



# **History**

# **Whole School Plan**

## **Introductory Statement and Rationale**

### **(a) Introductory Statement**

The Curriculum planning for History is based on the Department of Education guidelines which are set out in their Support Development Planning Services and their Primary Curriculum History manual. The principles are specifically tailored to the circumstances in Liosmór Mochuda National School. The plan was reviewed by teachers and ratified by the Board of Management. We aim through this plan to set out our approach to the teaching and learning of History. It will form a basis for teachers' long and short term planning and inform temporary teachers of approaches and methodologies used in our school.

### **(b) Rationale :**

This plan is being undertaken to review the current History plan and to adapt it to meet the requirement of the 1999 Primary School Curriculum. The S.E.S.E. History Curriculum provides opportunities for the children in Liosmór Mochuda National School to acquire a broad and balanced understanding of local, Irish and international history while at the same time developing investigation skills.

## **Vision and Aims**

### **(a) Vision**

All children should have a basic knowledge and appreciation for our historic past and recognise that lessons learnt from the past can be valuable in formulating policies for the future. We cherish our pupils equally and, recognising the uniqueness of each child, work together to help them all to reach their potential in all areas of the curriculum. We hope that skills learned will develop historical thinking for the future and assist them in becoming citizens appreciative of their cultural and historical inheritance.

### **(b) Aims**

Liosmór Mochuda National School endorses the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for history:

- 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 development 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:**

Our History programme is detailed in the S.E.S.E. History Curriculum 1999. Teachers should be familiar with the content relevant to their classes:

- Infant classes pp. 15-20

- First and Second classes pp. 23-31.
- Third and Fourth classes pp. 34-35
- Fifth and Sixth classes pp. 54-55.

We understand that every strand, every strand unit and every content objective is to be covered each year from Junior Infants to Second Class. Integrated themes may be considered for History. (*Themes: Myself, Autumn, Spring, Water, School, Winter, Clothes, Toys and Games also Events from the lives of the children, National or World news etc may be use as stimulus for themes*)

For Third to Sixth Classes it is understood that choices of Strand Units have to be made within the Strands. With this in mind the following are ideas to be considered by the teacher:

- (a) **Local History:** Lismore is rich in local history: The Cathedral, Old Railway Station, Heritage Centre, Lismore Workhouse, Castle Gardens, Shop Fronts, Lismore Bridge, Georgian Houses and Lismore Castle. (My Locality)
- (b) **National or World Projects:** Life in Medieval Times, The Celts, The Industrial Revolution, Life in World War 2, The Great Famine, Link to Geography – Countries around the World, Counties in Ireland. Link to Science – Animals, Sports.

Teachers are reminded that History is a spiral curriculum, in a multi-class situation topics may be returned to in later years in an interest and appropriate way. Projects give the children an opportunity to look at areas of the History Curriculum in a more in-depth study. Guided by the curriculum we endeavour not to select topics in a strictly chronological order. It is important that at all levels the use of time lines is a feature of History Teaching. Balance is maintained between local, national and international history when selecting topics for a yearly scheme.

## **2. Skills and Concepts Development:**

Strategies are used to develop the child's skills as a young historian. Children are encouraged to visit the local library, collect genuine documents from attics, speak to older members of the community, partake in research, use the internet for research, visit local sites, record visible signs of the past, discuss change and continuity and evaluate data collection.

Steps are taken to ensure that there is a balance between skills development and the acquisition of knowledge in implementing the curriculum.

Skills that children will be given the opportunity to acquired are:

- Time and Chronology
- Change and Continuity
- Cause and Effect
- Using Evidence
- Synthesis and Communication
- Empathy

In order to foster historical thinking skills we will use the following strategies at all class levels:

- Display and frequently refer to appropriate time lines.
- Ensure our pupil have access to a wide range of primary evidence including artefacts, pictures and photographs and documents and have opportunity to talk to older people with historical knowledge and information.
- Include talk and discussion with lots of questioning as a feature of all History lessons.
- Incorporate story into our History teaching whenever we can.

## **3. Approaches and Methodologies:**

Timelines are used to give the children an idea of how historical moments fit into the fabric of history.

