

SCOIL URSULA

- **Title: History Policy**

- **Introductory Statement and Rationale**

Introductory Statement

This plan was drafted in 2006 and updated in 2010 by the Principal and staff of Scoil Ursula. Following attendance at History In-service Training and a process of consultation and collaboration among staff members on in-school planning days, we are planning to implement the key messages, skills, content and methodologies of the History curriculum. It was disseminated to the wider school community through the Board of Management and ratified by the board on the 9th of May, 2011. This plan will form the basis of each teacher's long and short term planning in History. It will inform new or temporary teachers of our approaches and methodologies in this subject area.

Rationale

In keeping with the guidelines laid down by the DES, we focussed on this area of planning to ensure that the revised curriculum for History was introduced in our school in a well-planned, organised and consistent manner. We are conscious of the importance of the role History plays in helping the child become a confident, informed, critical and responsible adult member of society. We have planned for the integrated implementation of History particularly within the context of the three SESE subjects. We aim to ensure the implementation of a broad and balanced History curriculum throughout the school.

- **Vision and Aims**

Vision

It is our vision that the holistic education of the child must include the study of History. In our school we aim to present a History programme that is enjoyable, interesting and active. We hope to stimulate the child's understanding by exploring, investigating and developing an understanding of the natural, human, social and cultural dimensions of local and wider environments.. We encourage a hands-on investigative and explorative approach to the child's personal and local history, concepts of time and chronology and to help children develop an enhanced understanding of their own country and the wider world. We actively encourage pupils to take an interest in other cultures. The children are encouraged to engage in the process of historical enquiry. Our school provides for the development of a growing range of historical skills and concepts as children study the lives of people of the past. The child is encouraged to engage in finding, selecting and analysing a wide range of sources which can tell us about the past. They will use evidence they have found to reconstruct the past. We will allow the child to explore how the actions and experiences of people in the past have influenced subsequent generations.

a. **Aims**

The aims of the history curriculum are:

- 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 have had an impact upon 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 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 encourage the child to recognise how past and present actions, events and materials may become historically significant
- 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 and strand units, content objectives for his/her class level. Having read the Curriculum documents and Teacher Guidelines we understand that all strands and all strand units must be covered each year but not all the content objectives need be addressed within a strand unit. We will ensure that that the pupils receive a broad and balanced range of topics and objectives. We carried out an audit on what historical features that pupils can explore:

- Within the local environment
- Within the immediate environs of the school
- Within one or two kilometres of the school
- Within your area or county

2. Skills and Concepts Development

The history curriculum includes the following skills:

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

It also includes a number of strands which outline the historical periods that are to be included in the history programme at each level. Each strand includes a number of strand units. Depending on the class level, strands include:

- Myself and my family
- 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

In infant and first and second classes, the History Curriculum emphasises the development of the child's historical understanding through the exploration of personal, family and local history. From third and fourth classes upwards children will explore more extensive and more distant periods in the past and will encounter a broadening range of local studies.

3. Approaches and Methodologies

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

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

Teachers will utilise the following methodologies for History

- Interview
- Personal and family history
- Story
- Using evidence
- Oral evidence
- Using artefacts
- Pictures and photographs
- Documentary evidence
- Drama and role-play
- Using information technology
- Project work
- Map work

4. Linkage and Integration

Throughout the primary school years, the environments of the child, particularly

those of a local nature, provide ideal contexts and a compelling impetus for the integration of learning. The subject headings history, geography and science are used to aid the presentation of the curriculum, and an awareness of them is an important part of the child's cultural and intellectual inheritance. Each subject offers a distinctive perspective on the world and equips children with a particular range of skills. However, the use of these subject divisions must not negate the effective implementation of an integrated curriculum. The use of well-planned integrated approaches, both within SESE and between SESE and other curricular areas, will have an important part to play in the delivery of the primary curriculum at all levels. Systematically planned integrated topics can provide contexts in which knowledge and skills may be developed in a range of areas. Many elements from the history, science and geography curricula may be explored concurrently, and much of the work involved will contribute to the development of oral language, literacy, numeracy, aesthetic awareness, creative expression and communication skills.

As children grow older they begin to recognise that there are different ways or modes of looking at the world and of organising human knowledge, so teaching strategies may vary to include a holistic approach, some cross-curricular integration and a subject-centred focus. Possible cross-curricular links and integrated studies are noted within the content of the curricular statements for third to sixth classes. These should be regarded as suggestions only: people and their activities, other living things, features, materials, events and processes to be found in local and wider environments provide many other opportunities for a unified approach to learning. Such an approach utilises teaching and learning time efficiently and acknowledges that the social, emotional, attitudinal and moral development of the child is interwoven with the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

5. Multi-Grade Teaching

All classes complete the prescribed strands according to the History Curriculum.

We have examined our use of textbooks in the context of multi-class teaching.

There has been consultation and co-ordination between classes for selection strand units.

We are conscious of the need to differentiate the work for younger classes mixed with older children

6. Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment in History 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 history curriculum is implemented
- Teacher designed tasks and tests
- Work samples e.g. Finished projects, drawings and investigations.
- Parent/pupil feedback

Much can be gained from observing and noting children's responses in a variety of situations, including:

- the responses pupils make to the teacher's questions and suggestions
- the participation of pupils in whole-class discussions of historical characters, of their motives and actions, and of events in the past
- the interaction of pupils with each other in discussions and in group work
- the reaction of pupils to learning materials and learning tasks designed by the teacher
- the ways in which pupils react to and use historical evidence.

