



St. Raphaela's Primary School

Policy for the Teaching of History

Introductory statement:

This policy was created by the whole teaching staff of St. Raphaela's Primary School following two planning days during which we explored best practice in teaching History and our agreed approach to it in this school. It was created in April 2006 largely as our response to the directives of the National Curriculum and also as a means of ensuring continuity in our teaching. 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.

This plan was ratified by the Board of Management in November 2006 and will be reviewed in November 2010.

Rationale for the teaching of History:

We believe that Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (S.E.S.E.), of which History forms an important dimension, provides opportunities for the child to explore, investigate and develop an understanding of the natural, human, social and cultural dimensions of his or her local and wider environment. It also allows the child to learn and practice a wide range of skills and to acquire open, critical and responsible attitudes to the world around them. The study of history in particular enables children to investigate and examine critically significant events in their own immediate past, the past of their families and local communities, and the history of people in Ireland and other parts of the world. We believe that history develops an understanding of the actions, beliefs and motivations of people in the past and is fundamental to an informed appreciation of contemporary society and environments. We view history as having a distinct but complementary role together with geography and science within S.E.S.E., and as a wider contributor to the wider child centred curriculum.

Our Vision:

It is the mission of our school to enable each and every child to reach his/her full potential. We are aware of the contribution S.E.S.E. makes to the harmonious development of the child. We hope that by creating opportunities for children to experience a rounded historical education that is not exclusively focused on the transmission of a body of knowledge but that allows children to work as historians, we will help children to understand more fully the world in which they live, and how events and personalities have shaped the home, locality and wider environments in which they exist. It is our vision that history in our school will enable children to understand the present by exploring the past before they begin to look towards the future.

Our Aims:

We endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for History:

- To develop an interest and curiosity about the past
- To make the children aware of the lives of women, men and children of 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 acquisitions of concepts and skills associated with sequence, time and chronology appropriate to the developmental stage 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 foster a willingness to explore personal attitudes and values and to promote openness to the possibility of changing one's point of view
- To encourage the child to recognise that 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 and global contexts.

Curriculum Planning:

Strands and Strands Units:

Each teacher is familiar with the strands, strand units and content objectives for 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.

Classes from Junior/Senior infants to First /Second class will work very closely. At these levels, history will be delivered through integrated themes in the context of the other S.E.S.E. subjects as much as possible, as well as through integration with the S.P.H.E. curriculum and other curricular areas, therefore making the learning experience more holistic and meaningful for the child.

Junior and Senior Infants will study two strands:

- Myself and My Family
- Story (c.f. pg. 19, 20 C.S.)

First and Second Classes will cover three strands:

- Myself and My Family
- Change and Continuity
- Story (c.f. pg 27, 31 CS)

We will ensure that the stories and other activities selected in Junior, Senior, First and Second classes will encompass a range of perspectives and will:

- Introduce children to the lives of women, men and children from a range of social, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds.
- Include studies from a wide range of human experience.
- Come from local, national and international contexts.

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 have discussed how to ensure Oral Evidence is incorporated and have identified people in the 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 will refer to Pg 36 Teacher Guidelines and Exemplar 10 Pg 78 in this regard.

Third and Fourth Classes will study the following strands: (Page 42-50 C. S.)

- Local studies
- Story
- Early People and ancient studies.
- Life, society, work and culture in the past.
- Continuity and change over time.

We are aware of the requirements of the 'menu curriculum' as 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 correct number of Strand Units in consultation with the teachers of Fifth/Sixth classes in order to ensure coverage of most aspects of the curriculum before the children leave sixth class. We have chosen two strand units from each of the four strands:

- Local studies - 2 strand units
- Early people and ancient societies - 2 strand units
- Life, society, work and culture in the past - 2 strand units
- Continuity and change over time - 2 strand units
- A selection of stories that will integrate with the strand units selected above

Fifth and Sixth classes:

We are aware of the Strands that comprise the History Curriculum for Fifth/Sixth classes:

- Local studies
- 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

We are aware of the requirements of 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 correct number of Strand Units in consultation with the teachers of Third/Fourth classes in order to ensure coverage of most aspects of the curriculum before the children leave sixth class. We have chosen two strand units from each of the following strands:

- Local studies - 2 strands units
- Early people and ancient societies - 2 strand units
- Eras of change and conflict - 2 strands units
- Politics, conflict and society - 2 strands units
- Continuity and change over time - 2 strand units

and one strand unit from the strand Life Society Work and Culture in the past. In total we will cover eleven strand units along with a selection of stories relevant to these strand units. In choosing the Strand Units for third to sixth 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 from third to sixth 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.

We recognise that the curriculum recommends that in each year **one strand unit in local history and one strand unit in national or world history is studied in more depth over a longer period** and this has been taken on board in the development of our yearly plan.

