



## History Policy

At Navan Educate Together National School we acknowledge the importance of a sense of **history in our pupil's education**. We understand that the **history curriculum** provides the opportunity for the child to acquire a broad and balanced understanding of local, Irish and International history and at the same time, to develop and practice historical investigation skills.

We appreciate that this policy will

- Benefit the teaching and learning of History in our school
- Conform to principles outlined in the primary curriculum

### Vision:

NETNS is a developing school catering for both boys and girls. Our school is based on the following four main principles:

- Multi-denominational
- Child-centred
- Democratically run
- Co-educational

Our current enrolment is 155, this is increasing each year. As a staff, we are committed to the holistic development of all pupils in our care. We strive to ensure that all **children's** experience of school will be positive, supportive and challenging and that it will enable them to reach their full potential so that they in turn may play a fulfilling role in their own community and society in general.

We see the development of skills learned through the study of history, as well as the information learned, as central to achieving this goal.

### Aims and Objectives:

- To develop an interest in and curiosity about the past
- To make the child aware of the lives of adults and children in the past and how people and events have 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 stages of development

- 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 attitudes and behaviour of people today
- To foster a willingness to explore personal attitudes and values 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

The History Plan will be addressed under the following headings:

#### Curriculum Planning

- Strands and Strand Units
- Skills and concepts development
- Approaches and methodologies
- Linkage and integration
- Multi-grade teaching
- Assessment and record keeping
- Children with different needs
- Equality of participation and access

#### Organisational Planning

- Timetable
- Resources and ICT
- Health and safety
- **Individual Teacher's planning and reporting**
- Staff development
- Parental involvement
- Community links
- Places of Historic interest

#### Curriculum Planning

##### 1. Strands and Strand Units

- The strands and strand units for each class group are set out in the curriculum documents. Teachers should refer to the document prior to commencing planning and regularly throughout the year.

- The Menu Curriculum comes into force in 3<sup>rd</sup> Class and continues to 6<sup>th</sup>. The teachers of these classes complete the relevant menu curriculum form, recording what is completed each year. These are completed and returned to the History Coordinator by the end of June each year.
- The purpose of the menu curriculum is to ensure that the strands and strand units are taught in a systematic way, avoiding repetition and ensuring continuity and progression in the teaching of the curriculum.
- There is a balance between local, national and international elements in the menu curriculum.
- As the child progresses up the school it is envisaged that there is progression in the skills and concepts, content and delivery of each strand.

## **2. Skills and concepts development**

Teachers will seek to develop the following skills of the child in order to enable him/her to work fully as a young historian:

### *❖ Junior Infants and Senior Infants*

- Time and chronology
- Using evidence
- Communication

### *❖ First to Sixth Classes*

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

To ensure the balance between skills development and the acquisition of knowledge we:

- Encourage the use of hands-on evidence
- Strive to make the focus of each lesson to be on evidence, backed up with content

## **3. Approaches and Methodologies**

NETNS encourages the use of the following approaches and methodologies

- Story
- Drama and role play
- Oral evidence
- Documentary evidence
- Using ICT
- Personal and family history
- Using artefacts
- Pictures and photographs
- Use of the environment

#### 4. Linkage and Integration

At NETNS we encourage the use of linkage and integration in teaching the history curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to link the strands within the curriculum as well as strands and strand units e.g. stories and local studies, stories and myself and my family, stories and myths and legends, continuity and change over time and local studies.

#### 5. Multi-Grade Teaching

Where multi-grade classes exist, the following areas must be taken into consideration:

- Using a thematic approach
- Integration with other subjects
- Selection of textbooks
- Classroom organisation

#### 6. Assessment and record-keeping

At NETNS we carry out assessments in all classes from junior infants to sixth class. Assessment in history seeks to measure and report the child's progress and achievements in all aspects of the history curriculum.

Teachers assess:

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

Assessment tools are used to gather information about a child's progress.

Assessment tools:

- Teacher observation (during whole class discussions, group work)
- Teacher designed tasks and tests (quizzes, termly tests)
- Work samples, portfolios and projects (AOL folders, pictures etc)
- Curriculum profiles

Information gained from the assessments is used to assess pupil's knowledge of the topics and to inform the next class teacher of the level of knowledge in the class. On-going teacher observations, for example, will provide opportunities to assess how children are learning and may lead to modifications in the approaches used in future history lessons.

Topics covered over the year are recorded in the menu curriculum.

Parents are informed of their child's performance at the parent teacher meetings once a year, through end of term assessment reports and the end of year report sent home in June. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher by appointment.

#### 7. Children with different needs

Children with different needs are catered for in the following ways:

- Use of differentiation in the planning and carrying out of lessons
- Use of a mixture of teaching strategies and learning objectives

- Teachers are mindful of pupils with physical disabilities and every effort is made to consider these pupils when planning class work, field work and trips
- Children with exceptional ability/interest in history are encouraged and supported by the class teacher by providing extra reading materials and project work
- Teachers are encouraged to take part in team teaching

## **8. Equality of participation and access**

- Care will be taken when presenting the curriculum to students that the role of women in history is highlighted.
- Invited speakers and guests should comprise equally of men and women and where possible, children.
- Equal opportunities are afforded to boys and girls to participate in all classes and activities and all strands of the history curriculum.
- The history class is an ideal opportunity to integrate the culture of all pupils and this practise is strongly encouraged.
- Specific festivals and religious celebrations shall be addressed through the integration of the history and Learn Together curriculums.
- Provision should always be made for children who experience any form of disadvantage or for whom English is not their first language.