A wide variety of tasks should be used, including:

- telling and retelling of events and stories
- oral, written and pictorial accounts and descriptions of sites visited or people interviewed
- construction of timelines, varying from simple 'episodes in a story' lines to more complex lines of historical periods
- work cards or activity sheets which guide and stimulate children in the examination of evidence or in researching a topic
- trail booklets which help the child to examine the evidence of the past in the environment or in an exhibition
- maps of historical sites
- role-playing or dramatising a conversation or event
- speculating on the feelings, emotions and motives of a character so as to create a spoken or written account
- drawing or completion of drawings
- model-making
- compilation of a book on a particular historical topic or the presentation of project work using information and communication technologies
- projects completed on historical themes
- interactive, multimedia computer programs which enable children to explore historical topics and complete a range of tasks, puzzles or problems. These programs adjust to the child's level of knowledge or skill, give the child immediate feedback on his/her progress and, in some cases, may record information for the teacher about the progress of a number of pupils. Although useful, these programs may be of limited use in assessing historical skills
- results of the child's independent historical research
- teacher-designed revision test on a unit or units of work.

7. Children with Different Needs

It is important that all children experience a rounded education. History 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 when appropriate
- Content and pace may be varied as the need arises
- Teachers will use a variety of methodologies to cater for the different learning styles in their class
- Different ways of recording and communicating findings will be encouraged: drawing, ICT, written records, oral reports and models will be included. When the need arises teachers may offer a variety of recording methods following a whole class activity
- All children benefit from active involvement in the environment so all will be encouraged to

participate in fieldwork.

- Children who were born abroad or who have lived in other countries will be invited to share their experiences with the other pupils. We took this into consideration when selecting countries for study from third-sixth class.
- SNA assistance and collaborative work with resource

8. Equality of Participation and Access

History will be for all pupils in our school regardless of age, gender or ability.

• Organisational Planning

9. Timetable

In keeping with the recommendations in the Primary School Curriculum Introduction (page 70) , SESE is a minimum of two and quarter hours in infant years and three hours for classes 1 – 6 per week

On occasion, time will be blocked as appropriate. This might occur, for example, when working on an integrated project or exploring the local environment.

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

10. Resources and ICT

We have completed and included an environmental audit of the immediate locality and have used it to inform our planning of local human and natural studies.

We have audited our existing reference materials, packs, DVD's, videos etc. See list attached.

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 the case of History trails outside of school ground see guidelines from the Geography Teacher Guidelines P 74 – 78. Teachers are requested to adhere to these procedures when planning outdoor fieldwork, trails and trips.

12. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting

Individual teachers are encouraged to use this school plan as a basis for planning within their own classrooms. The following systems are also in place in our school:

Fortnightly Plans
Termly Plans
Cúntais Míósúil

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

13. Staff Development

The staff is made aware of any opportunities to attend in-service workshops and summer courses that may extend our understanding of History. The staff endeavours to continually build and update our resource base. Staff have been equipped with a laptop to enhance lesson planning.

Opportunities are given to share any resulting ideas or materials with the whole staff through the use of the school server.

We have been supported by the SESE cuiditheoir.

14. Parental Involvement

Children are encouraged to interview parents and grandparents on given topics and share their findings within the classroom setting.

Children are encouraged to seek out artefacts, photographs or documents of historical interest.

People with special interests in the area of History are welcomed to the school to contribute on their area of interest.

A two day history event, with support from parents, takes place on an annual basis.

15. Community Links

- Children are brought to local places of interest as part of the history curriculum. See appendix for list.
- We respond to invitations issued by the Sligo Heritage Office and the County Library.

16. Places of historic interest

See attached list.

• Success Criteria

We shall review this whole school plan in the future under the following headings:

- How methodologies listed in this whole school plan are working in the classroom?
- How well are geographical concepts learnt by the children?
- How well are the children's geographical skills progressing: a sense of place and space, geographical investigation skills, and mapping?
- Are the key messages being adhered to?
- Resources- use of, maintenance and upkeep- are there any concerns or issues?
- Are classes engaging in outdoor survey and fieldwork and how well are the procedures for

fieldwork working in the school?

- Is there evidence of displays, projects etc in school?

• **Implementation**

a. **Roles and Responsibilities**

Class teachers are responsible for the implementation of the History programme for their own classes. They will provide feedback on how the plan is progressing at regular intervals throughout the year. We intend to put History on a number of staff meeting agendas during the year.

The post holder with responsibility for History will support the implementation of the History programme particularly in the collation, organisation and distribution of resources.

Responsibilities will also include the organisation of special History talks or events eg trips and tours to places of geographical interest

Timeframe

The implementation of this plan begins during the School year 2011-2012.

• **Review**

Roles and responsibilities:

The Principal & Staff will review and update the policy in 2014.

• **Ratification and Communication**

The Board of Management ratified this policy on the _____ of _____.

Signed: _____, (Chairperson, BOM)

Scoil Ursula N.S. does not have adequate resources to disseminate all of its policies to all the concerned members of the wider school community. The policy is communicated to the members of the BOM and is available to the wider school community through the parents' representatives on the BOM. All Scoil Ursula N.S. policies are available for inspection in the school and at scoilursula.com

-