children.
- Ways in which parents can support the child in fostering an interest in local, regional, national, European and global geography is by supporting them undertaking project work, assignments etc.
- Presently no special events are held to focus on the school's SESE curriculum.

16. Community Links

- Oylegate NS has yet to identify members of organisations/individuals in the community that might support the school's geography programme.

17. Review

It will be the responsibility of the Principal Teacher to co-ordinate a review of this Policy. This policy will be reviewed in 2019 and every four years thereafter.

Success Criteria

- Teachers' preparation based on this plan.
- Procedures outlined in this plan consistently followed
- Teacher/parent feedback
- Children's feedback and on-going assessment
- Inspectors' suggestions/reports
- Second level feedback

Plan of work for 1st and 2nd Class

Strand	Year 1 (Odd/Even e.g. 2015/16)	Year 2 (Even/Odd e.g. 2016/17)
Human Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Living in the local community – My family and the community.• Living in the local community – People at work – Home, schools and youth clubs, Shops, offices, factories and farms.• Living in the local community – People at play – Family and friends. Dance teachers and drama teachers.• Living in the local community – People and	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Living in the local community – Homes and shelter.• Living in the local community – People at work – Garda station, hospital and health centre. Hotels, restaurants and centres for visitors.• Living in the local community – People at play – Park keepers and attendants. Youth leaders and sports coaches.

	places in other areas – A place in Ireland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living in the local community – People and places in other areas – A place in Europe.
Natural Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local natural environment – natural features. • The local natural environment - natural materials • The local natural environment - Weather – Observe and record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local natural environment – water in the locality. • The local natural environment - Weather – Influence of weather, and contrast with other areas. • Planet Earth in space
Environmental awareness and care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring for my locality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring for my locality

Plan of work for 3rd & 4th

Strand	Year 1 (Odd/Even e.g. 2015/16)	Year 2 (Even/Odd e.g. 2016/17)
Human Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in the local area and a contrasting part of Ireland – People and communities - both locally and contrasting. • Settlement, homes and other buildings • People at work – Food and farming, forestry, and fishing • People and other lands: an environment in another European country • Transport and communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in the local area and a contrasting part of Ireland – Natural environmental features and people - both locally and contrasting. • People at work – Industry, services and tourism, leisure and recreation • People and other lands: an environment in another part of the world. • County, regional and national centres

Natural Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local natural environment – natural features • The local natural environment – distances and cardinal directions • Rocks and soils • Weather, climate and atmosphere - Weather observations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local natural environment – effects of natural features • The local natural environment – use of natural features by humans • Weather, climate and atmosphere – Weather and climate • Planet Earth in space
Environmental awareness and care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental awareness – Attractive and unattractive elements of human and natural environments • Environmental awareness – Inter-relationships. • Environmental awareness – Types of environment • Caring for the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental awareness – Resources • Environmental awareness – Impact on environments • Environmental awareness – Positive and adverse effects • Environmental awareness – Conserving resources. • Caring for the environment

Plan of work for 5th and 6th

Strands	Year 1 (Odd/Even e.g. 2015/16)	Year 2 (Even/Odd e.g. 2016/17)
Human Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in the local area and a contrasting part of Ireland – People and communities - both locally and contrasting. • People at work – Food and farming, forestry, and fishing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in the local area and a contrasting part of Ireland – Natural environmental features and people - both locally and contrasting. • People at work – Industry, services and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and other lands: an environment in another European country • Settlement, homes and other buildings • County, regional and national centres – counties, towns and provinces of Ireland • Trade and development issues - Trade 	<p>tourism, leisure and recreation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and other lands: an environment in another part of the world. • Transport and communication. • Countries, capitals and well-known features of Europe. • Trade and development issues – Famine, and Development and aid.
Natural Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land, rivers and seas of Ireland • Soils • Weather, climate and atmosphere - Weather observations • Planet Earth in space – the Earth and the sun • Map and globe work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical features of Europe and the world. • Rocks • Weather, climate and atmosphere – Weather and climate, The atmosphere • Planet Earth in space – the Earth, moon and solar system. • Latitude and longitude – including key lines. • Map and globe work
Environmental awareness and care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental awareness – Attractive and unattractive elements of human and natural environments • Environmental awareness – Inter-relationship of climate, natural features, flora, fauna and human life. • Caring for the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental awareness – Effects of human activities • Environmental awareness – Earth’s resources • Caring for the environment
Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A European country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A non-European country

Reference Section

- Primary School Curriculum: Geography (1999)
- Primary School Curriculum. Your Child's Learning: Guidelines for Parents (*available on the NCCA website www.ncca.ie*)
- The What, Why and How of children's learning in primary school, NCCA (2006)