We will strive to ensure a balance between the development of skills and the acquisition of knowledge in our teaching of history.

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 have discussed how to ensure **Oral Evidence** is incorporated and are seeking to identify people in the 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 will refer to Pg 36 Teacher Guidelines and Exemplar 10 Pg 78 in this regard.

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 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.

Infants: (Page 18, S.E.S.E. History Curriculum Statement):

We are aware of the skills and concepts children will develop as they have the opportunity to **work as historians:**

- Time and Chronology
- Using Evidence
- Communication

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

- Sequencing activities - ordering objects/pictures; sequencing of artefacts from own personal past; sequencing of elements in a story etc.
- Use of simple 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 ways: listening to and retelling stories, drama, art work, ICT.

First and Second Classes: (Page 26 C.S.)

We are aware of the skills and concepts children will develop as they are provided with opportunities to engage with the History Curriculum and to **work as historians:**

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

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

- 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.

Third/Fourth Classes: (Page 40 C.S.)

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:**

- 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, pictures, 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 and imagination to reconstruct elements of the past and communicate this understanding in a variety of ways.

Fifth/ Sixth classes: (Page 60 C.S.)

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:**

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

Strategies we will use to develop children's skills to work as young historians will include:

- Use of timelines
- Enable children to use words, phrases and conventions associated with the recording of dates and time, such as BC, AD, Stone Age, early Christian Ireland etc
- Allow children to examine and use critically a wide range of historical evidence
- Enable children to develop some skills in the location and selection of 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 ways: oral language, drama, writing, art work, modelling, other media, ICT.

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:

- Infants: Picture sequences using the language of time
- 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.

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 approaches and methodologies. We plan to use the key methodologies of the primary school curriculum in the teaching of History.

- Active 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 (pgs 65-71, TG). Stories we have identified are/we will carry out an audit of fiction books
- Personal and family history (pgs 72-75, TG).
- Using Artefacts (pgs 81-86, TG). Collection of artefacts we have in our school/List we aspire to(storage)
- Drama and role play (pgs 109-113, TG).
- Using pictures and photographs (pgs 87-98, TG).

- Use of the environment (pgs 99-103, TG). We have carried out a local historical audit and will use it to design local history trails in an age appropriate way.
- Oral evidence (pgs 77-80, TG).
- Documentary evidence (pgs 104-108, TG). Newspapers collected, cards, postcards, old magazines, old receipts, census returns, old marriage, birth and death certificates.
- Use of ICT.

We believe that it is essential to use a broad range of technical techniques and classroom approaches in teaching History. These will include using story, drama and role play, locating oral and documentary evidence, using artefacts, pictures, photographs and using the environment around us.

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 that while history makes an important and distinctive contribution to the development of the child, historical education complements the growth of the child's geographical and scientific learning. With this in mind, we will ensure to look for opportunities whereby the elements from the history, science and geography curricula may be explored concurrently. Using systematically planned integrated themes or topics will be one way we would hope to achieve this. 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.

Assessment and Record Keeping: (c.f. History Curriculum page 76)

As in all subject areas **Assessment** is an integral part of the teaching and learning of S.E.S.E. 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 work. In this way assessment can provide the basis for reporting to and 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's work and projects	Curriculum Profiles (with indicators / ticklist)
<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 re-telling 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. • Making trail booklets. • Completed projects or books • Dramatising an event. • Making a model. • Using interactive multimedia computer programs. • Teacher designed revision tests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of work in progress • Written accounts • Drawings, diagrams, concept maps. • Completed work cards. • Tests. • Photographs of models. • Tapes of story telling and dramatisations. • Extraction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conveys knowledge of the past accurately through oral, written or drawn accounts • Re-tells events in sequence. • Re-tells with understanding • Handles and describes artefacts and makes deductions from it. • Sees differences between past and present. • Talks about the past in a critical but empathetic way. • Can discuss the reasons why some events happened and their causes. • Can identify motives for past events and appreciate various perceptions of those events.

Equality of Participation and Access:

- Equal opportunity will be given to all children 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 choices of:

- Stories
- Topics / Themes
- Visitors invited
- Evidence selected
- Resources purchases

Organisational Planning:

Timetable

In keeping with the recommendations in the Primary School Curriculum Introduction (page 70) a minimum of 2½ hours will be allocated to S.E.S.E. in infant classes and 3 hours will be allocated to S.E.S.E. from First to Sixth classes 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 2 hours, for S.E.S.E. when appropriate.

Resources and ICT

As stated in section 'Strands and Strand units', we will complete an environmental audit of the immediate locality and decide how to use it as a resource.

We have attached a list of current resources in our school.

We will use textbooks as a resource in our teaching of History.

We are in ongoing 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.

We have some videos that can support the strand units been taught.

We have access to the internet so we can use the web as a historical resource.

