

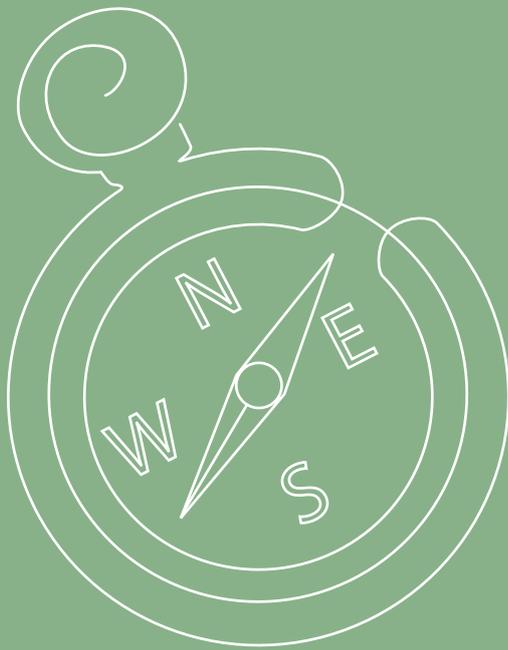
PRIMARY

Social, Environmental and Scientific Education: Geography

Guidelines for Teachers of Students with

MODERATE

General Learning Disabilities



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Introduction

For students with moderate general learning disabilities, the introduction to geography begins with the development of observation and recognition skills. These skills will help them to develop an awareness of and an interest in their surroundings, and to develop their understanding of how people contribute to and affect the environment.

Social, Environmental and Scientific Education

Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) is presented through three subject areas in the *Primary School Curriculum*. These are history, geography and science. The curriculum states that an understanding of the term 'environment' is essential to an appreciation of the nature of SESE and it offers the following:

The word 'environment' is used in this curriculum to denote the surroundings or external conditions with which an individual (human or other living organism) or community interacts. (Primary School Curriculum, 1999.)

Within this definition 'environment' is categorised into two broad groups, natural environments and human environments. While presented as three discrete subjects in the curriculum, history, geography and science are closely related and each seeks to provide for the students an understanding of one aspect of 'environment' both at local and global level.

By studying the constituent subjects of SESE, students are enabled to develop an awareness and appreciation of the natural, human, social, cultural and historical dimensions of life. They are also encouraged to develop an understanding of the physical world, the relationship of humans with their environment, and the historical process through which that relationship has grown.

Geography

Initial understanding of the **physical environment** centres on the student's immediate and local environment. This is then gradually extended to include a range of wider environments. Activities in the *Primary School Curriculum, Geography* begin with exploring and becoming familiar with the environment of the classroom, and are expanded to include the grounds around the school and, later, the local environment. It aims at familiarising the students with frequently used routes so that their awareness of and interest in routine journeys is increased. Trips outside the school environment help to stimulate the students' interest in the wider world. These wider environments may also be experienced indirectly through television, books, films, computer programs, the internet, and other media.

Developing an awareness of the **human environment** includes the awareness of being part of a group, and recognising familiar people and the role they play in the student's life. It can also be broadened to observing and understanding the roles of people in society, and having an appreciation of the way in which people use the environment. Fostering a sense of personal, class, school, and local identity enables students with moderate general learning disabilities to understand their own role and the role of others in their human environment. A central aspect is building on experiences that are already familiar to the student, and then gradually broadening those experiences.

Becoming aware of the **natural environment** is an important part of the *Primary School Curriculum, Geography*. A rich variety of flora and fauna can be explored, although students with moderate general learning disabilities will often need very structured activities to help them appreciate these sources of interest. The curriculum also seeks to alert the student to the natural phenomena that surround him/her and that influence his/her daily life.

School planning

Planning sections in the *Primary School Curriculum: Geography, Teacher Guidelines*, pages 26-39 give advice on this aspect of planning, some of which will also be applicable when planning for students with moderate general learning disabilities. The following sections outline some additional aspects of planning that may need to be considered.

Curriculum and organisational planning

The purpose and nature of geography in the school

A shared understanding of the purpose and nature of geography will help clarify for all school staff the role that it can play in the overall education of the student with moderate general learning disabilities. Discussion on the general approaches that may be adopted will promote a co-ordinated and collaborative approach to the planning, teaching and assessment of geography throughout the school. The general needs of the students in this area might be identified, and a broad plan drawn up to meet these needs. Individual student needs (such as particular mobility needs) may also warrant whole-school consideration. This will help to focus attention on the teaching resources and approaches that will be needed to implement this subject.

A broad and balanced geography curriculum

In order to provide students with a broad and balanced experience of geography, the school will need to exploit the resources the local environment has to offer. However, it will be important to address its limitations and challenges as well. The environment of a rural school can afford a wide range of experiences for students, but opportunities to know and appreciate the urban environment should not be overlooked. Similarly, students in an urban school should be given opportunities to experience the rural environment.

Many students with moderate general learning disabilities do not play an active role in their own community. The *Primary School Curriculum, Geography* can stimulate teachers and parents/guardians to explore the potential of local facilities and amenities in providing experiences for students. Getting out and about in the locality will consolidate the student's sense of belonging, and will also enable others to see these children and young adults as full and active members of the community.

The broadest possible curriculum should be offered. Learning should take place through active participation and exploration, with each student engaging in activities appropriate to his/her own ability level and particular needs. The amount of time spent on geography will vary according to the strengths and needs of each individual student, but careful school planning will ensure that time spent on this area will result in maximum benefits.

While geography makes an important and distinctive contribution to the development of the student, it also complements the growth of his/her historical and scientific learning. All three contribute to the wider social, environmental, and scientific education of the student, and their complementary roles will be reflected in the organisation of learning. The school should, therefore, plan learning in a way that provides linkages within SESE and integration with other curriculum areas, but at the same time is geography-led.

Individual schools and teachers, both mainstream and special, will choose and modify activities and learning outcomes to suit the individual learning needs of their particular students. For some students, it may be useful to use material from the *Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Severe and Profound General Learning Disabilities* and the *Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Disabilities* in order to facilitate progress, and to allow students to demonstrate achievement and experience success.

Exploration of the school environment

The *Primary School Curriculum, Geography*, involves students becoming familiar with the school, and all of the people, rooms and resources in it. It should also enable students to find their way around the school and its grounds. Wheelchair accessibility is extremely important, and general ease of mobility around the school should be facilitated. The planning process could involve placing clear trails and signs around the school that students can learn to interpret and use.

These could include

- coloured strips or 'footsteps' that are secured to the floors of corridors and that lead students to key areas

- tactile strips running at waist-height along the corridors leading to key areas such as the front door, PE hall, or dining room
- written signs on key areas accompanied by a pictorial symbol to enable students to relate to that area
- names and clear photographs of the Principal and other teachers on relevant doors.

Exploration of the local environment

The planning process should involve teachers in becoming familiar with the locality of the school, the people and communities in the area, and the human and natural geographical features to be found there. Parents/guardians can play a central role in identifying people and places that could be used in the geography programme. There may be a number of people in the locality who would be very willing to talk about their jobs, or help to organise visits to places of interest.

