

Talbot S.N.S
Whole School Plan for
Geography

Title School Policy on Geography for Talbot S.N.S.

Introductory Statement and Rationale

(a) Introductory Statement

The staff of Talbot Senior National School formulated this plan at a school development-planning day, following in-service training.

(b) Rationale

This plan is a record of our decisions regarding Geography and it reflects the Primary School Curriculum, 1999. It is intended to guide teachers in their individual planning for Geography.

Vision and Aims

(a) Vision

We seek to assist the children in their study of the Earth, its inhabitants and the inter-relationships between them in the context of place, space and environment.

(b) Aims

The aims of the geography curriculum are:

- To develop knowledge and understanding of local, regional and wider environments and their inter-relationships.
- 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, nonnumeric 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.

Curriculum Planning

1. Strands and Strand Units

Strands	Strand units 3rd / 4th	Strand units 5th / 6th
Human Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living & working in local area. • People living & working in contrasting part of Ireland. • People & other lands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living & working in local area. • People living & working in contrasting part of Ireland. • People & other lands. • County, regional & national centres. • Trade & development centres.
Natural Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local natural environment • Lands, rivers & seas of my county. • Rocks & soils • Weather, climate & atmosphere • Planet Earth in space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local natural environment • Lands, rivers & seas of Ireland. • Physical features of Europe and the world. • Rocks & soils • Weather, climate & atmosphere • Planet Earth in space
Environmental awareness & care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental awareness • Caring for the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental awareness • Caring for the environment

2. Skills Development

We focus on developing the following skills and concepts

- A sense of place and space

- Maps, globes and graphical skills
- Geographical investigation skills

To ensure a balance between skills development and the acquisition of knowledge, field work, experiments, research and project work are undertaken. I.T. is also used. We aim to empower our pupils with the acquisition of skills.

3. Approaches and Methodologies

The following approaches and methodologies are currently being implemented in our school

- Active learning
- Problem solving (DEIS numeracy 2018-2021)
- Developing skills through content
- Talk and discussion
- Co-operative learning
- Use of the environment - In learning about our own natural and human environments, we will use methodologies specific to Geography.
- Fieldwork and trails.
- Survey- We may record weather daily and collate information according to each class level.
- Interview
- Models
- Maps- We have a local area map, a map of Ireland, Europe and the world in each classroom. We also have globes in each classroom.
- Photographs- we have a large number of laminated photographs of our locality. We use these to teach all aspects of the Geography curriculum
- Story
- Praise small successes (DEIS Attendance strategy 2018-2021)

4. Linkage and Integration

We plan for integrated learning both within geography and between other curricular areas. We use opportunities to link activities and concepts between the strand units of the geography curriculum. When planning for History and Science, we have made links with the Geography curriculum. Theme-based activities that integrate history, geography and science are chosen by class groupings or by individual teachers.

5. Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment in Geography is concerned with children's acquisition of knowledge and the balance of that with the development of skills. Consequently a broad range of assessment tools and approaches are necessary. The following are among the assessment tools found useful –

- Teacher observation
- Teacher designed tasks and tests
- Work samples, portfolios and projects
- Curriculum profiles
- Retelling of activities (DEIS Literacy 2018-2021)
- “Two stars and a wish” on written work – to provide developmental feedback to pupils.

The above tools constitute a comprehensive system of assessing and recording each child's progress and achievements in geography.

6. Children with Different Needs

In keeping with the ethos of our school each individual is helped to develop to his/her potential. This will be achieved by teachers varying the pace, content and methodologies to inclusively ensure learning and success for all children.

7. Equality of Participation and Access

All the children in our school will participate in all aspects of the geography curriculum. Boys and girls are provided with equal opportunities. Every effort will be made to simplify the terminology and language so that children whose first language is not English can fully participate in the Geography class. Pupils from different cultures are encouraged to share their experiences and knowledge. The Geography programme 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.

All teachers have access to DES Intercultural Education Guidelines

■ Organisational Planning

8. Timetable

All classes will have a minimum of three hours per week allocated to S.E.S.E. One hour of this time will be spent on Geography. This time allocation may be broken down at the discretion of the individual teacher once there is a balance of all 3 subjects. On occasions time can be blocked for geography if a thematic approach is being used or if the children are working on a SESE project.

9. Resources and ICT

An inventory of geography resources available in the school is on the school network. Physical resources are stored in the learning support area. ICT is used through the interactive whiteboard and online resources. Teachers may also use some of their computer room time for SESE.

10. Health and Safety

Teachers will at all times be mindful of the school's Health and Safety Policy. Children will be encouraged to safeguard their own well-being by following classroom and out of class rules. The school Excursion Policy 2017 applies to all field trips and tours.

11. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting

Teachers will base their long and short term plans on the Geography development plan. Work covered will be outlined in the Cúntas Míosiúil and will be used to review the school's progress in implementing the Geography curriculum.

12. Staff Development

The post holder will notify the staff of opportunities for further professional development through participation in courses by DWEC and other organisations. The skills and expertise of the school will be shared in Geography (as other curricular areas) through input at staff meetings, the network, as well as on an informal basis. The school may access the services of the S.E.S.E. cuiditheoir.

13. Community Links

Links have been established with local organisations such as the Grand Canal Development Group, the County Council, Spiritan Education Trust, Junior Achievement, Maynooth University and Clondalkin Round Tower Heritage Group. (DEIS 2018-2021 Partnership with Others) An environmental audit has been conducted for the purpose of using our school environment as a resource for the teaching of geography.

Participation by parents in homework. (DEIS 2018-2021 Partnership with Parents)

■ Success Criteria

The success of this plan will be measured by the following criteria

- Teachers preparation based on this plan
- Procedures outlined in this plan consistently followed
- Feedback from teachers/pupils/parents/inspectors

■ Implementation

(a) Roles and Responsibilities

Class teachers are responsible for the implementation of the Geography curriculum. The post-holder with responsibility for Geography supports the implementation of the Geography curriculum and is responsible for the purchase, distribution and monitoring of resources.

■ Review

(a) Roles and Responsibilities

This policy was reviewed in December 2018 by the post-holder (Brenda Cahill) in consultation with the staff, and will be reviewed again in 2021 or at any time before this if necessary.

■ Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 21st January 2019 and will be available on the school website and on the network.