

St. Dymphna's School
SESE POLICY

Introductory statement/Rationale

The development of life skills is central to the curriculum in our school. The teaching of SESE is an important element in this context as SESE provides opportunities for pupils to explore, investigate and develop an understanding of the natural, human, scientific, historical, and social and cultural environment in which they live.

School vision

We strive to provide a broad and balanced curriculum in a supportive and caring environment, taking into consideration the needs of each pupil.

Our aspiration is that pupils will leave St. Dymphna's as confident, independent young adults with a knowledge and appreciation of their social, cultural, and physical environment.

Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) consists of three subjects: Science, Geography and History. SESE enables children to explore, investigate and develop an understanding of local and wider environments.

Curriculum Planning

Strands and Strand Units: Outlined below are the strands in the SESE Curriculum and the skills that we plan to develop. Each strand is subdivided into Strand Units which focus on particular concepts.

We have three Post Primary classes for 13–15-year-olds who follow the Junior Cert program over three years and a Transition class for 16 -18-year-olds who do the QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) Awards. SESE is taught in these classes so that pupils have a broad and balanced curriculum.

Geography	History	Science
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Human Environments• Natural Environments• Environmental Awareness and Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Myself and my Family• Story• Early People and Ancient Societies• Life, society, work and culture in the past	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Living things• Energy and Forces• Materials• Environmental awareness and care

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eras of change and conflict • Politics, conflict and society • Continuity and change over time 	
Skills Development		
<p style="text-align: center;">Geography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sense of place and space • Maps, globes and graphical skills • Geographical Investigation Skills 	<p style="text-align: center;">History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time and Chronology • Change and Continuity • Cause and Effect • Using Evidence • Synthesis and communication • Empathy 	<p style="text-align: center;">Science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Scientifically • Designing and Making

Digital Technology

There is clear evidence that confirms the improved learning outcomes for students in many areas of the curriculum with the effective use of digital technology. All teachers are encouraged to use digital technology to allow all pupils to access and respond to the curriculum in an appropriate way. Pupils can write, type, or record their learning both orally and pictorially.

Individual teachers' preparation for Teaching and Learning

All teachers have a copy of the school's scheme of work so that while there is progression and continuity the opportunity still exists for teachers to take account of local and national events and pupils' own interests. It is important for teachers to have the flexibility to choose topics of interest to the pupils.

The scheme will be used as a guide to ensure that the same topics are not covered unnecessarily. A copy of Short Term Recorded Preparation and Cuntas Míosúil will be kept in the school office and will be uploaded by teachers to a shared Drive so that the Specialist subject teachers can collaborate with the class teachers and there is a record of previous learning.

Geography

The geography curriculum enables children to make sense of their surroundings and the wider world. They do so by developing a range of geographical skills as they explore the natural and human elements of local and wider environments.

Aims

In line with the Geography Curriculum for Primary Schools we aim

- a. To enable pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of local, regional and wider environments and their interrelationships.
- b. To encourage an understanding and appreciation of the variety of natural and human conditions on the Earth.
- c. To develop empathy with people from diverse environments and an understanding of human interdependence.
- d. To encourage the development of a sense of place and spatial awareness.
- e. 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.
- f. To develop an understanding of appropriate geographical concepts.

Preparation for Teaching and Learning- Long Term and Short-Term preparation

Strands and strand units

Teachers are familiar with the strands/strand units/content objectives for the relevant class levels.

Class 1 (Infant classes pp. 17-27 curriculum-linked to Aistear- Early Childhood Curriculum). Topics as identified in teacher's long and short-term preparation.

Class 2 (First and Second classes pp. 29-43 curriculum) Topics as identified in teacher's long and short-term preparation.

Post Primary JC2 (Junior Cert Level 1 and 2) Topics linked to JC2 programme and identified in teacher's long and short-term preparation.

Transition Class (Post Primary curriculum- QQI. Level 2 and Level 3.) Topics as identified in teacher's long and short-term preparation.

Local/ National/ European and Non-European

By detailing the areas that are covered by each class we should ensure that there is continuity and progression in our geography programme and that there are no needless repetitions. It also enables teachers to choose places of interest to the pupils and to adapt the curriculum to match pupil's needs.

Locations are agreed for the strand unit 'People living and working in a contrasting part of Ireland' in our scheme. These are subject to change.