Contact with the community should be a two-way process.

Quite a lot of organisation is necessary in order to facilitate trips for students with moderate general learning disabilities. Some students will need transport that can safely accommodate wheelchairs. If school transport is available, it will be important to timetable weekly access for each teacher. Alternatively, regular access to suitable transport from an outside agency can be organised. Local amenities will need to be checked for wheelchair accessibility, and extra help may need to be recruited in order to provide an individual helper for each student. It may be possible to organise willing helpers from within the student's families or communities, and parents/guardians can be a valuable source of information in this regard.

Contact with the community should be a two-way process. Local people could be invited into the school and be taken on a tour of the school and grounds with help from the students, or view geography projects on the locality that were developed by the students.

The development of students' understanding of locational and directional terms is critically linked to their sense of place and spatial awareness.

Communication and language and the Primary School Curriculum, Geography

It is important that students are given opportunities to develop appropriate language and terminology associated with geography, through communicating with, and listening to, their teachers and other students during play and in other planned situations. The gradual introduction of geographical terms enables them to describe and discuss features in the environment in greater detail. Furthermore, the development of students' understanding of locational and directional terms is critically linked to their sense of place and spatial awareness. An understanding of spatial awareness will be developed through body awareness programmes, structured play activities, music and movement, and language games involving prepositions. Activities should be repeated and reinforced in appropriate contexts to allow them to establish links between words and the features and concepts they represent. For example, directional and route-finding skills could be integrated into the daily routine, so that opportunities are maximised every time students move around the school.

It is important that the student's chosen communication system (oral, signing, symbols, or pictures) is used to reinforce and extend these geographical concepts. Some students who experience communication difficulties may need to use technological aids to supplement or replace spoken communication. Appropriate provision should also be made for students who need technological aids in practical and written work.

Health and safety issues

All staff members should observe safety procedures when structuring activities, and every effort should be made to enable students to learn and to adopt safe practices. Safety procedures will need to be drawn up for field trips in the locality. Preliminary visits by teachers to the site can be used to ensure that it is accessible to all students and to identify potential hazards.

Environmental awareness and care is a cross-curricular strand common to the science and geography curricula in the *Primary School Curriculum*. In these guidelines it is addressed within the *Primary School Curriculum, Geography*, only.

Classroom planning

Many excellent ideas are to be found in the *Primary School Curriculum: Geography, Teacher Guidelines*, pages 42-47. Possible additional planning issues are referred to on the following pages.

Curriculum planning

Early geographical activities: developing a sense of place

It is important that students are given opportunities to use all their available senses to explore their environment. They should be encouraged to observe, touch, smell, and taste (where appropriate), a wide range of natural and manufactured materials. They should listen to a variety of everyday environmental sounds, and begin to build up associations on the basis of these sensory experiences.

Using and building on their experiences and memories of people and places is essential. Students learn that the rooms in which they live have different purposes, as have other houses, playgrounds, shops, libraries, etc. that they visit. Some visits, such as trips to grandparents, the dentist, or the hospital are more special than others. Adults around them point out things of interest and introduce new words, and the vocabulary of street, town or countryside begins to develop. Journeys taken regularly become familiar. Holidays allow students to experience new and contrasting places, and to extend their sense of place to include wider environments. These wider environments may also be experienced indirectly through television, books, films, stories, and other media. The student's sense of place also encompasses his/her attitudes to places and people, the sense of belonging and security in his/her home place, and the attitudes he/she displays towards people and places in other areas.

In planning geography in the classroom, the following concerns should be paramount:

- The starting point is the student's perception of his or her own personal space.
- This perception is unique to each student and may be influenced by age, gender, background, and disability.
- Students need time, space and play opportunities to develop their own concept of the world and to make sense of their experiences.
- It is important to explore feelings and opinions about places, as well as to develop geographical skills.

Organisational planning

Teachers will find excellent planning advice in the mainstream curriculum. Additional planning issues might include:

- organising the classroom, if possible, into areas with distinct purposes (a clearly identifiable play area, a clearly identifiable work area, a clearly identifiable self-care area)
- labelling areas in and around the classroom in a way that each student can understand
- creating opportunities for students to experience a range of weather conditions safely
- making alternative provision, such as signing, symbols, communication boards, and other forms of assistive technology for students who use means of communication other than speech
- organising the transport and staff needed to help carry out activities, especially those outside the classroom (See suggestions under *School planning*.)
- encouraging all staff to utilise routine movements around the school and local environment, in order to stimulate interest, understanding and independence.

Overview of the Primary School Curriculum, Geography

Skills and concepts development

A sense of place and space

- A sense of place
- A sense of space

Maps, globes and graphical skills

- Picturing places

Geographical investigation skills

- Questioning
- Observing
- Predicting
- Investigating and experimenting
- Estimating and measuring
- Analysing
- Recording and communicating

The geographical skills and concepts listed above will be developed as work is completed on the strands and strand units of the curriculum outlined below.

Human environments

- Living in the local community
- People and places in other areas

Natural environments

- The local natural environment
- Weather
- Planet Earth in space

Environmental care

- Caring for my locality

Through the *Primary School Curriculum, Geography*, the students begin to identify and communicate about a variety of places and features in the locality and about seasonal changes in the weather. Simple fieldwork skills are used to explore environments near their home or school. They begin to express opinions about the environment, and to compare one place with another. They also begin to use simple directional language or symbols, such as *up*, *down*, *forwards*, and *backwards*. Understanding that the world extends beyond their everyday experience is communicated through discussion, asking and answering questions, and drawing or participating in the making of models. Pictures and photographs are also used to communicate information, as are, for example, weather symbols on a chart. They also develop an awareness and understanding of being part of a group, of people living in different environments, and of the work they do.

A sense of place and space

Through completing the strand units the student should be enabled to

A sense of place

- remember and find where objects are at home or school
- identify and remember features within the class or in school
 - take/direct adult to the slide in the playground
 - identify members of the school community
- find his/her way around the immediate environment
 - home, classroom, play area
- show an awareness of changes in physical or human environments
 - working in a different room, new staff members
- become aware of, explore, and discuss some of the distinctive human and natural features of the locality
 - myself and my family
 - my friends
 - areas around the home
 - homes of friends and relatives
- recall features from his/her own locality
 - name, sign or otherwise indicate features he/she sees on the way to school
 - anticipate familiar landmarks
- communicate about travelling to places that are some distance away
 - the seaside, a cousin's house, on a train, to Kerry
- develop an awareness of people, features and places in other areas
 - people who live and work in the local community
 - human environments: buildings, work-places, transport
 - physical environments: rivers, seaside, mountains, caves

A sense of space

- demonstrate an understanding of simple directional instructions
 - participate in action songs and rhymes, such as 'Hokey Cokey'
- identify the position of different areas and objects in the classroom
 - know where to find his/her lunch box, coats, pencils
 - respond to requests, such as 'Go to the library'
- demonstrate some understanding of positional language
 - respond appropriately to requests such as 'Sit beside Kevin', 'Stand behind Mary'
 - use prepositional picture cards to indicate positions
- refer to or use simple locational terms, orally or by using sign
 - in, on, under, behind, beside, in front of, near, far away, next door, on my road, on my floor, upstairs, downstairs
- refer to or use simple directions within home, classroom and school settings
 - give directions to another room in the school
- give and follow simple directions to places in the immediate environment
 - places in the school building and playground
- explore directions in the classroom using simple arrow signposts
- discuss and record the relative location of familiar human and natural features in the locality
 - using positional language (for example near, in front of, in the corner)
 - in simple drawings and models
- discuss and record, in simple ways, journeys to and from places in the immediate environment
 - home, play spaces, school and classroom, shops, other locations
 - homes of relatives and friends, sports ground, holiday locations.

