

Brindle St James' Church of England Primary School



Geography Policy

February 2024

A high-quality geography education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their 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 frameworks and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

The aims

We aim to ensure that all pupils:

- Develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places - both terrestrial and marine - including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes.
- Understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time.
- Are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
 - Collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes.
 - Interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS).
 - Communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.

Teaching and learning style

We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our geography lessons. We believe in whole-class teaching methods and 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. Wherever possible we involve the children in 'real' geographical activities, e.g. research of a local environmental problem or use of the Internet to investigate a current issue.

We recognise that there are children of widely different geographical abilities in all 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;
- Grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- Providing resources of different complexity according to the ability of the child;
- Using classroom assistants to support individual or groups of children when possible.
- Approaching the teaching of geography in a variety of ways including appeal to a variety of learning styles including written work, exploration, local field trips and resources including maps, globes and measuring apparatus.

Subject content

Key stage 1

Pupils should develop knowledge about the world, the United Kingdom and their locality. They should understand basic subject-specific vocabulary relating to human and physical geography and begin to use geographical skills, including first-hand observation, to enhance their locational awareness.

Pupils should be taught to:

Locational 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.

Key stage 2

Pupils should extend their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to include the United Kingdom and Europe, North and South America. This will include the location and characteristics of a range of the world's most significant human and physical features. They should develop their use of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to enhance their locational and place knowledge.

Pupils should be taught to:

Locational knowledge

- locate some of 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.

Geography Curriculum Planning

The long term plans identify how the geography curriculum has been distributed across the years of both key stages in a sequence that promotes continuity and progress in the children's learning. Geography does not appear in every term per year group, but balances over the year to meet statutory requirements.

Medium term planning shows the sequence of each unit of study, linked to the estimated time each unit will take to complete. The teaching objectives linked to the programme of study are also identified.

Short term planning is the responsibility of the individual class teachers.

Early Years Foundation Stage

We teach geography in Class 1 as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception children are part of the Early Years Foundation Stage, we work towards achieving the geographical aspects of the Early Learning Goals (ELGs), which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the ELG objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world. The Reception children join in with the KS1 topics when suitable whilst also following their own independent exploration of learning through continuous provision which is tailored to suit their needs and interests.

Links 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. We also ensure that some of the texts that we use in English lessons are of a geographical nature. The writing of reports and letters alongside other methods of recording information all contribute to the development of children's writing.

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. 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.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

We make provision for the children to use the computer in geography lessons where appropriate. ICT is used to enhance their skills in data handling, research and presentation. We arrange for the children to communicate with pupils in other schools and countries by using e-mail. We also offer children the opportunity to use the digital camera to record and use photographic images.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Geography contributes to the teaching of PSHE and citizenship by lending 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 worse. Secondly, the nature of the subject means that children have the opportunity to take part in debates, discussions and campaigns on matters of concern thus promoting the concept of positive citizenship.

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. 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.

Special needs provision (including the gifted & talented)

At Brindle St. James CE Primary School 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. Through our geography teaching we provide learning opportunities that match the needs of children with special needs and we take into account the targets set for individual children. Where a child shows a particular skill for geography, we will support and challenge that skill.

Assessment and recording

We assess the children's work in geography by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lessons. Once the children complete a piece of work, we mark and comment as necessary. We use Assessment for Learning to plan future work and as a basis for assessing progress. Children are assessed against the relevant KLIPs at the end of each unit of work as working below, at or above the assessment criteria and a sample from each is kept in a class portfolio of evidence.

Resources

We keep a collection of geography equipment and a set of atlases for each key stage. The library is stocked with a good supply of geography topic books. The school regularly uses the County Library loan scheme which offers topic boxes that support teaching and learning, providing additional research and display material to be used in classrooms.

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. In the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 all the children carry out investigations and we give them opportunities to observe and record information around the school site and on school visits to sites such as Cuerden Valley.

Monitoring and review

The geography subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in geography. The geography subject leader 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 school. We allocate specific time for the vital task of reviewing samples of children's work and for visiting classes to observe the teaching of geography as necessary.