



## Geography Policy

### 1 Introduction

Geography should inspire a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people, equipping pupils with knowledge about: diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments and understanding of: the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the framework and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time (National Curriculum, 2014).

In geography, pupils learn about the skills of understanding a locality and how and where people fit into its overall structure. Geography encourages children to learn through experience, particularly through practical and fieldwork activities.

This takes place within the context of our school vision: to develop lively, enquiring minds and promote outstanding standards of achievement in a happy, safe and caring environment based on Christian values which encourage all to show respect, acceptance and understanding of others.

### 2 Aims

Geography teaching offers opportunities to:

- stimulate pupils' interest in their own surroundings and other localities, in the United Kingdom and the rest of the world.
- give pupils the opportunities to make observations and form opinions about their immediate environment and other localities.
- understand how physical features such as climate, rivers, mountains etc affect the lifestyles of different people around the world.
- foster pupils' sense of wonder at the beauty of the world around them.
- develop an understanding of the relationship between people and the environment and how peoples' actions affect the quality of the environment.
- enhance pupils' sense of responsibility with regard to caring for the Earth.
- develop an awareness and appreciation of cultural and economic diversity.
- acquire and develop skills necessary for making geographical enquiries.

- embody principles of the distinctively Christian nature of our school in all aspects of learning.

### **3 Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning of geography should be stimulating and motivating. Pupils should enjoy developing skills and knowledge and begin to see the world as an interesting place. It should involve encouraging children to ask questions, identify ways in which they might find the answers and to search for those answers. We aim to give the children practical, 'hands on' experiences in Geography: practical activities and field trips should form as large a part of the teaching activities as possible. As class teachers, it is essential to use a variety of teaching techniques in order to meet the learning objective with the greatest success. These will include co-operative group work, individual work and class work.

We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our geography lessons. We believe in whole-class teaching methods and we combine these with enquiry-based research activities. We encourage children to ask as well as answer geographical questions. We offer them the opportunity to use a variety of data, such as maps, statistics, graphs, pictures, and aerial photographs, and we enable them to use ICT in geography lessons where this serves to enhance their learning. Children take part in discussions and they present their learning in a variety of ways - orally, visually and in various written forms.

We recognise the fact that there are children of widely different geographical abilities in both classes and we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks;
- grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks to each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity according to the ability of the child;
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children when possible.

### **4 Geography Curriculum Planning**

We use the National Curriculum and Hamilton Trust materials as the basis for our curriculum planning. We have adapted the national scheme to the local circumstances of our school, i.e. we make use of the local environment in our fieldwork and we also choose a locality where the human activities and physical features provide a contrast to those that predominate in our own immediate area.

Our curriculum planning is in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). Our long-term plan maps the geography topics studied in each term during each key stage. The geography subject leader works this out in conjunction with teaching colleagues. In some cases we combine the geographical study with work in other subject areas, especially at Key Stage 1. At other times we arrange for the children to carry out a geographical study independently.

Our medium-term plans are creatively based on the national scheme of work and give details of each unit of work for each term. The geography subject leader reviews these plans on a regular basis. Because we have mixed-age classes, we do the medium-term planning on a four-year rotation cycle. In this way we ensure that children have complete coverage of the National Curriculum but do not repeat topics.

Each class teacher creates a plan for each lesson. These daily lesson plans list specific learning objectives.

We plan topics in geography so that they build upon prior learning. Children of all abilities have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and, through planned progression built into the scheme of work, we offer them an increasing challenge as they move up the school.

## **5 Foundation Stage**

We teach geography in the foundation class as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the foundation class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the geographical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage K UW. Geography makes a significant contribution to the objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world through activities such as collecting postcards from different places, singing songs from around the world, or investigating what makes a 'good' playground.

## **6 Key Stage 1 pupils should be taught about:**

### **Location knowledge**

- name and locate the world's seven continents and five oceans.
- name, locate and identify characteristics of the four countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas.

### **Place knowledge**

- understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom, and of a small area in a contrasting non-European country.

### **Human and physical geography**

- identify seasonal and daily weather patterns in the United Kingdom and the location of hot and cold areas of the world in relation to the Equator and the North and South Poles.
- use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to: key physical features, including: beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather; key human features, including: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shop.

### **Geographical skills and fieldwork**

- use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the United Kingdom and its countries, as well as the countries, continents and oceans studied at this key stage
- use simple compass directions (North, South, East and West) and locational and directional language [for example, near and far; left and right], to describe the location of features and routes on a map.
- use aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features; devise a simple map; and use and construct basic symbols in a key
- use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of their school and its grounds and the key human and physical features of its surrounding environment.

