



ST. DAVID'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

HISTORY POLICY

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

We aim through this plan, drawn up in accordance with the history curriculum, to set out our approaches to the teaching and learning of history. It will form the basis for teachers long and short term planning. It will also inform new and temporary teachers of the approaches and methodologies used in our school.

This plan has been reviewed by the staff in January 2020.

RATIONALE

We recognise History as an integral element of Social, Environmental and Scientific education. We recognise the distinct role History has to play in enabling the child to explore and understand the natural, human, social and cultural environments in which he/she lives. We hope that historical education in our school will enable the child to investigate and examine critically significant events in their own immediate past, the past of their families and local communities and the histories of people in Ireland and other parts of the world. We believe that History develops an understanding of the actions, beliefs and motivations of people in the past and is fundamental to an informed appreciation of contemporary society and environments. We view history as having a distinct but complementary role together with geography and science within SESE and as a contributor to the wider child centred curriculum

VISION AND AIMS

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 children 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.

Aims

We endorse the aims of the SESE History curriculum as outlined on Page 12 of the SESE History Curriculum Statement:-

- To develop an interest in and 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 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;
- To foster a willingness to explore personal attitudes and values and to promote an openness to the possibility of changing one's own point of view;
- To enable the child to acquire a balanced appreciation of cultural and historical inheritances from local, national and global contexts.

Curriculum Planning 1

Strands and Strand Units: Each teacher is familiar with the strands, strand units and content objectives for his/ her relevant class level and indeed for each other's class levels. We feel this is important in order to ensure a coherent programme throughout the school. Classes from Junior Infants to Second Class will work very closely. At these levels history will be delivered through integrated themes in the context of the other SESE subjects as much as possible as well as through integration with the

SPHE curriculum and other curricular areas, therefore making the learning experience more holistic and meaningful for the child.

Infants - Pgs 19-20 Curriculum

The content in history for the infant classes is confined to two strands:-

- Myself and my Family;
- Story.

Each of these strands will be covered.

1st and 2nd Class - Pgs 27–31 Curriculum

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 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.

3rd and 4th Class - Pgs 42-50 Curriculum

The Strands that comprise the curriculum for third and fourth classes are:-

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

5th and 6th Class

The Strands that comprise the History Curriculum for fifth and sixth classes are:

- Local studies;
- Story;
- Early people and ancient societies;

- Life, society, work and culture in the past;
- Continuity and change over time;
- Eras of change and conflict;
- Politics, conflict and society.

We are aware of the requirements of the 'menu curriculum' as outlined in the Curriculum Statement regarding the number of Strand Units from each Strand that must be covered in each school year.

A content plan for 3rd to 6th class is attached.

In choosing the Strand Units for 3rd to 6th classes, we are conscious of the spiral approach recommended in this curriculum, in which some aspects of the past may be explored in increasing detail at a number of levels.

We recognise that the curriculum recommends that in each year one strand unit in local history and one strand unit in national or world history is studied in more depth over a longer period and this has been taken on board in the development of our yearly plans from 3rd to 6th classes.

We understand that a strict adherence to a chronological treatment of Strand Units is not recommended in this curriculum because of the constraints this would impose on curricular planning.

We are aware that the development of children's chronological understanding can be fostered through the use of timelines, and will consider using timelines at all levels.

At all class levels we will strive to ensure a balance between the development of skills and the acquisition of knowledge in our teaching of history.

SKILLS AND CONCEPTS DEVELOPMENT

As outlined in our vision for history in our school we are not solely concerned with the transmission of a body of knowledge about the past, but also with ensuring children experience something of the way in which the historian goes about his/ her work. Each teacher is aware that the curriculum provides for the development of a

growing range of historical skills and concepts. Each teacher is aware of the aspects of Working as a Historian that apply at each class level.

Infants Class: Page 18 Curriculum

We are aware that the skills and concepts developed by the children as they work as historians are:-

- Time and Chronology;
- Using Evidence;
- Communication.

At Infant level strategies we will 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 simple 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.

1st and 2nd Class: Page 26 Curriculum

We are aware that the following skills and concepts will be developed by the children as they are provided with opportunities to engage with the History Curriculum and to work as historians:-

- Time and Chronology;
- Change and Continuity;
- Cause and Effect;
- Using Evidence;
- Synthesis and Communication;
- Empathy;
- Strategies we will use to develop the child's ability to work as a young historian at this level 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 discuss 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.

3rd and 4th Class: Page 40 Curriculum

We are aware that children will continue to develop these skills and concepts 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 will use to develop the child's abilities to work as a young historian at this level 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.

