St. John Bosco Junior Boys’ School

History Policy

**Introduction**

This policy was formulated by the Principal and teaching staff of St. John Bosco Junior Boys’ School in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Primary School History Curriculum. As a whole school plan it will guide and organise the teaching of History as part of the SESE curriculum. This plan will also serve as the basis for all long and short term planning in History in Junior Infants, Senior Infants and First Class. It will also inform new and temporary teachers of the approaches and methodologies used in the teaching of history in our school.

**Rationale**

We believe that SESE, of which the study of History forms an important dimension, 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. It also allows the child to learn and practise a wide range of skills and to acquire open, critical and responsible attitudes to the world around them. It is our intention that this plan will benefit teaching and learning within our school.

**Vision**

It is the mission of St. John Bosco Junior Boys’ School to enable each child to reach his full potential. We are aware of the contribution SESE makes towards the harmonious development of the child. It is our vision that through the History curriculum in our school will we enable the children to understand the present by exploring the past before they can begin to look towards the future.

We hope to provide opportunities for children to experience a rounded historical education that allows each child to work as historians in order to understand the world in which they live and to celebrate the many differences which exist in our

world. We believe that through the history curriculum we can explore these differences by investigating the lives and stories of people from the locality, Ireland and other countries of a variety of different religious and ethnic backgrounds.

The history curriculum provides opportunities for the child to explore investigate and develop an understanding of life in the past and their interpretation of it. The children’s interpretation of life in the past is a central theme of our history curriculum.

Our school is located on the Navan Road within walking the Phoenix Park. The Phoenix Park is one of the largest walled city parks in Europe and was established in 1662 by James Butler, The Duke of Ormond on behalf of King Charles 11. Aras an Uachtarain the residence of the President of Ireland dates from 1750 and is located in the centre of the park adjacent to the U.S Ambassador’s residence which was built in 1774. Many other historic buildings including Farmleigh House and Ashtown Castle as well as a number of historic monuments are located in the Phoenix Park. The office the Apostolic Nunciature is also located on the Navan Road. As our school is situated in an area of great historical importance and interest, it is our vision that we will open the children’s minds to their rich local heritage.

**Aims**

We endorse the aims of Social, Environmental and Scientific Education as outlined in the SESE History Curriculum

* To develop an interest in and a 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.
* 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 the 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.

**Curriculum planning**

Teachers are aware of the need to

* Adopt a pace of Curriculum development which is both challenging and realistic
* Ensure that the whole-school process links with and influences, teaching and learning in individual classrooms
* Monitor the implementation of the plan with particular references to the learning outcomes for children

**The structure of History curriculum for Infant classes**

The structure of the history curriculum for infant classes is presented in two sections

* A skills section entitled ‘**Working as an historian’** which describes the historical skills which children should develop as they encounter historical topics
* A number of **strands** which outline the historical periods and topics which may be included in the history programme. The topics within each strand are referred to as **strand units**

**Strands and strand units for Junior and Senior infants**

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| --- | --- |
| **Strands** | **Strand units** |
| Myself and my family | * Myself
* My family
 |
| Story | * Stories
 |

**Strands and strand units for First Class**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strands** | **Strand units** |
| Myself and my family | * Myself
* My family
* When my grandparents were young
* Games in the past
* Feasts and festivals in the past
 |
| Change and continuity | * Continuity and change in the local environment
 |
| Story | * Stories
 |

Each teacher is familiar with the strands, strand units and content objectives for their own class. Junior Infants, Senior Infants and First class have to cover all strands and strand units every year. Equal emphasis is given to each strand and strand unit. A full range of objectives will be covered during each year. Lessons may be delivered through a thematic approach in the context of other SESE subjects and also through integration with the SPHE and R.E curricula, therefor making the learning experiences more holistic and meaningful for the child.

