

KILLERMONT PRIMARY



ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES 5 – 14 POLICY

February 2005

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES 5-14 POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Killermont Primary school endorses the Environmental Studies 5-14 National Guidelines, SOED 2000.
- 1.2 Learning & Teaching in environmental studies embraces the central principles of the 5-14 curriculum: breadth, balance, coherence, continuity and progression.
- 1.3 Learning and teaching in environmental studies takes place within a framework which embraces current national advice, the National Priorities and the East Dunbartonshire Council Improvement Objectives.
- 1.4 The components of environmental studies are social subjects, science and technology: Attainment outcomes are described in terms of knowledge & understanding, skills and the development of informed attitudes.

2. Rationale and Aims

2.1 Rationale

Environmental studies offers a wealth of opportunities to stimulate the natural curiosity, enthusiasm and imagination of all young learners. It provides important opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding at local and global levels of their rights and responsibilities of active citizenship. This understanding is vital to enable young people to contribute towards shaping the environment of the future.

2.2 Aims

At Killermont we aim for pupils to:

- Develop an understanding of their environment, their place within it and the factors, past and present that have shaped it
- Acquire knowledge and skills that will enable them to interact effectively within the environment in the context of home, school and their later working life
- Progressively recognise the knowledge, understanding and skills associated with social subjects, science and technology
- Develop informed attitudes and values relating to the care and conservation of the environment
- Gain an understanding of issues related to the use of resources and sustaining global development
- Become aware of the importance of active citizenship in a democracy

3. Outcomes

3.1 Time Allocation

The time allocated to environmental studies will be in line with the advice given in *Structure and Balance of the curriculum 5-14 National Guidelines*.

As indicated in the 5-14 guidelines (2000) the time allocated to environmental studies should be 15% of the curriculum which calculates at 3 ¾ hrs per week:

3.2 Learning and Teaching Approaches

A range of teaching strategies that take account of pupils' interests, previous experiences and attainment, will enhance pupils' learning. Learning and Teaching approaches will be flexible and responsive to the needs of children, taking account of different learning styles and context. In environmental studies learning and teaching will take place in a variety of settings, within and beyond the classroom. Teachers should make every attempt to promote learning beyond the classroom by embarking on field trips and local visits. This will allow pupils to engage with their environment and see the relevance of their studies.

When planning effective learning and teaching, Killermont Primary School will ensure that:

- the purpose of the learning will be clear to pupils
 - learning goals and targets will be shared with pupils
 - pupils will be involved in the planning and management of their learning where appropriate
 - learning will maintain an element of challenge
 - pupils will take responsibility for their own learning and will be offered choice where appropriate
 - pupils will be involved in active learning
 - teaching will be interactive – this will involve teachers informing, explaining, describing, listening, modelling, questioning, demonstrating and supporting
 - children will be encouraged to collaborate with both the teacher and pupils to enhance their learning
- *Please refer to Learning & Teaching Policy*

3.2.1 Planning for Environmental Studies

The progress of pupils' knowledge & understanding, skills and attitudes is of vital importance and should be planned for addressing all the attainment outcomes for the three components (see appendix 1 - topic grids).

In forward planning files, teachers should ensure that for each topic there is:

- an outline of knowledge & understanding targets
- skills targets at the appropriate level with assessment focus highlighted
- an overview of informed attitudes levels A-F, with teaching focus highlighted
- a topic planner (see appendix 2– pro forma of planning sheet)
- two assessment sheets, one for skills and the other for knowledge and understanding (see appendix 3- assessment sheets).

3.2.2 Scottish Dimension

Pupils should have opportunities to explore the physical landscape, the character and achievements of Scotland and its people. The topics chosen for Killermont's programme of study allow plenty of scope for investigating the Scottish dimension. These topics will encourage children to identify with the country they live in and acquire knowledge and understanding of the interwoven aspects of culture and heritage. Time should be taken to explore the wide variety of cultural contributions from other parts of the world that have influenced our country. In doing so, children will find that their learning in social subjects respects and builds on their social experience and will encourage respect, tolerance and understanding of differences within our multi-cultural society.

3.3 Pupils with Additional Support Needs

There may be at times a need for some pupils, for whatever reason, to require Support For Learning.

