



WHEATFIELD

PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

Believe ★ Achieve ★ Succeed

Wheatfield Primary and Nursery School World Around Us Policy



WHEATFIELD
PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL
Believe ★ Achieve ★ Succeed

Introduction

Children are naturally curious and often ask profound questions about themselves and the nature of the world around us. The purpose of this Area of Learning is to help children to explore and find age-appropriate answers to some of these big questions from the perspectives of Geography, History and Science and Technology. This policy is based on the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum document which is the starting point for planning a school curriculum that meets the needs of individual children. With these requirements it is our aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for the children of Wheatfield Primary School, preparing them for a rapidly changing world.

What is 'The World Around Us'?

'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. 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 three contributory elements within the World Around Us are:

Geography

This 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. Our children will be provided with opportunities to 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 will 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.



WHEATFIELD
PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL
Believe ★ Achieve ★ Succeed

History

This 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 will be provided with opportunities to 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. Our 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

This 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. Our children will learn to ask scientific questions and begin to appreciate the way science will affect their future on a personal, national, and global level. They will 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. It is the exploration and understanding of the children's surroundings and the world in which they live.

'The World Around Us' is split into four interrelated strands:

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

As the strands are context free in nature, they give the teachers flexibility and the choice to move the theme they are studying in whatever way they and the pupils choose.

It is our aim to try and retain good practice from the three subject areas within the format of 'The World Around Us'. In developing a thematic approach which connects with all areas of the curriculum, it is important that we ensure breadth and balance in our teaching.

Aims

The purpose of learning about The World Around Us within the Northern Ireland Curriculum is to provide opportunities for the children:

- To develop self-confidence and self-esteem in expressing and sharing their thoughts and ideas and developing an appreciation of the beauty and wonder of the world;
- To develop an awareness of themselves and their place in the world, as well as of other places, cultures and the environment;
- To develop an awareness of Information and Communication Technology and its impact on society and the world around them;
- To develop knowledge, understanding and skills in the context of the 'World Around Us';
- To promote understanding, respect and appreciation for the world in which they live and their immediate environment;
- To acknowledge and appreciate a sense of the past, changes which have occurred and how these affect the world today;
- To develop an appreciation of the relevance and importance of Science and Technology in everyday life;
- To develop in children the skills of enquiry, investigation, analysis, evaluation and presentation.

Through the teaching of the 'World Around Us' all children will develop skills in the following areas:

- Literacy, Numeracy and ICT;
- Managing Information;
- Thinking, Problem Solving and Decision Making;
- Being Creative;
- Working With Others;
- Self-Management.

(See Appendix 1 for links to Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities)



WHEATFIELD

PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

Believe ★ Achieve ★ Succeed

Planning Approaches

'The World Around Us' programme will be implemented at a level appropriate to the needs of the children in the context of our school whilst providing opportunities for pupils to explore their world in the context of home, school, the local area and the wider world. Whilst initial planning is for the teachers, pupils will be encouraged to be active participants and contribute to the planning process. All planning will be based on the statutory requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

Our planning for 'World Around Us' should be directed towards promoting the following:

- good investigations and the development of children's enquiry skills;]
- good use of ICT to support teaching and learning;]
- effective use of the environment, educational visits and visitors;]
- progress in all three subject areas which make up 'World Around Us'.

Planning for Progression and Continuity

Planning for 'World Around Us' builds on the earlier experiences of children and continues to help them explore the world in which they live. At Foundation Stage, skills and concepts are developed during Play Based Learning and other planned activities relevant to the interests and experiences of the children. Observation informs the planning of future experiences within 'World Around Us'. The development of knowledge and understanding is important. When planning for progression teachers should consider:]

- the relevance of the knowledge selected;
- the breadth and depth of knowledge appropriate to the age and ability group;
- the understanding that is intended. It is important to ensure that the overall programme of learning in any year group and across the key stages is broad and balanced and that there is continuity and progression in children's learning.



