

Plean Scoile

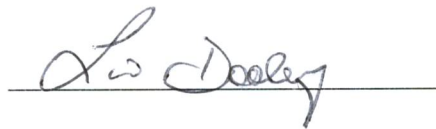
St Fiacc's NS

Geography Policy



Formulated/Ratified/Reviewed	By
Finalised 08/05/2019	Staff
Ratified 15/05/2019	BOM

Signed Chairperson BOM

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Dooley', is written over a horizontal line.

Geography Policy

Introductory Statement

This Geography Policy was reviewed in March 2019 by the Principal and teaching staff of St. Fiacc's NS. Individual elements of the plan are the result of collaborative staff discussion. The basis for the plan is the Geography Curriculum and the accompanying Teacher Guidelines.

Rationale

This Geography Plan was devised:

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

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 link

A. Curriculum Planning

1. Strands and Strand Units

Infant, First and Second Classes

Strands

Human environments

Natural environments

Environmental awareness and care

Strand Units

- Living in the local community
- People and places in other areas
- The local natural environment
- Weather
- Planet Earth in Space
- Caring for my locality

3rd – 6th Classes

Strands

Strand Units

Explored through a selection from the sub-units

Human Environments

- People living and working in the local area and People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland
- People and other lands
- County, 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 Space

Environmental Awareness and Care

- Environmental awareness
- Caring for the environment

- People and communities
- Natural environmental features
- Settlement: Homes and other buildings
- People at work
- Transport and communication
- An environment in another European country
- An environment in a non- European country

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

- Picturing places
- Using pictures, maps, models 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

- A sense of place
- A sense of space

Maps, globes and graphical skills

- Picturing places
- Using pictures, maps, models and globes

Geographical investigation skills

- Questioning
- Observing
- Predicting
- Investigating and experimenting
- Estimating and measuring
- Analyzing
- 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 (AfL) but may also include Assessment of Learning (AoL) 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 email, (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 will seek opportunities to link the strands within 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.
- It is planned to record such activities and include them in the whole school plan for future reference.

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 organization.

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)

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- 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

(Refer to school's Equality Policy)

- Equal opportunities are given to boys and girls to participate in classes/school 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 - 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

- There are many resources available for geography appropriate for each class e.g. *photographs, maps, atlases, globes, wall charts, posters.*
- An inventory of resources available for the teaching of geography is presently being drawn up. This inventory gives teachers a reference and resources checklist with items marked as appropriate for each class (Appendix B).
- Resources are purchased centrally. The centralized storage area is identified as the Annex located in the main school building.

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- 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 (www.scoilnet.ie , www.primaryresources.co.uk), DVDs, programmes for word processing and data handling, apps.
- Some appropriate software is currently available in the school (Geo-Aze, World!) This software is stored on laptops/IWBs and is easily accessible.
- Email can be used to contact other schools, interpretative centres, industries, meteorological agencies, embassies, charities and NGOs that focus on development work. 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 School Tours/Excursions Policy and Safety Statement

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 in these areas through use of PDST service.

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)

St. Fiacc's N.S Geography Policy

- 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 (not an exhaustive list)

- Parents of pupils from other countries
- Green Schools' Committee and Co-ordinator
- Carlow Tidy Town Committee
- Carlow Fire Brigade
- Nationwide Charitable Organisations (St. Vincent de Paul, Trócaire)
- Carlow County Museum
- Carlow Library

17. Success Criteria

This plan will make a difference to the teaching and learning of geography in our school. The following criteria will indicate success.

- **How will we know that the plan has been implemented?**
Teachers' preparation based on this plan.
Procedures outlined in this plan consistently followed
- **Has the plan achieved its aims? What are the indicators? (Refer to Aims)**
Means of assessing the outcomes of the plan include:
Teacher/parent feedback
Children's feedback and on-going assessment
Inspectors' suggestions/reports
Second level feedback
- **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.

18. Implementation

Roles and Responsibilities

Class teachers are responsible for the implementation of the Geography programme in their own classes. Ms. Doyle has curriculum responsibility for Geography, while the Principal is responsible for the overall SESE programme.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Inventory of Resources

Maps

Google maps

Atlases

Globes

Rock samples

Textbooks

Orienteering maps

Pictures of the natural environment

Compasses

Weather station

Thermometers

Soil testing equipment

Walking map of Carlow

Carlow tourism brochures

Know Your Ireland apps

Know Your Europe apps

Solar system models

National Geographic Kids

Aistear resources

Appendix B: Geography Environmental Audit

1. People and communities

Does the locality have people who would be willing to talk to children about their lives in the area and how these may have changed?