So that our students may learn to work as historians we are all committed to using a wide range of methodologies at all class levels:

- ✓ Story - Stories are told to the children either by local storytellers or by the teacher. Sometimes the children read them in books or from a PowerPoint Presentation. This can play an important role in the development of historical understanding. In response to story we engage the children in oral language activities, writing and visual arts as well as drama. It is advised that a historical novel be considered for older classes where appropriate.
- ✓ Personal and Family History – This provides an ideal starting point for the exploration of the past and plays an important part in teaching and learning particularly in the Junior Classes.
- ✓ Oral Evidence – This makes incidents and aspects of the past real and gives the children access to information unobtainable elsewhere. Visiting historians and older members of the community speak to the children about incidents that they have experienced. Homework may include conducting interviews.
- ✓ Using Artefacts – Handling and investigating historical artefacts is an activity based approach involving primary evidence that has a motivating influence on teaching and learning history. Each class should aim to have a History Box with artefacts.
- ✓ Pictures and Photographs – This is an approach well suited to Primary School and we endorse the use of this approach at all levels. Using evidence of people and places familiar to the children can help them to develop a sense of a time past, see change and continuity, and see cause and effect in a real and relevant way. Photographs of school events down through the years could be considered for History lessons.
- ✓ Using the Environment – We recognise the children’s own environment as our primary resource and our starting point for S.E.S.E. Trails and trips within the locality encourages the children to use a wide range of historical skills.
- ✓ Documentary Evidence - A variety of documentary evidence and data is collected by the children from their parents, the wider community and teachers to enhance the children’s understanding of the relevance of history. These may include letters, advertisements, magazines, photographs, newspaper articles, stamps, coins, cards, tickets, timetables, postcards, certificates of birth/death/marriage, census reports, school records, diaries etc. Sensitivity to children’s personal circumstances must be exercised and careful thought given to the selection of documents.
- ✓ Drama and Role Play - Drama is used to teach dramatic times in history – St Brendan prays on the Whale, The Normans Attack etc. These plays let the children interpret their understanding of a time in history. Children can also complete freeze frame/photo moments/talk-through in history and have their class guess what part of history they are portraying. Other strategies to consider are Conscience Alley/Hot Seating/Still Image/Thought Tracking.
- ✓ I.C.T. - Children research information for projects using the internet and CDs. Historical artefacts are acquired when possible and stored in the attic for use when specific topics are being taught. The internet will be used strictly in accordance with school policy.

*Photographs of the work of the children and of children working as historians will in future be part of our record keeping and assessment of work.*

#### **4. Linkage and Integration**

There is constant linkage between various strand units in History and linkage is encouraged so that children may apply prior learning and because it makes History more relevant to the children.

Integration occurs naturally between History and other school subjects such as Art/Science/Maths/ English/Geography/Drama. Theme based activities are used to support

integration. Themes and topics are developed in a cross curricular way and S.E.S.E. time may often be blocked timed to accommodate this. History topics may also be used as a focus for oral language, reading or writing. The teachers may consider being more flexible with their timetables to accommodate cross-curricular linkage and integration.

## **5. Multi-grade Teaching**

In a multi-grade situation a thematic approach for the entire classroom is sometimes adopted. On other occasions children use text-books which are specifically graded for the different age categories and incorporate the required strands outlined in the curriculum.

As we are a small school we plan our History programme on a 3 or 4 year cycle so that each child is exposed to the curriculum over that period in each classroom. The teacher may give consideration to teaching extra material on certain topics to the older children in the classroom. Differentiation may occur in the record/application of the lessons depending on the capabilities and age of the children in the classroom. More challenging tasks will be set for older pupils and a more sophisticated response will be expected from them. Collaborative group work will take place alongside a broad range of methodologies so that tasks are not reliant on reading ability alone.

## **6. Assessment and Record Keeping**

Teachers assess:

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

The assessment tools used to gather information about a child's progress are:

- Teacher observation – These might focus on participation in discussion of History, response to and use of historical evidence, questioning and synthesising of information and willingness to carry out tasks.
- Teacher designed tasks and tests – This may include telling and retelling of events and stories, written and pictorial accounts, model making, construction of timelines, activity sheets to guide examination of evidence and teacher designed revision tests.
- Work samples and portfolios – Personal folders of each child's work are compiled, these include samples from all subjects and are kept in the office. The Junior Room children complete a folder with work samples which they take home at the end of each year. These may include photographs of the children working as historians, photographs or pictorial accounts and models, samples of written accounts and project work.
- Curriculum profiles - Personal folders of each child's work are compiled, these include samples from all subjects and are kept in the office.
- Quizzes
- Projects work – PowerPoint, Art, Construction etc.