- *Please refer to Support For Learning Policy*

3.4 Assessment

Assessment is a continuous process which is an integral part of learning and teaching. The process of assessing pupils' progress will be set in the context of effective learning and teaching and will influence forward planning, teaching, recording, reporting and evaluating. Formal and informal assessment will be used:

- to give pupils clear and regular feedback
- to assist learners and teachers to identify the next step in the learning process which will ensure progression
- by teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of learning and teaching

Assessment may be an observed, practical, oral or written activity.

Assessment should be a positive experience for pupils and motivate them for learning. Pupils will have opportunities to evaluate their own work and to evaluate with their peers.

In Killermont a realistic approach to assessment means identifying a clear focus. This will derive from the planned topics and the results from the pre-topic assessment. Not all outcomes will need to be assessed in every topic as long as each strand is covered over time. For every topic, an aspect of knowledge & understanding and skills will be assessed.

Each area of environmental studies has a distinctive emphasis on skills, e.g.

<u>Social Subjects</u> emphasis on	ENQUIRY SKILLS
<u>Science</u> emphasis on	INVESTIGATIVE SKILLS
<u>Technology</u> emphasis on	DESIGN & MAKING

3.4 Assessment (cont'd)

It is not expected that pupils will be addressing all aspects of skills in every topic but an overall profile of skills attainment will be built up over the seven years at primary school. Teachers should refer to our strategic plan for assessing skills in environmental studies to identify each year's skill to be assessed. (See appendix 4 – strategic plan).

3.5 Recording and Reporting

Recording procedures will be in line with East Dunbartonshire Council policies. They will be manageable and will be used to monitor progress and inform learning and teaching.

Within Killermont the teacher records only pupils whose work has exceeded assessed targets or those requiring extra support. Notes should also be made regarding next steps for identified pupils and for the topic to improve. (See appendix 3- assessment sheets)

Reporting to parents will be specific and in clear language to promote effective communication between school and home. Levels A to E will be used to report progress and to determine next steps in learning. When judging a pupil's overall performance, the teacher will look across a range of work. This should take account of strengths and weaknesses across the range of strands over a period of time, rather than focusing on a single piece of work.

- *Please refer to the Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy*

3.6 Nursery/Primary/Secondary Transition

Joint planning, including cluster planning, will take place to enable environmental studies to meet the central principles of the 5-14 curriculum. Effective communication at transition stages is essential to ensure progression in knowledge and skills which takes account of prior learning and makes effective use of the knowledge of each child as a learner. Transfer of information will take place in line with East Dunbartonshire Council guidelines.

3.7 ICT

ICT will play an important role in the delivery of the environmental studies curriculum by motivating learners, supporting different kinds of learning and as a research tool. The strands that are particularly relevant to environmental studies are:

- Creating and Presenting
 - Collecting and analysing
 - Searching and researching
 - Controlling and modelling
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- *Please refer to Information Technology 5-14 Guidelines*

3.8 Staff Development

In Killermont, development needs in environmental studies will be identified through the staff development and review process and will be used to inform the planning process including the authority improvement plan and school development plan.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Management

The senior management team will manage the implementation of the school policy, paying due regard to the environmental studies curriculum, resources and staff development.

4.2 Teachers

Teachers will ensure that the policy is fully implemented and the environmental studies curriculum enhances learning and teaching and contributes effectively to raising attainment and achievement.

4.3 Parents/Carers

Parents/carers will be encouraged to and supported in playing an active role in their child's learning thereby fostering the home/school partnership.

4.4 Pupils

Pupils will be encouraged to be actively involved in their learning and to develop informed attitudes to environmental issues.

5. Resources

School Managers will ensure that schools have appropriate up to date resources to support learning and teaching in environmental studies; these will include books, pupil materials, ICT resources, practical materials, games, videos etc. School managers will ensure the responsibility for the organisation and planning of resources is clearly understood by all staff, that inventories are drawn up and resources are stored in ways that facilitate accessibility by pupils and staff. Pupils' work will be displayed appropriately to promote learning and encourage positive attitudes to environmental studies.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements of the Policy

A review of the policy will take place during 2007-2008.

Self-evaluation of the quality of learning and teaching is a fundamental responsibility of all teaching staff and a particular duty of senior staff in schools. The quality indicators described in *How good is our school? HMIE 2002*, are used for monitoring effective learning and teaching.