History resources are available either in the staff library in the staff room or in the History Box in the resource room. These include:

Local History:

- "On the One Road" Fr. Val's Stillorgan ...video/ DVD of history of Stillorgan interviews with old people made 1970
- "A History of Stillorgan" DVD made by Treasury Holdings
- "Stately Homes of Stillorgan" Bonnie Flanagan (book published 1991 on local buildings the area, many now gone. Includes good history and photo of Wesbury House (our convent building).
- Life of Canon Whately, after whom Whately Place was named.
- Story of the Capital - Video of History of Dublin
- Story of the Irish state - Video of Irish History.

Wider History:

- "Tom Crean's Rabbit" - Story of Shackleton and the conquest of South Pole
- "The Hunger" Diary of famine times in Ireland
- "Voyage of the Titanic" Diary of Mary Brady
- "Victorian Workhouse" Diary of E. Lorrimer
- Elsie's War. Story of courage in Nazi Germany
- Great Lives: Nelson Mandela
- Great Lives: Gandhi
- History Ages 5- 7
- History Ages 7-9
- Hands On History "HOMES"
- Hands On History "TOYS"
- Creative history (Ideas for TOPICS and DISPLAY) V Evans
- All the Drumshee Books By CORA HARRISON (12 titles in staff-room, suitable for 10+ different ages through history)
- Horrible Histories - all the titles in this series are available in the children's library.

We have a box of artefacts in the history box. All contributions gratefully accepted!!!!!!!!!!!!

Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting:

- Teachers will consult this whole school plan and our agreed long term plan and the curriculum documents for history when they are drawing up their short term plans.
- From infants to second class all strands and strand units will be covered every year as outlined in the documents. Each content objective within each strand unit will be covered.

- In third and fourth classes two strand units will be selected from each strand 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. We will also cover a selection of stories for fifth and sixth.
- Teachers from third to sixth will need to plan collaboratively on strands chosen in order to avoid duplication. Strand units may be repeated 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 S.E.S.E. subjects.
- Each teacher has 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.
- Cuntas míosúil will assist in recording work covered in evaluating progress in history and in informing future teaching. It is agreed to tick short term planning as a means of indicating work covered.
- Parents are informed of children's progress in history at parent teacher meetings and in end of year report cards

Staff Development:

- Teachers will have access to reference books, resource materials and websites dealing with history.
- Staff will be encouraged to research and try out new approaches and methodologies.
- Teacher x will be responsible for keeping resource material up to date and will arrange for opportunities for resources to be assessed for purchase and for new approaches to be piloted in the school.
- Teachers will be encouraged to attend in-service workshops and courses in history. They will communicate what they have learned to other staff at meetings.
- We have secured the services of an S.E.S.E. cuiditheoir to assist in this development and will continue to seek this support as long as it is available.
- Our school has a culture where teachers share good experience and **practice**.

Parental Involvement:

Grand-parents are frequent guest speakers in classrooms, talking about life in their school days, changes they have lived through, etc. If any parent has any special area of interest which would enrich our history programme, we also invite them to come in and show and tell!

Places of Historic Interest:

Among the places of historic interest that we visit regularly are:

- Dublin History Museum
- Kilmainham Gaol
- Collins' Barracks
- Christchurch

- St. Patrick's Cathedral

Community Links:

- People in the local community who have an interest and a knowledge in its history will be invited to speak with the children (C.F. Bonnie Flanagan, 19 Oaktree Road, Stillorgan)
- The local library will be a source of historical knowledge for the children i.e. documentary evidence, maps.
- The work of some national agencies relates to aspects of the history programme and we will welcome visits by speakers from these organisations, Dúchas, Heritage Council, local county council, archaeological survey of Ireland, National Roads Authority (sites on routes).
- 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

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 ie: fieldwork, health and safety etc?
- Are we using a variety of 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?
- Resources?

Ways of assessing this plan will be:

- Revisiting the plan as a staff
- Teacher parent feedback
- Parental feedback
- Formal assessment
- Children's feedback
- Inspectors reports and suggestions

Useful Websites:

Sources of local History:

National Archives	www.nationalarchives.ie
National Museum	www.museum.ie
National Library of Ireland	www.nli.ie
Heritage Council	www.heritagecouncil.ie
An Comhairle Leabharlanna	www.askaboutireland.ie

Other websites:

Primary Curriculum Support Programme
School Development Planning Support
National Council for Curriculum & Assessment
ENFO
TeachNet Ireland
Scoilnet
Irish National Teachers Organisation

www.pcsp.ie
www.sdps.ie
www.ncca.ie
www.enfo.ie
www.teachnet.ie
www.scoilnet.ie
www.into.ie

Ratification and Review:

This plan was agreed by all staff in April 2006. It was ratified by the Board of Management in November 2006 and will be reviewed in November 2010.