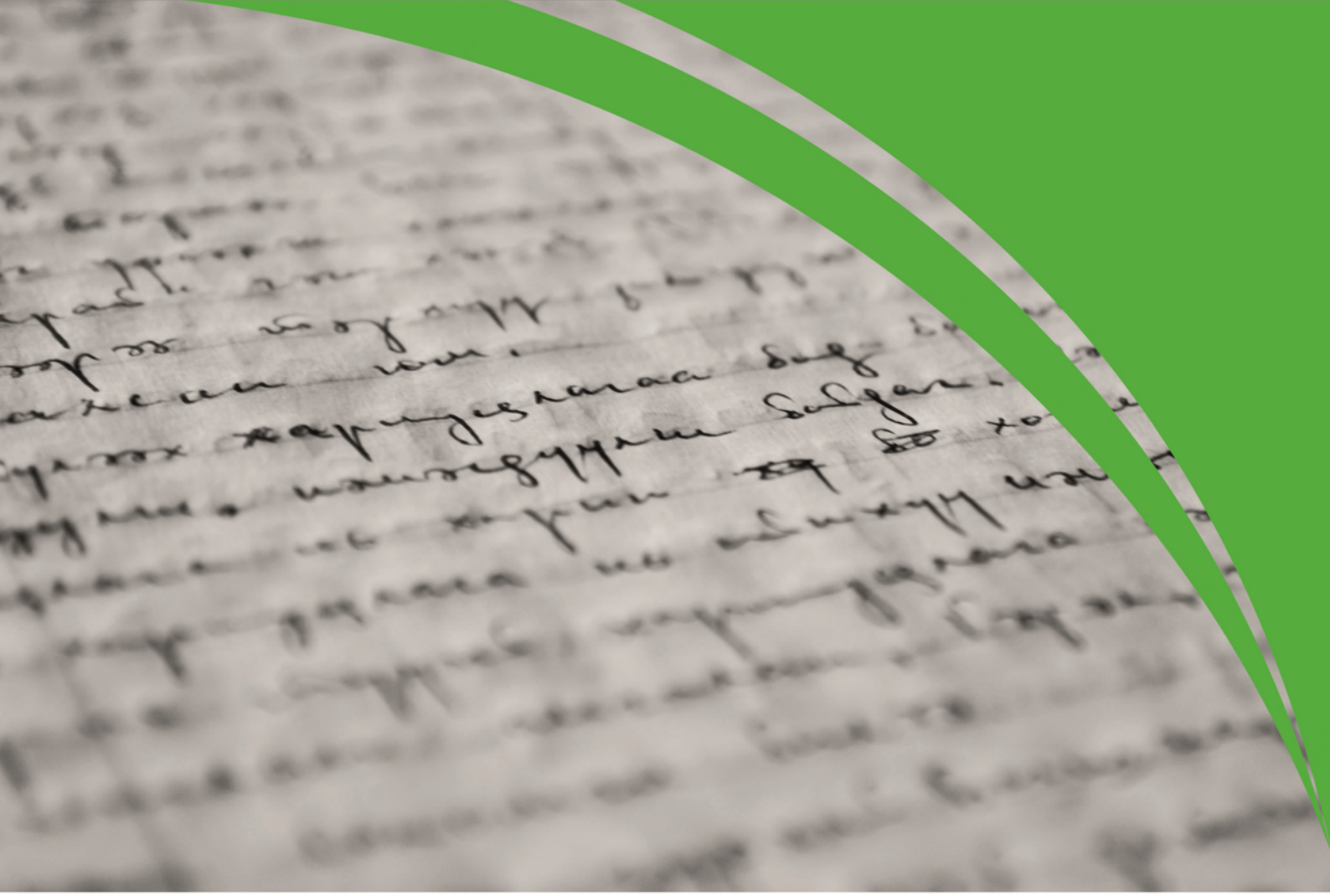

Geography Policy

Key Document Details

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Purpose of study – 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.

1 Aims and objectives

1.1 The Geography curriculum teaches an understanding of places and environments. Through their work in geography, children learn about their local area and 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 recognize the importance of sustainable development for the future of mankind.

