

Church Aston Infant School



Geography Policy

December 2017



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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 they 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 the importance of sustainable development for the future of mankind.

1.2 Our objectives in the teaching of geography at Key Stage 1 are:

Locational Knowledge:

- name and locate the world's seven continents and five oceans;
- name, locate and identify characteristics of the four countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding areas.

Place Knowledge:

- understand 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.

Human and Physical Geography:

- 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;
- use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to:
- key physical features, including: beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather;
- key human features, including: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shop.

Geographical Skills and Fieldwork:

- use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the United Kingdom and its countries, as well as the countries, continents and oceans studied at this Key Stage;
- use simple compass directions (N,S,E,W) and locational and directional language to describe the location of features and routes on a map;
- use aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features; devise a simple map; and use and construct basic symbols in a key;
- use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of their school and its grounds and the key human and physical features of its surrounding environment.

2 Teaching and Learning style

2.1 We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our geography lessons, including whole-class teaching methods, and 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 atlases, maps, graphs, pictures and aerial photographs, and we enable them to use ICT 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.

- 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 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 teaching assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children.

3 Geography curriculum planning – Key Stage 1

- 3.1 We use objectives from the 2014 National Curriculum as the basis for our planning. We utilise the local circumstances of our school, i.e. we make use of the local environment at Chetwynd Deer Park 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.
- 3.2 Our curriculum planning is in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). Our long-term plan maps the geography topics studied in each term. As we teach in mixed age classes at Church Aston Infant School, we devise a two year rolling programme of study to cover all the objectives and ensure that children do not repeat work. In some cases, we combine the geographical study with work in other subject areas. In other cases, we may arrange for the children to carry out an independent geographical study.
- 3.3 Each class teacher creates a plan for each lesson. These plans list specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and discusses them with the geography subject leader on an informal basis.
- 3.4 We plan the topics in geography so that they build on 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 The Foundation Stage

- 4.1 In Class 1 Geography is planned into half-termly cross-curricular topics, as part of the area of learning 'Understanding the World: The World'. In working towards the Early Learning Goals, children are developing skills, knowledge and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for later work in Geography in Key Stage 1. In the Foundation Stage children find out about their local environment and how it is similar and different to other places, and they begin to develop a geographical vocabulary. Geographical

activities are planned that provide opportunities to discover, explore, observe and discuss. The activities are based on first-hand experience and aim to attract children's interest and curiosity and to be imaginative and enjoyable. By the end of their Reception year, most children will be able to identify features of the place in which they live and talk about similarities and differences between their own environment and other places. Year 1 children in Class 1 are taught and assessed according to the Key Stage 1 objectives.

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 the literacy hour are geographical in nature. Reports, letters and recording information will all work to develop children's writing ability. We also use environmental issues as a provocation to write, by asking them to record information and write reports and letters.

5.2 Mathematics

The teaching of geography in our school contributes to children's mathematical understanding in a variety of ways. We teach the children how to represent objects with maps. The children study space and direction and they learn how to use simple grid references. They also use graphs to explore, analyse and illustrate a variety of data.

5.3 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 in which people recycle 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.

5.4 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. 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 Geography and Computing

- 6.1 Information and communication technology enhances our teaching of geography, wherever appropriate. Children use ICT to research information through the internet and use the iPads to take photographs. It also helps to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work.

7 Geography and inclusion

- 7.1 At Church Aston Infant School, we teach geography to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. Geography implements the school curriculum policy of providing a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our geography teaching, we provide learning opportunities that match the needs of children with learning difficulties, and we take into account the targets set for individual children in their Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs). We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details, see separate policies: Special Educational Needs; Equalities; Gifted and Talented Children; English as an Additional Language (EAL).
- 7.2 When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. This helps to ensure that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.
- 7.3 We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning geography. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, such as a visit to Chetwynd Deer Park, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

8 Assessment for learning

- 8.1 Children demonstrate their ability in geography in a variety of different ways. Teachers will assess children's work by making informal judgements during lessons and by marking work with children as they work. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and uses this information to plan future learning. Written or verbal feedback is given to the child to help guide his or her future progress. We encourage self and peer-evaluation of work.
- 8.2 At the end of a whole unit of work, we make a summary judgement of the work of each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum. We assess whether a child is working at a level below that which would be expected for their age, at the expected level, or exceeding it; and we inform parents of their child's progress at least annually in their Annual Report at the end of the summer term. We also pass information on to the next teacher at the end of the year, either within school or at their next school.

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, for instance our termly visits to Chetwynd Deer Park.
- 9.2 For health and safety issues regarding fieldwork, our school follows the guidance contained in its policies for Educational Visits and Health and Safety.

10 Monitoring and Review

- 10.1 The coordination and planning of the geography curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:
- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in geography and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
 - keeps Geography Evidence File of children's work.