**Geography Plan**

**Introductory Statement**

This plan was drafted by staff of Seir Kieran’s N.S. following a review of a plan which has been in place and reviewed on a bi-annual basis since 2007. It’s primary objective is to implement the key messages, skills, content and methodologies of the Geography curriculum.

This plan will form the basis of each teacher’s long and short term planning in Geography. It will document our approaches and methodologies in this subject area.

**Rationale**

* To put in place a plan for the teaching of geography which is in line with what is set out in the Geography Curriculum (1999).
* To provide teachers with clear guidelines.
* To ensure that the learning needs of all the children of Seir Kieran’s NS are met within the subject area of Geography.

**Vision:**

As a school community we in Seir Kieran’s N.S. aspire 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 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 environment.

**Aims:**

We endorse the aims of the SESE Geography curriculum as outlined in 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.
* 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.

**Curriculum Planning**

1.**Strands and Strand Units**

Teachers are familiar with the strands/strand units/content objectives for the relevant class levels. All strands and strand units are covered each year but not all content objectives need to be addressed within a strand unit.

Teachers use the curriculum

* Infant classes pp. 17-27
* First and Second classes pp. 29-43
* Third and Fourth classes pp. 45-61
* Fifth and Sixth classes pp. 63-84.
* There is continuity and progression in the geography programme from class to class
* Checks are made to avoid gaps and undue repetition between classes
* From 3rd to 6th classes, there are locations agreed for the strand unit People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland
* In the strand unit People and other lands, there is one location in Europe and one location in another part of the world agreed per year from 3rd to 6th classes
* There are opportunities provided for individual teachers to develop a sense of place for either national or international locations of interest to them

The following are a list of the agreed locations for the strand unit; People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland.

3rd class; Blanchardstown

4th class; Aranmore Island

5th class; The Burren

6th class; Tipperary

The following are the list of the agreed locations for the strand unit; People and other European Lands;

3rd class; France

4th class; Italy

5th class; Germany

6th class; Greece

The following are a list of the agreed locations for the strand unit; People and other Lands (Non European);

3rd class; Egypt

4th class; Japan

5th class; Mexico

6th class; China

**2. Skills Development**

We are aware that the development of Geographical skills is of equal importance to strand content in this curriculum.

The skills of: *Geographical Investigation*

*A sense of space and place*

*Mapping and graphical skills*

will be developed through the context of the strands and strand units.

Strategies for development of these skills will involve the children being actively involved in fieldwork, outdoor investigations as suggested in Teacher Guidelines starting on page 68.

The use of maps, globes and atlases will be used in age appropriate way in all classes.

By following the content of this curriculum and by developing the geographical skills the children in our school are given opportunities to work as geographers at every class level.

1. **Children’s ideas**

We plan to use the children’s ideas of places and spaces as a starting point for all geographical activity.

We find out what the children already know by

*Talk and discussion*

*Questioning and listening*

*KWL charts*

*Annotated/labelled drawings*

*Brainstorming*

*Concept maps*

We do this to build on the children’s previous knowledge and to address any misconceptions they may have.

**4. Approaches and Methodologies**

We plan to use the key methodologies of the Primary Curriculum in the teaching of Geography

*Talk and discussion*

*Active learning*

*Problem solving*

*Developing skills through content*

*Co-operative learning*

*Use of the environment.*

In learning about our own natural and human environments we will use methodologies specific to Geography:

*Field work*

*Survey*

*Interview*

*Models*

*Maps*

*Photographs*

*Artefacts*

When exploring other places we will consider these approaches and methodologies:

*Artefacts*

*Textbooks*

*Atlases, maps and globes*

*Establishing links schools in other places.*

*Interviews*

*ICT*

*Photographs*

We have a selection of different atlases available in school

A globe is on display in each classroom

Maps of Ireland, Europe and the World are on display in classrooms throughout the school.

**5. Linkage and Integration**

**Linkage**: When we are studying the local environment, we will study both the natural and human environments and the effect one has on the other.

When we are studying distant places under the Human Environment strand, we also consider the natural environments of these places.

The strand Environmental Awareness and Care is by its nature, linked strongly with the other two strands.

**Integration;** We will explore possibilities to integrate SESE subjects at all class levels. Teachers create their own integrated topics. They can refer to the Teacher Guidelines in Geography, History and Science in doing so.

**Integration of History and Geography:**

When choosing a European and non European country in the Human Environments Strand, we shall consider our choices in History under the “Life, society, work and culture in the Past” strand (for example; if we choose Germany in Geography, we could choose to focus on WW2 in History; Italy – Renaissance under Eras of conflict and Change in History; Britain – industrial Revolution)

**6. Assessment and Record Keeping**

Assessment in Geography seeks to achieve a balanced picture of the children’s progress in the acquisition of knowledge and skills and in the development of important positive attitudes.