In the strand unit “People and other lands”, locations in Europe and in other parts of the world are listed. Opportunities are therefore available for individual teachers and classes to develop a sense of place for other national or international locations of interest to them without needless repetition.

Skills and concepts development

The following steps are taken to ensure that there is a balance between skills development and the acquisition of knowledge throughout the programme.

Teachers in their long term and short term recorded preparation will state clearly what they want the students to know, understand, and be able to do as a result of specific learning and teaching activities.

Digital technology will be used to allow all pupils to access and respond to the learning activities planned by the teacher.

- a. The children work as geographers through use of; the local environment, textbooks, Digital Technology, maps and aerial photographs.
- b. The children take part in project work based on their local area and on foreign countries.

The following strategies are used by each class to develop the child’s skills and concepts development under the three headings.

A sense of place and space, through study of their local area, living as part of a community and as part of a wider world.

Maps, globes and graphical skills, the children are asked to read, interpret, show and draw information from maps, globes etc.

Geographical investigation skills, through experimentation- integration with science, maths, and art to discover patterns as a geographer.

Pupil’s Ideas:

We recognise the importance of using the pupils' ideas of place and space as a starting point for all geography activities. We use strategies such as talk and discussion, questioning, listening, problem solving tasks, drawings and teacher designed tasks and tests to discover the ideas that the children may have. The use of digital technologies and apps such as Google maps may also be used as a starting point as well as stories and reading books and news articles on various places.

Approaches and methodologies

We will use a mixture of the following approaches in our teaching of Geography.

- a. Active learning
- b. Problem solving
- c. Developing skills through content
- d. Talk and discussion
- e. Co-operative learning
- f. Use of the environment.

Digital Technologies and Geography

By using Digital technology, we can allow pupils to access and respond to the curriculum in a way most suitable for them – UDL (Universal Design for Learning)

1. Digital Technology has created new ways of exploring the world through maps. These can be interactive, of variable scale, and supported by multimedia.
2. It allows pupils to investigate geographical topics that are too remote and outside their everyday experience.

Refer to list of Digital Resources for Geography.

1. Teachers are following the recommended sequence for geography – local, regional, national, European and global and then reflecting it back to their own location
2. We will use photographs, Google Maps, Geoguesser, Google Map Treks, Cityguesser, and Scoilnet Maps.
3. We will use fieldwork, exploratory trails, photographs when learning about the environment (See pp. 68-73 Teacher Guidelines)
4. Fieldwork is incorporated into the geography programmes (See pp. 74-80 Teacher Guidelines)
5. Fieldwork, surveys, photographs, artefacts, interviews, environmental audit are used as methodologies to investigate human environments. (See pp. 81-96 Teacher Guidelines)
6. Fieldwork, trails, photographs (See pp. 97-115 Teacher Guidelines) are used to investigate natural environments.
7. Approaches and methodologies used in learning about other places are; artefacts, atlases, globes, interviews, photographs, school twinning (See pp. 116-126 Teacher Guidelines)

8. Mapping skills and mapping concepts are developed as part of the geography programme e.g., local maps, plans, photographs, internet, models (See pp. 127-144 Teacher Guidelines)

History

At St. Dymphna's we envisage history to be real and meaningful experience for the pupils in our classes. We hope to capture the pupil's imagination, stimulate curiosity and develop their sense of continuity and belonging to their local environment through the study of history throughout the school. We view history as having a distinct but complimentary role with Geography and Science.

The History curriculum supports children to develop basic skills as a historian through a knowledge and understanding of people, events and developments in the past.

Aims

In line with the History Curriculum Guidelines, we aim to enable pupils

- a. To develop an interest in and curiosity about the past.
- b. To make the pupil aware of the lives of women, men and children in the past and how people and events had an impact on each other.
- c. To develop an understanding of the concepts of change and continuity.
- d. To provide for the acquisition of concepts and skills associated with sequence, time and chronology, appropriate to the development stages of the pupil.
- e. To allow the pupil to encounter and use a range of historical evidence systematically and critically.
- f. To provide opportunities for the pupil to communicate historical findings and interpretations in a variety of ways.
- g. To foster sensitivity to the impact of conservation and change within local and wider environments.
- h. To help the pupil recognise and examine the influences of the past on the attitudes and behaviour of people today.
- i. To encourage pupils to recognise how past and present actions, events, and materials may become historically significant.