Maps, globes and geographical skills

Through completing the strand units the student should be enabled to

Picturing places

- make model buildings with bricks, Lego, and other play materials
- refer to simple drawings of areas
 - *play-mats of road or farm layouts*
 - *home and immediate surroundings*
 - *classroom, school and playground*
 - *other places and imagined areas (for example a route in a story such as 'Little Red Riding-Hood')*
- record areas in the immediate environment and places in stories using simple picture maps, models or photographs.

Geographical investigation skills

Through completing the strand units the student should be enabled to

Questioning

- ask questions about natural and human features in the immediate environment
 - *Who lives in this place?*
 - *What animals live here?*
 - *What will happen if I bring snow inside?*
 - *What has changed since I was last here?*

Observing

- observe natural and human features in his or her immediate environment
 - *classroom: furniture, games, display areas, teacher*
 - *school environment: hall, staff room, office, playground, Principal*
 - *features in the school locality: animals, plants, trees, roads, shops, church, football pitch, river, bridge, mountain, sea, hills, lake, beach*

- observe, compare and discuss natural and human features in the local and wider environment
 - *what happens when it rains*
 - *work and work-places of people who help us*
 - *different plants and animals in contrasting environments*
 - *colours and textures in the built environment.*

Predicting

- guess and suggest what will happen next in a situation
 - *suggest whether the pebble will float or sink in water.*

Investigating and experimenting

- participate in simple investigations suggested by the teacher, make observations, and collect data
 - *samples of soil, planting bulbs*
- collect information from a variety of sources
 - *books, ICT, other media.*

Estimating and measuring

- estimate and compare distances in an informal way
 - *the journey from home to school is longer than the journey from the class to the playground*
- begin to use simple methods to estimate, measure and compare observations
 - *use non-standard units of length to measure distance, for example measure the length of the room in paces*
 - *use balance to compare weights of samples collected*
- use appropriate simple instruments and techniques to collect data
 - *an improvised rain gauge, record sheets.*

Analysing

- participate in undirected and directed sorting of materials
 - *pebbles, bark, stones, leaves, shells*
- sort and group objects according to observable features
 - *pebbles, shells and seaweed in a bucket of sand*
- sort and group people, features, events, and natural phenomena
 - *people who work in shops, hospitals, schools*
 - *living things on the seashore, on the farm, or in the park*
- begin to look for and recognise patterns and relationships in the environment
 - *visiting same place, for example the park, during each season*
 - *the connection between dark clouds and rainfall*
 - *seasonal patterns in weather observations*

Recording and communicating

- match objects to pictures of the objects
 - *flowers, leaves, shells*
- produce his or her own artwork using materials gathered on field trips
 - *leaf printing, bark rubbings*
- describe and discuss his/her observations orally or by signing or pointing to symbols, using an expanding vocabulary
- take photographs, with or without assistance, of his/her family, house or class, to discuss with the class group
- represent findings pictorially and in other media
 - *trace over/copy/write labels for display*
 - *participate in the production of class displays, such as nature tables, class photograph galleries*
 - *visual/dramatic representations of journeys to school*
 - *journeys undertaken by characters in stories*
 - *keeping weather charts using symbols, pictures or photographs*
 - *participate in the production of class picture and story books*
 - *ICT*
 - *use camcorders to record the work of people within the school and in the locality.*

Human environments

The student should be enabled to

explore and discuss his/her membership of the family, school and local community.

Phase 1: Living in the local community	Phase 2: Living in the local community	Phase 3: Living in the local community
<p>Become aware of being part of a family and class group.</p> <p>Show recognition of family members and class members, seek their company when in unfamiliar surroundings, and differentiate between them.</p>	<p>Point out family members/class members in group photographs.</p> <p>React in group awareness games by looking at named students.</p> <p>Identify students who are absent at roll-call.</p> <p>Identify the bus driver/secretary from a series of photographs.</p>	<p>Identify familiar people in the school environment: <i>classroom assistant/caretaker/Principal</i>.</p> <p>Identify familiar people in the wider environment: <i>bus driver, postman</i>.</p> <p>Take photographs of his/her family to study and discuss in class.</p>

The student should be enabled to

identify and discuss the roles of people who serve the local community.

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Phase 1: Living in the local community	Phase 2: Living in the local community	Phase 3: Living in the local community
<p>Become aware of the roles of people in the family, class, school: <i>respond differently to various family members/classroom staff/school principal</i>.</p> <p>Link people with their roles in society: <i>indicate, by pointing or other means, that a postman brings letters, a fire fighter puts out fires, X brings us our dinner in school</i>.</p>	<p>Identify the jobs that familiar people do: <i>the bus driver brings us to the school</i>.</p> <p>Show curiosity about the role of various people in society: <i>ask about/play at being a fire fighter, a guard, visit a fire-station/a bakery/a farm</i>.</p> <p>Recognise that adults do different work.</p> <p>Match the picture of person to the tools/equipment they use: <i>bus, hose-pipe, siren</i>.</p>	<p>Communicate about the work that has to be done to run and maintain a home during the day.</p> <p>Understand that a range of jobs is carried out by people in the wider community: <i>indicate that the electrician fixes the lights, the doctor helps us get better</i>.</p> <p>Investigate the work of people in a range of places in the locality: <i>have opportunities to listen to and interview people in the classroom or in their workplaces</i>.</p>

The student should be enabled to

recognise that people live in homes.

Phase 1: Living in the local community	Phase 2: Living in the local community	Phase 3: Living in the local community
<p>Become aware of the fact that people live in homes: <i>recognise his/her own house in a photograph, point out homes in the street/in the vicinity of the school/in pictures, explore a doll's house, assist an adult in making house-like structures, indicate his/her own home to the bus driver.</i></p>	<p>Seek to communicate about his/her own home.</p> <p>Ask about the homes of others.</p> <p>Make houses with construction materials.</p> <p>Set up house for dolls and teddies.</p> <p>Listen to stories of houses being constructed: <i>'The Three Little Pigs', 'The House That Jack Built'.</i></p>	<p>Point out his/her own home/the homes of other classmates in photographs.</p> <p>Describe, by a variety of means, his/her home, its location and its surroundings.</p> <p>Know his/her own address and some of the street and road names in the locality.</p> <p>Become involved in the production of class photo galleries: <i>'Our Homes'.</i></p>

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The student should be enabled to

identify the main features of a house.