Methods we will use:

* + Teacher observation of the children’s learning as the geography curriculum is implemented
  + Teacher designed tasks and tests at the end of units of work
  + KWL Charts, Annotated drawings, Concept maps etc.
  + Work samples

These records will inform the teacher as to the progress of the child and as to the effectiveness of their teaching methodologies.

**7. Children with Different Needs.**

It is important that all children experience a rounded environmental education. Geography plays a pivotal role in this education and so we will do our best to ensure that every child will have opportunities to engage in learning activities appropriate to their abilities.

* Teachers will use a mixture of whole-class teaching and group work, with different groups set tasks of various complexities.
* Teachers will develop their questioning spanning from simple recall to more complex and analytical skills so that all pupils will have opportunities for success.
* Map work will be graded for the less able and the more able students.
* Different ways of recording and communicating findings will be encouraged: drawing, ICT, written records, oral reports and models.
* All children benefit from active involvement in the environment so all will be encouraged to participate in fieldwork.
* The child who possesses exceptional ability will be encouraged to undertake additional research and to record their geographical findings in a variety of ways.
* Children who were born abroad or who have lived in other countries will be invited to share their experience with the other pupils.
* Children will be provided with opportunities to work co-operatively.

**8. Equality of Participation and Access**

We will endeavour to make Geography accessible to all.

**Organisational Planning**

**Multigrade Teaching;** The Principal teacher will review numbers of pupils within each classroom from year to year. A decision will then be made as how to best deploy teaching resources within the school so as to provide children with the best possible learning opportunities within the subject area of Geography. This decision will be reached whilst taking into account how teaching resources are being deployed throughout the school within other subject areas. For eg.,where a double stream infant class setting exists, this teacher may be asked to take a geography class with more senior classes after infant hours so as to create double stream classes to allow for more effective delivery of the curriculum. Where there are SEN needs within a class, the principal teacher may decide to also deploy this teacher in a double stream setting so as to best meet the needs of SEN pupils in the delivery of the geography curriculum.

**9.Timetable**

In keeping with the recommendations in the Primary School Curriculum Introduction (page 70) we allocate three hours per week for SESE – that is one hour per week for geography.

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

Working on a integrated project

Exploring the local environment

Teachers might use discretionary curriculum time (2 hours per week) for SESE as appropriate.

**10. Resources and ICT**

* ‘Small World’series Infants to 6th Class.
* Websites which tie into themes being taught for eg. Britannica.
* School library.
* Relevant software.
* Visitors.
* DVDs.
* Atlases and maps.
* Businesses and sites in the locality.
* Artefacts brought in by children.

**11. Health and Safety**

We have a Health and Safety policy in place in our school which covers safety concerns around out of school activities, in this subject fieldwork.

**12. Individual Teachers’ Planning and Reporting**

Individual teachers go into more detail re curricular objectives and assessment.

Cuntaisí Mhíosiúla assist in evaluating progress in Geography and inform future teaching

Parents are informed of children’s progress at Geography at parent teacher meetings and in end of year reports.

Teachers are aware of the curriculum covered at each class level in order to ensure a coherent broad and balanced programme is experienced by the children by the time they leave sixth class.

**13. Staff Development**

We will attend any in-service training and will consider workshops and summer courses that may extend our understanding of Geography as a distinct subject and as part of SESE.

**14. Parental Involvement.**

Parents have an important role to play as custodians of local knowledge that can be shared with their children as they explore the various aspects of the local environment.

Parents may be encouraged to help out in the delivery of this programme by participating in surveys and interviews.

Parents from other countries may be encouraged to share their heritage with the rest of the school if they so wish or if it is appropriate.

**15. Community Links**

People in the local community who have an interest and knowledge in the environment may be invited to speak to the children.

Personnel from Concern/Trocaire/Fair Trade/Goal/Bothar etc. may be invited to speak with the senior pupils about trade and development issues.

Businesses and sites in our locality maybe used by teachers in implementing sections of the geography programme.

**Success Criteria**

The success of this plan will be measured using the following criteria;

* Implementation of the plan will be evident in teacher planning. (ie. are all the objectives being taught)
* Success of the plan will be gauged using the various assessment tools as are set out in the plan.
* Teachers will be afforded the opportunity to discuss the geography plan at regular staff meetings. This will allow continuous review of the success of the plan.
* Parents views will be sought and taken in to account.

**Implementation**

Class teachers are responsible for implementing the plan at their own class level. The principal will review the implementation of the plan on a regular basis through the viewing of cuntais miosula. The principal will also engage with teachers and pupils to ensure implementation of the plan.

**Review**

This plan will be reviewed again in 2019.

**Ratification and Communication**

This whole School Plan for Geography was communicated to the Board of Management for ratification. The plan was also put up on the school website in June 2017. Parents were also made aware of it via the June newsletter 2017. In the newsletter it was communicated to the parents that a copy of the plan was available for viewing on the school website. The plan was fully ratified by the board of management at a meeting on the 23rd of June 2017.