We will ensure that the stories selected will encompass a range of perspectives and will:

* Introduce the children to the lives of women, men and children from a range of social, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds.
* Come from local, national and international contexts

We endorse the emphasis placed on the exploration of personal and family history at this level and we are also conscious of the sensitivities some of these topics will require.

| **Strand and strand units** | **Junior and Senior infants** | **First Class** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Strand: Myself and my family****Strand Unit: Myself** | * Explore and record significant personal events and dates
* Collect and examine simple evidence
* Compare photographs, clothes worn or toys used at different ages, noting development and things which have stayed the same
 | * Explore and record significant personal events and dates
* Collect, discuss and compare simple items of evidence from own past
* Construct simple personal timeline or storyline.
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| **Strand Unit: My family or The family of a person known to me** | * Become aware of and identify the members of the family
* Compare relative ages: old/older, young/younger
* Collect simple evidence
* Explore and discuss hoe family members care for each other
* Discuss developments in the life of the family and things which have stayed the same
 | * Explore and record significant features, events and dates in the past of the child’s family and extended family
* Compare ages of family members: old/older, young/younger
* Discuss and record significant family events
* Collect, explore and discuss a range of simple evidence, noting changes and developments and items which have stayed the same
* Compile simple family tree, scrapbook or timeline
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| Strand Unit: When my grandparents were young **(First class only)** |  | * Explore and record aspects of the lives of people when his/her grandparents were young
* Listen to adults talking about their own past
* Collect and/or examine simple evidence in school or in a local museum
* Compare lives of people in the past with the lives of people today, noting differences and similarities
* Learn songs and dances or play games from the past
* Record material on appropriate timeline
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| **Strand unit: Games in the past (First class only)** |  | * Explore and record traditional and non-formal games, especially those common in the locality and those know to parents or grandparents
* Collect information on rules, traditions, songs or rhymes associated with the games
* Handle, collect or reconstruct articles used in such games where possible
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| **Strand Unit: Feasts and festivals in the past** |  | * Explore and discuss the origins and traditions of some common festivals
* Listen to, discuss, explore and record associated stories, legends, games and songs
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| **Strand: Change and continuity****Strand Unit: Continuity and change in the local environment** |  | * Visit, explore and become aware of elements in the local environment which show continuity and change
* Listen to and record memories of older people about such places
* Compare photographs, drawings and simple accounts of the site in the past with the site now
* Use simple work directives, work cards or trail leaflets
* Record findings through drawings and other art work, modelling, photographs, information and communication technologies
* Use appropriate timelines
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| **Strand: Story****Strand Unit: Stories** | * Listen to , discuss, retell and record through pictures and other simple writing activities, some stories from the lives of people who have made a contribution to local and/or national life and to the lives of people in other countries in a variety of ways
* Become aware of the lives of women, men and children from different social, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds, including the lives of ‘ordinary’ as well as ‘more famous people’
* Listen to local people telling stories about their past
* Discuss the chronology of event (beginning, middle, end) in a story
* Express or record stories through art work, drama, music, mime and movement and using information and communication technologies
* Display storyline pictures showing episodes in sequence
 | * Listen to , discuss, retell and record some simply told stories from the lives of people who have made a contribution to local and/or national life and to the lives of people in other countries through technological, scientific, cultural and artistic activities as well as those who have contributed to social and political developments
* Become aware of the lives of women, men and children from different social, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds, including the lives of ‘ordinary’ as well as ‘more famous people’
* Listen to local people telling stories about their past (where possible)
* Listen to, discuss, retell and record a range of myths and legends from different cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds in Ireland and other countries
* Distinguish between fictional accounts in stories, myths and legends and real people and events in the past
* Discuss chronology of events (beginning, middle, end) in a story
* Discuss the actions and feelings of the characters
* Express or record stories through simple writing, art work, drama, music, mime and movement and using information and communication technologies
* Display storyline pictures showing episodes in sequence
* Use appropriate timelines
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**Skills and Concepts Development**

Each teacher is aware that the curriculum provides for the development of a growing range of historical skills and concepts and the aspects of working as a historian that apply at each class level.

Strategies that we will use in each classroom to develop the History skills include the following:

**Junior Infants and Senior Infants -Skills and concepts development**

**Working as an historian**

* **Time and Chronology**- To become aware of and discuss the sequence of events in simple stories about the past and record sequences of events in personal or family history and in stories using simple timelines.
* **Using Evidence-** Encounter some simple historical evidence.
* **Communication-** Communicate an awareness of stories from the past in a variety of ways.

**Strategies for Junior and Senior Infants**

At infant level strategies we may 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 timelines
* Using simple evidence: artefacts from own personal past: clothes, toys, birthday cards and photographs from their own personal past
* Allowing children opportunities to communicate an awareness of stories about the past in a variety of ways such as listening to and retelling stories, using drama, art work and ICT.