WHEATFIELD

PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

Believe ★ Achieve ★ Succeed

Connected Learning

Flexibility has been built in to allow teachers to connect the elements of Geography, History and Science and Technology where appropriate. Where possible, links should be made with the other learning areas:

- Language and Literacy;
- Mathematics and Numeracy;
- The Arts;
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding;
- Physical Education.
- Good use of ICT to support learning and teaching.

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 practice and apply the skills they have gained.

Learning and Teaching

In Wheatfield Primary School, learning and teaching approaches provide suitably challenging opportunities for all pupils to take part in all 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 the children in effective learning. In the Foundation Stage children experience much of their learning through well planned and challenging play. This is further developed through well planned and challenging Activity Based Learning experiences in Key Stage One followed by Enquiry Based learning in Key Stage 2. Throughout the school, children have opportunities to make choices and decisions, developing their own ideas and interests, either as starting points for learning activities or pursuing a theme 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' area.

Assessment

- Assessment in the 'World Around Us', as in all areas of learning will be used as a means of promoting, enhancing and deepening children's learning. It involves all methods normally used, either individually, in a group and



WHEATFIELD

PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

Believe ★ Achieve ★ Succeed

whole class. The key reasons for assessment in 'World Around Us' will be to:

- enhance performance, achievement, self-confidence and self-esteem;
- promote greater resilience when faced with challenges;
- Increase independence;
- develop a positive climate for learning
- Our teachers' professional judgement is an important component of the day-to-day teaching happening in our classrooms. A range of assessment techniques are necessary to assess a pupil's full range of ability. Some techniques include:
 - Observations
 - Questioning
 - Presentations
 - Discussion
 - Role play
 - Fieldwork
 - Group work

Inclusion

At 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 can 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. Outdoor Learning The outdoors provides children with one of the best and most effective environments to learn. As Margaret McMillan (c1925) says, 'The best kept classroom and the richest cupboard are roofed only by the sky'. 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



WHEATFIELD

PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

Believe ★ Achieve ★ Succeed

- 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 should 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.

The school grounds greatly enhances our outdoor learning experiences. Our pupils get the opportunity to develop skills and concepts in this outdoor area. Pupils will also be responsible for assisting with the planting, upkeep and maintenance.

There are 2 trained Forest School Leaders on the Teaching staff, Mrs McKittrick and Mrs Batchelor, who incorporate Forest School lessons into their teaching, encouraging teaching and learning outdoors through Forest Schools. This will be disseminated to other classes annually.

Links with Outside Agencies

Classes go on trips which can be linked into themes covered in 'World Around Us' and the pupils' learning is greatly enhanced by visitors to school who have knowledge related to the theme being studied.

Health and Safety

In the event of pupils taking part in activities or trips outside the classroom, it is important to carry out risk assessment prior to the activity to ensure that it is safe and appropriate for all pupils. Should extra help (adults/ supervisors) be required, staff must consult the school's list of vetted adult helpers.

World Around Us Coordinator Role and Responsibilities

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

- to draw up an action plan for the development of the World Around Us in our school;
- monitor the running of the World Around Us scheme to ensure continuity and progression throughout the school;
- negotiate the place of World Around Us within the SDP and be involved in Monitoring and Evaluating;



WHEATFIELD

PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

Believe ★ Achieve ★ Succeed

- advise and guide colleagues regarding appropriate classroom practice;
- formulate policy / schemes of work in association with teachers and Principal, in line with SDP;
- promote and disseminate the policy within school;
- undertake monitoring to include lesson observations, examination of planning, and carry out evaluations;
- ensure that the area of learning is properly resourced in terms of acquisition, safe storage and access.

Resources

As far as possible, staff will use their own classroom resources which they have requisitioned. Pupils may be asked to bring any items which they are able to, from home. A very significant resource will be our outdoor learning environment as well as the local environment.

Monitoring and Review

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff.

This policy will be reviewed as appropriate, considering new legislation/ recommendations.