The curriculum is presented in two sections:

Skills

- Time and Chronology
- Using evidence
- Communication (class 1 and 2)
- Change and Continuity (Class 2)
- Cause and Effect
- Synthesis and communication
- Empathy

Content:

- Myself and my family
- Story
- Early people and ancient stories
- Life, society, work and culture in the past
- Eras of change and conflict
- Politics, conflict and society
- Continuity and change over time.

The History curriculum should enable pupils to:

- Study a range of people and events in the past in order to develop a balanced understanding of family, local, national and world history.
- Learn about the people, events, issues, and cultural experiences which have helped to shape the local community and the environment.
- Develop an understanding of change and continuity, including an awareness of factors which may have caused or prevented change, and come to appreciate that events may have a number of causes and outcomes.
- Examine and use a range of historical evidence systematically and critically and appreciate the fact that evidence can be interpreted in different ways.
- Use imagination and evidence to reconstruct elements of the past.
- Communicate historical understanding in a variety of ways, using appropriate language and other techniques or media.
- Develop an appreciation of the perspectives and motives of people in the past and accept that individuals and events should be understood in their historical context.
- Be aware that the attitudes and behaviour of people may be influenced by their understanding of the past and by their past experiences.

- Respect and value a range of opinions and acquire open, questioning attitudes to the beliefs, values and motivations of others.
- Develop tolerance towards minorities in society and appreciate the contribution of various ethnic, cultural, religious and social groups to the evolution of modern Ireland.
- Develop a sense of personal, local, national, European and wider identities through studying the history and cultural inheritance of local and other communities.
- Develop a sense of responsibility for, and a willingness to participate in, the preservation of heritage.

Approaches and Methodologies

A broad range of approaches and methodologies will be used as outlined in the T. Guidelines of the History Curriculum.

These include:

Story (Pgs. 65-7 TG)
 Personal and Family History (Pgs. 72-75 TG)
 Using Artefacts (Pgs. 81-86 TG)
 Drama re role play (Pgs. 109-113 TG)
 Using pictures and photographs (Pgs. 87-98 TG)
 Use of the environment (Pgs. 99-103 TG)
 Oral Evidence (Pgs. 77-80 TG)
 Documentary Evidence (Pgs. 104-108 TG)
 Use of ICT (Pg 114 TG)

Digital Technology

Digital images and a range of online applications can be highly motivating for pupils studying History. eg 3D tour of the Attic where Anne Frank and her family hid. Interactive tours of artefacts in museums- Egypt. Homework help site with range of activities for History.

Science

The Science curriculum supports children to develop basic scientific skills through a knowledge and understanding of science.

The curriculum is presented in two sections:

Skills

Working Scientifically
 Designing and Making

Content:

Living things

Energy and forces

Materials

Environmental awareness and care.

Aims

We support the aims of the Primary Science Curriculum

- a. To develop knowledge and understanding of scientific and technological concepts through the exploration of human, natural and physical aspects of the environment
- b. To develop a scientific approach to problem-solving
- c. To encourage the child to explore, develop and apply scientific ideas and concepts
- d. To foster the child's natural curiosity
- e. To aid the child to appreciate the contribution of science and technology to the wider world
- f. To appreciate and respect diverse living and non-living things
- g. To encourage the child to become environmentally responsible and aware
- h. To enable the child to communicate ideas, present ideas and report findings using a variety of media

Strand and strand units

All teachers are familiar with the strands, strand units and content objectives in the Science Curriculum and refer to them regularly when planning for their pupils.

Curriculum objectives are at the core of each Science lesson, and teachers refer to the curriculum objectives in their recorded preparation.

Approaches and methodologies

A range of teaching methods and approaches will be used to suit the pupils' knowledge and understanding. Our main aim is to get the children "thinking scientifically." Science should be fun for the pupils and pupils will be actively encouraged to get involved.

The approaches adopted should create a learning environment where:

1. Practical activity is encouraged (Hands- on discovery)
2. Links with the environment are fostered
3. Children have an opportunity to work together, share ideas and communicate their findings
4. Children's ideas are the starting point for some science activities
5. Children should be allowed the excitement of finding out for themselves
6. Children are encouraged to pose their own questions

The use of a variety of approaches and methods will facilitate the efficient implementation of the science curriculum. The nature of the strands and strand units themselves necessitates the use of a variety of teaching methods. The approaches chosen should enable the children to work scientifically in a variety of contexts, to undertake practical activities and to tackle open-ended investigations. Different methods are outlined as follows:

Whole-class work this is effective in introducing a topic and providing background information that may be required for an activity.