Conservationist <i>Green Schools Committee</i>	Musician / Artist	Sportsperson
Charity worker	Builder	Lorry driver
Person from a contrasting part of Ireland <i>Parents/ Teachers</i>	People who have relatives in other parts of the world <i>Parents</i>	People who are from other parts of the world <i>Parents</i>
Other		

2. Identify some major natural features in the local environment.

Woodland	Oak Park/Altamont Gardens	Hill	Killeshin Hill
Hedgerow	St. Fiacc's School Grounds	Mountains	Mount Leinster
Forest	Oak Park		
Grassland	St. Fiacc's School Grounds	Valley	Graigucullen
Waste ground	Celtic Linen/Sugar Factory	Highland	Killeshin
Peat land		Moor	
Bog		Estuary	
Soil		Bank of river	River Barrow
Marshy area		Cliffs	
Island		Wall local	The local environment
Flora	The local environment	Fauna	The local environment

3. Water in the environment

Pond		Lakes	Oak Park
Stream		Estuaries	
River	R. Barrow R. Burrin	Beach	
Canal	Barrow Track Knockbeg	Seashore	
Rain	The local environment	Other	
Puddles	The local environment	Tributary	R. Burrin

4. Are there streams/ivers in your locality that are tributaries of a main river?

Can these be identified or located on ordnance survey maps of various scales? **YES**

5. Settlement: Homes and buildings.

Identify features of the built environment in the locality?

Place names / street names	yes	Single homes	yes	Groups of homes	yes
Farmhouse	no	Cottage	no	Caravan	no
Mobile home	no	Apartment	yes	Offices	yes
Factories MSD Ogelsby and Butler	yes	Hospital St. Dymphna's / District Sacred Heart Hospital	yes	Re-use of buildings old school building	yes
Farmyard	no	Shops	yes	Colours, textures in buildings	yes
Newer areas of settlement	yes	Older areas of settlement	yes	Re-use of buildings	yes
Services to buildings e.g. electricity, phone etc.	yes	Advertisements	yes	Streetscapes	yes

6. Identify materials used to construct homes and other buildings.

Identify materials of local origin.

Buildings in which the following materials are used			
Sand	yes	Corrugated iron	yes
Brick	yes	Roof Tiles	yes
Local stone Deighton Hall Morrissey's Quarry Clogrennane Lime	yes	Slate	yes
Cut stone	yes	Timber	yes
Concrete blocks	yes	PVC	yes
Cement	yes	Glass	yes

7. Are there different forms of transport and communication in the locality?

Roads	yes	Airports	no	Train stations	yes
Bus stops	yes	Ports & harbours	no	Post	yes
Railways	yes	Canals	yes	E mail	yes
Train stations	yes	Gas pipelines	yes		

8. Identify any natural materials found in the environment.

Mud	yes	Sand	yes
Soil	yes	Water	yes
Rocks	yes	Peat	no
Stones	yes	Clay	yes
Pebbles	yes	Gravel	yes
Plant material	yes	Silt	no

9. List common rock samples which may be found in our local environment.

Igneous		Sedimentary		Metamorphic	
Granite		Limestone		Quartz	
		Sandstone		Marble	
		Shale		Slate	

10. List/identify simple common routes, both indoors and outdoors, that can be mapped easily for children's use.

Include several features that may be by children located along the route.

- St. Fiacc's School Grounds
- Carlow Town Park
- Duckett's Grove
- Mullaghreelan Wood

11. Is there a compass rose painted on the yard as a reference point for children? Yes

12. What seasonal changes can pupils observe?

Include aspects from Natural Environment, e.g. habitats and Human Environment, e.g. buildings
(This is not an exhaustive list)

- Trees
- Grass

- Plants
- migration
- hibernation
- seagulls
- ducks/swans/ducklings/signets

13. Name a local building/s that you think enhances the environment. Why?

See *Appendix B of History Policy* for local buildings/local places of interest.

14. Name a building/s that, in your opinion, doesn't enhance environment? Why?

Apartments and abandoned buildings around the area, former Penny's/former Quinns' shopping centre, casino, some fast food outlets, units next door to St. Fiacc's NS school grounds

15. Examples of the positive impact of human activities on the environment in our school?

- Green Schools Committee
- Student Council
- Litter wardens
- Caretaker
- Cleaners/ Housekeepers
- Tall trees

16. Examples of the negative impact of human activities on the environment can be observed/explored by pupils in our school?

