

Westgarth Primary School

Geography Policy

Introduction

At Westgarth Primary School we are committed to providing all children with learning opportunities to engage in geography. This policy reflects Westgarth Primary School's values and philosophy in relation to the teaching and learning of geography. It sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can work, and gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment.

Philosophy

At Westgarth primary we believe that Geography helps to provoke and provide answers to questions about the natural and human aspects of the world. Children are encouraged to develop a greater understanding and knowledge of the world, as well as their place in it. The geography curriculum at Westgarth enables children to develop knowledge and skills that are transferable to other curriculum areas and which can and are used to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Geography is, by nature, an investigative subject, which develops and understanding of concepts, knowledge and skills. We seek to inspire in children a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people which will remain with them for the rest of their lives; to promote the children's interest and understanding of diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. The curriculum is designed develop knowledge and skills that are progressive, as well as transferable, throughout their time at Westgarth Primary and also to their further education and beyond. It is also designed to be relevant, by including learning which focuses on local places which the children are familiar with and can experience.

Subject Intent

At Westgarth Primary, we aim for a high-quality geography curriculum which inspires in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people. Our teaching equips pupils with knowledge about places and people; resources in the environment and physical and human processes.

We want children to develop geographical skills including: collecting and analysing data; using maps, globes, aerial photographs and digital mapping to name and identify countries, continents and oceans; and communicating information in a variety of ways.

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, for example the Grand Canyon.

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 (for example, building a motorway) 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. Working 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 cultures, learning tolerance, appreciation and understanding of their diversity.

Progression and Continuity

The school uses a variety of teaching and learning styles in geography lessons. Our principal aim is to develop the children's knowledge, skills and understanding in geography. We believe in whole-class teaching methods and combine these with enquiry-based research activities. We encourage children to handle artefacts and 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, aerial photographs and geographical footage and we enable them to use technology in geography lessons where this serves to enhance their learning.

Children take part in roleplay 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, visiting relevant sites and carrying out fieldwork. We recognise the fact that we have children of differing ability in all our classes, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child and this is supported by appropriate adult support where required. We achieve this through a range of strategies which are differentiated by task, expected outcome and/or support from peers or adults.

Geography Curriculum Planning

At Westgarth Primary School geography is taught, where appropriate, through a topic approach alongside Design & Technology, History and Art.

Our long-term and medium-term plans map out the themes covered each year by each year group. These plans define what we will teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term.

Curriculum

EYFS

Our Early Years explore geographical themes and content through the Understanding of the World strand of the EYFS curriculum. This involves guiding the children to develop sense of their physical world, as well as their community, through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places and the environment. These are assessed according to the Development Matters attainment targets.

Key Stage 1

During Key Stage 1, pupils will investigate their local area and a contrasting area in the United Kingdom or abroad, enabling them to find 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. While doing this, they ask geographical questions about people, places and environments, and use geographical skills and resources such as maps and photographs.

During Key Stage 1 pupils should develop knowledge about the world, the United Kingdom and their local area. 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.

Children will develop their **locational knowledge**; they will learn to name and locate the world's seven continents and five oceans. In addition, they will learn to name, locate and identify the characteristics of the four countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas.

They will also develop a greater **understanding of place**, by comparing the 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. The specific geographical locations selected for these comparisons will be selected to link to other areas of the curriculum to allow for cross-curricular work and development.

In addition to developing children's locational and place knowledge, they will have the opportunity to learn about **human and physical geography**. During this study, they will 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. They will also begin to use geographical vocabulary to refer to key physical features (beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather) and key human features (city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shops).

Children will develop **geographical skills and fieldwork skills**, through these three areas of study, where they learn to use world maps, atlases and globes; simple compass directions; aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and

physical features and to use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of their local area.

Key Stage 2

During Key Stage 2, pupils extend and develop their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to include the United Kingdom and Europe, North and South America; studying the location and characteristics of a range of the world's most significant human and physical features. They continue to develop their use of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to enhance their locational and place knowledge.

They extend their **locational knowledge** when they learn to locate and name European countries as well as North and South America countries, concentrating on their environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries, and major cities. In addition to this, they extend their locational knowledge to be able to name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, describing key geographical regions, human and physical characteristics, key topographical features and land-use patterns. This is further extended to identify the position and significance of latitude, longitude, the Equator, the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, the Arctic and Antarctic Circle and the Greenwich Meridian and time zones.

They will build on their **understanding of place** by comparing the geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a region of the United Kingdom, a region of a European country and a region within North or South America. As in Key Stage 1, the specific geographical locations selected for these comparisons will be selected to link to other areas of the curriculum to allow for cross-curricular work and development.

