



St. Patrick's NS Strangsmills

History Plan

Revised: 2023

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Introductory Statement and Rationale

(a) Introduction:

This policy was created by the teaching staff of the above school following discussion and exploration of best practice in teaching History. On December 8th 2006 the plan was first devised and in 2012 the policy was revised and updated by the teaching staff in line with current practice and adaptations made as appropriate. This policy was reviewed again in November 2019 and updated to include specific detail on the areas to be covered at each of the senior class levels. A further review took place in autumn 2023 to incorporate a whole school approach to the teaching of local History and to incorporate field trips and outings that are historically relevant in the local vicinity. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff.

We decided to agree an approach to History to ensure continuity in our teaching and to avoid overlap. This policy will form the basis of teacher's long term and short term planning. It will inform new teachers of the approaches and methodologies used in our school.

(b) Rationale:

We believe that Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (S.E.S.E) of which History is a part, provides opportunities for the children to acquire a broad and balanced understanding of local, Irish and international history while at the same time developing historical investigation skills. It allows the child to investigate significant events in their own immediate past, the past of the families, communities, peoples of Ireland and of the world. It will benefit teaching and learning within our school.

Vision and Aims

(a) Vision

It is the ethos of our school to enable each and every child to reach his/ her full potential. We are aware of the contribution SESE makes to the harmonious development of the child. We hope that by creating opportunities for children to experience a rounded historical education that is not exclusively focused on the transmission of a body of knowledge but that allows children to work as historians we will help children to understand more fully the world in which they live, how events and personalities have shaped the home, locality and wider environments in which they exist. It is our vision that history in our school will enable children to understand the present by exploring the past before they begin to look towards the future.

As our school is based in Co. Kilkenny and on the border of Co. Waterford, we have a vast area of historical importance and interest. We will strive to open the children's minds to their rich local heritage.

(b) Aims

We endorse the aims of Social, Environmental and Scientific Education as outlined on the SESE History Curriculum (*SESE History Curriculum Statement Page 12*)

- To develop an interest in and a curiosity about the past.
- To make the child aware of the lives of women, men and children in the past and how people and events had an impact on each other.
- To develop an understanding of the concepts of change and continuity.
- To provide for the acquisition of concepts and skills associated with sequence, time and chronology, appropriate to the developmental stages of the child.

- To allow the child to encounter and use a range of historical evidence systematically and critically.
- To provide opportunities for the child to communicate historical findings and interpretations in a variety of ways.
- To foster sensitivity to the impact of conservation and change within the local and wider environments.
- To help the child recognise and examine the influences of the past on the attitudes and behaviour of people today.
- To encourage children to recognise how past and present actions, events and materials may become historically significant.

Curriculum Planning

1. Strands and Strand Units

Each teacher is familiar with the Strands, Strand Units and Content Objectives for his/her relevant classes and with the other class levels. This ensures a coherent programme throughout the school.

We are aware that Infant classes to Second class have to cover all strands and strand units and content objectives. From Third to Sixth class there is a menu curriculum from which we have chosen strand units. (See appendix 1) Certain strand units are revisited throughout the school and covered in depth as the children progress; these strand units are recorded in the teachers' planning. Equal emphasis is given to each strand. We intend, where possible, to integrate history in a thematic approach. A full range of objectives will be covered during each year.

In selecting Strand Units we will endeavour to ensure that:

- The locality of the school is reflected in the programme
- Children are introduced to the lives of women, men and children from a range of social, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds.
- Studies from a wide range of human experience are included.
- Local, national and international contexts are included

In choosing the Strand Units to be covered at each class level we are conscious of **the spiral approach** recommended in this curriculum. We will strive to ensure a **balance** between the development of **skills** and the acquisition of **knowledge** in our teaching of history. We endorse the emphasis this curriculum places on the exploration of **personal and family history** at this level and are conscious of the sensitivities some aspects of these topics will require.

Local History

We agree that through local history children can readily acquire and practise historical research skills, they can become familiar with, and learn to value, the local environment and they can learn to appreciate the elements of the past which have given them and their locality a sense of identity. We are aware of Exemplar 15 Pages 100-103 which examines factors to consider when embarking on a **local history trail**.

