



Geography Plan

Lurga National School

Introductory Statement

This document is a statement of the aims and objectives, principles and strategies for teaching and learning of Geography at Lurga National School. Inputs were sought from all teachers in deciding new priorities for the teaching of Geography. This plan forms the basis of each teachers long and short term planning in Geography.

Rationale:

Geography is a valued part of the curriculum at Lurga National School as it provides a means of exploring, appreciating and understanding the world in which we live and how it has evolved. Geography explores the relationship between the Earth and its people. It promotes environmental awareness and our duty of care to our surroundings. It gives us an understanding and appreciation of different cultures and peoples of the world and teaches us to respect those differences.

Geography stimulates curiosity and imagination and we aim to build upon the child's personal geography by developing geographical skills, understanding and knowledge through studying places and themes.

We encourage children to learn by experience. We value working in the natural school environment, the school garden and school grounds. We visit other local habitats - The Burren, the school road and Coole Park as an integral part of the Geography Curriculum. We recognise that Geography is an integral part of the S.E.S.E

Vision:

We believe that the Geography Curriculum enables children to make sense of the natural and human environments in which they live and in the wider world. As such, Geography is pivotal to each child's rounded environmental education. Geography prepares pupils to contribute and play a role in their communities by encouraging them to appreciate the interdependence of people.

Geography promotes an understanding of and respect for different cultures and ways of life. The Geography Curriculum fosters children's responsibility for the immediate and wider environments.

Aims:

We endorse the aims of the Geography Curriculum.

- To develop knowledge and understanding of local, regional and wider environments and their interrelationships
- To encourage an understanding and appreciation of the variety of natural and human conditions on the Earth
- To develop empathy with people from diverse environments and an understanding of human interdependence

- To develop the ability to use a range of communicative methods, especially those concerned with the development of graphicacy
- To encourage the development of a sense of place and spatial awareness
- To encourage the development of caring attitudes and responsible behaviour towards the environment, and involvement in the identification, discussion, resolution and avoidance of environmental problems
- To develop an understanding of appropriate geographical concepts.

Strands and Strand Units:

Each teacher is familiar with the strands and strand units, content objectives for his/her class level and indeed for each other's class levels. This is to ensure a coherent programme throughout the school. All strands and strand units will be covered each year and content objectives will be planned at staff-planning meetings.

	Human Environment	Natural Environment	Environmental Awareness and Care
Junior and Senior Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living in the local community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local Natural Environment • Weather • Planet Earth in Space 	Caring for my locality
First and Second Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living in the local community • People and Places in Other areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local Natural Environment • Weather • Planet Earth in Space 	Caring for my locality
Third and Fourth Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in the local area • People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland • People and Other lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local Natural Environment • Land, rivers and seas of my county • Rocks and Soils • Weather, Climate and atmosphere • Planet Earth in Space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Awareness • Caring for the Environment

Fifth and Sixth Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living and working in the local area • People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland • People and Other lands • County, regional and national centres • Trade and Development issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local Natural Environment • Land, rivers and seas of Ireland • Physical features of Europe and the World • Rocks and soil • Weather, Climate and atmosphere • Planet Earth in Space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Awareness • Caring for the Environment
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Skills Development:

Geographical skills development is treated with equal importance to content knowledge. We

teach the following:

A Sense of Place... what it looks like when you're teaching

The things that make Lurga distinctive & special so that memories and emotions can be built up about it?

Who lives here and what do they do? / Who works here and what do they do? / What facilities are there? / What is it like to be a child here? / What social strengths or problems does Killaloe have? / What events have happened here?

A Sense of Space... what it looks like when you're teaching

Locational information about where & why things are situated in relation to each other.

Knowing routes from place to place and visualizing what would be passed along the way. / Knowing that Coole Park and the Burren are not too far from the school so children can access it easily. / Realising that public bins are beside bus stops because of high need / Knowing what types of homes are in an area etc.

Maps, Globes & Graphical Skills

- Understanding, Using & Creating

- A resource pack of maps are available in the school supplies.