5th and 6th Class: Page 60 Curriculum

We are aware of the skills and concepts that children in 5th and 6th classes 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 will use to develop children's skills to work as young historians will include:-
 - Use of timelines;
 - Enabling children to use words, phrases and conventions associated with the recording of dates and time, such as BC, AD, Stone Age, early Christian Ireland etc.;
 - Allowing children to examine and use critically a wide range of historical evidence;
 - Enabling children to develop some skills in the location and selection of evidence;
 - Encouraging children to ask questions about a piece of evidence;
 - Encouraging children to compare accounts of a person or event from two different sources;
 - Encouraging 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. All teachers will endeavour to include a balance between the development of these skills and the acquisition of knowledge when designing their short and long term planning and when implementing it in the classroom.

APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

Our History Curriculum asserts that one of the keys to successful history teaching is the use of a broad range of classroom approaches and methodologies. We plan to use the key methodologies of the primary school curriculum in the teaching of History:-

- Active learning;
- Use of the environment;
- Talk and discussion;
- Cooperative learning;
- Problem solving;
- Developing skills through content.

In addition to this we are aware of the variety of approaches and methodologies outlined as particularly suited to History and will endeavour to employ the following methodologies:-

- Story – Stories covered infants to 2nd class tie in with broader themes being covered. We will consult pgs 65-71 of the Teacher Guidelines for guidance in this methodology;
- Personal and Family History - This methodology is an ideal starting point for exploring the past especially with our younger classes. Parents, grandparents and other family members will be encouraged to share family history with our children. We will consult pgs 72 - 75 of the Teacher Guidelines for guidance in this methodology;
- Using Artefacts - We will gather a selection of artefacts for using evidence as a methodology. Typical artefacts will be older clothes, shoes, vinyl records, old mobile phones, old textbooks, artefacts do not all have to be ancient ones. We will consult pgs 81 - 86 of the Teacher Guidelines for guidance in this methodology;
- Drama and Role Play Activities such as hot seating, conscience alley, and drama through story are ways in which children will empathise with people of the past and recreate human experience. We will consult pgs 109 - 113 of the Teacher Guidelines for guidance in this methodology;
- Using Pictures and Photographs - We will use historical photographs of our locality and also study a range of photos from famous collections, famous paintings and calendars. Collections such as the Lawrence Collection (www.nli.ie) will be ideal to use for activities around Change and Continuity. We will consult pgs 87 - 98 of the Teacher Guidelines for guidance in this methodology;
- Use of the Environment - Local features and trails in the school community that can be used as a resource are St Davids Church, St David's Castle, The

Courthouse, The Town Hall. We will consult pgs 99 - 103 of the Teacher Guidelines for guidance in this methodology. We will also refer to the Geography Teacher Guidelines pgs 74- 78 in this regard - From Poorhouse Road to the Fairy Flax Naas Historical Society Publication;

- Oral Evidence - We aim to try and make incidents and aspects of the past real for the children through the use of this methodology. Classes will experience visits from older people in the locality and children will have opportunity to interview older people as part of their homework. We will consult pgs 77 - 80 of the Teacher Guidelines for guidance in this methodology;
- Documentary Evidence -. We will consult pgs 104 - 108 of the Teacher Guidelines for guidance in this methodology;
- Use of ICT - We will make use of the internet to enhance our teaching of History. We will consult pg 114 of the Teacher Guidelines for guidance in this methodology.
 - Useful history websites
 - Scoilnet
 - Ask about Ireland
 - Census.ie
 - Mountjoy Jail

LINKAGE AND INTEGRATION

Where possible, strands and strand units will include a thematic approach to include other subjects e.g. other areas of SESE, Drama, Visual Arts, Music, Language etc.

In the multi-grade context history is taught as a whole class grouping.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is seen to be a continuous, dynamic and often informal process.

Teachers assess:-

- Progress in children's knowledge of the past;
- Ability to use historical skills;
- Development of attitudes.

The following tools will be used for the purpose of assessment:-

- Teacher observation;

- Teacher designed tasks and tests;
- Work samples.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Teachers, in their planning, shall support differentiation to cater for children with specific needs;
- Aspects of the topic which might be completed by all pupils should be identified in addition to work and approaches for the less able or more able;
- The benefits of group work and other means of differentiation will be considered and the support which may need to be offered to individual children when they are engaged in some of the learning activities;
- With regard to personal history and as far as they can be possibly aware, teachers address the issue of family situations sensitively *e.g. the death of a parent or sibling, lone parents, separated parents, adopted children, fostered children.*