We have discussed how to ensure **Oral Evidence** is incorporated and have identified people in the area who may be willing to come to the school and speak to the children about the past. We are

conscious of the planning and preparation that is vital for such a visit and will refer to Teacher Guidelines Pg 36 and Exemplar 10 Pg 78 in this regard.

Infants: Page 19 - 20 Curriculum Statement.

The content in history for the infant classes is confined to two strands and both will be covered:

- Myself and my Family
- Story

We will ensure that the stories and other activities selected in the Infant classes will encompass a range of perspectives.

First and Second classes: Page 27-31 Curriculum Statement.

The three strands that comprise the content of the History Curriculum at this level will be covered:

- Myself and my Family
- Change and Continuity
- Story

We will ensure that the stories and other activities selected will encompass a range of perspectives.

Third and Fourth classes: Page 42-50 Curriculum Statement.

We are familiar with the Strands that comprise the curriculum for Third/Fourth classes.

- Local studies
- Story
- Early People and ancient studies.
- Life, society, work and culture in the past.
- Continuity and change over time.

Fifth and Sixth classes: Pages 62-71 Curriculum Statement.

We are aware of the Strands that comprise the History Curriculum for Fifth/Sixth classes:

- Local studies
- Story
- Early people and ancient societies
- Life, society, work and culture in the past
- Eras of change and conflict
- Politics, conflict and society
- Continuity and change over time

Topics for in depth studies in local and national or world history are planned in tandem with Geography.

Guided by the curriculum we do not select topics in a strictly chronological order. It is important that at all levels the use of **time lines** is a feature of history teaching.

In addition to the themes listed events in the children's lives and from local, national or world news may also be a stimulus for S.E.S.E.

See attached yearly outlines in Appendix 1 for specific topics to be taught in classes.

2. Skills and Concepts Development

Each teacher is aware that the curriculum provides for the development of a growing range of historical skills and concepts. Teachers are aware of the aspects of **Working as a historian** that apply at each class level. Strategies that we will use in each classroom to develop the History skills include the following:

Infants: - The skills at Infant level: {Page 18 SESE History Curriculum Statement}

- Time and Chronology
- Using Evidence
- Communication

At Infant level strategies we may use to develop the child's skills to work as a young historian will include:

- Sequencing activities - Ordering objects/pictures; Sequencing of artefacts from own personal past; Sequencing of elements in a story etc.
- Use of timelines
- Using simple evidence: artefacts from own personal past: clothes, toys, birthday cards etc; photographs from own personal past.
- Allowing children opportunities to communicate an awareness of stories about the past in a variety of ways: listening to and retelling stories, drama, art work, ICT.

First and Second Classes

We are aware of the skills and concepts that children will continue to develop through engagement with the History Curriculum and by having the opportunity to **Work as historians.**

- Time and Chronology
- Change and Continuity
- Cause and Effect
- Using Evidence
- Synthesis and Communication
- Empathy

Strategies we may use to develop the child's ability to work as a young historian will include:

- Sequencing activities: placing objects or pictures in historical sequence
- Exploring instances of change and continuity in personal life, family and immediate local environment: looking at features which have changed or remained unchanged
- Through examining the actions of a character in a story discussing the reasons for change and the effects of change.
- Use of simple historical evidence: photographs, objects, memories of older people, buildings, stories and songs.
- Allowing children opportunities to communicate an awareness of stories, people and events from the past in a variety of ways: writing, drama, ICT etc.

Third and Fourth Classes:

We are aware of the skills and concepts that children will continue to develop through engagement with the History Curriculum and by having the opportunity to **Work as Historians**. *{Page 40 C.S}*

- Time and Chronology
- Change and Continuity
- Cause and Effect
- Using Evidence
- Synthesis and Communication
- Empathy

Strategies we may use to develop the child's abilities to **Work as Historian** will include:

- Using timelines for children to record information about people and events.

