

# ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL MAGHERY



# WORLD AROUND US POLICY

Produced by Staff of St Mary's: April 2020

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## **Policy Statement**

This WAU policy is based on the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum document (2007) which is the starting point for planning a school curriculum that meets the needs of individual children. Within these requirements we at St. Mary's Primary School aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum so as to prepare our children for a rapidly changing world. We seek to encourage the holistic development of those pupils entrusted into our care. We provide a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the demands of the NI Curriculum and offers our pupils rich and varied contexts to acquire knowledge and to develop skills which are essential to learning in all aspects of life.

We are a caring school, where we strive to ensure all stakeholders feel valued, and are aware of the important contribution each one has to make, thus providing a culture for the development and dissemination of good practice. The whole school community shares this common goal.

At St Mary's we set high standards in respect of attainment and behaviour and we expect our pupils to achieve these. We encourage our children to develop the key personal qualities of self-esteem, tolerance, consideration and respect for others. We provide a safe learning environment where the health, safety and emotional well-being of everyone in our school is of the utmost importance.

## **What is the 'World Around Us'?**

Children are naturally curious and often ask profound questions about themselves and the nature of the world around them. The purpose of this area of learning is to find age appropriate answers to some of these big questions from the perspectives of geography, history and science and technology. (page 83 N.I. Curriculum Document)

The World Around Us is one of the six Areas of Learning in the Northern Ireland Curriculum. It focuses on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in Geography, History, Science and Technology. St. Mary's Primary School aims to retain the best of current practice within the three traditional subject areas, while developing a topic/theme based approach to this area of learning, and making relevant connections across all areas of learning, while ensuring breadth and balance.

The statutory curriculum for World Around Us is structured as follows:

### **Foundation Stage:**

The World Around Us *including* Geography, History and Science and Technology

### **Key Stages One & Two:**

The World Around Us *through the contributory elements of* Geography, History and Science and Technology

The **World Around Us** is presented as four inter-related strands that connect learning.

- **Interdependence**
- **Place**
- **Movement and Energy**
- **Change Over Time**

### **Three contributory elements within the World Around Us:**

**Geography** explores the relationship between the earth and its people through the study of the environment, place and space. It develops knowledge of places and environments throughout the world, an understanding of maps and a range of investigative and problem solving skills both inside and outside the classroom Children should develop knowledge and understanding of their place in the world, other places, and the processes which affect the people, conditions and life in that place.

They should explore ideas about people, jobs, the weather and the environment both locally and globally and begin to consider their part in maintaining a sustainable world.

**History** is concerned with the concepts of sequence and time and with evidence which allows us to find out what happened in the past. The concepts of chronology, change/continuity, empathy and cause and effect will be developed through investigation of life in the past.

Children should gain an awareness of their past and changes which have occurred over time through examining evidence, looking at photographs, watching TV and multimedia clips and listening to stories.

Children will recognise the importance of evidence in giving a picture of the past but will understand that there can be different interpretations of this depending on how it is viewed.

**Science and Technology** aims to stimulate a child's curiosity in finding out why things happen in the way they do. It teaches methods of enquiry and investigation to stimulate creative thought. Children learn to ask scientific questions and begin to appreciate the way science will affect their future on a personal, national, and global level.

Children should have opportunities to develop the skills of Science and Technology and to develop awareness of the relevance and importance of Science and Technology in everyday life in finding out about themselves, the environment, the material and physical world.

### **Aims**

- To foster an enjoyment in studying the world around us
- To enable children to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in Interdependence, Place, Movement and Energy and Changes over time
- To develop the pupils' knowledge, understanding and identity with our local area
- To encourage them to develop a sense of care and responsibility for the place they live in

- To progressively extend their knowledge, understanding and awareness of other people and their places near and far
- To have a definite progression and continuity from year to year in the acquisition of skills, concepts, knowledge and understanding
- To recognise the cross-curricular value of World Around Us as a vehicle for: application and development of language in general and technical vocabulary in particular the development of talking and listening, numeracy and ICT skills
- To develop attitudes such as co-operation, independence, tolerance, a sense of curiosity and enquiry, good working habits, perseverance, self-confidence and self-esteem.

### **Skills**

‘At the heart of the curriculum lies an explicit emphasis on the development of skills and capabilities for life-long learning and for operating effectively in society. Through opportunities to engage in active learning contexts . . . children should develop **Cross- Curricular Skills** (in Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT) and **Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities**’ (page 5 NIC).

Within St. Mary’s Primary School, we also develop Geography, History and Science skills through the World Around Us. **(These skills are listed in Appendix 1)** While many of the skills will be developed incidentally, we also plan for the development of subject specific skills when appropriate.

### **Planning Approaches**

The WAU programme will be implemented at a level appropriate to the needs of the children in the context of our school and will also provide opportunities for pupils to explore their world in the context of home, school, the local area and the wider world. All planning is based on the statutory requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. We will also use the Ideas for Connected Learning, Thematic Units and other guidance material from CCEA and E.A. in our planning. Whilst initial planning is for the pupils, at all stages children will be encouraged to become active participants in the planning/ learning process.

### **Planning for Progression and Continuity**

Planning for the WAU builds on the earlier experiences of children and continues to help them to explore the world they live in. At Foundation Stage, skills and concepts are developed during play and other planned activities relevant to the children’s interests and experiences. Careful observation informs the planning of future learning experiences within the World Around Us.

We ensure that the overall programme of learning in any one year group, and across the key stages, is broad and balanced and that there is continuity and progression in children’s learning. We are adopting ‘a spiral approach to the World around Us so that concepts, knowledge and skills are introduced without undue repetition or significant gaps and are reinforced in a variety of contexts’ (page 85, NIC).

## **Connected Learning**

We emphasise the totality of the children's learning across the curriculum by making meaningful links across the learning areas. We encourage children to transfer understanding and skills from one context to another, allowing them to practise and apply the skills they have gained.

World Around Us planning aims to promote:

- Good investigations and the development of children's enquiry skills.
- Good use of ICT to support teaching and learning.
- Effective use of the school/local environment, educational visits and visitors to the classroom
- Progression in key aspects of geography, history and science and technology.

## **Learning and Teaching**

In St. Mary's, Learning and Teaching approaches provide suitably challenging opportunities for all pupils to take part in lessons fully and effectively. Learning experiences are active, practical and enjoyable. We make use of a wide range of teaching methods balancing whole class, group and individual activities to engage children in effective learning. There is a clear focus on Active Learning across all year groups in keeping with whole school policy. In the Foundation stage children experience much of their learning through well planned and challenging play. Children have opportunities to make choices and decisions, developing their own ideas and interests, either as starting points for learning activities or pursuing a topic in more depth. They are supported in taking risks in their efforts to succeed and are actively involved in planning, carrying out and reflecting on their work within the World Around Us Learning Area.

## **Assessment**

Assessment in WAU, as in all areas of learning, will be used to promote, enhance and deepen the children's learning. It involves all methods normally used to appraise the children's learning, either individually or in groups. The outcomes from these assessments can then be used to identify the progress which pupils make in relation to the processes, skills, understanding and knowledge outlined in the NI Curriculum. We take account of Assessment for Learning strategies and allow this formative assessment to help and guide planning. The key reasons for assessment within WAU will be to:

- enhance performance, self-esteem and self-confidence
- promote greater resilience when faced with challenges
- increase independence
- develop a positive climate for learning

## **Inclusion**

Within our school the World Around Us forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Children will be helped to access this Learning Area using a range of learning styles, visual, auditory and kinaesthetic. They are able to record and demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways according to their learning needs and preferences. Children with exceptional ability will have access to more demanding aspects of the WAU and increased resources may be required.

## **Learning in the Outdoors**

We use our school grounds to provide the pupils with an outdoor environment in which to learn. Our pupils have opportunities to develop skills and concepts in an outdoor learning environment where they will:

- Become more aware of, more observant in and more responsive to their surroundings
- Develop an approach to careful observation, accurate recording and thoughtful analysis
- Encourage an interest in environmental issues
- Foster a sense of wonder and discovery

Children will have the opportunity to study aspects of their own immediate world, including different features of town and countryside and make comparisons between local and wider world issues.

## **Health and Safety**

We enable pupils to have access to the full range of World Around Us activities. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure it is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

There will always be elements of risk and uncertainty as children engage in active learning. The NI Curriculum document states:

'All activities must be taught within a safe environment and children must be made aware of safe practice at all times' (page 84, NIC).

For WAU activities, we assess and manage risks with reference to the EA Guidance.