Phase 1: Living in the local community	Phase 2: Living in the local community	Phase 3: Living in the local community
<p>Look at pictures of different rooms in a house, and indicate recognition of different features of the house when asked: <i>point out the roof, windows, door, etc.</i></p>	<p>Add some features to a partially prepared representation of a house: <i>stick a cut-out door or roof onto a picture, add pieces to a jigsaw of a house, draw a missing window or door, participate in 'Where does this belong?' games .</i></p>	<p>Investigate the main features of his/her own home: <i>the number of rooms, furniture.</i></p> <p>Describe areas within the house: <i>indicate what is beside the table, on the shelf, in front of the desk.</i></p> <p>Make simple drawings/collage pictures of houses.</p>

The student should be enabled to

associate activities with areas within the house and outside the home.

Phase 1: Living in the local community	Phase 2: Living in the local community	Phase 3: Living in the local community
<p>Become aware of the ways in which adults and students use various areas in the house: <i>examine pictures of rooms in his/her own house or other houses (kitchen, bedroom, sitting-room, bathroom).</i></p> <p>Identify the position of different objects in the house: <i>know where to find the television, pyjamas, a carton of milk.</i></p> <p>Go to the appropriate school area for routine activities: <i>play corner, dinner area.</i></p>	<p>Indicate recognition by actions/ gestures/words that we sleep in the bedroom, that meals are cooked in the kitchen.</p> <p>Place furniture in appropriate rooms of a doll's house.</p> <p>Associate areas in the classroom with particular activities: <i>table-top work, music/reading/computer corner, relaxation area.</i></p>	<p>Know that rooms have different purposes: <i>use rooms appropriately at home/school, move purposefully between locations during class activities, carry messages around school building/work-place.</i></p>

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The student should be enabled to

develop some awareness of different types of homes in the locality.

Phase 1: Living in the local community	Phase 2: Living in the local community	Phase 3: Living in the local community
<p>Compare a photograph of his/her own home with a picture of another student's home: <i>colour of the door, number of windows, number on the door.</i></p>	<p>Recognise that people live in a variety of homes: <i>flat, house.</i></p> <p>Look at pictures and listen to stories about different homes.</p>	<p>Recognise that people live in a variety of homes: <i>two-storey house, bungalow, mobile home, caravan.</i></p> <p>Show some understanding of why people move homes: <i>new job, marriage, to find a bigger/smaller house.</i></p>

The student should be enabled to

develop some awareness of different types of buildings and human environments in the locality.

Phase 1: Living in the local community	Phase 2: Living in the local community	Phase 3: Living in the local community
<p>Identify the main features within the school grounds: <i>pointing to the Principal's office, playground.</i></p> <p>Associate activities with areas within the school: <i>deliver a message to another teacher, take a roll book to the office, recognise the canteen by the smell of dinner cooking.</i></p> <p>Indicate awareness of different environments by adjusting behaviour and functioning appropriately in various environments: <i>being quiet in church, buying items in a shop, laughing and running in the playground or sports field.</i></p>	<p>Name/point out in pictures some features he/she passes on way to school: <i>church/ shopping centre/ swimming pool, street furniture (seats, railings, litter bins, post boxes, flower tubs, telephone kiosk, street lights, bollards, metal covers).</i></p> <p>Develop awareness of different types of buildings and human environments: <i>have opportunities to visit buildings that vary in size, sound and atmosphere, such as shopping centres, multiplex cinemas, churches, castles, museums, concert halls.</i></p> <p>Observe and communicate about a familiar or favourite place.</p>	<p>Become aware of some buildings where people work, especially those in the locality: <i>know where mother/brother works.</i></p> <p>Find out about different types of shops and the range of goods available in them.</p> <p>Explore what other buildings and spaces in the locality are used for: <i>library, post office, bank, church, park.</i></p> <p>(Day trips provide opportunities to travel greater distances to new environments.)</p> <p>Discuss and explain his/her likes and dislikes about features of his/her environment: <i>'What is good about where you live?' 'What is your favourite thing in this school?' 'What do you not like about it?'</i></p>

The student should be enabled to

develop some awareness of people living in other areas.

Phase 1: People and places in other areas	Phase 2: People and places in other areas	Phase 3: People and places in other areas
Develop awareness of other people through listening to stories, looking at pictures, and watching television.	Begin to develop an interest in people and places beyond his/her immediate experience: <i>communicate about people met on holidays, about cousins living in the town/city/countryside.</i>	Develop an awareness of the homes, songs, festivals, customs, and weather of other countries: <i>listen to music, try on clothes, taste new dishes, examine postcards sent from other students.</i> Name the town/parish/city where he/she lives. Name the country in which he/she lives. Follow the progress of the local, county, national football team.

17**The student should be enabled to**

become aware of some links between the school or local community and people in other places.

Phase 1: People and places in other areas	Phase 2: People and places in other areas	Phase 3: People and places in other areas
Be aware of relatives and friends living in other places: <i>show recognition of cousins from photographs, become aware of familiar routes.</i>	Be aware of places and people visited on holidays: <i>contribute an item of news at circle time about a recent trip, examine holiday photographs.</i>	Become aware of schools in other parts of the city/town/country: <i>have opportunities to participate in inter-school sports.</i>

The student should be enabled to

recognise different means of transport.

Phase 1: People and places in other areas	Phase 2: People and places in other areas	Phase 3: People and places in other areas
<p>Select 'Mammy's car' from a series of photos.</p> <p>Sort cars from lorries during play.</p> <p>Identify different types of vehicles passing the school.</p>	<p>Indicate that cars travel on the road, boats on water, and planes in the sky.</p> <p>Describe by signing, gesturing or verbalising, different means of transport: <i>planes have two wings, cars have four wheels.</i></p>	<p>Communicate about busy/quiet roads in the area, traffic hazards, and ways of crossing safely: <i>know that the zebra crossing is a safe place to cross the road.</i></p> <p>Discuss the transport used by people to travel to work/go on holiday.</p>

The student should be enabled to

find objects or areas by following a simple plan (with verbal directions or from a set of drawings).

Phase 1: People and places in other areas	Phase 2: People and places in other areas	Phase 3: People and places in other areas
<p>Demonstrate an understanding of simple directional instructions: <i>describe the position of objects in relation to other objects, participate in 'Where am I?' games.</i></p> <p>Demonstrate some understanding of positional language: <i>respond appropriately to requests such as 'Sit beside Kevin', 'Stand behind Mary'.</i></p> <p>Trace the outline of a road drawn by the teacher using a finger/ crayon/pencil.</p> <p>Begin to use simple directional language: <i>up, down, in, behind, over, using toy cars and play mat.</i></p>	<p>Give and follow simple directions to places: <i>follow pictorial or verbal directions for routes within the school building, participate in games where he/she has to follow directions: 'Take three steps forward, one step backward', 'Go to the front, back, left or right of the hall', follow the outline of a road drawn by teacher in the school yard by walking/hopping/ cycling along it.</i></p> <p>Using prepositional picture cards, identify the positions of objects.</p> <p>Safely complete an obstacle course, constructed indoors or outdoors, using large and small apparatus.</p>	<p>Participate in playing a 'hot or cold' game to locate hidden objects in room.</p> <p>Undertake forest walks along marked trails with appropriate tasks set for completion along the route: <i>bark rubbings, leaf collection.</i></p> <p>Undertake town/city trails: <i>following directions, including the terms forwards, backwards, up and down, left, right.</i></p> <p>Lead another student around an obstacle course (perhaps blindfolded), either verbally or using sign.</p>

The student should be enabled to

describe simple journeys.

