

ST. NATHY'S COLLEGE

HISTORY DEPARTMENT

**SUMMARY
STATEMENT OF POLICY AND AIMS
2009 – 2010**

INTRODUCTION

St. Nathy's College was established to act 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 our school endeavours and activities are directed towards these objectives.¹

As a History Department we are mindful of our role as educators and we set out to nurture the unfolding minds and critical thinking of our students within the ethos of St. Nathy's College. We strive to inspire an interest in History and to impart knowledge and understanding of the past together with the skills necessary for the study and practice of History – ever conscious of the responsibility and the importance of the historian as the keeper of humanity's memory.

In establishing aims and objectives we take into account the nature of the discipline we teach, the needs of students and staff and the challenges and opportunities offered by curricular and technological change.

During this special year of commemoration and celebration the History faculty will participate in a series of events to mark the bicentenary of St. Nathy's College 1810 – 2010.

¹ St. Nathy's College Mission Statement.

CONTENT

The following is the course content for each year group:

First Year

How we find out about the past

- The work of the Historian
- The work of the Archaeologist
- Our Roots in Ancient Civilisation
- Castle, Church and City
- Renaissance (as time allows)

Second Year

Studies of Change

- The Renaissance
- The Voyages of Exploration and Discovery
- The Reformation and Counter-Reformation
- Plantations in Ireland
- Revolutionary Movements – America, France and Ireland
- From Farm to Factory

Third Year

Understanding the Modern World

- Political Developments in Ireland in the late 19th and in the 20th Centuries
- Social Change in Ireland in the 20th Century
- International Relations in the 20th Century

Fifth Year

Later Modern Ireland

- Topic 3: The pursuit of Sovereignty and the Impact of Partition 1912-1949
- Topic 5: Politics and Society in Northern Ireland 1949-1993

Later modern Europe

- Topic 3 Dictatorship and Democracy in Europe, 1920 - 1945
- Topic 4 Division and realignment in Europe, 1920 - 1992

Sixth Year

Later modern Ireland

- Introduction
- Later modern Ireland
 - Topic 3: The Pursuit of Sovereignty and the Impact of Partition 1912 - 1949
 - Topic 5: Politics and Society in Northern Ireland
- Later modern Europe and the Wider World
 - Topic 3: Dictatorship and Democracy in Europe 1920-1945
 - Topic 6: The United States and the wider world 1945-1989

The Research Study

We note and value as especially significant the exploration of History and the Historian as the principle which underlines both the syllabus and our engagement with it as students and teachers. Documents-based study and the research study give students a real sense of how to approach historical research and enable them to develop a critical intelligence and the skills of historical method.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

The word History derives from the Greek *historia* meaning what has been learned from enquiry. The past does not yield up its secrets of its own volition: the sources of which our knowledge depends must be interrogated by historians before they can provide evidence of past events and past societies.²

The teaching and study of History involves the development of historical thinking, concepts and skills. These are taught both incidentally and explicitly in class. Skills acquired at junior cycle are reinforced and extended at senior cycle when students are challenged to become more sophisticated and critical in their thinking.

ORGANISATION

All classes are of mixed ability. First and Second years have three classes of History per week. Third years have four and senior students have five.

At junior cycle History is a compulsory subject and all students have access to the curriculum at both ordinary and higher levels. At senior cycle students have access to History as a choice subject and all have the facility to follow the course at higher or ordinary level. Emphasis is placed on creating and maintaining an ordered, positive classroom environment which is pleasant for both students and staff to work in and which encourages a sense of belonging, involvement and co-operative learning.

The value of History as discipline and its relevance to careers and the world of work are promoted and we work with the Guidance Counsellor in this area. We are conscious that as a school we function within the broader community of Ballaghaderreen and its hinterland. We value the history of the area and seek to raise students' awareness of their heritage.

SUBJECT PLANNING AND METHODOLOGY

Teaching methodology is wide-ranging and encompasses the varied teaching styles of teachers and the varied learning styles of students. It is designed to impart the necessary knowledge and to engage students in active, interesting and structured learning.

² History Guidelines for Teachers (NCCA, 2004)

TEXTBOOKS AND COURSE MATERIALS

Textbooks for Junior Cycle

Living History 1 (EdCo) – First, Second Year

Living History 2 (EdCo) – Third Year

Textbooks for Senior Cycle:

- Later Modern Ireland

Topic 3: *The Pursuit of Sovereignty and the Impact of Partition*

Topic 5: *Politics and Society in Northern Ireland 1949 – 1993*

- Later Modern Europe and the Wider World

Topic 3: *Dictatorship and democracy in Europe, 1920 – 1945*

Topic 4: *Division and realignment in Europe, 1920 - 1992*

Topic 5: *The United States and the World, 1945 – 1989*

HOMEWORK

Homework is an important element in the learning process and provides students with opportunities to consolidate and extend work done in class. It involves not only written assignments but also over learning, study and research as well as revision for examination.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment of student attainment and progress takes place a number of times each year. There are end of term examinations at Christmas, Easter, and Summer. Mid-Term assessments take place at Halloween and Shrove. Pre-Leaving Certificate and Pre-Junior Certificate examinations are held in February/March. All first years sit a common end of

year examination, drawn up collectively by first year teachers and based on pre-planned, agreed course content.

ICT

ICT can make a valuable contribution to the study of History and the World Wide Web provides an important research tool for teachers and students. The manual *ICT and History* may be obtained from The National Centre for Technology in Education, Dublin City University, Glasnevin, Dublin 9, 'phone 01 700 8200, email: info@ncte.ie, web address: www.ncte.ie. A copy is available in Room 15C.

Students are introduced to relevant sites in line with the guidelines outlined on p. 53-54 of *History: Guidelines for Teachers* (NCCA). They are familiar with www.scoilnet.ie and www.hist.ie.

The faculty looks forward to participating in the opportunities offered by the Broadband initiative.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

School Health and Safety Guidelines apply to all History classes and teachers are familiar with School Safety Policy. Fire escape routes and assembly points are displayed in each classroom. Students are required to behave with proper regard for the safety of themselves and of others. If students are taken out of school, school procedure and guidelines for out-of-school activities must be strictly adhered to. Proper care and supervision must also be exercised in line with school policy on internet use.

History Department/Team, St. Nathy's College

Autumn 2009.

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