## **Risk Assessments**

Staff will access the current school file which supplies a range of risk assessments appropriate to the activity or use the EA online portal for alternatives. ***(See Appendix 2). Please note that this is a generic Risk Assessment. There are a choice of suitable Risk Assessments in a staff folder located in the Staff Room for staff to access contingent of risk and on Google Shared Drive.***

Staff also access EA Guidance "Educational Visits for the Interim Guidance 2017." (Appendix 3)

## **WAU Coordinator's Role and Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the World Around Us coordinator to:

- Monitor the implementation of the World Around Us scheme to ensure continuity and progression throughout the school.
- Negotiate, in accordance with the whole school Learning and Teaching policy, the place of WAU within the SDP.
- Lead the Monitoring and Evaluating of WAU via Teachers' eight weekly planners and Yearly Planners.
- Develop and disseminate knowledge and expertise of WAU in the context of the whole school policy on CPD.
- Advise and guide colleagues with regard to quality classroom practice.
- Maintain and amend the agreed WAU policy in collaboration with teachers and Principal in line with SDP.
- Promote and disseminate the policy within school. Undertake monitoring to include lesson observations, planning, and teacher evaluations.
- Ensure that the area of learning is properly resourced in terms of acquisition, safe storage and access.
- Liaise with appropriate advisory services

## **Monitoring and Review**

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff. Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in Geography, History and Science and Technology within the World Around Us is the responsibility of the WAU coordinator.

The work of the WAU coordinator also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of this Learning Area, being informed about current developments, and providing a strategic lead and direction.

## **Resources**

We are currently developing resources for all WAU topics/themes in the school. We keep some essential equipment and practical materials in central areas which are easily accessed by all staff. Class teachers will supplement these resources with their own (and children's) materials. The library contains a comprehensive supply of topic and reference books and computer software is available to support children's individual research. We also make use of our school Poly-tunnel, wormery and other outside facilities to support learning and teaching within WAU. We also avail of educational trips where appropriate to WAU topics.

**Appendix 1 Geography, History and Science and Technology skills**

Foundation Stage	Learning Intention (We are learning . . .)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To begin to have a sense of the world around them</li> <li>• To become familiar with concepts such as fair/not fair, the past, my place</li> <li>• To use our senses to find out about our world</li> <li>• To stop to look closely and carefully</li> <li>• To use a magnifying glass, digital microscope</li> <li>• To record in a variety of ways</li> <li>• To make suggestions when planning what to do</li> <li>• To use simple subject specific language</li> <li>• To begin to have a sense of the passage of time</li> <li>• To be aware of how to find out about the past</li> <li>• That we can find out by exploring</li> <li>• To begin to ask questions relevant to our explorations</li> <li>• To recognise change in our own lives</li> </ul>

Key Stage One	<i>As for Foundation Stage and</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To begin to have a sense of how geography, history, science and technology help us to understand our world</li> <li>• To begin to ask more focussed questions around our observations</li> <li>• To make simple predictions and give reasons for these</li> <li>• To recognise and begin to explain why tests are fair/not fair</li> <li>• To classify according to simple differences</li> <li>• To recognise patterns in the natural and built environment e.g. Spring growth, house types etc.</li> <li>• To interpret information from simple maps</li> <li>• To begin to plan what to do</li> <li>• To follow a structured enquiry</li> <li>• That we may use all senses to explore and survey the natural and built environments</li> <li>• To use standard measures when working</li> <li>• That we can record work in a variety of ways</li> <li>• To describe what happens and explain why</li> <li>• To relate what happened to what we predicted</li> <li>• To examine evidence and opinions from a range of sources</li> <li>• To record information using simple timelines</li> <li>• To begin to understand what life was like for older people we know</li> <li>• To be aware of how people’s experiences may have influenced how they felt</li> <li>• To identify how life in other time periods is similar to, or different from, the present day</li> <li>• To begin to identify why events happened in the past</li> </ul>



