

**HOLY FAMILY PRIMARY SCHOOL  
MAGHERAFELT**



**WORLD AROUND US**

**POLICY STATEMENT**



## **Introduction**

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. Within these requirements it is our aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for the children of Holy Family Primary School preparing them for a world which is rapidly changing.

## **What is The World Around Us?**

The World Around Us (WAU), one of the six Areas of learning in the Curriculum, consists of three contributory elements: Geography, History and Science and Technology. It focuses on the pupil's development of knowledge, skills and understanding in these three contributory elements. It is the exploration and understanding of the children's surroundings and the world in which they live. WAU is split into four inter-related strands that connect learning:

- INTERDEPENDENCE
- PLACE
- MOVEMENT+ENERGY
- CHANGE OVER TIME

Holy Family Primary School is committed to designing learning experiences within World Around Us using a theme based approach. We will ensure a balance of these contributory elements through the delivery of the four inter-related strands in all key stages. o 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 foster and develop the skills of enquiry, investigation, analysis, evaluation and presentation.

## **Skills**

Through opportunities to engage in active learning contexts children will develop Cross-Curricular Skills in Communication, Using Mathematics, Using ICT and Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities.

### **Planning Approaches**

The WAU 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 wider world.

Whilst initial planning is for the pupils, 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 WAU will 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 WAU

### **Principles and Strategies of the teaching and learning of WAU**

#### **Principles;**

The World Around Us is important because:

- The skills and knowledge of WAU can be applied to everyday life
- It is the knowledge essential to our understanding of the world around us, interpreting and making sense of it
- It is both interesting and enjoyable providing an awareness of other places and peoples

#### **Strategies;**

- The emphasis is on an integrated approach with links between the three WAU areas as well as the other curriculum areas.
- The curriculum is organised on a theme based approach integrated into yearly programmes throughout the school.
- Emphasis is on stimulating the minds of children to promote the need to 'know the reason why'
- Make the subject real offering opportunities for direct experience, practical activities and exploration.
- Use a range of teaching approaches, whole class/group/individual etc.

### **Planning For Progression and Continuity**

Planning for WAU 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 and other planned activities relevant to the interests and experiences of the children. Observation informs the planning of future experiences within WAU.

We ensure that the overall programme of learning in any one year group and across the key stages is broad and balanced with input from the pupils so that continuity and progression are evident in learning.

### **Inclusion**

In our school WAU is part of a broad and balanced curriculum which is inclusive of all pupils regardless of ability. Opportunities will be provided for all pupils to make progress. We will do this by setting suitable challenges responding to the different or additional needs of the children in our school.

### **Assessment**

Assessment in WAU, as in all areas of learning will be used as a means of promoting, enhancing and deepening children's learning. It involves a variety of methods used to appraise the children's learning either individually/in a group/whole class. 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 N.I. Curriculum. We take account of Assessment for Learning strategies and allow this formative assessment to help and guide planning. The key reasons for assessment in WAU will be to:

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

### **Outdoor Learning**

The outdoors provides children with one of the best and most effective environments to learn.

We are presently improving the potential for outdoor learning through the development of several outdoor learning areas within the school grounds.

Our pupils will get the opportunity to develop skills and concepts in these outdoor areas. Members and representatives of our Eco-Committee will play a part in the planning and development of this and they will have responsibility for assisting with the upkeep and maintenance of these outdoor areas.

### **Links with Outside Agencies**

It is advised that all classes go on trips which can be linked into the topics covered in WAU. Close relationships exist with a number of local schools, District Council and businesses. STEM and STEP projects are undertaken by the teachers in KS2.

### **Health and Safety**

In the event of pupils taking part in activities/trips outside the classroom a risk assessment will be carried out prior to the activity to ensure that it is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

### **Monitoring and Review.**

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff. The monitoring of standards of work and quality of teaching within WAU is the responsibility of the Co-ordinator.

### **Resources**

As far as is possible, staff will use all relevant, available resources from the Northern Ireland Curriculum and also from other connected sources.