Geographical Investigation Skills

- Questioning
- Observing
- Predicting
- Investigating & Experimenting
- Estimating & Measuring
- Analysing
- Recording & Communicating

Strategies for development of these skills will involve the children being actively involved in fieldwork, trails and outdoor investigations as suggested in the curriculum.

Children's Ideas:

In Lurga NS we recognise that the child's initial ideas must be explored if they are to form a starting point for learning. This will help enormously to see what preconceived ideas the child may have. It is also useful as an assessment tool at the end of a unit to see if there has been any progression.

Suggested approaches include:

- Brainstorming + Concept Mapping
- Questioning + Think, Pair, Share
- KWL Charts + Before/ After drawings
- Annotated drawings + Talk and discussion

Fieldwork & Practical Investigations

We recognise that fieldwork is as a vital element of geographical education. The following activities will be carried out to stimulate children's interests in the environment.

Investigating Human Environments

- Observing and sketching features in the landscape.
- Conducting land use/ traffic surveys
- Effective use of Photographs Appropriate use of artifacts
- How to interview people living and working in the area
- How to conduct environmental appraisals
- Plotting routes on local maps.

Investigating Natural Environments

- Recognising and examining features in photographs
- Using simulations and models
- Observing and sketching features in the environment
- Conducting experiments and investigations
- Keeping a vegetable garden.
- Map skills and mapping concepts
- Local maps/ plans/ photographs & model

Approaches and Methodologies:

Our teachers will follow the recommended sequential approach for Geography whereby local areas are first studied followed by regional, national, European and global studies. We plan to use the key methodologies of the Primary Curriculum in the teaching of Geography:

- Active Learning
- Problem Solving
- Developing skills through content
- Talk and discussion
- Co-operative learning
- Use of the environment at school level, village level, county level, wider country level.

Linkage and Integration:

A linked SESE approach can be taken to planning in which a topic may be developed through the skills list of two or more of the SESE group as is suggested in this policy. The strand "Environmental Awareness & Care" and all associated strand units are shared in both Geography & Science. This can be accounted for when planning as it covers both subjects.

We will explore possibilities to integrate the SESE subjects at all class levels. We will refer to the teacher guidelines in Geography, History and Science in order to choose topics or themes for SESE integration. In particular the use of environmental trails in Geography will complement the study of living things in Science while the strand of Environmental Awareness and Care is common to both curricula. The use of trails will also lead to the study of how places and features have been shaped by the actions of people in the past and so integrate naturally with Local Studies in History.

Opportunities that exist for integration with other subjects are:

- SPHE: the development of the child's sense of identity and citizenship
- Mathematics: the skills outlined in mapping and graphs
- Visual Arts: aesthetic awareness in the environments and making drawings
- Physical Education: outdoor and adventures activities
- SESE: using the local school environment: for measuring and drawing to scale (internal and external school environment)
- Language: discussion of ideas and relationships in Geography – the language of location, direction and position.
- Music: Composers, songs and instruments from other countries.

Multi-grade teaching:

The use of an integrated approach within the SESE and the broader curriculum will facilitate blocks of time to be utilised in an efficient way and will be particularly useful in our multi class situation. We will differentiate the work for the different ages by setting tasks for the older children that will demand more complexity in terms of content, process and outcome. We will provide resources for each class level so that they can work independently as another class level is being attended to.

Assessment and Record Keeping:

Geography Assessment is more than just a checklist of content-based facts. It's a way of thinking that can only be assessed by a teacher's observation of how the children react to different situations. Teachers should therefore employ a range of assessment techniques, including:

- Short, informal passages that put forward a teacher's observations on the child's development of Skills & Attitudes.
- Strategic collection of work samples and child self-assessment to support observations

Children with Different Needs:

Our Geography teaching aims to meet the needs of all the children at Lurga National School.

- This will be achieved by teachers varying their pace, content and teaching 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.
- The SNA supports particular children and groups as directed by the class teacher.