In Key Stage 2, **human and physical geography** knowledge is extended to allow children to develop an understanding of aspects of physical geography (investigating climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle) and human geography (learning about types of settlement and land use, economic activity and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water.)

Children will continue to develop **geographical skills and fieldwork skills**, through these three areas of study, where they learn to use maps, atlases and globes and digital/computer mapping; eight-point compass directions; four and six-figure grid references, symbols and keys and the Ordnance Survey maps. They will also 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.

The Contribution of Geography to Teaching in other Curriculum Areas

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. This will further support the embedment of knowledge into the

long-term memory as links between subjects are a fantastic way to include retrieval practise into our lessons.

Literacy

Geography makes a significant contribution to the teaching of English because it actively promotes the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Reading and writing skills are essential when the children are undertaking geographical enquiry, when collecting information and source material and when making notes and following instructions. Pupils need to communicate in ways appropriate for the task and audience, for example writing to a newspaper about a local issue. Discussion, drama and role-play are aspects of the Programme of Study, as children develop an understanding of different viewpoints and perspectives. Evaluating environmental issues requires children to articulate their ideas and to compare and contrast their views with those of other people. Further to this, good oral communication skills can be developed as the children collaborate in fieldwork.

Mathematics

Opportunities occur for children to apply their mathematical skills when analysing data, reading maps, plans, thermometers, and rain gauges. The use of fieldwork data, timetables and charts contributes to the children's mathematical understanding as well.

History

There are close links between the two subjects. For example, a study investigating how an aspect of the local area has changed over a long period of time, or how the locality was affected by a significant national or local event, will link both History and Geography. As children study British, European and World History, they use and develop their mapping skills and learn the location of places.

Art

Geography creates an abundance of material to use in art, for example flora and fauna, landscapes, maps. Children also develop an understanding of different places and cultures through their work on artists, designers and craftspeople.

Computing

The use of technology can help children's learning in Geography, providing access to unlimited information. Geographical skills can be developed when using mapping CD-ROMs and encyclopaedia. Databases, weather charts, satellite images, tourist information and the latest news of events from around the world can be accessed through the Internet. Children may use technology in geography to enhance their skills in data handling, in presenting written work and by using equipment to record their work in the form of digital cameras, camcorders etc iPads. There are also possibilities for sharing work with other schools in the immediate locality, the UK and abroad.

Progress and Achievement

Children are monitored on a regular basis to check progress. We encourage all pupils to take responsibility for their own and their peers learning. A range of Assessment for Learning

strategies are used, for example peer marking, - the children regularly peer mark and are encouraged to comment on each other's work using vocabulary related to the skill taught - evaluation, self-assessments - children are encouraged to make personal assessments of their own work through evaluating activities and identifying what they need to improve -, the use of talk partners, subject knowledge quizzes and end of unit teacher/pupil evaluation. Through these, both children and adults are able to recognise the progress being made and can identify and tackle any misconceptions.

Assessment and Recording

At Westgarth Primary, assessment is an integral part of the teaching process. Assessment is used to inform planning and to facilitate differentiation. The assessment of children's work is on-going to ensure that understanding is being achieved and that progress is being made. Feedback is given to the children as soon as possible in the moment, and marking work will be guided by the school's feedback policy. Children's progress is also recorded and monitored through formative data analysis each term where teachers make a judgement of each pupil in relation to National Curriculum objectives.

Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach geography curriculum objectives. Resources are kept in a central store where there is a box of equipment for specific topics and lists of further resources. 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. Geography resources, equipment and books are regularly audited and updated/replaced when appropriate.

Role of the Class Teacher

- ❖ To ensure progression in the acquisition of geographical skills with due regard to the National Curriculum for geography.
- ❖ To develop and update skills, knowledge and understanding of geography.
- ❖ To identify inset needs in geography and take advantage of training opportunities.
- ❖ To keep appropriate on-going records.
- ❖ To plan effectively for geography, liaising with coordinator where necessary.

Role of the Coordinator

The coordinator is responsible for coordinating geography throughout the school. This includes:

- ❖ Ensuring continuity and progression from year group to year group through monitoring books and planning.
- ❖ Guiding colleagues with how geography should be taught.
- ❖ Advising on training needed and booking staff on appropriate courses.
- ❖ Assisting with maintaining resources within the yearly budget.

- ❖ Assisting and supporting colleagues in the implementation and assessment of geography throughout the school.
- ❖ Evaluate the strength and weaknesses in the subject, indicating area for further development and improvement. This is recorded in the School Development Plan.

Signed: Mrs A Curwen