- Loitering groups/trespassers
- Dog walkers on school grounds
- Over use of playing pitch
- Building work on school grounds
- Graffiti
- Vandalism

17. What strategies for improving and caring for the environment can pupils implement in our school?

- Planting of trees and plants
- Vegetable patch
- Litter pickers

18. What strategies for improving and caring for the environment can be implemented by teachers/parents?

- Planting of trees and plants
- Vegetable patch
- Litter pickers

19. What local environmental issues can pupils investigate/help to resolve?

- Littering
- Water conservation
- Recycling, reducing, reusing
- composting
- Banning single use plastic.

Appendix C: Two Year Plan for Geography

Appendix C: Two Year Plan for Geography

HUMAN ENVIRONMENTS										NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS										ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AND CARE	
	Living in the local community	People living and working in the local area AND in a contrasting part of Ireland	People and other lands	County, regional and national centres	Trade and development issues	The local natural environment	Land, rivers and seas of my county	Land, rivers and seas of Ireland	Physical features of Europe and the world	Rocks and soils	Weather Climate and atmosphere	Planet Earth in space	Environmentally aware	Caring for the environment							
1 st / 2 nd Yr 1	School and local community My family and Community People at work- School and local clubs. People who supply food		Italy China		Story of tea	Flora and Fauna Identify natural features, collect materials from the local environment						Space and Solar system *Science (forces)	Caring for my locality								
3 rd / 4 th Yr 1		Groups in the community- GAA, clubs/societies, organisations e.g. St. Clare's Hospitality Natural environmental features and people- Changes in locality (tourist attractions in locality) People at work- Tourism, leisure and recreation Transport and communication	France/ England New Zealand/ America *History (Maori)	County, regional and national centres	The banana story	Local Natural Environment	Local rivers lakes mountains bridges			Rocks and soil *Science (materials)		Planet Earth in space	Environmental Awareness and care								
5 th / 6 th Yr 1		Groups in the community linking to wider groups in Ireland e.g. SVP, Simon Community, Make a Wish. Natural environmental features and people- Revise local attractions. National tourist attractions e.g. River Shannon. People at work- Fishing and forestry	Poland/ Germany *History (WW2) Australia Egypt *History	Counties Cities Placenames Important buildings of Ireland	Famine and Poverty in Africa	Physical land/seas/rivers of Ireland Counties, towns, rivers and mountains Bogs/Changes in landscape, technology, community and erosion	N/A	Mountains rivers/lakes/seas of Ireland	Natural features of Europe e.g. Alps, Mediterranean Sea, Rhine	Earth quakes and Volcanoes	Winds, rainfall, co-ordinates, longitude/latitude/tropics Factors affecting climate	Day and night Earth Seasons	Energy Conservation Urban vs. rural living Air pollution Acid rain, ozone layer/global warming/ Wind energy The Burren								

Appendix C: Two Year Plan for Geography.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENTS							NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS							ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AND CARE	
	Living in the local community	People living and working in the local area AND in a contrasting part of Ireland	People and other lands	County, regional and national centres	Trade and development issues	The local natural environment	Land, rivers and seas of my county	Land, rivers and seas of Ireland	Physical features of Europe and the world	Rocks and soils	Weather Climate and atmosphere	Planet Earth in space	Environmental Awareness and CARE	Carin g for the environment	
1 st /2 nd Yr 2	Home and Shelter People at play	Buildings and use of local building materials	Brazil Poland		The story of chocolate	Water in the locality The River Barrow The Irish Sea					Weather		Caring for my locality		
3 rd /4 th Yr 2		Settlement: Homes and other buildings. Natural environment features and people. People at work	France/ England New Zealand/ America *History (Maori)	County, regional and national centres	The banana story	Local Natural Environment	Local rivers lakes mountains bridges				Weather Climate and Atmosphere		Environmental Awareness and care		
5 th /6 th Yr 2		Industry Imports Exports Map Reading	Countries and capitals of Europe Countries of Asia (Fairtrade)	Countries Placenames important buildings in Europe	Fairtrade	Physical land/seas/rivers of Ireland Counties, towns, rivers and mountains Erosion of coastline and resulting beaches	N/A	Mountains rivers/lakes/seas of Ireland	Natural features of Europe e.g. Alps, Mediterranean Sea, Rhine	Soil	Wind/storms, rainfall, co-ordinates, longitude/latitude/tropics Factors affecting climate	Day and night Earth Seasons	Energy Conservation Urban vs. rural living Air pollution Acid rain, ozone layer/global warming/ Wind energy The Burren		