

St. Nathy's College

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GEOGRAPHY

SUBJECT PLAN

2011-2012

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St Nathy's College Mission Statement

St Nathy's College was established as a centre of learning. We strive to achieve this within a fostered Christian environment which equally provides for the faith and personal development of each student.

All of our school endeavours and activities are directed towards these objectives



Mission Statement

As teachers of Geography, we aim to develop in students:

- An appreciation and concern for the diversity of the natural environment, and an understanding of human and physical processes.
- A respect for different cultures through an understanding of their development and their inter-relationships.
- A strong interest in their own surroundings and in the world as the home of mankind;
- An understand of some of the relationships between people, environments and sustainable development;
- A range of skills and competencies necessary to carry out geographical enquiry and to interpret geographical information.



Programme and Levels

The following Geography programmes are available:

Junior Cert to all levels

Leaving Cert to all levels

Transition Year Programme



Subject Aims

- To acquire an awareness and understanding of the processes involved in the physical, social and economic environment.
- To develop a range of practical, social, evaluation and communication skills which are of geographical and general significance.
- To encourage in students a sensitive awareness of peoples, places and landscapes, both in Ireland and elsewhere.
- To provide opportunities to foster and build upon students' natural curiosity about their own and other people's social and physical environments.
- To promote a sensitive awareness of the environment.



Subject Objectives

Students of Geography should be able to:

- Acquire a knowledge, an understanding of concepts and develop skills and attitudes through the geography topics dealt with in class.
- Acquire information and develop an understanding of:
 - examples of physical environmental phenomena and processes relating to Ireland and elsewhere.
 - examples of social, cultural and economic phenomena and processes relating to Ireland and elsewhere.
 - the nature and diversity of physical and cultural landscapes in Ireland and elsewhere.
- Gain an understanding of the key concepts, e.g. location, spatial distribution, area association, density, pattern, region and change over time.
- Acquire, develop and practise skills in the following:
 - Map interpretation
 - Figure interpretation
 - Photograph analysis
 - Numerical skills and calculation
 - Picture interpretation
 - Figure drawing
 - Map drawing
 - Fieldwork
 - Sampling
- Develop positive attitudes towards themselves, others and their environment. Such attitudes include:
 - Willingness to perceive and evaluate natural and cultural phenomena from the point of view of others.
 - Appreciation of social, cultural and environmental diversity.
 - A responsible attitude towards the exploitation and conservation of resources.



Subject Co-ordinator

Séamus Curley

Subject Teachers

Ronan Brett

Ronan Curran

Séamus Curley

Enda Forde

Jacqueline Mullen

Anne O'Brien

Jimmy Tuohy



Time allocation

1 st Year	2 classes per week @35/40 minutes each
2 nd Year	3 classes per week @35/40 minutes each
3 rd Year	4 classes per week @35/40 minutes each
4 th Year	5/6 classes per week @35/40/45 minutes each
5 th Year	5/6 classes per week @35/40/45 minutes each
Transition Year	2 classes per week @35/40 minutes each



Options Structure

Options Structure :

- Classes are generally of mixed ability - Higher Level course is pursued until the Mock examinations in Third Year - at that stage students wishing to follow Ordinary Level course can do so using past examination papers.
- Geography is compulsory for all students in Junior Cycle.
- Students are placed in mixed ability classes in First Year.
- All First Years follow an agreed Geography programme. A variety of teaching methods are used to cater for their needs.
- At the end of first year all students take a common exam in Geography. Based on the results of this exam, and exams in the other compulsory subjects, classes are formed for second year.
- All students in second year have the opportunity to study Geography at Higher level and are encouraged to do so. The Higher Level course is pursued until the Mock examinations in Third Year - at this stage students wishing to follow Ordinary Level course can do so using past examination papers.
- Geography is one of the choice subjects at Senior Level. All Leaving Certificate students, who wish, may take Higher Level Geography.
- In practice a student's decision is influenced by the advice of the teacher they had in third year, by Junior Certificate results and by the level of Geography studied for Junior Certificate.



Timetabling

1 st Year	2 single class periods per week
2 nd Year	3 single class periods per week
3 rd Year	4 single class periods per week
4 th Year	3/4 single classes & 1 double class per week
5 th Year	3/4 single classes & 1 double class per week



Grouping of Students

Students are allocated to option subjects according to their preference.

There is no streaming in place for Geography classes, pupils are grouped on a mixed ability basis and the subject is open to boys and girls.

In practice, any student at either junior or senior level can take a higher level paper at the state examinations.

At exam level both higher and ordinary levels are catered for in the one class.



Student Access to Subject Level

All students have access to all levels in Geography. There is no restriction on access to the subject. Students are encouraged to take Geography at the highest level according to their ability. After Junior Cert, students have the option to continue studying the subject in Senior Level. Generally, all students who choose the subject are accommodated.



Class Organisation

Geography is taught in general classrooms, usually one seat behind each desk with desks in pairs, or two seats behind one table. This arrangement encourages paired work if required, and allows for group work, as tables and desks are not in a fixed position. Depending on the methodologies used, students usually sit at desks and work individually.



Textbooks and Course Materials

Junior Certificate: *New Complete Geography*– 4th edition by Charlie Hayes (Gill & Macmillan).