## **Organisational Planning:**

### **9. Timetable**

- History timetables are constructed in accordance with the DES regulations. Teachers allocated on average one hour per week (senior classes) or forty-five minutes (infant classes) of history each week.
- Teachers will utilise their time in different ways depending on the area/concept/skill being taught.
- Teachers may choose to
  - Use block time e.g. field trips
  - Use discretionary time e.g. if an important visitor comes to school or to avail of the PPDS service.

### **10. Resources and ICT**

- As a developing school, we are well resourced in history books, but less so in artefacts and historical pieces. Our aim over next five years is to compile resources based on themes as outlines in the curriculum e.g. The Celts, The Roman and World War1 etc.
- Resources are sourced both by the History Coordinator/curriculum group and by the teachers themselves. Teachers are asked to speak to the History coordinator before purchasing in case of overlapping resources.
- There is a selection of technologies available in the school; e.g. a tape-recorder, video camera, digital camera, printers, computers and broadband internet access.

- ICT is an integral part of the children's learning and it is assumed that teachers will incorporate ICT into their teaching through the use of suitable websites, CD-ROMs, videos and DVD's.
- Children are encouraged to do some of their project-work using ICT in programs such as MS Word, MS PowerPoint and MS Publisher
- Teachers can receive guidance on using these pieces of software by talking to the ICT coordinator.
- **All software is stored on the student's drive on the school network.**
- The school has a Safe Usage policy in relation to the use of the internet in the school. Please refer to this before using the internet in your classroom.

### 11. Health and Safety

- Teachers are required to be mindful of all health and safety issues that may arise during the teaching of History. Examples of these issues may be- the use of water, road-crossing, use of public areas/toilets/footpaths
- Furthermore, children are taught to respect property and the ancient ruins/sites/artefacts etc that they may attend/handle.

### 12. Individual teachers' planning and reporting

- Teachers will use the local history and menu curriculum templates as a basis for their history planning. Teachers are guided by the approaches and methodologies of the primary school curriculum and the school plan.
- Teachers have autonomy to use a thematic approach where appropriate or may choose to plan using the strand and strand units specific to the class being taught.
- **Teachers are encouraged to refer to their Cuntas Míosúil's to ensure that all relevant strands and strand units have been adequately covered.** Furthermore, the use of the menu curriculum template will ensure that planning across a two-year menu curriculum will build on work already completed and avoid unnecessary repetition.

### 13. Staff Development

- Teachers in our school have access to a growing number of reference books and resource materials for the teaching of history. There is also a list of recommended websites which may be of benefit to teachers. Staff members are encouraged to contribute to this bank of resources as the potential arises.
- Staff members are encouraged to share their experiences of successful methodologies during the 'what went well' section of each staff meeting.
- History courses are advertised and staff members are encouraged to attend as often as the need and opportunity arises.
- Teachers who have attended courses are given time at staff meetings to share new knowledge and methodologies.

#### 14. Parental Involvement

- Parents and grandparents are involved in supporting the history curriculum through personal history projects, classroom visits and storytelling. Parents are encouraged to volunteer their knowledge and expertise in history by helping with the school history book, sharing stories and experiences of particular historical events and supporting the child's learning at home. Teachers in our school regularly invite parents to contribute to history lessons. For example;
- My self (gathering artefacts and sharing personal stories with our junior classes)
- My family or the family of a well-known person to me (helping with construction of family trees)
- When my grandparents were young (sharing stories and experiences of the past)
- My locality through the ages
- Life in Ireland since the 1950's

#### 15. Community Links

Field trips and village trails are encouraged in the local community. For example classes might choose to visit;

Teachers are encouraged to use email and IT to contact other schools, museums and groups of historical interest.

#### 16. Places of historical interest

Class teachers are encouraged to include one trip to a place of historical interest, either locally or nationally, in each school year.

Local history is taught in all classes of the school according to the local History template.

#### Success Criteria

- The success of this school plan will be assessed based on the following success criteria;
- **Teacher's preparation has been based on this plan**
- Procedures outlined in this plan have been consistently followed
- The success of this plan in achieving its aims will be assessed by;
- Teacher feedback
- **Children's feedback**
- Inspector's suggestions and reports.

#### Implementation

Roles and Responsibilities:

The special duties and post holder, with responsibility for history, supported by the history curriculum team, will coordinate the progress of the plan. Feedback will be sought on implementation of the plan.

### **Review**

This plan will be reviewed by staff and pupils in January 2016. The special duties post holder with responsibilities for history will conduct the review and lead the curricular team in implementing any changes. All changes will be ratified by the BOM and the staff.

### **Ratification and Communication:**

On ratification of this plan by the staff and the BOM, this plan will be communicated to all teachers through distribution and will become part of the Pleann Scoile.

This plan was ratified by the BOM on

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### **Reference Section:**

Primary school curriculum; History (2014)

Primary School Curriculum. Your child's learning; Guidelines for Parents The What, Why and How of children's learning in primary school, NCCA DVD 2006

### **Useful Websites**

Source of Local History;

National Archives

[www.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.nationalarchives.ie)

National Museum

[www.museum.ie](http://www.museum.ie)

National Library of Ireland

[www.nli.ie](http://www.nli.ie)

Heritage Council

[www.heritagecouncil.ie](http://www.heritagecouncil.ie)

An Comhairle Leabharlanna

[www.askaboutireland.ie](http://www.askaboutireland.ie)

### **Other Websites:**

Primary school support programme

[www.pcsp.ie](http://www.pcsp.ie)

School development planning support

[www.sdps.ie](http://www.sdps.ie)

National council for curriculum assessment

[www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie)

ENFO

[www.enfo.ie](http://www.enfo.ie)

TeachNet Ireland

[www.teachnet.ie](http://www.teachnet.ie)

Scoilnet

[www.scoilnet.ie](http://www.scoilnet.ie)

BBC

[www.bbc.co.uk/history/forkids](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/forkids)



Ratified by the B.O.M.

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

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_