- Examining and using a wider range of historical evidence: photographs, pictures, objects, memories of older people, buildings, stories, songs, written sources, films, other media, ICT
- Encouraging children to ask questions about a piece of evidence
- Enabling children to summarise information in and make deductions from a single source of evidence
- Providing opportunities for children to use evidence and imagination to reconstruct elements of the past and communicate this understanding in a variety of ways

Fifth and Sixth Classes:

We are aware of the skills and concepts that children will continue to develop through engagement with the History Curriculum and by having the opportunity to **Work as Historians** (*Page 60 C.S*)

- Time and chronology
- Change and continuity
- Cause and effect
- Using evidence
- Synthesis and communication
- Empathy

Strategies to develop children's skills to work as young historians will include:

- Use of timelines
- Enable children to use words, phrases and conventions associated with the recording of dates and time, such as BC, AD, and Stone Age. Early Christian Ireland etc.
- Allow children to develop some skills in the location and selection of evidence
- Encourage children to compare accounts of a person or event from two different sources

- Encourage children to use imagination and evidence to reconstruct the past in a variety of ways: oral language, drama, writing, art work, modelling, other media, ICT

3. Approaches and Methodologies

The History Curriculum states that one of the keys to successful history teaching is the use of a broad range of classroom approaches and methodologies. We are aware of the variety of approaches and methodologies outlined as particularly suited to history and will endeavour to employ as many as we can as appropriate to our individual circumstances.

The range will include:

- Story *(pages 65-71 TG)*
- Personal and family history *(pages 72-75 TG)*
- Using artefacts-visitors bringing artefacts e.g. old irons, kettles, churns,
(pages 81-86 TG)
- Drama and role-play *(pages 109-113 TG)*
- Using pictures and photographs *(pages 87 -98 TG)*
- Use of the environment *(pages 104-108 TG)*
- Oral evidence-questionnaires, interview, special visitors
(pages 77-80 TG)
- Documentary evidence *(pages 104-108 TG)*
- Use of ICT *(pages 114 TG)*

4. Linkage and Integration

Linkage

We acknowledge that linkage and integration are recommended within the SESE curriculum. We hope to make a link between our history topics in so far as possible for the class levels. Teachers will explore possibilities for linkage across the History curriculum and develop such opportunities in their classroom.

Integration

The History curriculum states that “while history makes an important and distinctive contribution to the development of the child, historical education complements the growth of the child’s geographical and scientific learning” (p.9). With this in mind, we will ensure to explore possibilities to integrate the SESE subjects.

When choosing our European and non-European country in Geography we integrate them with our choices under the strand Early People and Ancient societies. In Olympic years we study the history of the games and the countries of origin. This topic is integrated and themed with Mathematics and Geography and Art.

Local studies are integrated with Geography, English and Visual Arts.

Our integration strategies include

- Developing themes and topics in a cross curricular way
- Blocking S.E.S.E. time
- Selecting a history topic as the focus for oral language work, reading and writing.
- Flexible time tabling

We will use integrated SESE themes in classes where possible and practical.

5. Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment in History seeks to measure and report the child's progress and achievements in all aspects of the curriculum. We will assess the following:

- Progress in children's knowledge about the past
- Children's ability to use and understand the development of historical skills
- Development of children's attitudes, interests, critical thinking skills

The Assessment tools we will choose from are:

1. Teacher observation might focus on: *(pages 79,80 C.S)*

- ☐ Participation in discussions of history
- ☐ Response to and use of historical evidence
- ☐ Questioning and synthesising of information
- ☐ Willingness to carry out tasks

2. Teacher designed tasks and tests *(pages 80,81 C.S)*

- ☐ Telling and re-telling of events and stories
- ☐ Oral, written and pictorial accounts and descriptions of sites visited or people interviewed
- ☐ Construction of timelines
- ☐ Work cards or activity sheets
- ☐ History trails
- ☐ Maps of historical sites
- ☐ Role play, hot seating or dramatising a conversation or event

- ☐ Speculating on the feelings and emotions of others so as to create a spoken or written account
- ☐ Model making
- ☐ Drawings
- ☐ Compilation of a work on a particular historical topic or the presentation of project work using information and communication technologies
- ☐ Projects completed on historical themes
- ☐ ICT resources and quizzes
- ☐ Results of the child's independent historical research
- ☐ Teacher-designed revision test on a unit of work
- ☐ Oral presentation of work

3. Work samples, portfolios and projects

(pages 82,83 C.S.)