The Cúntas Míosuil records what topics have been covered in History. Project work is presented in project notebooks.

Assessment assists with reviewing progress of History, giving feedback to parents at meetings, informs in-house records, informs progress reports and future teaching and planning.

## **7. Children with Different Needs**

Children who have special needs are assisted by the Special Needs Assistant (SNA) in enjoying History at a level that is suitable to the individual. Where possible the Resource or Learning Support teacher will prepare the child for the S.E.S.E. topic beforehand. The teacher directs the SNA on the content of the lesson and method of instruction to assist the child. Children whose first language is not English receive assistance from the English Support Teacher. Children with

exceptional ability are encouraged to use project work and IT programmes and this allows those with greater ability to excel in their area of interest. On occasion children with greater ability take part in the more difficult questioning and activities. Simpler IT games are used to encourage the weaker reader or speaker.

In our classroom we approach History in a way that is inclusive of all our children. The following are strategies that we endeavour to use:

- A mixture of whole class, group and individual work.
- Differentiated tasks.
- Plan topics that provide opportunities for further research for the more able pupils.
- Include a range of more accessible and more demanding evidence.
- Always keep in mind different learning styles.
- Vary questioning during oral discussion from recall to analytical recall skills.
- Collaborative team work for S.E.S.E.

## **8. Equality of Participation and Access**

Liosmór Mochuda National School is a co-educational school so all the children participate in all elements of History class.

The History class provides opportunities for studying the ordinary lives of women, men and children. It addresses the role of women and men in local, national and international contexts. S.E.S.E. seeks to generate an appreciation of cultural and historical inheritance and cultivates an atmosphere of equality of opportunity where gender, cultural diversity, minorities and special needs are respected and valued.

Below are strategies we endeavour to use in our approach to History:

- Curriculum Content – At all class levels we include the lives of men, women and children from different social, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds when selecting stories, planning themes and topics, inviting visitors to school to talk to the children, selecting evidence (artefacts/photographs/documents) and purchasing resources (Library books, posters, software)
- Personal and Family History – In our approach to this strand teacher at all levels keep in mind that for the small child ‘*my family*’ are the people they live with, the people who love and care for them. We cherish diversity, families are different and we would like every child to be proud of his/her family. No child should feel uncomfortable through activities relating to Personal and Family History. (*Sometimes what seems like a simple task could cause anxiety such as bringing in a photograph of themselves as a baby may not be a possibility with some children*)
- Feasts and Festivals – Guided by the S.E.S.E. curriculum and Inter Cultural Guidelines (N.C.C.A.) we include in our programme units of work where the children become familiar with origins and traditions associated with a wide range of festivals in Ireland and other countries.
- Classroom Planning and Practices – We use talk and discussion with lots of questioning as a feature of all History lessons in a way that includes all children so that the awareness of different perspectives is fostered.

## **Organisational Planning:**

### **9. Timetable**

History is part of the Social, Environment and Scientific Education programme in the school. In the Infant classes 2 hours 15 minutes is allotted to S.E.S.E. and 3 hours per week is allotted to the older classes. Discretionary time may be used for projects or trips from time to time. S.E.S.E time may be block timetabled.

## **10. Resources and ICT**

A Library of IT and other resource materials are being collected in the school. This is available to the children for projects work and for fun activities. Artefacts are displayed in a safe manner and later more valuable artefacts and construction models are stored in the attic until required again. Textbooks are a resource to support our History teaching and should be used judiciously.

Heritage for Schools provides support and resources where necessary.

The local Library is used for projects work. Local storytellers and historians are invited to the school to share their expertise and talents.

Department grants are used to buy resources when necessary. Cameras, computers and tape recorders are used where it is deemed appropriate. CD's on different Historical events are available. The children have access to the internet to research historical events.