Small groups. Several groups working on the same activity small groups may work on different activities with teacher or/and SNA support

Individual work This is where children carry out investigations that allow them to pursue their own interests and ideas.

Skills Development

Working Scientifically

Working scientifically will involve children in:

- Observing
- Questioning
- Predicting
- Hypothesising
- Investigating and experimenting
- Interpreting results
- Recording and communicating results

An important aspect of scientific activity is **Designing and Making**. Children are to be encouraged to design and make artefacts and models that will provide solutions to practical problems. The skills to be developed for this facet are:

- Exploring
- Planning
- Making
- Evaluating

Safety

During practical work teachers should be aware of the safety implications of any exploratory or investigative work to be undertaken. Children should be encouraged to observe safety procedures during **all** tasks. There are many safety issues to consider including:

Plants and Animals

Disposable gloves to be used when pupils are handling any plants or animals. Children should never handle unknown or unfamiliar plants, especially fungi.

Hand washing should be encouraged after handling plants and animals.

Electricity

Children should only use low-voltage battery powered devices. Mains electricity should **never** be used for electricity and magnetism experiments. Children should be repeatedly warned about the danger of mains electricity.

Equipment

The use of glass apparatus and sharp-edged tools should be avoided except under the direct supervision of the class teacher. Thermometers should be handled carefully

Eyes

Children should never use lenses, binoculars or other lens devices to look directly at the sun or other intense source of light. This includes dark glass and plastic.

Chemicals

If household chemicals are purchased to meet the requirements of an experiment any surplus should be disposed of on completion of experiment. We will try to avoid any chemical containing bleach. Use safety goggles where possible. These chemicals will **not** be stored in the science boxes.

Polythene Bags

Children should be warned of the dangers of using these bags as they may cause suffocation.

Heat

Pupils under no circumstances will be allowed to handle matches or lighters. If candles are used as part of an experiment long hair should be tied back and loose sleeves secured. All experiments involving candles should be directly supervised by the class teacher. Any heating can be done with hot water from a tap or from a kettle held by an adult. Flammable liquids should never be used.

Cleanliness and Hygiene

Random sniffing and tasting should be discouraged. The teacher should explain that anything the children are asked to smell, or taste has been carefully chosen for that activity. The sharing of spoons or other utensils should not be permitted. Hand washing should be encouraged before food activities.

Digital technology and Science

Digital technology has changed the ways in which we can measure, handle and access information. It can extend work in the classroom as it allows pupils to make connections between what they learn and the wider world.

It enables all pupils to record their observations in meaningful ways and to share information with others. Results and observations can be recorded with photos, oral recordings, charts, tick sheets. Book creator, slides and google docs.

Linkage and Integration in SESE

We acknowledge that linkage and integration are recommended within the SESE curriculum, and this is reflected in our preparation for teaching and learning. When appropriate teachers will link strands and strand units using a thematic approach

Geography, Maths and Science are linked through co-ordinates, measures, area etc.

English through a range of reading and writing genres. Pupils are encouraged to share their views and experiences and to record these in a variety of ways.

Art through mapping, pictures and diagrams.

PE and SPHE linked with Science, Geography, Maths, English

Digital Technology- pupils can use the Blu Bots and Robbie the Robot kits for following routes, directions from other pupils. Recording results and observations in a variety of ways using photos, audio recordings, graphs etc.

All classes have at least two I Pads for taking photos and uploading worksheets to Google classroom. Pupils can type into the worksheets or use audio to convert to text.

Refer to list of apps/sites for each area.

Assessment and Record Keeping in SESE

The primary purpose underlying assessment is to enhance the learning experiences of our pupils. We can report the pupil's progress and achievements to parents and use it to plan future learning experiences.

We use the following methods of assessment

1. Teacher Observation
2. Teacher designed tasks and tests
3. Pupils work- recorded in a range of ways.
4. Classroom displays of pupil's work

5. Feedback from pupils

Teacher Observation

Observations made by the teacher during practical tasks will help to determine the development of skills and attitudes. They will also help to establish the extent to which the children have mastered the required knowledge. The teacher will need to take an active role and ask open-ended questions to gain insight into a child's understanding.

