

Woodthorpe J.I. School

Geography Policy

1 Aims and objectives

1.1 Geography teaches an understanding of places and environments. Through their work in geography, children learn about their local area, and they compare their life in this area with that in other regions in the United Kingdom and in the rest of the world. They learn how to draw and interpret maps, and they develop the skills of research, investigation, analysis and problem-solving. Through their growing knowledge and understanding of human geography, children gain an appreciation of life in other cultures. Geography teaching also motivates children to find out about the physical world, and enables them to recognise the importance of sustainable development for the future of mankind.

1.2 The objectives of teaching geography in our school are:

- to enable children to gain knowledge and understanding of places in the world;
- to increase children's knowledge of other cultures and, in so doing, teach a respect and understanding of what it means to be a positive citizen in a multicultural country;
- to allow children to learn graphic skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps;
- 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 in children a variety of other skills, including those of enquiry, problem-solving, ICT, investigation, and that of presenting their conclusions in the most appropriate way.

2 Teaching and learning style

2.1 We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our geography lessons. We believe in using a variety of teaching methods to meet the learning needs of children in each class. 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 role-play and discussions, and they present reports to the rest of the class. They engage in a wide variety of problem-solving activities. Wherever possible, we involve the children in 'real' geographical activities, for example research of a local environmental problem, or use of the Internet to investigate a current issue.

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

- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;

- setting tasks of increasing difficulty according to the ability of the child;
- providing resources of different complexity, according to the ability of the child; and
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children.

3 Geography curriculum planning

- 3.1** Our school follows the National Curriculum Programme of Study for Geography. We have adapted the programme 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.
- 3.2** Geography is planned as part of and delivered through our connected Curriculum scheme of work for Years 1 to 6.
- 3.3** Each class teacher follows a plan for each lesson. These plans list specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson. The class teacher keeps these individual plans.

4 The Foundation Stage

- 4.1** We teach geography in reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), we relate the geographical aspects of the children's work to their development towards the appropriate age band for the specific area; Understanding the World, which underpins the curriculum planning for children from birth to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the development of each child's knowledge and understanding of the world, through activities such as collecting postcards from different places, being involved in an activity associated with a specific country or thinking about journeys.

5 The contribution of geography to teaching in other curriculum areas

5.1 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. At Key Stage 2 pupils have the opportunity to debate environmental issues, 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.

5.2 Mathematics

The teaching of Geography in our school contributes to children's mathematical understanding in a variety of ways. We teach the children how to represent objects with maps. The children 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.

5.3 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Firstly, the subject matter lends itself to raising matters of citizenship and social welfare. For example, children study the way people recycle material, and how environments are changed for better or for worse. Secondly, the nature of the subject means that children have the opportunity to take part in debates and discussions. We also consider the human aspect of geography, considering how people help us and how we can help others. Thus geography in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship.

5.4 Spiritual, moral, social 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. Geography contributes to the children's appreciation of what is right and wrong by raising many moral questions during the programme of study.

6 Geography and ICT

Information and communication technology enhances our teaching of geography, wherever appropriate, in each key stage. Children use ICT to enhance their skills in data handling (mountain, climate, population or river data) and in presenting written work. They research information through the Internet. Children are able to use iPads in their research and for recording their learning. We have access to 'Roamers' which supports early mapping skills. Staff ensure that our E.Safety policy is followed when using any new technology.

7 Geography and inclusion

7.1 At our school we teach geography to all children. Geography compliments the school curriculum policy of providing a broad and balanced education to all children.

7.2 When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. This helps ensure that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

8 Assessment for learning

8.1 The children's learning and understanding of Geography is assessed, at the end of each relevant unit, using 'I Can' statements. Record of this assessment is given to the geography co-ordinator at the end of each term.

9 Resources

9.1 We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all the geography units in the National Curriculum Programme of Study. All teachers have relevant resources in classrooms for their **Voyager** topics. There is also **a range of** ~~central store where everyone has access to maps, atlases and photocopiable resources~~ **and** ~~We also keep a collection of~~ geography equipment which the children use to gather weather data, and a set of atlases for both key stages. In the library we are developing our supply of geography topic books and in the computer suite we have a range of educational software to support the children's individual research.

10 Fieldwork

10.1 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.

10.2 At Key Stage 1 we let all children carry out an investigation into the local environment, and we give them opportunities to observe and record information around the school site. They also visit a farm to consider the differences between our two localities. At Key Stage 2 the children do a study of the local area. We also offer them the opportunity to take part in two residential visits Blackwell Court (Lower KS2) and Red Ridge (Upper KS2).

11 Monitoring and review

11.1 The Geography co-ordinator monitors implementation of the geography content within the curriculum scheme of work and the assessment of children's learning. This is fed back to the Leadership Team and to staff for evaluation.

The Rights of Every Child

Woodthorpe JI School uses the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child to ensure that every policy supports the improvement of life chances for children. Related articles: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 28, 29.

Signed:

Approved: October 2018

Review: October 2021