Junior Certificate examination papers in Third Year

Junior Certificate syllabus

Marking schemes

Teacher's notes

Powerpoint presentations

Homework/notes copy

Leaving Certificate: *Horizons*, 1 – 1st Edition by Edwina Hynes & Tara Fitzmaurice (Folens)

Horizons 2 (Elective 5, Options 7 & 8)

Leaving Certificate examination papers in Year 5

Leaving Certificate syllabus

Marking schemes

Teacher's notes

Powerpoint presentations

Homework/notes copy



Planning for Students with Special Needs

The Geography department tries to meet the needs of all students and is particularly sensitive to the Special Educational Needs of students.

This is achieved by:

- Consulting regularly with Resource and Learning Support teachers regarding the needs of individual students.
- Referring continually to Individual Education Plans of students and work with them.
- Modifying teaching methods, content, questions, homework and examinations.
- Attempting to deliver content in a manner that is easily understood.
- Ensuring that all classes are inclusive and that affirmation of students takes place.
- Exposing all students to all aspects of the course.



Cross-curricular Planning

The Geography faculty has close links with several faculties in the school. These include: History, CSPE, Business Studies, Religion, Science, Computers, Mathematics and Agricultural Science.

Planning between the Geography department and other subject departments is mainly informal.



Subject Planning for a Culturally Diverse Society

Geography is a subject that examines culturally diverse societies and encourages respect and tolerance.

Students from different cultural backgrounds are encouraged to relate their own experience through the Geography of their own country, which can be achieved through project work.

Particular care is taken when teaching Irish Geography.

Language skills can be developed through classroom discussion and homework.



Effective Teaching Methodologies

Individual class teachers tailor teaching methods to suit the needs of their students, while following a general departmental programme and methodology.

Teachers teach through:

- Choosing material appropriate to students' ability
- Instruction
- Brainstorming
- Puzzles
- Questions and Answers
- Discussion
- Group Work
- Themed Teaching
- Fieldwork Investigation
- ICT
- Project Work
- Role-play
- Workbook

- Diagrams and Sketch Maps
- Paired Work
- Regular Tests

Range and Variety of Resources

- Textbooks
- Photocopied Material
- Atlases
- Maps
- Digital Projector
- Laptop



Provision for Health and Safety Requirements

- A copy of the school's Health and Safety Statement is kept in the staffroom, which includes a section on Field Trips. Geography teachers are advised to make themselves familiar with this document.
- Fire exit doors clearly marked and fire drills carried out yearly.
- Accident report sheets kept in Office and filled in and filed in the event of an accident.
- The school arranges for a Health and Safety Consultant to visit the school and talk to the staff on issues of concern.
- Subject Department Teachers are then taken on a tour of their classrooms and potential hazards are highlighted and discussed.
- The Principal is informed immediately on the results of such inspections and remedial action is taken as soon as possible.



Curriculum Content

- Year 1 Introduction to Ordnance Survey Maps → Scale – Area – Distance – Location
Direction
Introduction to Aerial Photographs
Physical Geography – Plate Tectonics – Volcanoes – Earthquakes –Rocks
Mass Movement –Mechanical Weathering – Chemical Weathering
Population & Human Migration
- Year 2 Physical Geography → Rivers – Glaciation or Coastal Studies – Soils
Ordnance Survey Maps – Aerial Photographs
Social Geography → Settlement – Urbanisation – Ordnance Survey Maps
Inequality
- Year 3 Physical Geography → Weather – Climate
Economic Geography → Primary, Secondary & Tertiary Economic Activities
Ordnance Survey Maps – Aerial Photographs
Examination Papers
- Year 4 Core Unit 1 – Ordnance Survey Maps – Aerial Photographs
Core Unit 2
Introduction to the Geographical Investigation
- Year 5 Elective Unit – Ordnance Survey Maps – Aerial Photographs – Geographical
Investigation
Optional Unit – Examination Papers



Homework Procedures

- Written homework given each night along with work to revise/learn.
- Homework is written into students' homework journals.
- Homework is monitored and feedback given to parents via journal e.g. comments written by teacher into journal if homework is not done – to be signed by parents.
- Students are advised on good study/homework practice by teachers.



Assessment Procedures

- Written homework is given in almost every class. This is often given so as to consolidate what the student has learned in class and thereafter enhance academic achievement.
- Liaison with Learning Support Teachers takes place to devise suitable homework tasks for students with special needs.
- Students are advised to revise course content regularly.
- Year 1 Examinations at November, Christmas and Easter.
Common examination at the end of Year 1.
Other examinations at the discretion of teachers.
- Year 2 Examinations at November, Christmas, Easter and Summer.
Other examinations at the discretion of teachers.
- Year 3 Examinations at November and Christmas.
Mock/Pre-Junior Certificate examination.
Other examinations at the discretion of teachers.
Junior Certificate.
- Year 4 Examinations at November, Christmas, Easter and Summer.
Other examinations at the discretion of teachers.
- Year 5 Examinations at November and Christmas.
Mock examination/Pre-Leaving Certificate Examination
Other exams at the discretion of teachers.
Leaving Certificate.



Record-keeping procedures

- Class teachers keep their own records of examination results, assessments, attendance, homework etc.
- Student assessment reports are passed on to the next Geography teacher if there is a change in personnel.
- Examination results are officially recorded in school report books. These are retained by the school.
- Grades are kept on file in the school and sent to the student's home twice a year.
- A record of in-service courses attended by teachers is kept in the school office



Teacher In-Career Development

- Some teachers of Geography have attended in-service in the revised Leaving Certificate Geography course
- In-service on stress and classroom management.
- In-service on First Aid

- Completion of technology courses
- First-aid training
- Attendance at examiner's marking conferences