Geography Curriculum Statement

Curriculum drivers shape our curriculum breadth. They are derived from an exploration of the

backgrounds of our pupils, our beliefs about high-quality education and our values. They are

used to ensure we give our pupils appropriate and ambitious curriculum opportunities: Respectful Communicators, Knowledgeable and Reflective Learners, World Citizens and Healthy Advocates.

Through Geography at St Anne’s Primary School, we strive to provide our children with the opportunities to become global citizens, deepening their interest and wonder in exploring their own place in the world. Our curriculum is based upon the National Curriculum and through this, they will develop a sense of their world at a local, national and global scale understanding the interconnections between how people and the environment interact. Through our Geography curriculum, pupils are equipped 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. Allowing children to take part in fieldwork is a key part of this and brings their classroom learning to life. Pupils learn to think critically, think spatially, use maps, visual images and new technologies, to understand and present information. They will understand their responsibilities within their own society whilst also having a coherent insight into sustainability of a dynamically changing world.

The substantive knowledge within the curriculum begins at a global scale before moving onto a national and local scale, allowing children to understand the world and their place in it. Our curriculum is designed so that every child, including those with a disability or who have special educational needs, has the opportunity to thrive and flourish as inquisitive geographers. No child is taken out of studying Geography on a regular basis. All children, regardless of economic disadvantage and ability, have the same knowledge-rich, high quality teaching and teachers will modify and adapt to ensure that this is accessible to all. We recognise that skills in Geography are separate to those of reading and writing and so we have a curriculum where the tasks are concerned with building geographical skills and knowledge and not reading or writing age/ability. This ensures that children are not held back in making progress in Geography because of difficulties they experience elsewhere in the curriculum.

Through Geography at St Anne’s, we increase the cultural capital of all pupils. This is done through exposing children to places all over the world through carefully planned trips which include visiting areas to see examples of geographical processes and the use of technology to virtually visit places of interest. These opportunities are open and accessible to all children, with financial support and places available to those children who need it to ensure no one misses out. At St Anne’s, we recognise that every child has their own cultural capital and by the time our children leave our school, we want to have not only celebrated this but ensured we have enriched their knowledge and understanding in order to equip and prepare them for their futures.

Through the geographical concepts that are revisited in every unit, we aim to ignite a natural curiosity and love of learning for the world in which our children live. This will also provide a consistent context that allows pupils to utilise their new knowledge in their wider understanding of the world around them. We have clear progression maps for key threshold concepts and geographical skills. We ensure this progression and are confident that they are leaving St Anne’s with the substantive and disciplinary knowledge to best allow them to access and fully engage with later curriculum content.

The value of Geography within school is championed and highlighted through its weaving in through other topics, such as English, Religion, Science, History and Computing whilst making it explicit to the children where these links are and encouraging them to seek out their own. Topics are planned to ensure that children have opportunities to revise and revisit knowledge from previous years and units. There are specified end points at KS1, LKS2 and UKS2 for key threshold concepts in Geography: space, place, scale, interconnections, environment and processes. This forward-backwards engineering of the curriculum ensures students return to the same concepts over and over, supporting retrieval and securing it in long term memory.

Geography is taught in dedicated blocks throughout the year, however inter-curriculum links are regularly made to strengthen schemas. As a school, we teach through the framework of the 2014 National curriculum. We have identified the key knowledge of each topic that has been planned for our year groups and consideration has been given to ensure progression across topics across the school. Within each unit, the amount of knowledge and new vocabulary is carefully considered so as to not overwhelm children’s short-term memory and encourage long term retention. The topics are on a fixed basis, so teachers in each year group teach the same topics each year. This enables teachers to develop their resources and expertise, as well as developing effective curriculum links. However, relevant updates are made if we feel it is going to have a significant impact upon our children’s lives.

By the end of Year 6, children will have studied a wide range of human and physical processes as well as a variety of different places ranging from Blackpool to South America. Children will have made connections between different places and understand how we have the ability to make an impact upon our world.

Implementation

Regular retrieval sessions of previous topics are completed at the beginning of each lesson to enable children to remember their learning. The knowledge learnt and retained is then built upon each year as their understanding of the context and concepts widens. This progression is evident in their learning through the type of tasks they will encounter. This also offers the opportunity for teachers to talk to children about their previous learning and give the children opportunities to develop their oracy skills explaining their previous learning.

In lessons, there are many opportunities for children to express their experiences, opinions and also knowledge they already have about a topic they are studying. This provides key opportunities for teachers to identify any gaps in knowledge and also assess where there may be misconceptions on the subject matter. As we are aware that many geographical concepts and places are difficult to visit or understand, lessons feature many texts, videos, images or real examples. Our local area is utilised to achieve desired outcomes and to provide children with real life opportunities.

We have closely linked our Geography learning with History topics, where relevant, and recognise that the two subjects can occasionally be woven together. Children will learn the Geography of a place before completing a historical study.

Impact

As learning is a change to long-term memory, it is impossible to see impact in the short term. We do, however, use probabilistic assessment based on deliberate practice. This means that we look at the practices taking place to determine whether they are appropriate, related to our goals and likely to produce results in the long run.

Our intention for the children at St Anne’s will be that they will develop as geographers by deepening and extending their learning as they move through school and will start to see how relevant geography is in their wider life outside school, especially in current times of energy, fuel and waste challenges.

Children will be more confident in the geographical knowledge and skills that they have developed at St Anne’s and will be able to reflect on it and apply it more meaningfully to their lives. Children will be seen to be inspired and driven to know more and find out what differences they can make to our world in positive ways.

Our Geography Curriculum is high quality, well thought out and is planned to demonstrate progression. If children are keeping up with the curriculum, they are deemed to be making good or better progress. In addition, we measure the impact of our curriculum through the following methods:

At the end of a unit of work, children will write an “essay-style” answer using a structure strip to provide prompts on what needs to be discussed. These prompts will link to one of the lessons they have had or knowledge they have learnt during the unit. This is to allow children the opportunity to show what they have learnt over the topic and that information is embedded and understood in the longer term. This also allows the teacher to assess which information the children have acquired so they can build upon it at a later time.

At the end of each year, children will complete a knowledge quiz based on the substantive knowledge statements of the topics covered that year and this provided information to the following teacher about which areas are well remembered and understood and which areas could be the focus of retrieval practice the next year. Children will also complete smaller assessment style tasks to assess their progression in geographical skills.

The impact of the curriculum will be assessed through:

* Work in pupil’s books
* Photographs and videos of children’s work on SeeSaw
* Pupil conferencing
* Thorough planning that has clear Learning Objectives and skills being taught
* Teacher Assessment