EQUALITY OF PARTICIPATION AND ACCESS

- There are gender issues that need to be considered in relation to the teaching of history *e.g. addressing the role of women in local, national, international contexts, understanding the social changes that have taken place for women in relatively recent history, appraising texts and other resources for gender representation;*
- The history class provides opportunities for studying the ordinary lives of women, men and children;
- Equal opportunities are given to boys and girls to participate in classes / activities;
- The history class can be used as an opportunity to integrate the culture of all pupils *e.g. international pupils;*
- Specific cultural issues are addressed *e.g. Punchestown Racing Festival, Chinese New Year, religious celebrations e.g. St. David's Day, Women's World Day of Prayer, St. Brigid's Day.*

RESOURCES AND ICT

- The Internet will be used as a tool for historical reference. All websites are screened as per I.C.T. policy.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Teachers are aware of Health and Safety issues pertaining to activities connected with the history curriculum *e.g. handling artefacts, going on trails, visits to museums, ruins, archaeological sites;*
- Permission procedures for field trips are adhered to.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Each Class Teacher is responsible for planning at his / her own level;
- In Infant Classes a minimum of 2 hours 15 minutes per week will be timetabled for S.E.S.E.;
- From 1st to 6th Classes a minimum of 3 hours per week will be timetabled for S.E.S.E. **History will form part of these blocks;**
- On occasions, time will be blocked for History *e.g. using a thematic approach, working on a project, visits to local historical sites;*
- Discretionary time will occasionally be used for History.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- Teachers have access to reference books, resource materials, and website dealing with history;
- Teachers who avail of particular interest courses in history are encouraged to share the expertise acquired at these courses either formally or as part of a staff meeting.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- Parents and grandparents can be involved in supporting the history curriculum by *e.g. sharing particular expertise or experiences, providing resources, being available for interviews;*
- Parents can support the child in fostering an interest in personal, local, national and international history by *e.g. accessing specific information, supporting homework and project work, being a real audience for children's work in this area;*
- Special events may be held *e.g. display of project work, pageants for particular anniversaries in the life of the school.*

COMMUNITY LINKS

- The members of local history societies / individuals in the community can support the school's history curriculum;
- There are local places of interest where the children could be brought as part of the history curriculum –mentioned above.

PLACES OF HISTORIC INTEREST

- Places of historic interest are incorporated into school tours e.g. *Kilkenny Castle*;
- Field trips and trails are organised to support the teaching of local and national history.

RATIFICATION

- This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on **date below**.
- The policy will be available in the school for parents to view.

REVIEW

- The History Policy is an ongoing document which is subject to review;
- The policy will be reviewed on a regular basis. The review date will be scheduled by the Principal in consultation with the Teaching Staff Members.

Ratified by Board of Management on: _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson

Principal

Content Plan for 3rd to 6th class

Year	Local Studies 2	Story (selection)	Early People and Ancient Societies (2)	Life Society ,Work and Culture in the past (2) (1)	Continuity and Change over Time (2)	Eras of Change and Conflict(2)	Politics, Conflict And Society (2)
Third & Fourth (even years) Small World 3rd	Games and pastimes	Fionn and the Fianna	Stone Age Peoples	Life in Norman Ireland	Food and farming		
	My family	The Wooden Horse of Troy Tom Crean	The Bronze Age		Transport		
Third & Fourth (odd years) Small World 4th	My locality through the Ages-buildings Odlums Mill, Courthouse, Town Hall	Children of Lir	The Celts Early Christian Ireland	Life in Medieval Towns –Ireland and Europe	Schools and Education		
	Schools and Education /My School	Amelia Earheart Leif Erikson	The Romans	Life in Ireland in the Nineteenth century	Caring for the Sick		
Fifth & Sixth (even years) Small World 5th	Feasts and festivals in Ireland Punchestown Standing Stone	The Story of Diarmuid and Gráinne Granuaile	The Maya	The Normans Life in Medieval times in Ireland	The History of Irish Music	Traders and Explorers The Great Famine	Ireland in the 16 th and 17 th Centuries
		Daniel O’Connell Leonardo da Vinci		Life in 18 th Century Ireland	Energy and Power Communication	The Industrial Revolution Irish Women in Science	Land Ownership in the 16 th and 17 th centuries
Fifth & Sixth (odd years) Small World 6th	Buildings ,Sites and Ruins in Ireland St David’s Church, St David’s Castle Jigginstown House	Stories from the Titanic	Ancient China	The Fenians The Home Rule Crisis Nationalism and Unionism	The Irish language	The Land War World War 1	The 1916 Rising Revolution and Independence The Irish Free State
		Mahatma Gandhi Mary Robinson		Irish Culture World War 2	Barter trade and Money	Modern Ireland	Northern Ireland The Troubles