**First class -Skills and concepts development**

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**- To begin to distinguish between the past, present and future and to begin to develop an understanding of chronology through exploring and recording simple sequences and also by placing historical objects or pictures in historical sequence.
* **Change and Continuity**- To explore instances of change and continuity especially in personal life, in family and local history.
* **Cause and Effect-**To discuss the reasons why some events happened and some of their consequences.
* **Using Evidence-** To examine a range of simple historical evidence and begin to distinguish between fictional accounts in stories, myths and legends and real people and events in the past.
* **Synthesis and Communication-**To communicate an awareness of stories, people and events from the past in a variety of ways
* **Empathy-** Imagine and discuss the feelings of characters in stories from the past

**Strategies for First Class**

Strategies we may 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.

**Approaches and Methodologies**

The Primary School History Curriculum states the use of a broad range of classroom approaches and methodologies is the key to successful teaching and learning. We will endeavour to use a wide variety of approaches and methodologies when teaching History. Text books and work cards may also be used to support a lesson.

The approaches adopted should create a learning environment where

* Hands – on discovery is encouraged.
* Links with the environment are fostered.
* Children have an opportunity to work together, share ideas and communicate their findings.
* Children should be allowed the excitement of finding out for themselves.
* Children are encouraged to pose their own questions.

The nature of the strands and strand units themselves necessitates the use of a variety of teaching methods.

**Key Methodologies**

We adapt and modify activities so that they meet the needs of all children in the class. We plan to use the six central methodologies of the Primary School in the teaching of History

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

**In addition to the central methodologies we will use the methodologies specific to History namely**

* Story
* Personal and family history
* Using artefacts-visitors bringing artefacts e.g butter churn
* Drama and role-play
* Using pictures and photographs and newspaper archives
* Use of the environment – Phoenix Park
* Oral evidence-questionnaires,( interviews with special visitors )
* Documentary evidence
* Use of ICT

At present, due to the location of our school, we actively use our local environment. We will continue to make further use of this immediate resource by developing SESE trails for use with each class grouping. We will continue to build up resources and artefacts, pictures and photographs for other strands of the curriculum.

**Linkage and Integration**

We acknowledge that linkage and integration are recommended within the SESE curriculum. We hope to make a link between our history topics in so far as possible for the class levels. Teachers will explore possibilities for linkage across the History curriculum and will note such opportunities in their long and short term plans. The stories, which we have chosen, link to specific strand units e.g. Clothes and The Emperor’s New Clothes.

We agree that history makes an important and distinctive contribution to the development of the child and that historical education also compliments the growth of the child’s geographical and scientific learning. With this in mind, we will ensure to explore possibilities to integrate the SESE subjects. Certain themes are integrated and explored as a whole school approach e.g Harvest time, food and farming, St Brigid and St Patrick. Local studies may be integrated with geography, English and visual arts.

At certain times of the year we have a whole school approach to a particular theme e.g. Autumn- when we study stories and instances of change and continuity associated with harvest time, food and farming, St Brigid ,St. Patrick and St. John Bosco. These particular themes are explored by all the classes in the school to celebrate feast days. We celebrate Halloween by having a fancy dress day and tell stories and identify local traditions associated with this festival.

**Assessment and Record Keeping**

As in all areas Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning in SESE. Assessment in History must seek to measure and report the child’s progress and achievements in all aspects of the curriculum. We will assess the following:

* Progress in children’s knowledge about the past
* Children’s ability to use and the development of historical skills
* Development of children’s attitudes, interests and critical thinking skills

**As a staff we have discussed the purposes of assessment in history and reached a shared understanding of the assessment tools we will use.**

These will include

* Teacher observation
* Teacher designed tasks
* Telling and re-telling of events and stories
* Oral, written and pictorial accounts and descriptions of sites visited or people interviewed
* Construction of timelines varying from simple episodes in a story, lines to more complex lines of historical periods
* Work cards or activity sheets
* Role play or dramatizing a conversation or event
* Speculating on the feelings and emotions of others so as to create a spoken or written account (integration with English)
* Model making
* Drawings
* Results of the child’s independent historical research
* Work samples, portfolios and projects
* Feedback from pupils and parents

Using a range of these learning activities means that assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process and that the child’s progress is assessed in the context of the historical material with which he is familiar

**Children with Different Needs**

We are aware of the distinct role history can play in the harmonious development of each and every child. We will endeavour to ensure that all children have the opportunity to experience a rounded historical education. In the same way as we make provision for individual difference in every 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:

* Making an effort to create opportunities for hands on practical activities
* Using a mixture of whole class teaching, focused group work and paired work.
* Employing a variety of methodologies in the classroom
* More able pupils will be encouraged to carry out research in certain topic areas
* Offer a variety of recording methods

We endorse the emphasis the History curriculum places on the exploration of personal and family histories at all levels and are very conscious of the sensitivities some aspects of these topics may require. In instances where it would be insensitive to explore a child’s own personal and family history we will consider the substitution of the personal and family history of another person. The curriculum unit allows for this within the strand unit- ‘My family or a family of a person known to me’.