Equality of Participation and Access:

Lurga National School recognises and values diversity, and believes all children are entitled to access the services, facilities, or amenities that are available in the school environment.

The geography curriculum in our school will allow children to learn of and come to value the diversity of peoples, cultures and societies in Ireland and throughout the wider world and so promote cultural awareness.

Timetable:

- Infant classes – 45 minutes per week (SESE often integrated with Aistear. Introduction can be delayed due to increase in literacy instruction time)
- 1st – 6th Class – 1 hour per week
- All classes adhere to the timetables listed above

- Discretionary curriculum time is used occasionally for SESE.
- On occasion, time will be blocked as appropriate. This might occur when working on an integrated project or exploring the local environment.

Homework

- Geography homework may be given, particularly when children are engaged in Project Based Learning.

Resources and ICT:

We recognise the many benefits of incorporating ICT into the Geography classroom.

- Interactive whiteboards and screens are in every classroom and are ideal for the whole-class study of maps/ images, including route plotting, discovering change in areas over time and accessing new & dynamic materials (documentaries, online tutorials).
- Teachers are advised to also make use of in-class computers and visualisers when developing lessons.
- I-pads/laptops will be available for the children to use when completing project work. Content which is considered to be potentially liable, objectional or controversial is blocked.
- We wish the children to use the internet safely for research of all subject areas.
- Specific websites we recommend for studying Geography include:
 - Google Maps/ Earth
 - Scoilnet.ie (which includes a free subscription to Britannica Online Encyclopedia)
 - Askaboutireland.ie
 - National Geographic Kids.com

Resources:

- Use of the school and of the local area as a resource.
- Maps and Globe
- Countries and Regions: Lurga National School contains a number of maps (physical and political) of Ireland, Europe and the World.
- Each class from third to sixth has a map of Ireland and Europe.
- Fifth and Sixth classes also have a map of the World.
- Selection of textbooks available in the school.

Health and Safety

Safety During fieldwork, teachers should be aware of the safety implications of any work being undertaken and children should be encouraged to observe safety procedures during all tasks. The following is a summary of safety issues in the different strands of the curriculum:

- Outdoor work should be based in areas that are accessible and safe. A preliminary visit by teachers should be used to identify any possible hazards
- When working with plants and animals, pupils should wear gloves to protect from allergic reactions.
- Children should wash their hands after handling animals, plants or soil.
- Cuts, grazes and skin infections should be covered.
- Prior to engaging in any outdoor work the children and teacher should discuss how they will care for the animals and plants they may collect.
- Children should draw up their own conservation code before working in the outdoor environment.

Individual teachers planning and Reporting:

Teachers will consult this whole school plan for geography and the curriculum documents when they are drawing up their short and long term plans. Teachers will include all strands and strand units every year and will select objectives within the strand units each year. Where it is meaningful and suitable, geography will be taught in a thematic way to integrate with the other SESE subjects of history and science. Monthly reports will assist in recording work covered, in evaluating progress in geography and in informing future teaching and planning.

Staff Development:

- External agencies are engaged with to provide CPD training in SESE.
- Internal staff development is provided to teaching staff at staff meetings.

Parental Involvement:

- Parents with special relevant knowledge may be invited into school to speak to children.
- Parents and other adult members of the school community may be invited to assist with certain activities,(Field Work, School Gardening).

Community Links:

- Environmentalists in the community will be asked to talk to children and share their

knowledge with them – Link with the ‘Biodiversity and the Global Community’ and other themes of Green School Project such as travel. The importance of Fairtrade.

- The local library in Gort/Ennis is a source of information for the children.
- The work of some national agencies relates to some aspects of the geography curriculum.

We will access materials produced by these agencies specifically for schools.

