

What is WAU?

In the Northern Ireland Curriculum **Geography, History, and Science and Technology** are the contributory elements that form an Area of Learning called The World Around Us.

All three are statutory and need to be approached from their own unique perspective: pupils should have broad and balanced experiences in all of them.

These three elements share the same four interrelated strands: **Interdependence, Place, Movement and Energy, and Change Over Time**.

Focusing on these strands can help to remove the clutter of endless possibilities of content. They can also help pupils to make connections within and across their learning, bringing meaning and relevance to their experiences in school and in life.

Aims of WAU

Our aims in teaching WAU within the Revised Curriculum are for our children to:

- enjoy studying the world around them
- develop an awareness of themselves and their place in the world
- develop an awareness of other cultures and their impact on the environment around them
- develop their knowledge and understanding of places in local, regional, national, international and global contexts (keeping in mind our Rights Respecting School (RRS) ethos)
- explore ways in which changes have and will occur in the

- world and the effect on those who live there
- Explore sources of energy in the world and the possibilities of protecting and managing these resources.
 - Explore the positive and negative effects of natural and human events upon place and time
 - Explore why things move and how they work

In WAU as teachers, we want to begin to nurture and develop the **skills** of enquiry, investigation, analysis, evaluation and presentation. We want to develop a quest for knowledge.

STEM projects are undertaken by the teachers in primary 7 and keystage 2 actively teach science in every topic.

Through the teaching of WAU all children will develop skills with cross-curricular links in the following areas:

- Literacy/Numeracy/ICT/PDMU
- Thinking Skills/Problem Solving
- Being Creative
- Working With Others
- Self - management
- Managing information
- Decision making

Planning

WAU planning will be implemented at a level appropriate to the needs of the children in the context of our school.

It will provide opportunities for pupils to explore their world in the context of home, school, the local area and wider world (using the locality and global learning).

Pupils will be encouraged to be active participants and contribute to the planning process. (use of planning boards and KWL)

All planning will be based on the statutory requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

Our planning for WAU should promote the following:

- Good investigations and 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

WHY?

- The skills and knowledge of WAU are widely applicable 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 people

How?

- 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 into a topic based approach throughout the school.
- Our aim is to stimulate the minds of the children and promote a thirst for knowledge.
- The subject should be real - offering opportunities for direct experience, practical activities and exploration.
- We use a range of teaching approaches, whole class/group etc.
- SEN pupils have the same entitlement to WAU as all other pupils.

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.

It is important to 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 to ensure that continuity and progression are evident in learning.

Assessment

Assessment in WAU, as in all areas of learning will be used to promote, enhance and deepen children's learning. This will develop a positive climate for learning and progression. All schemes should be treated as 'working documents' which are adapting and changing to the needs and interests of the children.

Outdoor Learning

Outdoor learning provides children with a wonderful environment to learn.

We have developed outdoor learning in our nursery recently. We aim to look further at developing outdoor opportunities and learning areas within our school grounds. (using the locality)

Our pupils already get the opportunity to develop skills and concepts in outdoor areas (garden - vegetable plot) as members and representatives of our School Council and Eco Council. Pupils are also responsible for assisting with the upkeep and maintenance of areas such as the school garden with every class having a flower bed to care for.

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 secondary schools and businesses.

Health and Safety

In the event of pupils taking part in activities/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.

Resources

As far as is possible, staff will use all relevant, available resources and contact coordinators if they need further assistance.

Victoria Primary School

World Around Us Policy