Phase 1: People and places in other areas	Phase 2: People and places in other areas	Phase 3: People and places in other areas
<p>Participate in action songs such as <i>'The Wheels on The Bus'</i>.</p> <p>Follow imagined routes in a story: <i>'We're going on a bear hunt'</i>, <i>'Rosie's Walk'</i>, <i>'The Gingerbread Man'</i>.</p> <p>Play with small-world toys to reconstruct real and imaginary journeys.</p> <p>Undertake short walks, outside the school site where possible: <i>to the playground/park to feed ducks, anticipate familiar landmarks, communicate what is 'around the next corner'</i>.</p> <p>Actively explore and ask questions about unfamiliar places.</p> <p>Anticipate future trips/outings.</p>	<p>Participate in creating a display of pictures or photographs which sequence his/her journey to school, enlisting a parent's help in photographing parts of the journey.</p> <p>Participate in creating a pictorial record of class or school visits to other environments.</p> <p>Participate in a treasure hunt: <i>find an object on the school site given simple verbal/ pictorial/symbolic clues.</i></p> <p>Ask questions about journeys past, present, or planned for the future.</p>	<p>Communicate about a journey to town, or to a work-place: <i>transport used, features and people observed, showing recognition of familiar routes and landmarks.</i></p> <p>Explore simple picture maps, not necessarily to scale.</p>

Natural environments

The student should be enabled to

become aware of, explore and discuss some aspects of natural environments in the immediate locality of the school.

Phase 1: Local natural environment	Phase 2: Local natural environment	Phase 3: Local natural environment
<p>Respond to sensory experiences involving animals and plants: <i>smell flowers/cut grass/herbs in the garden, feed the fish in the aquarium, observe birds on the bird table outside the classroom.</i></p> <p>Recognise some animals and plants within the immediate locality of the school.</p> <p>Be encouraged to remember environments visited: <i>look at, touch, smell, and taste objects that were brought back from a trip, look at pictures/video footage of a trip, listen to recorded sounds and key words about the environment visited.</i></p>	<p>Recognise a variety of habitats within his/her immediate environment: <i>birds living in nests, spiders building webs, worms living under the ground, insects on leaves.</i></p> <p>Become aware of other habitats through field trips: <i>a local pond, a local stream, a local river.</i></p> <p>Have opportunities to observe the transformation of caterpillars in to butterflies in a vivarium.</p> <p>Select a common plant or animal and predict where he/she might find it.</p> <p>Sort pictures of plants and animals into groups which live in similar homes: <i>wet/dry/cold/hot places.</i></p>	<p>Name familiar flowers and animals in the local environment: <i>identify the areas in the school grounds where certain common plants and animals are often found.</i></p> <p>Recognise rocks, soil and water, and understand that they are part of the environment.</p> <p>Make drawings of a habitat as it changes over the year, or use the digital camera to record and discuss it: <i>identify materials used.</i></p> <p>Create a suitable home for a pet, a mini-beast or an animal.</p> <p>Become aware of a wider range of habitats through field trips: <i>seashore, hedgerow, forest, bog.</i></p> <p>Visit an area undergoing change, for example a field that is becoming a building site: <i>stages of change can be recorded using drawings or the digital camera.</i></p>

The student should be enabled to

observe, discuss and investigate water in the local environment.

Phase 1: Local natural environment	Phase 2: Local natural environment	Phase 3: Local natural environment
Observe bodies of water such as ponds, lakes or seas, listen to the sound of rainfall, and splash in puddles and streams.	<p>Identify and describe water features with which he/she is familiar: <i>a river, a lake, a beach, or a pond.</i></p> <p>Investigate water, sand and stones in streams, ponds, lakes and on the seashore: <i>use touch, sight and smell to explore shells, water, sand, seaweed, rocks.</i></p> <p>Explore how water moves objects: <i>float sticks/boats down a stream.</i></p>	<p>Identify water in different forms: <i>steam, ice.</i></p> <p>Investigate a freshwater pond: <i>collect/watch an adult collecting a water sample, observe and smell the water to see how clean it is, observe closely plant life and water minibeasts, examine the area surrounding the pond for other plant and animal life.</i></p>

The student should be enabled to

observe, collect and investigate a variety of natural materials in the local environment.

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Phase 1: Local natural environment	Phase 2: Local natural environment	Phase 3: Local natural environment
<p>Use touch, sight and smell to investigate mud, sand, pebbles, stones, leaves, shells, bark and rocks: <i>show curiosity about, and participate in, undirected and directed sorting of materials, with assistance make and display collections of materials gathered.</i></p> <p>Go outside and look for particular items, using samples or pictures as a reference.</p>	<p>Group and classify objects found on a nature walk: <i>colour, size, texture, wet/dry.</i></p> <p>Make rubbings of various materials: <i>rocks, leaves, bark, bricks.</i></p> <p>Make collage pictures using materials such as leaves, moss, and wood shavings.</p> <p>Match objects to pictures/silhouettes of the objects: <i>flowers, leaves, shells.</i></p> <p>Record natural materials found in the locality: <i>make a booklet of things found in the playground/school grounds.</i></p>	<p>Represent findings with real objects, pictures, or photographs taken with a digital camera.</p> <p>Make pressed flower pictures.</p> <p>Make necklaces and wind chimes from shells.</p> <p>Use a balance to compare the weights of samples collected.</p>

The student should be enabled to

observe and discuss a variety of weather conditions, using simple vocabulary.

Phase 1: Weather	Phase 2: Weather	Phase 3: Weather
<p>Show an awareness of weather conditions: <i>shiver/hunch shoulders when cold, observe rain on a window pane, watch and listen to wind blowing through the trees.</i></p> <p>Have opportunities to chase balloons, run with crepe-paper streamers/scarves in the playground.</p>	<p>Have opportunities to experience weather (without limiting this experience by overprotective clothing).</p> <p>Record weather observations using a weather chart.</p> <p>Identify by pointing to weather symbols/pictures/photographs on a chart that it is raining, snowing, sunny.</p>	<p>Measure and record the weather using direct observation and simple equipment.</p> <p>Record weather observations over a period in a weather diary: <i>using pictures, appropriate pictorial symbols, and his/her own drawings.</i></p> <p>Participate in creating a class rain gauge: <i>collect rainwater in jars in various parts of the school grounds over a period, notice which jar collected the most water.</i></p>

The student should be enabled to

become aware of some of the effects of different weather conditions on human, animal and plant life in the local environment.