WHEATFIELD

PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

Believe ★ Achieve ★ Succeed

Appendix 1

Stages	Learning Intentions (we are learning...)
Foundation	<p>To use our senses to find out about our world (TPD)</p> <p>To stop to look closely and carefully (MI)</p> <p>To use a magnifying glass, digital microscope (MI)</p> <p>To record independently in a variety of ways (MI)</p> <p>To make suggestions when planning what to do (BC)</p> <p>To use simple subject specific language (TPD)</p> <p>To begin to have a sense of the passage of time (MI)</p> <p>To be aware of how to find out about the past (TPD)</p> <p>To use our senses to find out about our world (TPD)</p> <p>To stop to look closely and carefully (MI)</p> <p>To use a magnifying glass, digital microscope (MI)</p> <p>To record independently in a variety of ways (MI)</p> <p>To make suggestions when planning what to do (BC)</p> <p>To use simple subject specific language (TPD)</p> <p>To begin to have a sense of the passage of time (MI)</p> <p>To be aware of how to find out about the past (TPD)</p> <p>That we can find out by exploring (BC)</p> <p>To begin to ask questions relevant to our explorations (BC)</p> <p>To recognise change in our own lives (MI)</p>



WHEATFIELD

PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

Believe ★ Achieve ★ Succeed

Stages	Learning Intentions (we are learning...)
Key Stage One	As for Foundation Stage and....
	<p>To begin to have a sense of how geography, history, science and technology help us to understand our world (MI)</p> <p>To begin to ask more focussed questions around our observations (BC)</p> <p>To make simple predictions and give reasons for these (TPD)</p> <p>To recognise and begin to explain why tests are fair/not fair (TPD)</p> <p>To classify according to simple differences (TPD)</p> <p>To recognise patterns in the natural and built environment e.g. Spring growth, house types etc. (MI)</p> <p>To interpret information from simple maps (MI)</p> <p>To begin to plan what to do (MI)</p> <p>To follow a structured enquiry (MI)</p> <p>That we may use all senses to explore and survey the natural and built environments (MI)</p> <p>To use standard measures when working (MI)</p> <p>That we can record work in a variety of ways (MI)</p> <p>To describe what happens and explain why (TPD)</p> <p>To relate what happened to what we predicted (TPD)</p> <p>To examine evidence and opinions from a range of sources (TPD)</p> <p>To record information using simple timelines (MI)</p> <p>To begin to understand what life was like for older people we know (BC)</p> <p>To be aware of how people's experiences may have influenced how they felt (BC)</p> <p>To identify how life in other time periods is similar to, or different from, the present day (TPD)</p> <p>To begin to identify why events happened in the past (TPD)</p>



WHEATFIELD

PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

Believe ★ Achieve ★ Succeed

Stages	Learning Intentions (we are learning...)
Key Stage Two	As for Key Stage One and That history, geography, science and technology help us to understand our world (MI) To use more precise subject specific language (TPD) To suggest subject specific questions using an enquiry-based approach (MI) To record and present information in appropriate formats (MI) To use different ways to find out about our world e.g. exploration, survey, fair test (BC) To make predictions based on previous knowledge (TPD) To design and carry out a fair test (TPD) To make observations noting close detail and to be able to use microscope (MI) To make observations taking account of the need for care and accuracy (SM) To make decisions about what, when and how to measure with increasing accuracy (TPD) To draw conclusions and make comparisons from our work (TPD) To sort and classify according to more complex similarities and differences, offering explanations (TPD) To begin to relate cause with effect (TPD) To structure a simple enquiry (TPD) To investigate an issue from different viewpoints (BC) To develop a sense of place through the use of maps, plans, photographs and atlases etc. (MI) To examine evidence and opinions from a range of sources and distinguish between fact and opinion (TPD) To order and sequence information to demonstrate understanding (TPD) To create timelines within a broad historical period (MI)



WHEATFIELD

PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

Believe ★ Achieve ★ Succeed

	<p>To identify change and continuity within a period studied and suggest reasons (TPD)</p> <p>To appreciate that there may be different points of view / different causes and consequences of an event or situation (BC)</p>
--	--