Teacher-Designed Tasks and Tests

A wide variety of tasks may be provided for the pupils including:

- Observing/Asking questions
- Analysing objects and processes and hypothesising about how systems work or are made (Science)
- Predicting outcomes of an investigation (Science)
- Collecting information from books and materials- SESE
- Providing oral, written, recorded and pictorial accounts of what they have learnt.
- Displaying projects
- Using activity sheets
- Designing, making and evaluating models and structures
- Using interactive multimedia programs to explore themes and complete a range of tasks and problems
- Exploring and engaging in practical investigations in the environment
- Completing teacher-designed tests- Kahoot. Quizziz
- Displaying and reporting on work completed to the class.
- Drawing with labels (teacher can discuss drawing with child and annotate it as a result of asking questions)

Work Samples and portfolios.

Samples of a pupil's work recording achievement should be accompanied by brief comments from the teacher highlighting the skills or knowledge that has been gained and brief information on the level of support provided. Photographs, drawings, work completed on Google classroom, including audio recordings, worksheets may be stored online in Google Classroom or in a portfolio.

Resources

Each teacher receives a Class budget each year to purchase appropriate resources for their class in History, Science and Geography. Over reliance on the use of workbooks and textbooks should be avoided and teacher designed, or specifically sourced resources are often more suitable to meet the needs and interests of our pupils.

Science equipment is stored in the Resource room and divided up into topic boxes that relate to the Strands- e.g., Electricity. Light and Colour. Magnetism. Materials.

Digital Technology

All classes have an IWB and access to the internet and teachers and pupils are encouraged to use digital technology whenever possible to access a range of up-to-date materials and enable pupils to be actively involved in their learning. Pupils can upload pictures, worksheets, use voice activated software, record their findings orally or in written form.

Teachers have access to a range of resources through Scoilnet including Scoilnet maps and Britannica school.

Pupils can search safely for resources using safe search as agreed as part of our Digital learning plan 2022-23 and present their work in a range of ways.

The BOM funded the course Assistive Technology for all staff and there are sufficient devices in the school for every pupil- Laptops, chrome books and I pads. All teachers have a teacher's laptop.

Staff should refer to the list of suggested apps/sites for SESE.

Staff Development

There are a range of face to face and online courses available throughout the year for staff to upskill and develop their knowledge and skills in all curriculum areas.

Most teachers attend courses in the summer and in the evenings that relate to their posts of responsibility and/or to curriculum areas that they have an interest in.

Staff are encouraged to share information from courses and can upload notes to the shared teachers drive

Parental involvement

Parents can be involved in supporting SESE- taking part in interviews, helping pupils learn about their personal history and locality, fostering an interest in local, regional, national, European and global geography by encouraging children to pay attention to their surroundings, read maps or use Google earth.

There may be members of organisations/individuals in the community that might support the school's SESE programme.

Success Criteria

We will use the following criteria to assess the success of this plan:

Our yearly and fortnightly recorded preparation is based on the Whole School Plan with opportunities for teachers and pupils to respond to local and national events and particular areas of interest for the pupils.

Development of historical and geographical skills throughout the classes

Pupil's awareness and knowledge of local and global issues, features and developments.

The use of photographs, displays, use of artefacts and evidence in classes.

Classes engage in outdoor observation as appropriate

Pupils are actively involved in practical activities in SESE.

Pupils are learning to question, predict and test their ideas in science.

There is cross curricular recorded preparation and linkage with Post Primary subject teachers.

Recorded long and short-term preparation is shared by teachers online in schools shared Drive.

Implementation

This policy was written by the principal, who is the co-ordinator for Science, History and Geography and discussed and agreed with staff.

All class teachers are responsible for the implementation of the SESE curriculum in their own classrooms.

Staff meetings will be set aside during the year to discuss the SESE plan and implementation.

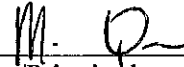
Review

The review will take place in June 2025 or before if the SESE curriculum is revised by the Department of Education. The Principal will be responsible for co-ordinating the review as the SESE Co-ordinator

The SESE plan and scheme of work was ratified by Board of Management on by BOM on 25 October 2023

This policy will be reviewed in May 2024

Signed: 
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: 
Secretary/Principal

Date: 25 October 2023

Date: 25/10/23