



St. Louise de Marillac Primary School, Drumfinn Rd., Ballyfermot, Dublin 10

Whole School Plan for SESE: History

■ Introductory Statement and Rationale

(a) Introductory Statement

This plan was drafted by the staff of St. Louise de Marillac Primary School and agreed in consultation with parents and Board of Management.

We aim through this plan, drawn up in accordance with the DES history curriculum (NCCA, 1999), to set out our approaches to the teaching and learning of history.

It will form the basis for teachers' long and short term planning. It will also inform new and temporary teachers of the approaches and methodologies used in our school.

The plan was reviewed during the school year 2023-2024 after a process of consultation with the staff.

(b) Rationale

We recognise History as an integral element of Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE). In our school SESE provides opportunities for the child:

- to explore, investigate and develop an understanding of the natural, human, social and cultural dimensions of local and wider environments;
- to learn and practise a wide range of skills;
- to acquire open, critical and responsible attitudes.

SESE enables the child to live as an informed and caring member of the local and wider communities. We recognise the distinct role that History has to play in enabling the child to explore and understand the natural, human, social and cultural environments in which he/she lives. We hope that historical education in our school will enable the child to investigate and examine critically significant events in their own immediate past, the past of their families and local communities and the histories of people in Ireland and other parts of the world. We view History as having a distinct but complementary role together with Geography and Science within the broader curriculum area of SESE and as a contributor to the wider child-centred curriculum.

■ Vision and Aims

(a) Vision

It is the ethos of our school to enable each and every child to reach his/ her full potential. We are aware of the contribution that SESE, including History, makes to the harmonious development of the child. We hope that children develop a strong understanding of personal and local history as well as encountering the history of wider places and times.

(b) Aims

We endorse the aims of Social, Environmental and Scientific Education as outlined on Page 12 of the SESE History Curriculum Statement enabling the child:

- 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 had an impact on 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 encourage children to recognise how past and present actions, events and materials may become historically significant.
- 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 enable the child to acquire a balanced appreciation of cultural and historical inheritances from local, national and global contexts.
- We aim to use the local area as a resource for history as much as possible bearing in mind the constraints of access and hazards that may be present.
- We aim to invite people in the community to talk about history of our place i.e. Kilmainham Goal, Phoenix Park and the Memorial Gardens. See Section 16 of this plan for more details.

■ Curriculum Planning

1. Strands and Strand Units

Each teacher is familiar with the strands, strand units and content objectives for his/her relevant class level and indeed for each other's class levels. We feel this is important in order to ensure a coherent programme throughout the school.

We agree that through local history children can readily acquire and practise historical research skills; they can become familiar with, and learn to value, the local environment and they can learn to appreciate the elements of the past which have given them and their locality a sense of identity. Teachers will refer to Exemplar 15 Pages 100 – 103 of Teacher Guidelines for relevant considerations if embarking on a local history trail.

We have discussed how to ensure Oral Evidence is incorporated into learning and we would welcome people in the local area who may be willing to come to the school and speak to the children about the past. We are conscious of the planning and preparation that is vital for such a visit and teachers will refer to Pg 36 Teacher Guidelines and Exemplar 10 page 78 in this regard.

We are aware of the requirements of the 'menu curriculum' outlined in the Curriculum Statement as to the number of strand Units from each Strand that must be covered in each school year. We have chosen the prescribed number of Strand Units in order to ensure the coverage of various aspects of the curriculum before the children leave sixth class.

Junior & Senior Infants: Refer to pages 19 – 20 Curriculum Statement

The curriculum for these classes comprises two Strand Units:

- Myself & My Family
- Stories

1st & 2nd Classes: Refer to pages 27 – 31 Curriculum Statement

The curriculum for these classes comprises three Strand Units:

- Myself & My Family
- Change and Continuity (in the local environment)
- Story: a selection of stories

3rd & 4th Classes: Refer to pages 42 – 50 Curriculum Statement

The curriculum for these classes comprises five Strand Units:

- Local studies– 2 strand units
- Early people and ancient studies-2strand units
- Life, society, work and culture in the past-2 strand units
- Continuity and change over time-2 strand units
- Story - a selection of stories relevant to these strand units

5th & /6th classes: Refer to pages 62 – 70 Curriculum Statement

The curriculum for these classes comprises seven Strand Units:

- Local studies– 2 strand Units
- Early people and ancient societies - 2 strand units
- Life, society, work and culture in the past - 1 strand
- Eras of change and conflict– 2 strand units
- Politics, conflict and society– 2 strand units
- Continuity and change over time– 2 stand units
- Story - a selection of stories relevant to these stand units

Story

A selection of stories relevant to strand units will be used at all class levels.