**Equality of Participation and Access**

History is part or the SESE curriculum and is taught to all children within the school regardless of their age. We recognise the contribution of ordinary people to history and we will place emphasis on the roles of everyday people in history.

We will endeavour to adapt the teaching and learning to meet the needs of all the children in our school e.g. by use of alternative resources, ICT and visual aids.

**Organisational Planning**

**Timetable**

In keeping with the recommendations in the Primary School Curriculum Introduction a minimum of two and a quarter hours will be allocated to SESE per week for infant classes and three hours per week for First class.

On occasion, time will be blocked as appropriate. This might occur when:

* Working on a project
* Exploring the local environment
* Devising and undertaking a local trail

Teachers will consider the use of discretionary curriculum time for SESE when appropriate.

**Resources**

Our historical resources are stored in the Library. Following an audit of our resources we identified certain items and recommended packs that we needed to purchase.

 **Health and Safety**

In their planning of activities, teachers will be mindful of safety issues. They will also explain the reasons for safety measures and discuss any implications with the children. Children will always be encouraged to consider safety for themselves, others, the environment and the resources they use, when undertaking activities in a history lesson.

When planning for History, consideration is given to the following

* Hidden dangers if the children are moving around the classroom or on fieldwork in the local environment
* Storage facilities for necessary resources.
* Access to equipment and transportation of equipment and artefacts
* Adequate space for children to sit or stand.
* Appropriate volume levels when using audio equipment and ICT.

**Individual Teacher’s Planning and Reporting**

All work completed by the teachers is documented on a Cúntas Miosúil (monthly record sheet) which are stored on The Naz drive central computer system. All teachers will use the Whole School Plan, yearly plans and the History Curriculum strands and strand units to inform their classroom planning. Teachers also keep long and short term plans in their individual planning folders.

**Parental Involvement/** **Community Links**

We encourage parental involvement particularly when a parent has a skill or interest in a particular area. Parents send in photographs and artefacts and help with other aspects of the history curriculum when they are asked to do so.

We have identified a number of individuals, groups and agencies in our local community who may be able to support our history programme e.g. Ashtown castle

The local community supports the history curriculum in many ways such as an annual invitation for first class pupils to visit Ashtown castle and avail of a guided tour of the building.

**Places of Historical Interest**

Our local area is of immense historical value, linking with our history curriculum, we have appended our history environmental audit. We are very fortunate that our school is located on the Navan road and so we can actively explore our local environment. Places of historic interest around our area and beyond include:

* St John Bosco JBS and the senior boys’ school
* Our Lady help of Christians parish church
* Mary help of Christians GNS
* Aras an Uachtarain
* Ashtown castle
* The US ambassador’s residence
* Farmleigh House
* Mc Kee Army Barracks Blackhorse Avenue
* Dominican Convent Cabra
* Garda Headqurters, Garda Depot, Phoenix Park
* The Papal monument, Phoenix Park

**Success Criteria**

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

* Evidence that pupils are engaging in studies from personal to local, national and international history
* That history is defined as an attempt to reconstruct and interpret the past as well as the past itself
* Our yearly and classroom planning is based on the Whole School Plan
* There is a balance between skills and content
* Development of historical skills throughout the classes
* Integrated themes are being developed across the school, using a whole school approach. e.g. History of our local area-The Navan Road. Story- St Brigid, St Patrick
* Use of timelines throughout the school
* Classes engaged in outdoor observation and trails of the local environment
* Photographs, displays, use of artefacts and evidence in classes
* Procedures outlined in this plan consistently followed throughout the school
* Children’s feedback
* Teacher/parent feedback
* Inspectors’ suggestions/feedback

**Implementation and Review**

The Principal is responsible for the implementation of the History programme as part of the SESE curriculum in St. John Bosco Junior Boys’ school. Class teachers are responsible for the implementation of the History programme for their own classes.

It will be necessary to review this policy on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the SESE/History curriculum in our school. Any amendments will be noted and acted upon. This review will be carried out by all teaching staff.

**Ratification and Communication**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in November 2013

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Chairperson BOM

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_