<b>Key Stage Two</b>	As for Key Stage One and
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To use more precise subject specific language</li> <li>• To suggest subject specific questions using an enquiry-based approach</li> <li>• To record and present information in appropriate formats</li> <li>• To use different ways to find out about our world e.g. exploration, survey, fair test</li> <li>• To make predictions based on previous knowledge To design and carry out a fair test</li> <li>• To make observations noting close detail and to be able to use microscope</li> <li>• To make observations taking account of the need for care and accuracy</li> <li>• To make decisions about what, when and how to measure with increasing accuracy</li> <li>• To draw conclusions and make comparisons from our work</li> <li>• To sort and classify according to more complex similarities and differences, offering explanations</li> <li>• To begin to relate cause with effect</li> <li>• To structure a simple enquiry</li> <li>• To investigate an issue from different viewpoints</li> <li>• To develop a sense of place through the use of maps, plans, photographs and atlases etc.</li> <li>• To examine evidence and opinions from a range of sources and distinguish between fact and opinion</li> <li>• To order and sequence information to demonstrate understanding</li> <li>• To create timelines within a broad historical period</li> <li>• To identify change and continuity within a period studied and suggest reasons</li> <li>• To appreciate that there may be different points of view and different causes and consequences of an event or situation</li> </ul>

**RISK ASSESSMENT**

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<b>School</b>		<b>Activity</b>	Educational visits - General	<b>Review Date:</b>	
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<b>Assessment completed by:</b>					
<b>Name:</b>		<b>Date:</b>		<b>Signature:</b>	

Hazard	Persons Exposed and How	Current Controls	Further Action Necessary	Action by Whom	Action by When	Completed
<b>Inadequate planning and organisation</b>	Group members  Accidents/injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group leaders will have read and will follow The Educational Visits Guidance</li> <li>All staff will be appropriately trained, experienced and qualified to competently fulfil their leadership roles and responsibilities</li> <li>All leaders will meet prior to departure to discuss and share risk assessments and implement management plans</li> <li>All leaders will be made aware of their roles and responsibilities prior to departure</li> <li>Leaders will brief young people regarding hazards and involve them in the risk assessment and management process</li> <li>Parents will be informed of arrangements prior to visits and written consent obtained</li> </ul>				
<b>Exposure to adverse effects of weather</b>	Group members  Cold injury, heat injury, over exposure to sun etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff will consider possible weather conditions, plan appropriate programmes, and ensure that young people are aware of appropriate clothing and equipment required (inc. hat, suncream etc.)</li> <li>Specialist personal protective clothing and equipment will be made available to group members if appropriate</li> </ul>				

Hazard	Persons Exposed and How	Current Controls	Further Action Necessary	Action by Whom	Action by When	Completed
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff will plan and make provision for young people who may not bring suitable kit, including arranging check-up before departure and/or bringing spares</li> <li>• Staff will obtain daily weather forecast and adjust plans accordingly</li> </ul>				
<b>Young person lost or separated from group</b>	Group members Trauma Upset Injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group leader will ensure that supervising staff are competent and understand their roles</li> <li>• Staffing ratios will be appropriate and sufficient</li> <li>• Leaders will use suitable group control measures (e.g. buddy systems, large groups split in small groups each with named leaders, coloured caps etc)</li> <li>• Staff will ensure that young people are fully aware of itinerary and supervision/meeting arrangements</li> <li>• Young people will be briefed as what to do if separated from group</li> <li>• Leaders will conduct regular head counts, particularly at arrival/departure points, and when separating and reforming groups</li> </ul>				
<b>Leaders take their own children or other family members on visit</b>	Group members Inadequate supervision Accident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If staff family members or volunteers accompany group, the supervision and care of young people will not be compromised</li> <li>• Staff ratios will be amended accordingly to take account of split responsibilities</li> <li>• The Deputy Leader will be fully briefed and competent to take over full leadership if required</li> </ul>				
<b>Visit returns after school hours</b>	Group members Accident Upset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/guardians and young people will be fully informed regarding collection arrangements after a visit</li> </ul>				

Hazard	Persons Exposed and How	Current Controls	Further Action Necessary	Action by Whom	Action by When	Completed
	Lost Abduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people will not be left alone, and will be properly supervised after a visit until they have been safely collected or dropped-off</li> <li>• A clear pre-planned procedure will be agreed for young people who are not collected</li> <li>• A young person will not be left alone with just one member of staff</li> </ul>				
<b>Emergencies</b>  Inadequate procedures	Group members  Delayed help/support Deterioration of condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school has an emergency plan for dealing with an incident on a educational visit</li> <li>• At least one leader will carry a mobile phone (with ready charged battery and call credits if “pay as you go” )</li> <li>• Staff will carry sufficient cash or cards for pay-phones (mobiles do not work in some areas due to weak signal)</li> <li>• Leaders will have immediate access to a copy of Emergency Procedures, including all emergency contact numbers</li> <li>• Leader and Headteacher/Emergency Home Contact will have instructions regarding what to do in an emergency</li> <li>• Leaders will have an appropriate level of first aid training and at least one leader will have a current first aid qualification</li> <li>• A complete first aid kit (and travel sickness equipment) will be checked and taken with the group</li> <li>• The first aid kit will be easily accessed by all leaders</li> <li>• Contact details of parents, group leader, school and, if appropriate, head teacher/school contact’s after-hours number will be held by group leader and school contact</li> </ul>				