- Irish Peatland Conversation Council www.lpcc.ie
- www.waterwaysireland.org
- www.treecouncil.ie
- www.mapzone.ie

Content for each class level

	Country Study	Human Environments (Suggestions integration with History)	Natural Environments	Environmental awareness and care
Jun/Sen Infants Year 1 Content integrated with Aistear	My locality	My Family and community -Homes (in Lurga and elsewhere) -Other buildings near the school -School (in Lurga and elsewhere) -Who works in the locality, the farmer, the garda,	Weather -The local natural environment -School grounds -Trees and plants in the school environment	-Caring for my locality – caring for my classroom/school -Caring for clothes, toys and other possessions -Dispose of litter appropriately
Junior/Sen Infants Year 2 Content integrated with Aistear	Lurga/Tubber/Gort	Pinpoint Clare and Galway on a map of Ireland -People at play Journeys -routes to school, transport in my community. -The fireman -The dentist	The Squirrel -Planet Earth in Space -Caring for my locality -Clothes for different weather	Caring for my locality- caring for my school. Collect paper, cans and other materials for recycling

1st/2nd Class Year 1	Ireland Mediterranean Country Greece Italy	People at work (jobs) -My family and community What amenities / activities are available locally (local clubs/attractions) -Signposts in my locality	Trees in my community and in Lurga/Gort -Identifying leaves -Night & Day and how their effects on plants and animals	-Coole Park – Animals and Trees
1st/2nd Class Year 2	Asian Countries China India	Lurga/Gort – focus on buildings, settlement, infrastructure, mapping, services. -Photographs (past and present) -People and places in other areas -	The local natural environment: Coole Park -Irish Provinces -At the seaside in our community	-Caring for Lurga/Gort -Seaside safety and knowing the sea. -Examining tides
3rd/4th Class Year 1	Asia Australia New Zealand Antarctica- polar regions. Inuit people	People at work: Food and Farming. -The food we eat – traceability. -Transport	-Local beaches in our locality -Irish counties -Plans & Maps Directions -The River Shannon -The Water Cycle	-Re-using and recycling waste materials. (project) -Water Usage
3rd/4th Class Year 2	America United States/Mexico Canada European Country Spain	-My County – Origins & geographical changes (Norman Ireland & Medieval Ireland) -Irish Tourism	-Story of a river Rivers, Lakes in Ireland -The Water Cycle -Counties of Ireland	-Tidy Towns -Living in a community -Our Native Birds -Climate change
5th/6th Class Year 1	Great Britain South American	-Transport and Communication -People at work:	-Natural Disasters Volcanoes,	Farming in the local community and

	Country Brazil European Countries France Norway	Tourism (Airport / local factory/ warehouse) -European Union	Earthquakes etc -Longitude &Latitude, Coordinates -Mountain ranges in Ireland -Rocks &Soils Counties/Town s -Rivers of Ireland and the River Shannon and stages of a river	Ireland -The Fishing Industry -Climate change
5 th/6th Class Year 2	African Country / Countries Egypt South Africa European Countries Germany Poland	-Trade and development issues (famine) -Modern industry in Ireland (Industrial Revolution) -World poverty	-The structure of the earth. -Peatlands of Ireland (Bórd na Mona) -Ordnance Survey Mapping	-The Burren -Energy (Renewable and Nonrenewable) -Storms, Weather and Disasters. -Climate change Success Criteria:

We will review this whole school plan for Geography in September 2023 using the following criteria:

- How individual teacher preparation, planning and teaching reflects this plan
- How methodologies listed in this plan are working in the classroom
- Resources adding additional resources as necessary to assist the delivery of this programme
- How well are geography concepts learnt by children
- How well are children's geographical skills progressing

Implementation:

Roles and Responsibilities:

- This plan will be supported, developed and implemented by all staff members who aim to:
- Lead the development of new methodologies listed in the plan
- Liaising with community organisations and relevant agencies
- Continue with the development of ICT as a learning tool in Geography

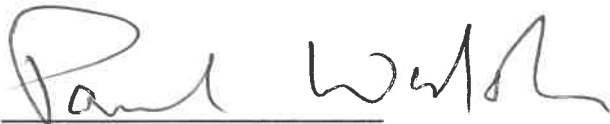
Timeframe

This plan will be implemented in February 2020.

Ratification & Communication

- This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 21/3/2023.

Signed: _____



(Chairperson)