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Phase 1: Weather	Phase 2: Weather	Phase 3: Weather
<p>Become aware of the effects of weather on the type of clothes we wear and on our daily routines: <i>put on a coat when the weather is cold, pull up a hood in the rain, know that he/she can only go to the playground when it is dry.</i></p>	<p>Observe the effects of weather on animal and plant life: <i>notice how frost affects plant life, how animals seek shelter from the rain.</i></p> <p>Observe seasonal changes in a deciduous tree: <i>indicate, by pointing or other means, a winter/spring tree.</i></p>	<p>Investigate the effects of weather on himself/herself and his/her environment.</p> <p>Communicate about changes in the weather and how it affects the job of a farmer, a sailor, or a builder.</p> <p>Have opportunities to listen regularly to the weather forecast on radio/television.</p>

The student should be enabled to

recognise that weather patterns are associated with seasonal change.

Phase 1: Weather	Phase 1: Weather	Phase 1: Weather
Distinguish between summer and winter clothes: <i>dress a 'weather bear' in a T-shirt and shorts, or a raincoat and umbrella, or a coat and hat, or a scarf and gloves.</i>	Associate activities with different types of weather: <i>picnics, trips to the beach.</i> Explore picture books about time/ seasons.	Communicate about seasonal changes in the weather, and express opinions about his/her favourite season and weather. Plan a wardrobe for a weekend trip away, depending on weather conditions.

The student should be enabled to

identify and discuss the sun, the moon and stars.

Phase 1: Planet Earth in space	Phase 2: Planet Earth in space	Phase 3: Planet Earth in space
Recognise the difference between day and night: <i>know that the sun is in the sky during the day and the moon and stars at night, participate in songs such as 'Mr Sun', 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star'.</i> Know that we sleep during the night and go to school or work during the day.	Observe the shape of the sun and moon: <i>look at pictures of the moon and observe that it can appear to be different shapes at different times.</i> Investigate shadows: <i>keep a record of how the shadow of a stick in the ground changes during the day.</i>	Understand the importance of sunlight for plants and animals. Become aware of the dangers of the sun for skin and eyesight: <i>wear sunglasses, put on sunscreen/a hat/a T-shirt in hot weather.</i> Visit a planetarium.

Environmental awareness and care

The student should be enabled to

observe, identify and appreciate the natural and human features of the local environment.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Have experience of an attractive, welcoming, colourful, clean classroom: <i>attend to new artwork on walls, new flowers indoors or outdoors.</i>	Observe and identify attractive elements of physical, natural and human features: <i>colours and features of the playground, colours of flowers and trees in the school grounds/park during the different seasons, water features in the local environment.</i>	Identify positive aspects of natural and built environments through observation, discussion and recording: <i>colours, textures and shapes in materials/buildings/walls, expressing views on features he/she finds attractive or unattractive.</i>

The student should be enabled to

identify, discuss and implement simple strategies for improving and enhancing the environment.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Begin to develop an awareness of the importance of taking care of and enhancing the environment: <i>watering plants on the nature table, changing water in vases of flowers, wiping down tables.</i>	Develop a sense of responsibility for taking care of and enhancing the environment: <i>hanging works of art on the class walls, participating in the planting of trees and flowers in the school grounds, setting stones in the garden to create habitats.</i>	Begin to develop a sense of responsibility for taking care of and enhancing the environment: <i>take pride in his/her classroom, keep work spaces clean and tidy, keep home and surroundings clean, tidy and safe.</i>

The student should be enabled to

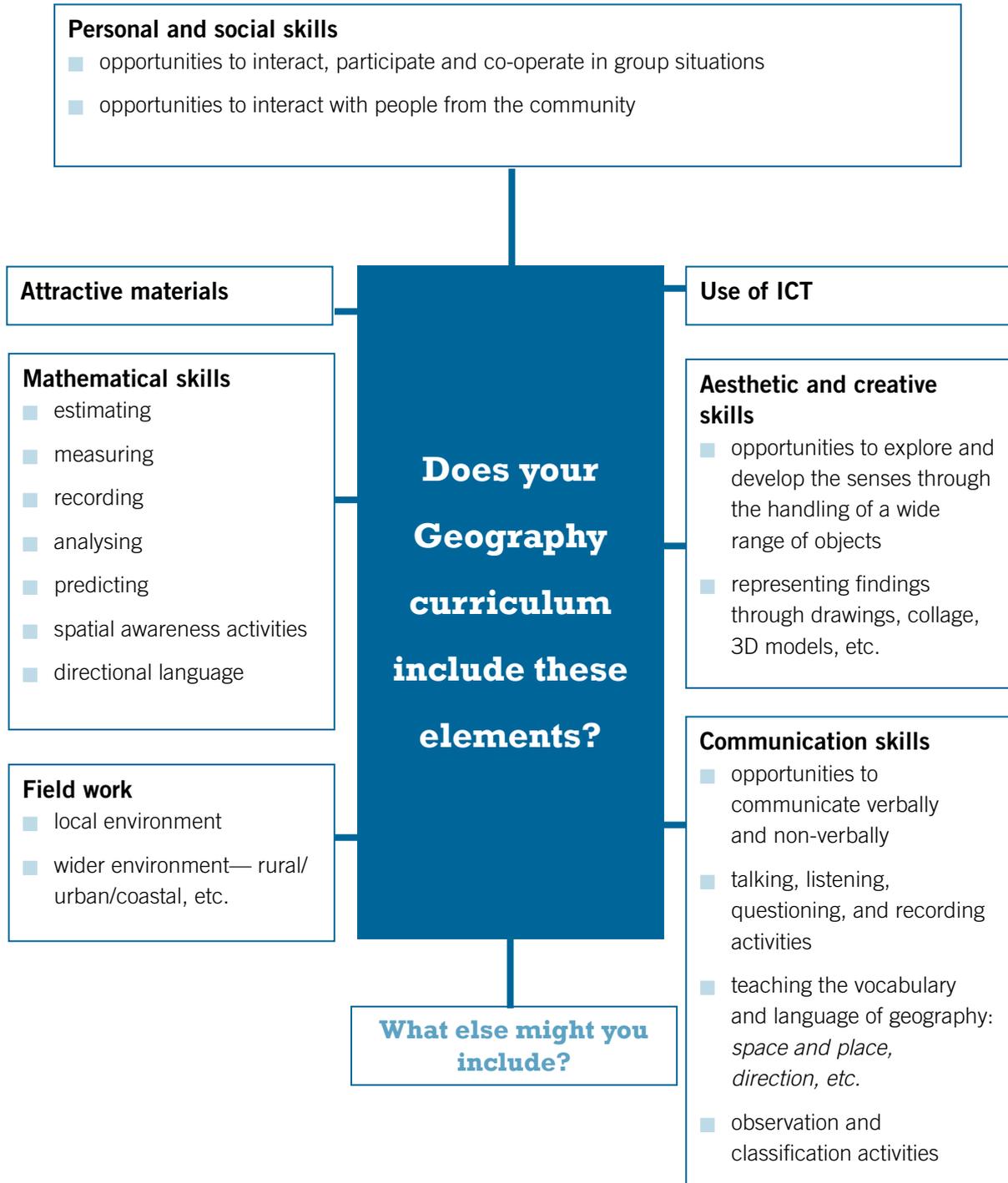
become aware of ways in which the environment can be polluted or harmed.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
<p>Identify common waste products: <i>know that sweet papers and empty milk cartons are rubbish.</i></p> <p>Know that rubbish has to be disposed of in an appropriate way: <i>put used tissues into a bin in the classroom.</i></p>	<p>Look for evidence of harm caused to the school environment: <i>writing on desks, litter in yard, etc.</i></p> <p>Know that broken things that cannot be fixed become waste materials: <i>throw broken plates and cups in the bin, become aware that small rubbish bins are emptied into larger containers stored in the school grounds.</i></p>	<p>Know that, in the preparation of food, there are waste products; <i>put vegetable peelings into a special bin for the compost heap.</i></p> <p>Become aware of litter, pollution and vandalism; <i>identify the types of litter around the school and the activities that created them.</i></p> <p>Look at photographs or pictures in newspapers and/or magazines which show evidence of how the environment can be harmed: <i>discuss what might have happened.</i></p> <p>Recognise that some materials decay naturally, while others survive a long time in the environment: <i>fruit and leaves rot, plastic does not.</i></p>

