



# Geography Policy

## The importance of geography to the curriculum

The study of geography involves pupils exploring the relationship and interactions between people and the environments in which they live and upon which they depend. Children develop their curiosity and compassion for the natural world we live in as they start to understand that many challenges that arise during their lifetime are centred around geography. From adapting and mitigating the impact of climate change to predicting natural hazards such as Tsunami and Earthquakes, to understanding the causes and effects of population migration around the world, our pupils will need to know about geography and think like geographers. At Maryport C of E primary school, we seek to develop young geographers who are able to make links and connections between the natural world and human activity and to understand the kind of questions geographers ask such as *Why is this place like it is? How is it changing? What will be the costs and benefits of these changes when they happen?* In line with the statutory requirements of the school curriculum which must be balanced and broadly based, our school commits to ensuring that every pupil at every stage of learning has regular and appropriately challenging and engaging learning in geography which is informed by the National Curriculum. In addition, we will ensure that what our pupils learn in geography and how they learn it not only inspires and stretches them intellectually but also contributes to their spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development and helps to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences they will face.

## The aims of geography and how these contribute to the school's aims

Geography at Maryport C of E primary school aims to:

- Stimulate pupils' interest in their surroundings and in the variety of human and physical conditions on the earth's surface;
- Foster pupils' sense of wonder at the beauty of the world surrounding them;
- Help pupils develop an informed concern about the quality of the environment and the impact of human activity;
- Enhance pupils' sense of responsibility for the care of the earth and its people and secure their commitment to promoting and living sustainable lifestyles;

- Develop pupils' skills of critical enquiry and an ability to handle and interpret information, through asking and answering geographical questions and using computing to communicate with and explore a variety of people, places and environments across the world;
- Help pupils explore values and attitudes about complex issues such as sustainability and sustainable development.
- Enable pupils to study a range of places, cultures and environments;
- Foster a sense of understanding about how we are interconnected and interdependent with other people and ecosystems around the world.

### **Approach to teaching and learning**

In geography the pedagogy which underpins learning is a key question led enquiry approach, which encourages our pupils to take increasing responsibility for their learning, think independently and achieve challenging subject outcomes. Therefore, at Maryport C of E primary school, we use the Connected Geography scheme to seek to encourage pupils to learn their geography through big question led enquiries about topics, places and themes which focuses on real people, places and geographical issues and allows them sufficient scope and time to really engage in higher order subject skills such as developing explanations (even though there are very often no 'right' answers in geography), reaching conclusions, making judgements, evaluating, applying information learned in one context to another and generating their own ideas and questions to investigate through hypothesising.

Whilst knowing more subject information as the pupils' progress through school is important, we are careful in our planning to ensure that there is always a balance between new content and the development of important subject skills and the ability of children to think critically about what they are learning and why. This approach is reflected in all our planning based on the Connected Geography scheme we follow.

We identify important topics, issues, places and themes informed by the guidance of the National Curriculum to ask important questions and then follow enquiries which are carefully structured. We recognise that we cannot teach whole topics without risking the curriculum becoming largely content driven. Our approach to leading learning in geography through big investigative 'How' and 'Why' questions ensure that achieving key subject

outcomes and our pupils being able to develop as young geographers remains central to all we do.

We also value fieldwork and recognise that regular high quality outdoor learning is crucial to learning. It provides opportunities to develop and consolidate skills and concepts introduced in the classroom and allows pupils to extend their understanding of the 'real' world. It also enables pupils to become observant, to develop the skills of recording, analysis and to start to develop 'enquiring minds'.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Geography is taught in the Early Years as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. We relate the geographical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in 'Knowledge and Understanding of the World' from the Early Years Outcomes. From the first day at school, children are exposed to geography, as they start to explore their classroom and the school environment. Throughout the Early Years, children continue to develop their skills where they are encouraged to explore their natural world and observe the changes that take place in the environment. They will increase their knowledge and personal experiences through enrichment activities and the introduction to important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. Children are introduced to the values of 'compassion', 'respect' and 'responsibility' and start to show an awareness of how they can look after the world. Through fiction and non-fiction books, children become more aware of themselves and the world in which they live.

### **Key Stage 1**

During Key Stage 1, pupils investigate their local area and a contrasting area in the United Kingdom or abroad, finding out about the environment in both areas and the people who live there. They also begin to learn about the wider world. They carry out geographical enquiry inside and outside the classroom. They extend their basic skills and their ability to ask geographical questions about people, places and environments while starting to use basic subject vocabulary.

