

Geography Policy

This policy is a whole school policy including EYFS

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 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 how the current world evolved and 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 IT 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, 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 are planning our Geography to link with our theme for the half term/term. The planning used the National Curriculum Learning Objectives for the different key stages. Teachers use a wide variety of resources, including Espresso, which has resources for many geography topics.
- 3.2** The curriculum planning long-term plan maps the themes covered each term for the different key stages including any geography links.
- 3.3** Our medium-term plans, give details of each unit of work for each term and list specific learning objectives.
- 3.4** Lesson plans/daily plans list the specific learning objectives for each lesson and detail the lesson content.
- 3.5** We plan the topics in geography so that they build upon prior learning and activities with and skills differentiation. Children of all abilities have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and, through planned progression built into the long term plan, we offer them an increasing challenge as they move up the school.

4 Foundation Stage

- 4.1** We teach geography in the Foundation Stage as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. The objectives are set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Geography makes a significant contribution to the EYFS objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world through activities such as collecting postcards from different places, singing songs from around the world, or investigating what makes a 'good' playground.

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 literacy are geographical in nature. At 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 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. We incorporate 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. We make use of the Interactive White Board to enhance learning opportunities. They research information on the Internet. We also offer children the opportunity to use the digital camera to record and use photographic images.

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 allow them to organise charity events to respond to matters of concern to them, such as helping the poor or homeless or natural disasters. Thus geography in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship.

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.

Art/DT Science, History, and R.E contribute to many aspects of themed curriculum.

6 Teaching geography to children with special needs and disabilities

6.1 At Springmead 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 and we take into account the targets set for them.

7 Assessment and recording

- 7.1** 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. Once they complete a unit of work, we make a summary judgement of the work of each pupil and we use this to plan future work with that pupil, to provide the basis for assessing the progress of the child, and to pass information on to the next teacher at the end of the year. At the end of the year tracking sheets are used in Geography to assess the level children are working at, which get passed to the next class teacher. Assessment for learning is also used through theme lessons.
- 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.

8 Resources

- 8.1** We keep a collection of geography equipment and resources which the children use to study geography. In the library and on the computers we have a good supply of geography topic books and information 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. Each class goes on a *Go Explore!* session every half term and Year 6 complete Bushcraft, - building knowledge of the environment, how to use the environment for different purposes and be safe in it and thrive in it.
- 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 do a study of the local area. We also offer them the opportunity to take part in three residential visits, including one to a foreign country.

10.0 Monitoring and review

The role of subject leaders is to:

- provide a strategic lead for the subject with the aim of improving standards;
- offer support and advice to colleagues on the subject;
- monitor pupil progress in that subject area across the school through observations and discussion with staff and children. Also through levelling and scrutinizing work.
- We review the way the subject is taught at the school and plan for improvement;
- understand current standards in the subject across the school and how this compares to expected targets;
- plan how we are going to improve standards in conjunction with staff and principal;
- provide efficient resource management for the subject;
- review the curriculum plans for the subject and ensure that there is coverage of the

National Curriculum, where we feel it is appropriate, and that progression is planned into schemes of work;

- to keep up to date with the developments in the subject at both national and local level;
- keep detailed information on their subject in a subject leader file;
- work with the principal to produce a development plan for the subject which links the whole school objectives;
- review policy annually;

The school gives subject leaders non-contact time, so that they can carry out the necessary duties involved with their role.

This policy is the principal's ongoing responsibility and reviewing its effectiveness annually, in consultation with the staff.

Signed:

Date: