

Policy for Geography

Aims

The aims of geography are:

- to enable children to gain knowledge and understanding of places in the world at different scales: locally, nationally, internationally;
- to increase children's knowledge of other cultures and, in doing so, teach a respect and understanding of what it means to be a positive citizen in a multi-cultural country;
- to allow children to learn graphic skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps, plans, diagrams and photographs;
- to enable children to know and understand environmental problems at a local, regional and global level;
- to encourage in children a commitment to sustainable development and an appreciation of what 'global citizenship' means;
- to develop a variety of other skills, including those of enquiry, problem solving, ICT, investigation and how to present their conclusions in the most appropriate way.

Curriculum Organisation

Early Years Foundation Stage:

Geography is taught to nursery and reception classes through topic work with the geographical aspects of the children's work planned to address the Early Years Outcomes for the EYFS in the area of Understanding the World. In this area of learning children are developing 'crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that helps them to make senses of the world'. Pupils are assessed against ELG's and this helps to form the foundation for later work in geography.

Key Stage 1 & 2:

Geography is delivered through the Rising Stars Voyagers scheme of work. This scheme of work meets all of the requirements for this subject, as set out in the National Curriculum. Topics are taught on a termly basis and pupils are assessed against their performance in each topic.

Contribution to other curriculum areas

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. Geographical enquiry involves: reading a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts; writing reports, descriptions, explanations, letters etc; speaking and listening skills are developed through asking and answering questions about a topic or issue, role play, interviews, presentations, key questioning, debates and team tasks.

Mathematics

Geography in our school contributes to the teaching of mathematics in a variety of ways. The children study space, scale, and distance and they learn how to use four- and six- figure grid references. They also use compasses, tables, diagrams and graphs to explore, analyse and illustrate a variety of data.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

We use ICT effectively to enhance the learning of geography in class, through the use of Interactive White Boards, laptops/notebooks and iPad's with links to the internet, together with a selection of DVDs and compatible geographical resources. We also offer the children the opportunity to use the iPad's to record and take photographic images for evidence.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. The topics covered helps to raise the children's awareness of citizenship and social welfare e.g. through studying the way people recycle material and how environments are changed for better or for worse' or researching the issue of plastic pollution.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

We offer children in our school many opportunities to examine the fundamental questions of life through the medium of geography. We encourage 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 the 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.

Inclusion

We teach geography to all children, whatever their ability, and our teaching is planned to provide learning opportunities that match the needs of children. Lessons are differentiated through task or organisation with children working in mixed ability pairs or groups. For our gifted and talented pupils, we provide opportunities to complete extension tasks linked to the topics, which are designed to challenge the more able geographers.

Assessment and recording

We assess the children's work in geography by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lessons. Once they complete a topic, we make a summary judgement of the work of each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum levels of attainments, using the Rising Stars Assessment Progression Frameworks. The children have the opportunity to self-assess the same targets. This information is recorded and used to plan the future work of each child, to make a termly assessment of the child's progress and it helps to inform the child's annual report to parents, which is passed on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

Children are teacher assessed at the end of each topic against agreed age-related criteria. This includes WT (working towards), ARE (working at) and WGD (working at greater depth).

The geography subject leader keeps a varied selection of evidence of the children's work in a portfolio.

Health & Safety

Risk assessments are conducted by staff prior to any fieldwork. (See health & safety policy).

Resources

A variety of resources are available for the teaching of geography and these are regularly reviewed and updated by the subject leader. A further review of resources will be carried out at the end of this year. They are kept in a central store. In addition, there is a range of geography topic books located in the library and pupils are encouraged to bring in topic-related resources.

Monitoring and review

The humanities team and subject leader is responsible for producing the geography policy and for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in geography. The humanities team is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of geography, for being informed about current developments in the subject and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The geography subject leader produces an annual report and action plan which indicates strengths and weaknesses of the subject and identifies areas for further improvement. The subject leader has allocated time for monitoring children's work and observing teaching across the school.

Date: November 2020

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