### **Key Stage 2**

During Key Stage 2, pupils investigate a variety of people, places and environments in the United Kingdom and abroad, and start to make links

between different places in the world. They find out how people affect the environment and how they are affected by it. Pupils carry out geographical enquiry inside and outside the classroom. In doing this, they ask geographical questions and use geographical skills and resources, such as maps, atlases, aerial photographs and ICT. Children will develop geographical enquiry skills, including geographical questions, collecting and recording information and identifying different views. They will acquire the appropriate practical skills associated with Geography, including using suitable vocabulary, fieldwork techniques and maps, plans and atlases. Pupils will use secondary sources of information with accuracy, including aerial photographs, satellite images etc. As well as making its own distinctive contribution to the school curriculum, geography contributes to the wider aims of primary education. Teachers will ensure that links between subjects are maximised.

### **Progression and continuity**

As pupils progress as geographers, at Maryport C of E primary school, we recognise that whatever the content of their learning and the subject skills they are using our expectations of them must be focused on the following progression in subject outcomes:

Recognise – Identify – Respond – Express – Basic Subject Vocabulary

Describe – Observe- Reason – Select – Speculate – Appropriate Subject Vocabulary

Classify – Categorise – Sequence – Compare and Contrast – Views and Opinions

Understanding through informed explanation and synthesis – Specialist Subject Vocabulary

Highlight and explain links, patterns, processes and interrelationships

Apply – Reach Conclusions – Make judgements

Evaluate – Critique – Predict – Reflect – Hypothesise

Whilst we recognise that our expectations of pupil outcomes must never be confined by their stage of learning we nevertheless ensure that in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 our core subject expectations enable pupils to learn and consolidate the fundamental attributes of being a geographer. At this stage there is a particular focus on ensuring our pupils are

able to recognise, identify, describe, observe, reason and begin to offer explanations for geographical phenomena whilst using basic and increasingly appropriate subject vocabulary.

During Lower Key Stage 2 our expectations increase proportionately as we challenge our pupils not only to know more but also to master progressively more demanding subject outcomes such as reaching explanations through the synthesis of evidence, from a wider range of sources. At the same time we expect greater subject vocabulary alacrity from our pupils and we plan accordingly for the use of more specialised subject vocabulary.

At Upper Key Stage 2 our expectations in geography are that pupils will more regularly and consistently apply information that they have learned in other contexts and at other stages to make links and identify patterns in their geographical learning. We challenge them to reach conclusions and make judgements about geographical issues and to evaluate and critique evidence and to generate questions of their own.

To ensure continuity and progression for all pupils the curriculum is carefully organised EYFS- Year 6 to ensure that our pupil's knowledge and understanding of geography develops because:

- Expected subject outcomes in terms of developing as a young geographer increase in complexity and level of challenge as detailed above and are used as the starting point for all planning of content delivery and learning teaching enquiries;
- There is increasing breadth and scale of study through the curriculum moving progressively from personal experiences to local, regional, national and global perspectives informed by the guidance of the National Curriculum;
- The curriculum becomes progressively more complex developing from discrete facts and bodies of information to conceptual awareness and generalised knowledge about more abstract ideas;
- The mastery and application of geographical tools and skills occurs in more precise and complex contexts;
- The focus of what pupils learn becomes gradually more issues based enabling them to explain links, patterns and processes and be more informed and mature in their thinking and self-reflection in terms of

recognising the importance of attitudes and values about contested matters.

### **The role of the teacher**

In line with the school's teaching and learning policy, in geography, teachers:

- Design activities which help pupils answer the geographical questions such as: Where is it? What is it like? How has it changed? Why has it changed? How will it change next? What will happen if? How might it be better? What can be done? How do I feel?
- Share with pupils learning outcomes and how they will achieve these;
- Revisit and build on pupils' prior knowledge, understanding and skills;
- Ensure that objectives for lessons are presented in the form of 'key questions' that need to be answered;
- Provide a variety of learning activities that are used regularly, including observation, enquiry, investigation, puzzles and problem-solving alongside a variety of resources;
- Encourage pupils to describe, explain, predict and evaluate;
- Plan for pupils to make and use maps, atlases, satellite and GIS imagery and globes regularly in order to locate places being studied and make/use models to explore geographical patterns and processes;
- Provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to work as individuals, in pairs and in groups;
- Encourage discussion so that pupils clarify their thinking;
- Set high expectations and provide regular feedback about the pupils' work;
- Give children the opportunity to record their work in a variety of ways, including diagrams, illustrations, pictures, letters, posters, annotated drawings and maps, reports, PowerPoints and presentations.
- Celebrate children's achievements through displaying sharing their work with other children or via classroom displays.

