

**Education Policy for Clare Museum**



2020-2022

## **Clare Museum's Mission Statement**

'The mission of Clare Museum is to collect, preserve, interpret and display the material culture relating to the history of County Clare, both in the museum building and online, as an educational resource and a socially inclusive cultural service for the people of Clare and visiting tourists.'

## **Our Mission for Education**

'To provide a socially inclusive educational resource that is focused on meeting the needs of educators and the public both in the museum and online, for the people of Clare and beyond'

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is to provide Clare Museum with a structured approach to meeting our mission as an educational resource, and it builds on our first Education Policy which covered the period 2017-2019. Given the need to be adaptable to change in our environment, the lifetime of this policy is again a relatively short at three years – from 2020-2022 inclusive. It will be reviewed annually and amended if necessary.

The success of the previous policy was undermined by the availability of staff, particularly from the autumn of 2018. However, the curriculum based workshops, headed up by a volunteer, have proven to be a very popular with primary schools, while engagement with adult learning classes of the LCETB have been very successful. For secondary schools, the Being an Archaeologist workshop has been less successful as improvement in the economy has meant that archaeologists have had limited availability. Our first education volunteer departed in the summer of 2018 and a new volunteer was appointed to fill the role. The current policy is more ambitious than the previous policy with more focus on the use of social media, the development of guided tours and a series of on-going monthly lectures planned.

## **Resources**

The museum has two full time staff members: a curator and a facilities management attendant and there are currently five volunteers, including one dedicated to developing the museum as an educational resource. Over the last decade a relatively high turnover of staff and volunteers has interrupted the provision of learning at the museum has been an on-going problem.

In 2016, Clare County Council provided an Education budget to Clare Museum of €3,000. This figure has increased to €8,000 in 2019.

The museum has a small but dedicated temporary exhibition space with some fixed showcases and six mobile showcases.

While the museum has a varied collection that underpins the education programme, about half of collection is catalogued enabling it to be used efficiently as an educational resource. A plan to catalogue the backlog is in place and the progress has been made to reduce the numbers of uncatalogued items. Nonetheless, the museum is already using the collection as a resource online for schools, on social media, in workshops, temporary exhibitions and many of the photographed items have been used in publications.

## SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Museum website.</li> <li>• Support of stakeholders.</li> <li>• Excellent museum exhibition.</li> <li>• Quality of museum’s reserve collection.</li> <li>• Some dedicated exhibition space.</li> <li>• Dedicated educational budget.</li> <li>• Free admission.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong reliance on volunteers and interns.</li> <li>• Permanent staff have no background in education</li> <li>• Reduction of staff in 2018</li> <li>• Relatively small education budget.</li> <li>• Lack of profile amongst disadvantaged and immigrant groups.</li> <li>• Lack of a fulltime Education Officer.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some successful educational activities that can be built upon.</li> <li>• Clare Education Centre, the LCETB and TVAS (archaeology workshops) value working with the museum.</li> <li>• A volunteer with a background in museum education.</li> <li>• Several successfully piloted curriculum-focused workshop.</li> <li>• Continued digitization of the collection. Plan for cataloguing the collection backlog.</li> <li>• Availability of the Westropp Room for museum activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited cataloguing of the collection.</li> <li>• Cuts to the museum budget.</li> <li>• Lack of dedicated space for workshops and other educational activities.</li> <li>• Schools not participating due to economic constraints.</li> <li>• Volunteers can leave at any time.</li> <li>• Lack of child protection training for some staff and volunteers.</li> </ul>

### Strategic Aims:

**Strategic Aim 1:** To provide curriculum based activities and handling collections to primary and secondary schools

#### Objectives:

- 1.1 Provide workshops relevant to the Primary school curriculum.
- 1.2 Provide workshops and activities based on traditions associated with Celtic festivals.
- 1.3 Provide age appropriate activity sheets for schools based on the Museum’s collections.
- 1.4 Establish a ‘Loan Box’ collection and associated documentation for schools
- 1.5 Provide guided tours of the Museum’s collections.
- 1.6 Provide ‘Be an Archaeologist’ workshops for secondary school transition year student.

- 1.7 Organise an in-service training day for teachers through the Clare Education Centre
- 1.8 Establish a weekly digital communications medium to deliver information regarding the Museum's collection to schools (initially video on social media).
- 1.9 Market the Museum's Schools Services information to schools.

**Strategic Aim 2:** To provide an environment where students can learn professional museum and research skills in a real museum environment.

Objectives:

- 2.1 Link students of the Museum Studies MA at UCC with typical curatorial tasks to provide them with professional curatorial experience.
- 2.2 Provide research projects for students of the Social History MA at UL which contribute to the knowledge of the history of Clare and publish online.