The SESE Programme in the school is Folen's Explorers.

- [www.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.nationalarchives.ie)
- [www.museum.ie](http://www.museum.ie)
- [www.nli.ie](http://www.nli.ie)
- [www.heritagecouncil.ie](http://www.heritagecouncil.ie)
- [www.askaboutireland.ie](http://www.askaboutireland.ie)
- [www.pcsp.ie](http://www.pcsp.ie)
- [www.sdps.ie](http://www.sdps.ie)

## **11. Health and Safety**

As part of the enrolment policy of the school, parents are asked to sign to accept that their children will have permission to go on school excursions. These may include going on trails, visiting museums or ruins, etc Children are given instructions on how to behave on these school outings. When handling artefacts care is taken to minimise the risk of injury.

Teachers should consult the Principal whenever it is proposed to engage the children in History activities in the environment. The school's policy on out of classroom activities should be consulted and provision made for adult help, suitable clothing and in particular footwear, insurance and transport.

Before use in the classroom artefacts should be examined by the teacher and checked for potential danger e.g. sharp edges, small parts etc.

## **12. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting**

As Liosmór Mochuda is a small school, each teacher, in line with directives laid out in the Primary School Curriculum, takes responsibility for the content of the History lessons.

Sometimes a line approach is taken; sometimes a thematic approach is taken. This depends on the abilities of the children in any given year. Flexibility is encouraged in planning a history programme. It is envisioned that children will have covered the Primary Curriculum for History by the time they have completed Primary School.

## **13. Staff Development**

Teachers have access to reference books in the school and in the local library. They can also access resources and websites from the school. Teachers have the freedom to purchase school resources if required and after consultation with the Principal. Teachers are encouraged to attend History courses when available and to share their knowledge and expertise at staff meetings. Occasionally school join together for outings, guest speakers etc.

In the past Waterford Education Centre have provided Sustained Support from an S.E.S.E. Cuiditheoir.

## **14. Parental Involvement**

Parents:

- ✓ Foster an interest in personal, local, national and international history by talking to their children about events that have occurred in the past.
- ✓ Accompany children on excursions.
- ✓ Help with homework involving reading or research or project work.
- ✓ Encourage children to watch historical programmes.
- ✓ Come and watch school pageants.
- ✓ Parental involvement permeates our History Curriculum, particularly in Junior Classes.

### **15. Community Links**

The local environment is a starting point for our History Curriculum and references to community links are seen through our involvement in our local environment. Members of the community who are particularly interested in local history are invited to talk to the children.

### **16. Places of Historic Interest**

These are incorporated into school trips whenever possible and include Famine House, Castle, Tower Walks etc.

### **Success criteria:**

This plan has been implemented when

1. Teachers' preparation is based on this plan
2. Procedures outlined are consistently followed

The plan has achieved its aims if the plan is fulfilled, this is assessed by

1. Teacher and parent's feedback
2. Children's feedback
3. Inspectors reports or suggestions
4. Second Level feedback
5. Other

The plan has promoted the key considerations when implementing the history curriculum when:

1. History is defined as an attempt to reconstruct and interpret the past
2. There is a balance between the process (how the child learns) and the content (what the child learns)
3. The child acquires skills and concepts to work effectively as a young historian
4. The curriculum is spiral and developmental in its structure
5. The child engages in studies ranging from personal to local, national and international history.
6. History is integrated across the curriculum from Infants to 6<sup>th</sup>.



## **Implementation**

### **(a) Roles and Responsibilities**

The plan is supported, developed and implemented by the children, parents and staff. The Principal will co-ordinate the progress, monitor the development and evaluation of the plan in consultation with other members of staff.

### **(b) Timeframe**

This re-drafted policy will be implemented from the date of its signing.

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## **Review**

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the history curriculum.

### **(a) Roles and Responsibilities**

- *Teachers*
- *Pupils*
- *Parents*
- *Post holders/plan co-ordinator*
- *BoM/DES/Other*

### **(b) Timeframe**

This policy will be reviewed in 2026-2027.

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## **Ratification and Communication**

The Board of Management ratified this policy on the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Ciara McGrath (School Principal)**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Dean Paul Draper (Chairperson B.O.M.)**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

