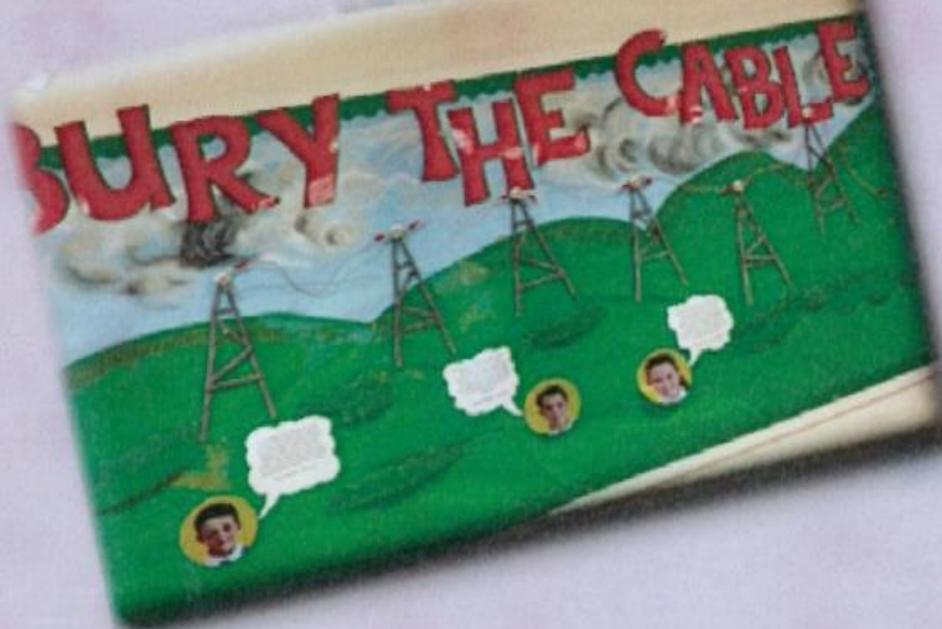


The following Case Study was taken from an ETI survey into “The Implementation of World Around Us” in Primary Schools. (December 2013 – June 2014)

## CASE STUDY: ST JOSEPH'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, MADDEN



St Joseph's Primary School is situated near the village of Madden, off the Armagh to Middletown Road. The enrolment has remained steady and is currently at 127; 26.7% of the children are entitled to free school meals and the school has identified 12.5% of the children requiring additional support with their learning.

The leadership and management of the school give a high priority to the World Around Us curriculum as a context for developing the children's communication, using mathematics and information and technology (ICT) skills. A key strength in the planning for the WAU curriculum is the progressive development of the children's historical, geographical and scientific skills through engaging, real and relevant investigations rather than a rigid adherence to the four strands contained in the curriculum guidance.

The teachers use the surrounding rural context creatively for the development of the children's knowledge, skills and understanding. For example, following the building of a new

school, life at the old school was captured through a time capsule and a DVD of learning through the decades with recollections from children in the 1950s through to today. The school uses high quality resources and enrichment activities to enhance the delivery of WAU including a school garden, aquarium, environmental trails, the ECO council, links with the Armagh Multi Media Access Creative Learning Centre, local historians, visits to local sites or museums, media technology and iPads. The quality of the learning environment, including the displays of the children's work, is excellent.

The staff plan investigations linked to the locality and the interests of the children. These investigations are planned carefully with enquiry questions to promote the children's thinking skills and to develop their personal capabilities. Interesting investigations include:

- What was the significance of the Armagh Railway Disaster and how do we represent this event using an e-book?
- War versus Peace - People who made a difference such as Nelson Mandela, Rosa Park, Father Alec Reid?
- How do we represent the experiences of children during the Irish Famine on a DVD?
- Should overhead pylons be built in Madden?
- Why do athletes have slower heart rates?
- Why did the unsinkable Titanic sink?
- Why didn't I see the pedestrian? – What do we need to do to Be Safe and Be Seen?

By the end of year 7, the children understand how methods of recording the past have changed and recognise the impact of the digital age on the access to a greater range of original sources including oral, written, pictorial and physical.

- They ask questions with a strong sense of curiosity to find out answers to an enquiry, individually and in groups.
- They sequence events, make links



between the causes and consequences of an occurrence and weigh up the impact of a range of reasons to reach a conclusion, for example, about the significant reason for the Armagh Railway Disaster.

- They display high levels of personal responsibility and confidence in communicating about the past both orally and in written work.
- They listen actively to the perspectives of historians and compare the secondary oral accounts with the primary written and pictorial evidence.
- They analyse a range of accounts from the time including newspapers and eyewitness accounts in order to select the most important information to write an e-book about the significance of the disaster.
- They experiment with different graphic designs using captions, photographs and factual evidence in order to maximise the impact of the account for the reader today.
- They compare each other's work to identify ways in which to improve their work further.

As a result, the standards of the children's work, including skills in communication and ICT are outstanding. Through such an enquiry, the children gain high level historical skills in empathy, change and continuity, chronology, the use of evidence and in how to interpret and represent the past. Furthermore, the investigative nature of the approach provides the children with opportunities to develop well their creative and critical thinking skills.