## **7 Key Stage 2 pupils should be taught about:**

### **Locational knowledge**

- locate the world's countries, using maps to focus on Europe (including the location of Russia) and North and South America, concentrating on their environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries, and major cities.
- name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, key topographical features (including hills, mountains, coasts and rivers), and land-use patterns; and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time.
- identify the position and significance of latitude, longitude, Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle, the Prime/Greenwich Meridian and time zones (including day and night).

### **Place knowledge**

- understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region of the United Kingdom, a region in a European country, and a region within North or South America.

### **Human and physical geography**

- describe and understand key aspects of:

- physical geography, including: climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle.
- human geography, including: types of settlement and land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water.

### **Geographical skills and fieldwork**

- use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied.
- use the eight points of a compass, four and six-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build their knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world.
- use fieldwork to observe, measure, record and present the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods, including sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technologies.

## **8 The contribution of geography to teaching in other subjects**

The key aim of a Geography lesson should be to develop geographical skills, but geography can also make a contribution to other subjects:

### **English**

Geography makes a significant contribution to the teaching of English in our school because it actively promotes the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We ensure that some of the texts that we use in the literacy hour are geographical in nature. For example, in Key Stage 1 we use the Katie Morag books. At Key Stage 2 we organise debates on environmental issues or role play because we believe that these develop speaking and listening skills. Reports, letters and recording information will all develop children's writing ability. We also use environmental issues as a way of developing the children's writing ability by asking them to record information and write reports and letters.

### **Mathematics**

Geography in our school contributes to the teaching of mathematics in a variety of ways. We teach the children how to represent objects with maps. Pupils study space, scale and distance and they learn how to use four- and six-figure grid references. They also use graphs to explore, analyse and illustrate a variety of data.

### **Computing**

We make provision for the children to use computers in geography lessons where appropriate. We incorporate ICT in our geography curriculum planning at Key Stage 2, and we use it at Key Stage 1 when appropriate. Children use ICT in geography to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work. They research information through the Internet. We also offer children the opportunity to use a digital camera to record and use photographic images.

### **Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship**

Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. The subject matter lends itself to raising matters of citizenship and social welfare. For example, children study the way people re-cycle material and how environments are changed for better or for worse. The nature of the subject means that children have the opportunity to take part in debates and discussions. We allow them to organise campaigns on matters of concern to them, such as helping the poor or homeless.

### **Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development**

We offer children in our school many opportunities to examine the fundamental questions in life through the medium of geography. For example, their work on the changing landscape and environmental issues leads children to ask questions about the evolution of the planet. We encourage the children to reflect on the impact of mankind on our world and we introduce the concept of 'stewardship' in relation to sustainable development. Through teaching about contrasting localities, we enable the children to learn about inequality and injustice in the world. We help children to develop their knowledge and understanding of different cultures so that they learn to avoid stereotyping other people and acquire a positive attitude towards others. We help contribute to the children's social development by teaching them about how society works to resolve difficult issues of economic development. Geography contributes to the children's appreciation of what is right and wrong by raising many moral questions during the programme of study.

## **9 Inclusion**

### **Equal Opportunities**

- We plan our classroom activities to challenge and involve all pupils appropriately, according to age and capability, ethnic diversity, gender and language background.
- We are aware of different learning styles and the need to allow pupils to be able to work in their preferred learning styles for some of the time. We use materials for teaching which avoid stereo-typing, and bias, towards race, gender, role or disability. Through the teaching of geography we will promote mutual respect and tolerance for all cultures. We also encourage responsibility to the community and the environment.
- We deal with such issues clearly and sensitively when they arise.

### **Differentiation**

We teach geography to all children, whatever their ability. Geography forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. We provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against age-related expectations. We use a range of strategies to support pupils. A few of these, particularly relevant to Geography are:

- the use of appropriate vocabulary at varying levels of difficulty during lessons;
- modified text passages as expected in other curriculum areas;
- different levels of written or oral questions for pupils investigations;
- careful use of support for pupils with English as an additional language.

**For our gifted and talented pupils we will expect:**

- teachers to provide teaching and learning experiences that encourage pupils to think creatively, explore and develop ideas, and try different approaches.
- pupils should be encouraged to set their own questions, offer ideas, suggest solutions or explanations, and reflect on what they have heard, seen or done in order to clarify their thoughts.
- greater independence in working, e.g. a pupil to be able to carry out their own simple geographical enquiry.
- to avoid giving gifted pupils additional writing tasks and encourage them instead to communicate their understanding in a variety of ways, giving them responsibility for choosing and evaluating the most appropriate method.
- to provide opportunities within geography for pupils to develop their skills in other areas, such as intrapersonal skills (for example, opportunities to use initiative), and interpersonal skills (for example, leadership and group membership). These opportunities also relate to the key skills of working with others and improving own learning and performance.