- Stories will be selected to ensure pupils are exposed to a wide variety of text. Myths and legends, both Irish and from other cultures, will be used as well as real life stories and stories about people.

Choice of content

Teachers will have some choice in the content and topics that may be covered at each class level. In choosing the Strand Units for all classes, we are conscious of the spiral approach recommended in this curriculum, in which some aspects of the past may be explored in increasing detail at a number of levels. In selecting Strand Units for classes, we will endeavour to ensure that:

- The locality of the school is reflected in the programme
- Children are introduced to the lives of women, men and children from a range of social, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds
- Studies from a wide range of human experience are included
- Local, national and international contexts are included
- There is a balance between the development of skills and the acquisition of knowledge in our teaching of history.

We recognise that the curriculum recommends that in each year from 1st – 6th class, one strand unit in local history and in classes from 3rd – 6th one strand unit in national or world history is studied in more depth over a longer period. This has been considered in the development of our yearly plan and topics that lend to treatment over a period of time have been included. Topics that lend to integration with other curricular areas are also included.

Our agreed yearly plan of the content of the school's History programme for each class level is included as an Appendix to this policy. Please see **Appendix B**.

We understand that a strict adherence to a chronological treatment of Strand Units is not recommended in this curriculum because of the constraints this would impose on curricular planning.

We are aware that the development of children's chronological understanding can be fostered through the use of timelines, and will consider using timelines at all levels.

We endorse the emphasis this curriculum places on the exploration of personal and family history at this level and are conscious of the sensitivities some aspects of these topics will require. We agree that through local history children can readily acquire and practise historical research skills, they can become familiar with, and learn to value, the local environment and they can learn to appreciate the elements of the past which have given them and their locality a sense of identity. We will refer to Teacher Guidelines Exemplar 15 Pages 100 – 103 when embarking on a local history trail. Trails developed for children in 5th/6th classes will be more complex, sophisticated versions of those developed for 2nd - 4th classes.

2. Skills and Concepts Development

As outlined in our vision for history in our school we are not solely concerned with the transmission of a body of knowledge about the past, but also with ensuring that our children experience something of the way in which the historian goes about his/her work. Each teacher is aware that the curriculum provides for the development of a growing range of historical skills and concepts. Each teacher is aware of the aspects of **Working as a Historian** that apply at each class level. These are listed below as follows:

Junior & Senior Infants: Page 18 Curriculum Statement

- Time and chronology
- Using evidence
- Communication

At infant level strategies we may use to develop the child's skills to work as a young historian will include:

- Sequencing activities – ordering object/pictures; Sequencing of artefacts from own personal past; sequencing of elements in a story etc.
- Use of timelines
- Using simple evidence: artefacts from own personal past: clothes, toys, birthday cards etc; photographs from own personal past
- Allowing children opportunities to communicate an awareness of stories about the past in a variety of way: listening to and retelling stories, drama, art work, ICT.

1st & 2nd Classes: Page 26 Curriculum Statement

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

Strategies we may use to develop the child's ability to work as a young historian will include:

- Timelines & Sequencing activities: placing objects or pictures in historical sequence
- Exploring instances of change and continuity in personal life, family and immediate local environment: looking at features which have changed or remained unchanged
- Through examining the actions of a character in a story discuss the reasons for change and the effects of change.
- Use of simple historical evidence; photographs, objects, memories of older people, buildings, stories and songs.

- Allowing children opportunities to communicate an awareness of stories, people and events from the past in a variety of ways: writing, drama, ICT etc.

We are aware of the skills and concepts that children will continue to develop through engagement with the History Curriculum and by having the opportunity to Work as Historians.

3rd & 4th Classes: Page 40 Curriculum Statement

5th & 6th Classes: Page 60 Curriculum Statement

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

Strategies we will use to develop the child's abilities to work as a young historian will include:

- Using timelines for children to record information about people and events
- Examining and using a wider range of historical evidence: photographs picture, objects, memories of older people, buildings, stories, songs, written sources, films, other media, ICT.
- Encouraging children to ask questions about a piece of evidence
- Enabling children to summarise information in and make deductions from a single source of evidence
- Providing opportunities for children to use evidence
- Enabling children to summarise information in and make deductions for a single source of evidence
- Providing opportunities for children to use evidence and imagination to reconstruct elements of the past and communicate this understanding in a variety of ways
- We endeavour to use artefacts and old pictures/ photos as historical resources.
- Enable children to use words, phrases and conventions associated with the recording of dates and times, such as BC, AD, Stone Age, early Christian Ireland etc.
- Allow children to examine and use critically a wide range of historical evidence
- Encourage children to ask questions about a piece of evidence
- Encourage children to compare accounts of a person or event from two different sources
- Encourage children to use imagination and evidence to reconstruct the past in a variety of way: oral language, drama, writing, art work, modelling, other media, ICT
- Enable children to develop some skills in the location and selection of evidence

The use of timelines will play a major role in the development of chronological understanding and will be used at all class levels in an age appropriate way.

Junior Classes & Middle Classes – timelines that relate to personal history with photographs and items along with the language of time.

Senior Classes – timelines of distant periods and key dates

All teachers will endeavour to include a balance between the development of these skills and the acquisition of knowledge when designing their short and long term planning and when implementing it in the classroom.

3. Approaches and Methodologies

Our History Curriculum asserts that one of the keys to successful history teaching is the use of a broad range of classroom of classroom approaches and methodologies. We plan to use the key methodologies of the Primary School Curriculum (NCCA, 1999) in the teaching of History.

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

In addition to this we are aware of the variety of approaches and methodologies outlined as particularly suited to history and will endeavour to employ the following methodologies:

- Story (page 65-71, Teacher Guidelines) We have a selection of fiction books. We will continue to build up a collection of stories with historical themes. We also have sets of Class Novels with historical connections.

Personal and family history (pg 72-75, TG)

- Using artefacts. We will follow the ideas / guidelines outlined on pages 81 – 86 TG. Approaches and Methodologies
- Artefacts. We have prioritised two themes – *Our School* and *Our Locality*. We have decided to place particular emphasis on housing when we address the theme Our Locality.
- Drama and Role play (pages 109 – 113, TG) Role play, hot seating, conscience alley, drama through story
- Using pictures and photographs (pages 87-98 TG) We will concentrate on compiling a collection of photos of the local area present and past. We will source photographs from national collections, e.g. www.nil.ie, Ballyfermot Library etc. We will concentrate our efforts on photos from school and local buildings, parks, houses etc. A folder will be set up on the shared school server to store photos & pictures of local photos.
- Oral evidence (pages 77 – 80 TG)
- Documentary evidence (pgs 104-108 TG) Newspapers collected, card, postcards, old magazines, old recipes, census returns, old marriage, birth and death certificates
- Use of ICT (page 114 TG) We will use the internet as a resource to locate material.

We have prioritised the following methodologies for development:

- Pictures and Photographs
- Any additional resources that are found in relation to school life in the past

4. Linkage and Integration

Linkage

In order to make learning more meaningful for the child and to ensure the simultaneous development of historical skills and to provide for the application of these skills, teachers will explore possibilities for linkage across the History curriculum and will consider and note such opportunities in their classroom planning.

Integration

We agree with the assertion made in the Curriculum Statement page 9 and we will ensure to look for opportunities whereby the elements from the History and Science and Geography curricula may be explored concurrently. Using systematically planned integrated themes or topics (see Geography/ Science school plan) we will try to integrate learning. We are conscious not only to seek out opportunities to integrate content, but also to be mindful of opportunities for transferral and application of skills. We also acknowledge the scope that exists to integrate History with other subject areas.

5. Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning of History. We as a staff have a common understanding of its purpose and the ways in which the progress of children in History will be assessed, documented and reported.

Assessment in History will fulfil the following roles:

- A diagnostic role – to identify areas of difficulty in order to respond to the needs of the child
- A summative role - to establish the outcomes of learning after completing a unit of communicating with parents and others
- An evaluative role - to assist teachers in assessing their own practice, methodologies, approaches and resources

We recognise that assessment techniques used in history must seek to assess progress in

- a) Children's **knowledge** of the past
- b) Children's ability to use historical **skills**
- c) Children's development of **attitudes**

The assessment tools we will use will range from the informal means to the more structured approaches. Examples are:

Teacher Observation	Teacher designed tasks/tests	Children work and projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses of children to questions and suggestions • Level of participation in whole class discussions • Interaction with others in group discussion and collaborative activities • Reaction to learning materials and tasks assigned • Reaction to and the using of historical evidence • Empathy displayed for historical situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telling and retelling events • Asking and answering a variety of closed and open questions • Oral, written and pictorial descriptions or recordings • Constructing sequences and timelines • Handling evidence and posing appropriate questions • work cards or activity sheets for completion • Making trail booklets • Complete projects or books • Dramatizing an event • Making a model • Using interactive multimedia material • Teacher designed revision tests 	<p>Examples of work in progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written accounts • Drawings, diagrams, concept maps • Completed work-cards • Tests • Photographs of models • Tapes of story -telling and dramatisations