1.2 The aims of geography 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 multi-cultural 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 a variety of other skills, including those of enquiry, problem solving, ICT, investigation and how to present 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 whole-class teaching methods and we 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 such as programmable toys in key stage 1 and data handling in both key stages. These are used in geography lessons where this serves to enhance their learning. Children take part in role-play, outdoor learning including forest schools and we run Eco Clubs and related activities. They have 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, e.g. 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 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;

- setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks;
- grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks to each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity according to the ability of the child;
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children.

3 Geography curriculum planning

3.1 We use the National Curriculum for geography as the basis for our curriculum planning in Key Stage 1 and 2, linked into the key skills outlined in our topic map. We have adapted the curriculum 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. While there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each topic, the skills are taught through a planned progression meaning that the children are increasingly challenged as they move through the school.

3.2 Our curriculum planning is in two phases (long-term, short-term). Our long-term plan maps the geography topics studied in each term during each key stage. The geography subject leader works this out in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group.

3.3 Each class teacher or year group team creates a plan for each lesson. These lesson plans list specific learning objectives and skills. The class teacher/team keeps these individual plans, and these are reviewed by the geography subject lead throughout the year.

3.4 We plan the topics in geography so that they build upon prior learning. Children of all abilities have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and, through planned progression built into the scheme of work, we offer them an increasing challenge as they move up the school.

4 Foundation Stage

4.1 We teach geography in nursery and reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. These classes follow the Statutory Programmes within the Statutory Framework for the EYFS, the Early Learning Goals and the non-statutory Development Matters objectives for Understanding the World. Geography contributes to a child's knowledge and understanding of the world through activities such exploring the local area and outdoor environment.

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. In Key Stage 2 we organise debates on 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

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 in Key Stage 2 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 Information and communication technology (ICT)

We make provision for the children to use the computer in geography lessons where appropriate, incorporating ICT in our geography curriculum planning at Key Stage 2, and we use it at Key Stage 1 when appropriate. Children use ICT in geography to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work as well as researching information through the Internet.

5.4 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 re-cycle 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 have an Eco Council where children can develop their knowledge and awareness of current ecological issues as well as discussing how they can make a difference at school and home. The Eco Council promotes the concept of positive citizenship and Eco Leadership.

5.5 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. 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.

6 Teaching geography to children with special educational needs

6.1 At our 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 which enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting appropriate learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the Early Learning Goals (ELG)and National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress.

6.2 When progress falls significantly outside the expected range 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. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

6.3 We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning geography. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a field trip, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

6.4 High quality first teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have, or may have SEND. Differentiation occurs in the support and intervention provided to different pupils, through questioning, scaffolding and resources for individual pupils. This is an inclusive approach to individual learners' needs, ensuring language, questioning, concepts and ultimately learning is accessible to all.

7 Assessment and recording

7.1 Attainment in nursery / reception classes is recorded against ELGs for 'The World and People and Communities' (understanding of the world) and will feed into the foundation stage record. In Key Stages 1 and 2, we assess the children's work in geography by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lessons. In foundation and Key Stage 1 much of the work will be practical and oral and will not result in a piece of written work. At Key Stage 2, there will be a

balance between practical, oral and written work. Once the children complete a piece of work, we mark and comment as necessary.

7.2 The geography subject leader keeps samples of the children's work in a portfolio which shows what the expected level of achievement is in geography in each year of the school. The majority of work in geography at Key Stage 1 is done at a practical or discussion level.

8 Resources

8.1 We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all the geography units linked to the National Curriculum and these resources in a central store. 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 have a good supply of geography topic books and a range of educational software to support the children's individual research.

9 Fieldwork

9.1 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.

9.2 At Key Stage 1 we let all the children carry out an investigation into the local environment and we give them opportunities to observe and record information around the school site. At Key Stage 2 the children complete a study of the local area. We also offer them the opportunity to take part in a residential visits including Whitemead and the Isle of Wight.

10 Monitoring and review

10.1 The geography subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in geography and is also is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of geography. The geography subject leader is also responsible for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

This policy will be reviewed annually

Signed: S Wootten

Date: 01/07/2026