- ☐ Photographs of children at work as historians
- ☐ Photographs, pictorial accounts and models
- ☐ Samples of written accounts
- ☐ Project work

4. Feedback from pupils and parents

5. Self-assessment

Assessment is linked to the teaching and learning process and the child's progress is assessed in the context of the historical material with which he/she is familiar.

Record keeping and communication

This range of assessment provides information to:

- Review progress in history with children
- Give feedback at parent teacher meetings
- Inform in-house records
- Inform progress reports sent to parents
- Inform future teaching, learning and planning

6. Differentiation for Children with Particular Needs

We are aware of the distinct role history can play in the harmonious development of each and every child. We will do our best to ensure that all children have the opportunity to experience a broad historical education. In the same way as we endeavour to provide for individual differences in every curricular area, we will also strive to make the history curriculum accessible to as many children as possible. In order to do this we will endeavour to:

- Make an effort to create opportunities for hands on practical activities
- Use a mixture of whole class teaching, focused group work or paired work, grouping children in mixed or ability groups, individual work
- Employ a variety of methodologies in the classroom
- Encourage pupils to carry out research in certain topic areas
- Offer a variety of recording methods
- Plan topics that provide opportunities for further research for more able pupils
- Include a range of more accessible and more demanding evidence
- Cater for different learning styles

- Vary questioning during oral discussion from recall to analytical and recall skills
- Introduce Collaborative team work for S.E.S.E.

We endorse the emphasis this curriculum places on the exploration of personal and family histories at all levels and are very conscious of the sensitivities some aspects of these topics may require. In instances where it would be insensitive to explore a child's own personal and family history we will consider the substitution of the personal and family history of another person. The curriculum unit allows for this within the strand unit "My Family or a Family of a person known to me".

7. Equality of Participation and Access

S.E.S.E seeks to generate an appreciation of cultural and historical inheritance and cultivates an atmosphere of equality of opportunity where gender, cultural diversity, minorities and special needs are respected and valued. History will be accessible to all children within the school regardless of their age, gender or ability. We will place an equal emphasis on the role of women in history, looking at the contribution of women from a local, national and international perspective. In our school we recognise the contribution of ordinary people to history and we will place emphasis on the roles of everyday people in history.

For those children experiencing any form of disadvantage we will adapt the teaching and learning to meet their needs. The work will suit their ability, and we will use alternative resources, ICT and visual aids where deemed necessary.

These are the strategies we use in our approach to History.

- Curriculum content:

At all class levels we include the lives of men, women and children from different social, cultural ethnic and religious backgrounds when:

- Selecting stories
- Planning topics and themes
- Inviting visitors into school to talk to children
- Selecting evidence – artefacts, photographs and documents.
- Purchasing resources – books for the library, posters, software

- Personal and Family History

In our approach to this strand teachers at all levels keep in mind: the diversity of families when looking at “my family are the people I live with, the people who love and care for me.” In St. Patrick’s NS we cherish diversity. Families are different and we would like every child to be proud of his or her family. No child will be made feel uncomfortable through activities relating to Personal and Family history.

- Feasts and Festivals.

Guided by the S.E.S.E. Curriculum and Inter-Cultural Guidelines [N.C.C.A.] we include in our programme units of work where children become familiar with the origins and traditions associated with a wide range of festivals in Ireland and other countries.

- Classroom planning and practice

We use talk and discussion with lots of questioning as a feature of all History lessons in a way that includes all children so that awareness of different perspectives is fostered.

Organisational Planning

8. Timetable

In keeping with the recommendations in the Primary School Curriculum Introduction (p70) a minimum of three hours will be allocated to SESE per week, from first class to sixth, (1 hour per week allocated to History) and two and a quarter hours with Infant Classes (45mins per week to History).

On occasion, time will be blocked as appropriate. This might occur when:

- Working on a project
- Exploring the local environment
- Having persons in to speak to the class
- Going on trails.

Teachers will consider the use of discretionary curriculum time for SESE when appropriate.

9. Resources and I.C.T.

Teachers have compiled resources in their relevant classes to support the teaching of the Strand units at each class level. There is a variety of textbooks to support the teachers in preparing for topics. The I-pads are used for research and to create mind maps and compile information on a topic as well as taking photographs. We will use the resources of the interactive whiteboards and inform each other of useful sites.