The student should be enabled to

identify and help to implement simple strategies for protecting, conserving and caring for the environment.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
<p>‘Things I can do’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>caring for clothes, toys and other possessions</i> - <i>tidying the classroom by putting objects in appropriate storage boxes</i> - <i>disposing of litter appropriately: throwing tissues away</i> - <i>putting food on the bird table during the winter.</i> 	<p>‘Things we can do together’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>caring for one’s own property and that of others</i> - <i>keeping classroom, school and play spaces clean and tidy, participating in a rota for tidying the area outside his/her classroom</i> - <i>turning off the tap to save water</i> - <i>collecting paper or cans for recycling</i> - <i>participating in a project to enhance the school environment: planting bulbs, sunflowers, trees etc.</i> - <i>caring for a living thing in the classroom – a plant, a goldfish/ caterpillars/woodlice, etc.</i> <p>Discuss the roles of the cleaner, gardener, dust-bin collector, etc. and identify ways in which he/she could make their jobs easier.</p>	<p>Participate in activities that contribute to and protect the environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>creating and maintaining a school garden with a compost heap</i> - <i>collecting rainwater for watering the school garden</i> - <i>participating in a litter survey in the locality or school grounds</i> - <i>organising collections of papers, aluminium cans or other materials for recycling</i> - <i>participating in a class project of adopting a tree, taking note of its progress and recording (digitally or pictorially) the stages of change it undergoes throughout the year</i> - <i>identifying simple things we can do for the environment at school and at home: turning water off when brushing teeth, turning lights off when leaving the classroom, etc.</i>



Exemplars

The following pages outline some ideas for developing themes and topics in geography for students with moderate general learning disabilities. The exemplars of work included are outlines from which teachers can develop a more comprehensive programme. In some instances, only minor additions may be necessary to make them suitable for individual

classroom environments. Alternatively, the needs of a particular school environment may dictate considerable adaptation before implementation. Factors such as the developmental stage and previous experiences of students, the availability of resources (human and material), the nature of the learner, and the local community will need to be considered.

No.	Exemplar title	Page
1.	A thematic approach to planning SESE: Spring	29
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Exemplar 1: SESE: Geography

A thematic approach to planning in SESE: Spring

Geographical aspects	Historical aspects	Scientific aspects
<p>The local natural environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore and discuss some aspects of the physical and natural environments in the immediate locality of the school. <p>Weather</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe and discuss a variety of weather conditions, using simple vocabulary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>rainy/sunny/foggy days.</i> Record weather observations using a weather chart or diary. Discuss the suitability of different kinds of clothes for different weather conditions. <p>People at work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the work of the farmer during spring. 	<p>Time and chronology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Become aware of and discuss the sequence of events in simple stories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>the days of the week</i> - <i>the seasons</i> - <i>the life cycle of the frog, sheep, a flower.</i> Record sequences of events using simple time lines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>the growth of a broad bean.</i> Listen to some stories associated with the traditions and customs of spring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>St Brigid and the St Brigid's cross</i> - <i>St Patrick.</i> 	<p>Plants and animals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe, discuss and identify a variety of plants and animals in different habitats in the immediate environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>common trees and other plants</i> - <i>common birds observed in trees and hedges/visiting the bird table.</i> Sort or group living things into sets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Spring flowers, leaves, trees, birds, vegetables.</i> Recognise and identify the external parts of living things: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>flower, leaf, stem, root</i> - <i>tail, leg, beak, feathers.</i> Observe growth and change in some living things: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>bulbs and seeds planted in the classroom.</i> Explore the conditions for growth of bulbs and seeds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>in soil, damp moss, wet paper.</i> Become aware that animals and plants undergo seasonal changes in appearance or behaviour: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>the appearance of buds and shoots.</i> <p>Other curricular areas</p> <p>SPHE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing and changing <p>Mathematics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number, measurement <p>Communication and language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of new vocabulary

Exemplar 2: SESE: Geography

A thematic approach to planning in SESE: Our school

History	Geography	Science	Other curricular areas	
<p>Explore and record significant events and changes over time: <i>new buildings, playgrounds.</i></p> <p>Collect and examine simple evidence: <i>photographs of students when younger, old school photographs.</i></p> <p>Listen to oral evidence from past students.</p> <p>Compare photographs, clothes worn or toys used at different ages: <i>things that have changed/ stayed the same.</i></p> <p>Role-play of lessons long ago.</p>	<p>Physical environment: <i>local weather, landmarks, habitats.</i></p> <p>Human environments: <i>journey to and from school, local people, shops, schools, amenities.</i></p> <p>Environmental awareness and care: <i>litter, recycling project.</i></p>	<p>Living things: <i>Plants and animals: habitats, bird life in school grounds: make a bird box, bird table.</i></p> <p>Energy and forces: <i>lighting, heating, playground equipment.</i></p> <p>Materials in use in school: <i>building, furniture.</i></p>	<p>Communication and language</p> <p>Development of listening and communicating skills: <i>listening to stories & folklore, interviews.</i></p> <p>Development of new vocabulary.</p> <p>Mathematics</p> <p>Number, measurement: <i>number of classes, students, teachers.</i></p> <p>Estimation and measurement: <i>distances and heights.</i></p> <p>Shape: <i>windows, doors, tables.</i></p> <p>Graphs: <i>numbers of students, classes, teachers.</i></p>	<p>PE</p> <p>Playground games, old and new.</p> <p>Rules for safety.</p> <p>Visual arts</p> <p>Displays in topic area.</p> <p>Models of school now and long ago.</p> <p>Music</p> <p>Street rhymes and skipping songs: <i>Dusty bluebells.</i></p>

Exemplar 3: SESE: Geography

Strand: Environmental awareness and care

Caring for my locality: A recycling project

Learning outcomes

The student should be enabled to

- develop a sense of responsibility for taking care of and enhancing the environment
- identify different types of waste
- identify different types of waste disposal
- identify and help to implement simple strategies for protecting, conserving and caring for the environment.