### **The role of the Geography Co-ordinator**

- Taking the lead in developing geography further across the school, monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning and the use of resources.

- Supporting colleagues to ensure they are confident and competent in teaching geography.
- Attend subject professional development opportunities as they arise and prompting other teaching staff to attend CPD that is relevant to them.
- Auditing resources and ordering resources when needed.
- Arrange for relevant advice and information from professional development programmes, including courses, to be disseminated to the rest of the teaching staff.
- Leading staff meetings as appropriate.

### Cross Curricular links

Across the Connected Geography scheme, in each of the geographical enquires, links are made to other subject areas. Due to the extensive list of cross-curricular ideas and suggestions, it allows teachers to effectively plan which cross-curricular links are most suitable for their class. We believe that making links is important because it highlights to pupils the interconnectedness and interdependence of the real world and extends the geographical understanding of our pupils. When making such connections we ensure to maintain subject rigour and appropriate expectations in Geography for each stage of learning therefore ensuring that high standards of geographical attainment are maintained, even during cross-curricular activities.

### Spiritual, moral, social, cultural development/cross curricular

In our planning we also make meaningful links to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development.

**Spiritual development:** Through helping pupils to recognise the beauty and diversity of the world. A geographical awareness helps children understand their place in the world. Geography provides opportunities for children to learn about sites of wonder, or physical features that they might wish to visit in the future.

**Moral development:** Through helping pupils to reflect on how the environment is affected by decisions made by people, so that the children can make informed choices in the future. Through discussion, the children learn to appreciate the moral dilemmas posed by introducing changes to the environment and the effects this can have on the surrounding area.



**Social development:** Through helping pupils to understand the need to consider the views of others when discussing localities, settlements and the environment. Work on a locality in a less economically developed country provides an opportunity to discuss social issues. Fieldwork encourages collaborative projects, making the most of different strengths and interests within a team.

**Cultural development:** By exploring different settlements, the children can gain knowledge of different culture, learning tolerance and understanding of their diversity.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

Geography will be monitored throughout the school by the Geography Co-ordinator who will be responsible for gathering and analysing samples of work to ensure consistency, monitoring planning, reviewing expectations and feedback across the whole school. The Geography Co-ordinator will also monitor geography books to ensure that the programmes of study are being taught effectively and are catering for all needs and abilities. Finally, lessons will be monitored to help promote quality of learning and maintain high standards of achievement, challenge and engagement in geography.

### **Inclusion, equal opportunities and differentiation**

At Maryport C of E primary school we ensure that all pupils can engage with geographical learning and develop as young geographers irrespective of their race, cultural background, gender, religion, level of intellectual ability or physical and emotional circumstances. Mutual respect and the fostering of empathy and community understanding at local, regional, national and global scales lies at the heart of the study of Geography and at our school we model this in terms of the inclusive nature of the learning and teaching we provide.

Ensuring differentiation is a fundamental and core element of inclusion. As such we plan and resource our learning, in line with our whole school policies, to enable all pupils to make good and sustained progress in Geography. To ensure inclusion we:

- Plan activities to challenge and involve all pupils appropriately;
- Are aware of different learning styles and in turn incorporate a wide range of activities to cater for all;

- Take into account classroom organisation, support, learning resources and the environment;
- Deal with issues clearly and empathetically when they arise;
- Ensure fieldwork opportunities are accessible to all.

### **Assessment**

Children are quizzed at the beginning and the end of every topic to allow progress to be monitored. Formative assessment is also used to make judgements about the child's learning and development of skills across the whole enquiry, allowing teachers to plan effectively and to facilitate differentiation for future learning.

### **Resources**

The Connected Geography scheme have a range of resources which are used to aid learning. These will be stored in an accessible location for all teachers in school. Additionally, further resources such as text books, atlases and maps will be located here for teachers to use when needed. An inventory of resources will be held and regularly updated by the subject leader. All teachers will be responsible for returning resources they have used. Pupils will also have access to iPads in class which they can use to enhance their learning in geography.

### **Marking and feedback**

To follow the Marking and Feedback Policy.

### **Review and evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed in December 2021.