10. Health and Safety

Teachers should consult the principal whenever it is proposed to engage children in History activities outside the school grounds. Provision will be made for adult help where necessary, suitable clothing- in particular footwear, and transport.

All activities and outings will be carried out in accordance with our Health and Safety Policy and with due recognition of our Child Protection Statement. This will also apply to school tours which may take place at historical sites. Before use in the classroom artefacts will be examined by the teacher and checked for potential danger e.g. sharp edges Artefacts with small parts will not be handled by infants.

11. Individual Teacher's Planning and Reporting

- Teachers will report on work completed in Cúntas Miosúil. These are kept in individual teacher's planning folders and in the filing cabinet in the office. Cuntais Miosuil assist in evaluating progress in S.E.S.E. and inform future teaching.
- Teachers will use the Whole School Plan and Yearly plans (for 3rd to 6th class) to inform their classroom planning.
- Teachers will use the History Curriculum strands and strand units when planning.
- Teachers also keep long-term and fortnightly plans
- Parents are informed of children's progress in S.E.S.E. at parent teacher meetings and through the end of year report cards.

12. Parental Involvement/Community Links

Occasionally we may invite guests/person from the locality to the school to share stories from the past and growing up in the locality. We encourage parental involvement, particularly when a parent has a skill or interest they wish to share. We ask them to share their own personal memories of when they were young. We may invite some parents and grandparents to talk to the children. Parents send in photographs and artefacts and help with other aspects of the history curriculum when they are asked to do so.

Parental involvement permeates our History curriculum particularly in the junior classes. Personal and family history involves parents in talking to their children, answering questions, hunting for photographs, lending items for display, taking children to see historic places. Parents are informed of how they might help with history at parent teacher meetings, through newsletters and informal discussions.

Parental help will be requested, if needed, on our S.E.S.E field trips.

The Senior Classes annual school tour in the last term will incorporate a place of historical interest. Children from the senior classes may also be taken on a local historical/geographical tour during the school year.

13. Environmental Audit

Our school is located approximately 5 km from Waterford city, 40 km from Kilkenny city and 20 km from New Ross.

Occasionally school tours will incorporate a study and/or an awareness of the historical aspects of these environs on such trips.

Places of historic interest around Strangsmills and beyond include:

- Old Dunkitt Church
- Dunkitt Castle
- Bishopshall church and graveyard
- Mullinabro House
- Turret in Mullinabro
- Dunkitt House
- Dunkitt graveyard
- Old Gaulskill church

- Old preparatory college Kilmacow
- Mills: Strangs Mill, Browns Mill, Dangan Mill
- Presentation convent
- Kilkenny Castle and city
- Reginalds tower
- Viking Triangle
- Dunbrody Famine Ship in New Ross
- Ros Tapestry
- New Ross Port and River Barrow

Success Criteria

We will use the following criteria to assess the success of this plan

- Evidence that pupils are engaging in studies from personal to local, national and international history at an age-appropriate level.
- That history is defined as an attempt to reconstruct and interpret the past as well as the past itself
- Our yearly and classroom planning is based on the Whole School Plan
- There is a balance between skills and content
- Development of historical skills throughout the classes
- Integrated themes are being developed, on occasion, across the school, using a whole school approach.
- Use of timelines in classes.
- That the curriculum is spiral and developmental in its structure
- Classes are engaged in outdoor observation and trails of the local environment

- Photographs, displays and use of artefacts are evident in classes
- Procedures outlined in this plan are consistently followed throughout the school
- Children's feedback
- Teacher and Parent feedback
- Inspectors' suggestions and/or feedback

Implementation

Roles and Responsibilities

All the teachers are responsible for the implementation of the History curriculum in their own classrooms. Teachers will be encouraged to present feedback during planning meetings on review of History.

Timeframe and Review

The history policy was formulated in December 2006. It was reviewed in June 2010, February 2012, November 2019 and November 2023. This policy will be reviewed again during the 2027/2028 school year following the implementation of the new History framework.

All staff will be involved in the review of this policy. The Board of Management will be involved in its continued development and review.

Ratification and Communication

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management on December 7th 2023.

Signed : _____ Date: _____

Chairperson BOM