Introduction

Students are introduced to different types of waste and waste disposal. They look at ways of collecting items for recycling and avoiding littering.

Development

Students go out in small groups with refuse bags to each class and collect rubbish, at the end of the day or after lunch. Each bag could be labelled for each class, and the number of items in each bag counted. (Proper health and safety procedures would need to be adhered to strictly, for example using sturdy gloves.)

Using a simple bar chart the teacher records, with as much student participation as is possible, how much rubbish each class had in its bag. *Which class had the most/least rubbish?*

Students might then sort the rubbish into paper, metal, plastic, etc.

They then record the types of rubbish on a simple chart and keep that which could be recycled separately.

The teacher could introduce three boxes for paper with three different labels – **recycle me/re-use me/shred me**. These labels could be created as visuals, and this would be an appropriate time to introduce the **recycling symbol**. Students could be encouraged to communicate about the different ways in which the paper could be reused.

Follow up activities

Students are encouraged to bring in a number of items from home, and these are sorted into the same categories. A letter home to parents will explain the type of rubbish required. Students identify items that have the recycling symbol.

Students go for a school walk and observe the number of litter bins and identify if there are sufficient.

Interviews could take place with other students/the Principal and their views recorded on video/tape.

A visit could take place to a supermarket or a waste disposal plant to find out what they do with their waste.

Exemplar 4: SESE: Geography

Strand: Human environment Activities to develop early map work – pictures, plans and maps

(Based on exemplar 9 in the *Primary School Curriculum, Geography*)

Structured play

Students with moderate general learning disabilities will need extensive opportunities to develop spatial, seriation, classification, and representational skills through structured play. Access to home corners, construction toys, toy farms, and play mats should be provided beyond the infant classes. Activities in these areas should not be random but structured, with the teacher as an active participant scaffolding the oral language inputs from the students.

Trails

Using coloured twine or rope to lay trails around the classroom or school can enhance the concept of following a route. This can be elaborated upon as the students become accustomed to this activity.

Following a trail, the teacher should:

- focus the student's attention on the route by verbalising the journey and drawing the students' attention to significant landmarks
- have particular stopping points arranged and make observations at them
- as students become more practised, begin to draw the shape of the route, allowing students to observe this and to comment on and describe the line representing the route
- with students, agree shapes and symbols to represent significant places and landmarks and agree their position on the trail map
- take photos at particular points on the trail and arrange the photos on a map of the trail.

Nature trails

Trails can be set up in the school grounds. Students could be blindfolded and, led by verbal prompts from adults, walk along a trail holding onto a rope. Stops could be selected to encourage them to use their senses to explore the natural environment:

- touching the wall, feeling bricks
- touching the barks of trees, leaves
- walking on gravel, listening to the crunching of stones underfoot
- smelling the flowers, herbs
- listening to the sounds of children in the playground, aeroplanes overhead.

Mazes

Mazes provide a useful context for teaching route-finding and directional skills. A maze painted on the schoolyard that the students can walk on, will assist in understanding the concept of lines representing boundaries on a map.

The school hall/gym could be used to set up an obstacle course as part of a PE lesson in which students follow mats, tunnels, steps, etc. to reach a particular destination. Rolls of wallpaper could be used to create pathways in the hall, and students could follow the pathways by crawling, rolling, bottom shuffling, or using wheelchairs. Soft play equipment is excellent for setting up mazes, as it is possible to arrange it so that paths are created in which the surrounding area becomes obscured. In all these activities, each student will require the task to be presented in a slightly different way to meet his/her needs.

ICT programmes in mathematics and geography using trails and mazes are also useful resources.

Exemplar 4: SESE: Geography

Photographs

- Use photographs taken from different positions in the classroom, around the school, and in the school grounds. Students have to decide where the photographer was standing.
- Use photographs taken on school trips to outline the route taken.

Building models

Allow the student to use construction toys to recreate or create his/her own street scene using small-world objects, such as churches, houses, and schools. He/she may also construct large-scale models using PE equipment and other large objects.

Exemplar 5: SESE: Geography

Strand: Human environment

Strand unit: Living in the local community

Topic: People who help us

Learning outcomes

The student should be enabled to:

- identify activities carried out by adults in the immediate environment
- locate specific places in the school, for example the kitchen, the office
- speculate about the use of objects
- sort, group and describe objects
- ask and answer questions
- recognise that adults do different kinds of work.

Resources

- photographs of members of staff who perform different functions
- a selection of objects associated with their jobs
- a bag belonging to one member of staff

Introduction

This lesson could begin with a game in which students are invited to use the available evidence to identify the owner of a bag. A similar activity is mentioned as an introductory activity to exploring evidence in history. For this particular lesson it would be important that the objects reflect the job of the bag's owner. For example, a bag belonging to the school secretary could contain items such as her stapler, paper clips, pens, letters. Using this activity, the teacher could lead a discussion about what people use in their work.

Development

Students are presented with photographs or pictures of a number of people from the school staff, for example the nurse, the cook, the secretary, and the caretaker.

Students recognise, by naming or signing, the people in the photographs.

A range of items are displayed, for example saucepan, plasters, keys accompanied by visuals/symbols of each item.

Students take turns to select an item, decide who uses it in their work, and place it next to the appropriate photograph on a large sheet of paper. They then take the items back to the people concerned and check out if they belong to them.

Before returning the items, students could make a record of their findings by drawing around the objects on each person's sheet or by sticking on symbols of the objects.

Some students may be able to write or use ICT to create the lists.

Follow-up activities

- Make books about different people's jobs using photographs.
- Students tape record interviews with members of the school staff about their work.
- Some students might do work experience within the school, for example help in the kitchen/canteen for half a day.

Exemplar 6: SESE: Geography

Strand: Natural environment

Strand unit: The local natural environment

Project: Creating a school garden

A whole-school topic for a term/year could centre on the creation of a school garden. A staff meeting might generate a topic web of activities for students of all ages and abilities. Many of the activities would be cross-curricular, and different activities would be assigned to different classes. Teachers could then select differentiated age-appropriate activities from the whole-school list for their class, ensuring that high priority objectives from their IEPs are being met. These will give a real-life context to self help skills.

The following web illustrates the range of activities involved.



Learning outcomes

For some students, a learning outcome might be that they wash and dry their hands after gardening sessions, or change from trainers to Wellington boots unaided on request (SPHE). Other students will learn to negotiate a 'shopping list' of seeds they want to buy, or will start a garden map using pictures cut out of catalogues and collage materials. More able students will start a garden diary – 'Today we planted ...', and chart the weather. Some students will push and pull the rake from their wheelchairs and develop their physical gardening skills.