

Hinchliffe Mill Junior and Infant School

Geography Policy (Revised February 2015)

“What is our knowledge worth if we know nothing about the world that sustains us, nothing about natural systems and climate, nothing about other countries and cultures?”
Jonathon Porritt, Forum for the Future

In today's society, it is important that children should gain knowledge and understanding of the world around them. The skills of geography should be seen as valid, worthwhile and useful in everyday life. There are also important issues raised by the subject about shared responsibilities for our world.

Aims

- To give children a sense of wonder in the world around us
- To develop independence in thought and action
- To nurture a respect for the environment
- That children see a need for geographical knowledge and skills in everyday life
- To develop children's geographical knowledge and understanding. That children learn geographical skills
- To expand children's horizons and foster an understanding of how other people live
- To gain understanding of the interdependence of the world
- To learn through practical experience
- To fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum Document
- That all children have an equal opportunity to learn geographically

Objectives

Through our practice and methodology, that the majority of children will develop the skills that enable them to use geographical skills effectively and appropriately.

Methodology

We believe that children should experience a variety of methodology:

- exposition by the teacher
- discussions between teachers and pupils and between themselves
- using appropriate practical work
- learning directly from the local and wider environment
- consolidation of fundamental skills by practice and routine
- problem solving including investigational and exploratory work
- that teachers take opportunities to link geography to other areas of the curriculum
- we recognise the important role which ICT can play in supporting geographical development: in this we believe that teachers use their own professional judgement to choose appropriate methodology

We believe that children should experience a variety of work situations

- Mental and Oral work
- Class activities - when introducing work in a lesson
- Individual work - particularly when following up an activity
- Group or paired work - particularly in investigation, application and problem solving and field study

These groupings may vary in structure to accommodate certain work strategies: similar ability, mixed ability, friendship groups.

Hinchliffe Mill Junior and Infant School has adopted and implemented the National Curriculum for England 2014.

Children are taught in mixed ability class groups across two year groups.

Planning

We are following the guidelines of Curriculum 2014 which are quite brief. We continue to facilitate this by using and adapting the plans which link areas of learning in school. Some past QCA topics are still used. However, we have changed some emphasis to stimulate interest and meet the needs of our children.

The Role of the Teacher

The teacher will be sensitive to the needs of the children and will plan appropriately for the needs of the children in their class. They will encourage the children and value each child's achievement.

Resources

These include personnel and physical resources.

- There is a central bank of physical resources in school
- A variety of atlases are available in the library
- Maps of the local area and areas used for residential visits in various scales are available in the store room and hall
- ICT resources, including calculators and computers, are used in geography
- The internet is a valuable resource eg Google World
- Each classroom also has equipment pertinent to the work being followed.
- The children are generally aware of location of materials and encouraged to collect what they need independently. To enable this to happen, equipment is well organised and clearly labelled.
- We are based in a locality where outdoor learning is easily implemented
- There is a teacher designated as Geography Co-ordinator
- All staff are confident and competent in teaching this area of the curriculum
- Classroom support assistants, learning support assistants, parent helpers and other adults are used to assist in the subject, particularly in field study and practical work.
- Children use the school environment as a resource for geography.
- There is a budget allocation for resources.

Field Study

Field study is an invaluable way of studying the local community and that farther a-field. This may be in the form of short visits within the local area, day visits within the region and residential visits in this country.

- Visits will be organised by the teaching staff and relevant to the appropriate programme of study.
- Staff are aware of, and have access to school and local authority guidelines for Health and Safety
- There is appropriate risk assessment
- Parents are encouraged to support visits and accompany the school on such visits
- Prior to residential visits detailed information is available to parents
- All areas have previously been visited by a member of staff involved in the visit

- Follow up work in school enables the experience to be built upon and knowledge and skills extended

Assessment and Record Keeping

- We ensure work is marked and evaluated.
- Assessment is required to plan for the next stage of the children's work.
- Assessment is used to evaluate a child's progress.
- Each child's workbook is an ongoing record of that child's progress.
- Assessment is in accordance with School Policy.
- Pupil assessment sheets for the curriculum are kept in the store room filing cabinet

Equal Opportunities

The programmes of study are available to all pupils. Support services and staff are used to ensure that no child is excluded from a residential visit because of physical disability.

All visits take place on the understanding that where they are part of the school curriculum financial contributions are on a voluntary basis.

It is the general policy of the school to provide financial support if needed.

Monitoring and Evaluation

A programme of monitoring and evaluation has been put into place across the school for geography. The Headteacher who is the co-ordinator carries out this monitoring programme, planning is collected weekly. Lessons are observed on a planned basis and work is sampled and reviewed annually in staff meetings. Work samples for three pupils in each year group; below average, average, above average; are collected annually and after review are stored in the store room.

Target Setting

Our aim is to set targets as required for each child to fulfil their full potential

Information Communication Technology

Throughout school children have access to ICT facilities that develop skills needed in geography. This includes Data Handling, Spreadsheets and Control. Specific software programmes and internet tools are also used by the children. The school has an up to date ICT Policy

Homework

- Government guidelines are currently followed on homework.
- Parental interests in geography should be welcomed.
- Work parallel to that being presently covered in class may be sent home if appropriate. This must not prove onerous to the teacher.
- A longer project may be set as homework relating to geography, particularly in years 5 and 6.
- The school has an up to date homework policy and parent information leaflet.

Special Educational Needs

Children with Special Educational Needs are carefully monitored. Initially differentiated work will be provided within the group. It may be that differentiation within the classroom is inappropriate for their particular needs. In this case an Individual Education Plan will be drawn up for them by their teacher in consultation with SENCO.

- The school has an up to date SEN Policy
- There is also support from the Local Education Authority

Communication with Parents

We believe that links with home are vital and endeavour to keep parents informed of our work and the children's progress. Parents are free to discuss issues at any time. They are kept informed in a variety of formal ways.

These are:

- Parent /Teacher interviews
- The annual written report
- Other written information
- Special events such as open days
- Make them aware of our policy

Display

Displays of information and geographical facts are used in school. It is appropriate that work in geography is displayed in school so that children can celebrate their achievements.

The role of the co-ordinator

- To model good practice
- To ensure the implementation of this policy
- To ensure they are up to date with current policy and practice
- To monitor and evaluate practice within classrooms
- To help with and monitor planning
- To attend courses and lead staff INSET
- To review this policy
- To inform Governors on current policy and practice in Geography

The co-ordinator responsible for this policy is Liz Noble

Liaison

There is regular liaison with schools within the pyramid by the headteacher and year 6 teacher.

This Policy will be reviewed on a biennial basis.