**Strategic Aim 3:** To develop and market life-long learning opportunities that the museum has to offer.

Objectives:

- 3.1 Provide a calendar of events that includes monthly public talks in support of museum exhibitions.
- 3.2 Grow accessibility with regular guided tours of the collections.
- 3.3 Establish quarterly workshops in support of museum exhibitions.
- 3.4 Stay current via biannual temporary exhibitions and smaller monthly artifact or topic highlights.
- 3.5 Engage families with movie evenings.
- 3.6 Promote interaction with the establishment of a mobile activity cart.
- 3.7 Publish online and hardcopy resources for in-house exhibitions
- 3.8 Promote the existing museum reading list for the museum exhibition.

- 3.9 Design and print the Clare Local Studies reading list for the museum exhibition.
- 3.10 Update interpretation of the museum website.

**Strategic Aim 4:** To facilitate maximum engagement with the museum in Clare.

Objectives:

- 4.1 Promote the museum as a resource to support all adult education programmes of the LCETB.
- 4.2 Establish a community outreach programme with volunteers.
- 4.3 Use social media to highlight objects in the museum collection.

**Strategic Aim 5:** Resource the museum sufficiently to achieve the ambitious objective of marketing, training and development.

Objectives:

- 5.1 Continue to avail of museum training provided by the Heritage Council
- 5.2 Attend Irish Museum Association Seminars and training days.
- 5.3 Ensure funding is available for staff members to pursue post-graduate courses in museum studies.
- 5.4 Child protection training for staff and volunteers who require it.
- 5.5 Object handling training for staff

## 2020-2022 Implementation Plan Overview

<b>Strategic Aim 1: To provide curriculum based activities to primary and secondary schools</b>	2020	2021	2022
1.1 Provide workshops and curriculum based workshops for Primary Schools	•	•	•
1.2 Provide workshops and activities based on Celtic festivals	•	•	•
1.3 Provide age appropriate activity sheets for schools based on the Museum's collections.	•	•	•
1.4 Establish 'Loan Box' and documentation for schools.	•	•	•
1.5 Provide guided tours of the Museum's collections	•	•	•
1.6 Provide Be an Archaeologist Workshops		•	•
1.7 In Service training day for teachers	•	•	•
1.8 Establish a weekly social media video	•	•	•
1.9 Market the Museum's Schools Services to schools	•	•	•
<b>Strategic Aim 2: Provide environment where students can learn museum and research skills in museum environment</b>			
2.1 Link UCC students with curatorial tasks	•	•	•
2.2 Provide research projects for UL which contribute to knowledge of Clare's	•	•	•

history.			
<b>Strategic Aim 3: To develop life-long learning opportunities</b>			
3.1 Provide a calendar of events that includes monthly public talks	•	•	•
3.2 Grow accessibility with regular guided tours of the collections	•	•	•
3.3 Establish quarterly workshops in support of museum exhibitions		•	•
3.4 Stay current via biannual temporary exhibitions etc	•	•	•
3.5 Engage families with movie evenings	•	•	•
3.6 Promote interaction with the establishment of mobile activity cart.	•		
3.7 Publish online and hardcopy resources for in-house exhibitions	•	•	•
3.8 Promote the existing museum reading list.	•	•	•
3.9 Design and print the Clare Local Studies reading list for museum exhibition	•		
3.10 Update interpretation of the museum website	•	•	•
<b>Strategic Aim 4: To facilitate maximum engagement with the museum in Clare</b>			
4.1 Promote the museum as a resource to support all adult education programmes of the LCETB	•	•	•
4.2 Establish an outreach programme with volunteers	•	•	•
4.3 Use social media to	•	•	•



highlight objects in the museum collection			
<b>Strategic Aim 5: Resource the museum sufficiently to achieve the marketing, training and development objectives</b>			
5.1 Continue to avail of training provided by the HC	•	•	•
5.2 Attend IMA Seminars/Training	•	•	•
5.3 Provision of post graduate courses to staff	•	•	•
5.4 Child protection training for staff who require it	•	•	•
5.5 Object handling Training for staff	•	•	•

Performance indicators and review:

The success of the policy will be determined by the increase in the numbers of visitors to the museum and in particular an increase in the numbers of schools and school children that visit. In 2017, 1,858 children from 30 primary and secondary schools visited the museum. However, by 2019, due to reduced staff and limited availability of our education volunteer and a reduced number of activities, this had reduced to 1,013 from 20 primary and secondary schools.

A qualitative evaluation of the workshops shall be sought from participating schools. An evaluation form shall be emailed to participating school teachers upon the confirmation of a booking and the data gathered will inform the development and improvement of our educational activities.

The successful implementation of this policy will contribute towards increasing the number of visits to the museum to from 30,000 in 2018 to 35,000 by 2022. The successful implementation of this Education policy will contribute to achieving to that aim.

## References

Education Policy for Kerry County Museum

Education Policy for Tipperary South County Museum

Education Policy for Donegal County Museum