



# Curriculum policy: Geography

# Geography:

To inspire curiosity and fascination about the world and its people.



## Curriculum Intent

Through Geography we want our children to be curious about their own locality and the wider world. We want children to see the links between human and physical geography, to understand the world and the people within it.

We want our children to think geographically, to see the world in a unique way, understanding complex problems and making connections from local to global.



## Curriculum Aims

We want children to be able to:

- Ask questions, discuss, communicate understanding, and revise their ideas
- Use specialist vocabulary
- Understand and clarify what geography is and the importance and value of studying the subject
- Understand the link between human and physical geography
- Develop geographical skills such as observation (through field work, maps etc), description and comparison (e.g., geographical features, and events)
- Develop visual literacy and acquire a range of geographical images to accompany the expanding geographical vocabulary



## Lesson structure

We want geography to be an enjoyable experience. We believe that children learn best when there is a clear structure and purpose for the learning.

Geography is taught using an enquiry approach. Each unit begins with an overarching question to hook and engage the children. There is also a clear unit outcome, providing a clear purpose for the learning.

Each lesson begins with a clear learning objective. Success criteria are expressed as 'I can' statements (Recorded as a title page in their exercise books) which the children can self-assess as the lesson and unit progresses.

To develop children's geographical understanding and thinking lessons will provide children with opportunities to:

- **Observe:** Use first-hand, pictures, videos, and maps, using and developing visual literacy skills to acquire geographical vocabulary
- **Describe:** Demonstrate that the vocabulary has been acquired, using talk, and then possibly annotating, labelling, and writing
- **Compare:** Identify similarities and differences
- **Reason:** Give/Suggest reasons for similarities and differences identified
- **Explain:** Explain at a higher level



## Planning and Resources

Each unit employs the same structure. Teachers begin by looking at the unit overview. This provides an at-a-glance overview of what will happen in the half termly unit. It offers practical advice regarding resourcing and teaching of the unit of work. It starts with the unit title and key enquiry question.

Each unit ends with 'The Big Finish' which is designed to consolidate, share, and celebrate the learning that has taken place.

It is essential that teachers read, digest, and fully understand how each lesson builds to the 'Big Finish.'

Much of geography is visual (e.g. Features of landscapes and urban scapes) and pictorial (such as photographs, films and maps).

Classroom displays are essential to support learning. These should include a range of questions from the unit including the key question and sub questions. Subject specific vocabulary should be included with definitions.



## Curriculum Implementation

We teach geography as an explicit subject from Years 1 to 6 using the Rising Stars scheme which covers all strands of the National Curriculum. All children work on the same core tasks. Those that grasp content and concepts quickly can go to work on the 'stretch and challenge' extensions within the task.

Children are taught three units of geography over the year. Each unit has six sessions (based on two hours each), which move from a shared starting point to a 'Big Finish,' where learning is showcased.

Each unit of work is designed to expand from the children's own environment to the wider world. Place studies start local and increase in scale to regional, national, and global, allowing revisiting, developing, and challenging ideas and concepts. Similarly, consideration of the weather and seasons progresses to more in depth study of the importance of climate and finally addresses protecting environments from global warming combating climate change.

The focus throughout is on contextualized geography, using real, named localities and environments which can be located on appropriate maps. Throughout the units, knowledge, skills, and concepts are brought together holistically, underpinned by the development of strong evolving subject vocabulary with which to talk about and discuss the geography being learned.

We want children to discover that some of the questions have more than one answer, some of which are 'better' than others. This is particularly true when environmental issues are discussed, and experts propose different solutions. During lesson we want children to explore how 'real world' decisions are made.

Geography knowledge and skills are taught and developed within the 'Understanding of the World' in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). We want our children to develop an understanding of the world through activities such as: exploring the natural world around them, finding out about contrasting environments, exploring habitats and investigating our locality.



## Assessment

Formative assessment opportunities are integrated throughout the units. Some are informal and depend on the use of talk, eavesdropping on children's discussions or through direct conversation with children to check their understanding and correct use of vocabulary.

Each unit is clearly evidenced with a title page which breaks down the 'I can' statements for each lesson. The 'I can' statements should be constantly referred to throughout the lesson. Wherever possible the work recorded in the children's exercise books will demonstrate their understanding and allow them to indicate that they have achieved the 'I can' statement.

Online quizzes are also included and are designed to enable children to assess their own progress in acquiring knowledge and support retention of the information.

By looking at which 'I can' statements the children have achieved, the children, teacher and subject leader can quickly determine who is working at age expectations and the knowledge, skills and concepts that require further attention.



## Inclusion

We teach geography to all children, whatever their ability. Those working towards expectations will work on tasks that are adapted to suit their needs. They may also choose to demonstrate their understanding orally or visually, to avoid limited literacy skills hindering their achievements within the subject. Where possible, children will be supported through paired and group work. Questions posed within the sessions provide opportunities for all children to be able to contribute.



## Role of Subject Leader

- Ensure that the statutory requirements of the national curriculum for geography are met
- Ensure appropriate professional development opportunities are provided for all staff
- Monitor their subject to ensure consistency of approach
- Ensure regular and appropriate assessment of geography takes place and have a clear overview of who is achieving age related expectations
- Ensure that children who are not making enough progress to achieve age related expectations have been identified, and appropriate interventions put in place to ensure they catch up
- Ensure appropriate resources are available
- Engage with outside agencies and online communities to keep up to date and become the expert in their chosen subject in the school

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