Hazard	Persons Exposed and How	Current Controls	Further Action Necessary	Action by Whom	Action by When	Completed
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders will brief young people regarding emergency procedures</li> <li>• Leaders will prepare a contingency plan in the event of an accident or breakdown (inc. safety of group, and planned means of onward travel or return home)</li> </ul>				
<b>Activities in, on or near water</b>	Group members  Drowning Hypothermia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All accompanying staff are made aware of the particular and higher risks associated with many water based activities</li> <li>• Activities involving water will be carefully pre-planned and appropriate risk assessments and control measures put in place, including availability of life saving equipment and competent, trained staff.</li> <li>• Staff will know the swimming ability and confidence of group members and will plan activities accordingly</li> </ul>				
<b>Special medical, behavioural needs of specific young people</b>	Group members  Injury Illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to date information regarding special/medical needs of all group members will be obtained</li> <li>• Advice will be taken from SENCO, doctor, and parents/guardians, if appropriate</li> <li>• Individual needs and associated specific risks will be identified, recorded and shared with all relevant personnel</li> <li>• Young people will have written parental consent and will inform leaders if medication taken or required</li> <li>• Young people (and parents in letter) will be reminded to bring personal medication if required</li> </ul>				

Hazard	Persons Exposed and How	Current Controls	Further Action Necessary	Action by Whom	Action by When	Completed
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit leader(s) will carry information regarding medical conditions and any relevant medication</li> <li>• Staff will check before departure that young people and/or leaders carry (and store securely) any necessary medication</li> <li>• Staff will be fully briefed regarding those with known special/medical needs, and trained to treat/respond accordingly</li> <li>• The programme/itinerary will be arranged with due regard to the mobility and special needs of all members of the group</li> <li>• Young people will be briefed to eat/drink sensibly and to have sufficient sleep</li> <li>• Particular care will be given to ensure safe access and involvement for all (e.g. for wheelchair users), especially with regard to transport, accommodation and activities</li> </ul>				
<b>Misbehaviour Misconduct</b>	Group members  Accidents Injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staffing supervision will be sufficient and appropriate to manage the group safely</li> <li>• Young people will be briefed regarding conduct/behaviour required</li> <li>• Advice will be taken from SENCO and other staff if there are concerns over behaviour</li> <li>• Individual risk assessments will be carried out if required</li> </ul>				
<b>Periods of remote supervision</b>	Group members  Accident Separation from group Abduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group members will be assessed as sensible and competent</li> <li>• Parents/guardians will be informed of arrangements and give written consent</li> <li>• Individuals for whom indirect supervision is not considered suitable will be more directly supervised.</li> </ul>				

Hazard	Persons Exposed and How	Current Controls	Further Action Necessary	Action by Whom	Action by When	Completed
	Attack by stranger Obtaining illegal substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group members will be briefed regarding conduct/behaviour required</li> <li>Group members will be briefed regarding response if approached inappropriately by a stranger</li> <li>Young people will remain in groups or buddy systems at all times, including visits to toilets</li> <li>Young people will be briefed what to do and how to contact staff if required in an emergency</li> <li>Young people will be briefed regarding procedure if lost/separated</li> <li>Young people will have ID cards with contact details of accommodation, school and leader mobile number</li> <li>All leaders and young people will be briefed clearly regarding rendezvous times and places</li> <li>Staff will understand that they are still responsible and be fully briefed with respect to supervisory responsibilities</li> </ul>				
<b>Allergic reactions</b> <b>Poisons</b> <b>Stings, bites</b>	Group members  Trauma Illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff will be briefed regarding group members with known allergies, and will be trained to treat accordingly</li> <li>Staff will check that young people and/or leaders carry any necessary medication</li> <li>Known high risk situations will be avoided, and appropriate avoidance action taken if necessary</li> </ul>				