6. Record keeping

Cúntas Míósúil, Pupil Work, Photographs of Projects

7. Children with Different Needs

As previously stated we are cognisant of the distinct role history can play in the harmonious development of each and every child. As such we will do our best to ensure that all children have the opportunity to experience a rounded historical education. In the same way as we endeavour to provide for individual difference in every other curricular area, we will also strive to make the history curriculum accessible to as many children as possible. In order to do this we will consider:

- Using a mixture of whole class teaching and focused group work

- Planning topics so that opportunities are provided for further investigation work for the more able or less able
- Choosing more accessible or more demanding evidence
- A range of questions spanning from simple recall to more complex and analytical
- Planning for the use of a wide range of communication skills (e.g. Drawing, ICT, written and oral accounts, photographs and models)
- Provide opportunities for co-operative learning
- The exceptional child will be encouraged to undertake additional research and record their findings in a variety of ways
- Timetabling

All teachers are familiar with the NCCA (Draft) Guidelines for teachers of Students with General Learning Disabilities and will consult these guidelines as appropriate. Within the AS class the teacher will adapt the curriculum content to best suit the needs of the children.

We endorse the emphasis this curriculum places on the exploration of personal and family history at all levels and are conscious of the sensitivities required to explore a child's own personal and family history. We will consider the substitution of the personal and family history of another person where deemed necessary.

8. Equality of Participation and Access

- Equal opportunity will be given to pupils to experience all strands and to participate in all class activities
- Provision required will be identified for the inclusion of children experiencing physical disabilities, learning difficulties and those whose first language is not English
- Our studies will include one from local, national and international places
- Our history classes will place an emphasis on the lives of ordinary women, men and children of the past as is recommended in the curriculum
- We will consider in our teaching of History the contribution made by women in the past as well as men
- At all class levels we include the lives of men, women and children from different social, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds
- These considerations will impact on our choice of
 - Stories
 - Topic/Themes
 - Visitors invited
 - Evidence selected
 - Resources purchases

9. Organisational Planning

a) Timetable

In keeping with the recommendations in the Primary School Curriculum Introduction (page 70)

Infants Classes 2 hours 15 minutes will be allocated to SESE per week.

1st – 6th Classes 3 hours will be allocated to SESE per week.

On occasion, time will be blocked as appropriate.

This might occur when

- Using a thematic approach
- Working on a project
- Exploring the local environment

Teachers will consider the use of discretionary curriculum time which is approx. 2 hours for SESE when appropriate.

b) Resources and ICT

- We have attached a list of current resources in our appendix
- We may use textbooks as a resource in our teaching of History. There are suitable sets of history books for 3rd – 6th class available in the school.
- We are in contact with our local library.
- We will make use of the archaeology in the classroom pack to enhance the delivery of history in our school.
- Any other packs to support history, e.g. Trocaire pack
- The internet will be used as a historical resource.
- History resources will be stored in the Staffroom, in the school library, in book storage prefabs and upstairs outside Room 30. Sets of class novels and a selection of books with historical references will be available as library books for teachers/ pupils to borrow. **See Appendix B.**

c) Health and Safety

(Refer to school's Health & Safety Policy and Preparing for fieldwork. Geography Teacher Guidelines pp. 74 – 78)

Teachers will consult the principal whenever it is proposed to engage children in History activities in the environment outside the school. The school's policy on out of classroom activities will be consulted and provision made for extra adult help/supervision, suitable clothing, footwear, insurance and transport. Before use in the classroom, artefacts will be examined by the teacher and checked for potential danger e.g. sharp edges. Artefacts with small parts will not be used with infants. In accordance with our Internet Acceptable Use Policy, all websites will be checked by the teacher for suitability prior to allowing children to engage with them.

12. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting

- Teachers will consult this whole school plan and the curriculum documents for history when they are drawing up their long and short term plans.
- In third and fourth classes two strand units will be selected from each stand along with a selection of stories. We will ensure that two of these strand units chosen will be in depth studies each year. One of these in depth studies will have a local focus and the other will have a national/international focus.
- In fifth and sixth class we will select two strand units from each strand with the exception of 'Life, society, work and culture in the past' from which we will only select one strand unit.
- Teachers from third to sixth will need to plan collaboratively on strands chosen in order to avoid duplication.
- Strand units may be repeated and enhanced as children progress through the school to ensure continuity and progression.
- Where it is meaningful and suitable, History will be taught in a thematic way to integrate with the other SESE subjects
- Each teacher will have a long term plan for the year drawn up collaboratively with teachers of the same class level. From this, teachers will tailor them according to the individual needs of their own classes.
- A class teacher's individual Cúntas míosúil (monthly progress report) will assist in recording work covered when evaluating progress in history and in informing future teaching.
- Parents are informed of children's progress in history at parent teacher meetings and in the end of year report cards.

13. Staff Development

- Teachers will have access to reference books, resource material and websites dealing with history.
- Staff will be encouraged to research and try out new approaches and methodologies.
- Our school has a culture where teachers share good experience and practice.

14. Parental Involvement

Refer to Primary School Curriculum; Your child's learning, guidelines for Parents (NCCA) 'The What, Why and How of children's learning in primary school', NCCA DVD (2006)

- We will encourage parents to talk to their children about their personal and family history; this will also involve sourcing family photographs. We will encourage parents to lend artefacts for display and to take their children to see historic places.
- Parents and grandparents may be invited to come into the school and to share their historical experiences with the children.
- Grandparents afternoon is an annual event.
- Parents and grandparents may be invited to come on historical trails and invited to share their historical experiences with the children.

Specific strand that will allow for parental involvement are:

- Myself and my family
- Stories
- Change and continuity
- Local studies

Parents from distant lands will be encouraged to share their heritage with the rest of the school.

15. Community Links

- People in the local community who have an interest and a knowledge in its history may be invited to speak with the children.
- The local library will be a source of historical knowledge for the children e.g. documentary evidence, maps, photos, etc.
- The work of some national agencies relating to aspects of the history programme may be used.
- Speakers from organisations such as Dúchas, Heritage Council, local county council, archaeological survey of Ireland, National Roads Authority (sites on routes) may be invited to school to speak to pupils.
- Children will be brought on visits to different places of local interest as they progress through the primary school. Trips to museums, battle sites, galleries and interpretive centres will form part of the history programme.

16. Places of historic interest

We have identified the following places of historic interest for visiting:

Viking Dublin	No 29 Merrion Square Georgian House
Kilmainham Jail	Art Gallery
National Museum	Writer's Museum
Phoenix Park	Chester Beatty Library
Dublin Castle	Memorial Gardens, Islandbridge
City Hall	Trinity College & Book of Kells
Newgrange	GPO & 1916 Museum
Natural History Museum	

▪ Success Criteria

We will review this whole school plan under the following headings:

- Are individual teachers preparing, planning and teaching according to this plan?
- Are procedures in the plan being followed i.e. fieldwork, health and safety etc.
- Are we using a variety of teaching methodologies?
- How are the children's historical skills progressing?
- How well is historical knowledge being learned by the children?
- Are we adhering to the menu curriculum in history as outlined in this plan?
- Are we assessing our history as outlined in the plan?
- Are the key messages of the curriculum adhered to? (See prompts page 9 Teacher Guidelines)

Ways of assessing this plan will be:

- Revisiting the plan as a staff
- Teacher & parents' feedback
- Formal assessment
- Children's feedback
- Inspector's reports and suggestions

Implementation

a) Roles and Responsibilities

Individual class teachers are responsible for the planning and preparation for Historical Trails, outings or the resources they may use in their class. Teachers will consult with the principal / HSCLO when they wish to establish a contact or arrange a visit from a person in the local community. (See child protection policy). It may be necessary to seek the assistance of HSCLO to initiate contact with a person in the local community and co-ordinate the outing or visit.

Review

The school community of St Louise de Marillac Primary School has an agreed systematic cycle of review of policies whereby new policies are reviewed after one year and subsequently every three years. In line with the above, as this policy has been reviewed in 2024 it will be reviewed again in the academic year 2026-27 and subsequently every three years, unless changes are required by legislation or other needs arise before then. Appendices may be amended as deemed necessary.

This policy was discussed and updated by the staff and school community in March 2024.

Ratification and Communication

This History Policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Louise de Marillac Primary School on 18/6/24.

It is available for staff on Microsoft Teams.

It is also available in the policy folder in the staffroom.

Signed:


(Chairperson, Board of Management)

Date:

18/6/24