**Teaching geography to children with special educational needs**

We teach geography to all children, whatever their ability. Geography forms part of a broad and balanced education. Through our geography teaching we provide learning opportunities that match the needs of children with learning difficulties and we take into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Teachers decide how the material should be adapted to meet the needs of the children in the class, particularly if they are not attaining at levels broadly appropriate for their age. Teachers are best placed to judge whether the learning objectives meet the learning needs of individual children and to adapt these to provide appropriate opportunities for all children to succeed. Some of the teaching activities will need to be adapted to ensure that children with special educational needs of all kinds may participate fully and demonstrate their achievements.

**10 Assessment and Recording**

We assess children's work by making informal judgments as we observe them during each lesson. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher marks the work and comments as necessary. At the end of a unit of work, the teacher makes a summary judgments about the work of each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum age related expectations. Teachers record the attainment in their planning documents and on Classroom Monitor and we use these to plan future work with that pupil, to

provide the basis for assessing the progress of the child, and to pass information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

At the start of each topic, pupils also complete mind maps, which are added to as the topic progresses, in order to show progress. This can be either a whole class mind map or an individual one, depending upon the age of the children. Pupils are encouraged to improve their own learning performance through the schools marking policy.

Teachers analyse the progress pupils have made in the units of work they have completed at the end of each school year to complete the annual report to parents/carers. The report takes the form of a summary of teacher's observations and continued assessments of the pupils at work and a level at which the pupil is currently working.

The geography subject leader will collect samples of the children's work at the end of each term and keep these in a portfolio which shows what the expected level of achievement is in geography in each year of the school.

## **11 Resources**

We are continually improving resources in our school. Each teacher keeps resources for the relevant units in the appropriate classroom. Resources are also kept in the store room in the hall. In the library we have a developing supply of geography topic books and set of atlases. Teaching materials are also stored in the staffroom. Pupils have access to data bases, spreadsheets, simulations and the Internet. A globe is kept in each classroom.

## **12 Fieldwork**

Fieldwork is integral to good geography teaching and we include as many opportunities as we can to involve children in practical geographical research and enquiry.

At Key Stage 1 we let all the children carry out an investigation into the local environment and we give them opportunities to observe and record information around the school site. At Key Stage 2 the children do a study of the local area. The school takes Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 on field studies where fieldwork techniques and first hand observational work are developed.

## **13 Health and Safety**

All out of school activities will comply with the guidelines in the school Health and Safety policy. When engaged in fieldwork children are expected to behave in a considerate, responsible manner showing respect for other people and the environment.



## **14 Roles and responsibilities**

### **The Governing Body:**

Determines, supports, monitors and reviews the school geography policy.

### **The Headteacher's role is to:**

- provide support by encouraging staff and praising good practice;
- monitor learning and teaching through lesson observations;
- give feedback to teachers following lesson observations;
- support staff development through in service training and provision of resources.

### **Role of the Subject Leader is to:**

- ensure the geography curriculum is being delivered in a way which meets the learning objectives and hopefully inspires and motivates the children.
- be responsible, along with the class teacher, for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in geography.
- support colleagues in the teaching of geography, being informed about current developments in the subject, and to provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school, including advising the Head teacher about purchasing, ordering and maintaining teaching resources.
- give the head teacher an annual report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. We allocate special time for the vital task of reviewing samples of children's work.

### **The Class teacher's role is to:**

- be responsible for the teaching of geography as set out in the policy;
- provide planning and reviews for the Headteacher and subject leader to have access to;
- provide samples of history work when required;
- assess children's work in order to detail future planning;
- update skills, knowledge and understanding of history;
- identify training needs in geography and take advantage of training opportunities;
- keep appropriate on-going records in relation to school policy.

## **15 Monitoring and Review**

We are aware of the need to monitor and update the school's Geography Policy on a regular basis so that we can take account of improvements made in our practice.

Member of staff responsible: Geography Subject Leader

Date policy written: October 2015

Date to be reviewed: October 2018

Signature (Head) J. Castle (Date) April 2016

Signature (Chair of Governors) [Signature] (Date)

This policy should be reviewed annually and rewritten every three years if necessary.