

Eastfield Primary School



Geography Policy

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EASTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

GEOGRAPHY POLICY

Introduction

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.

We believe that geography is about:

- Experiencing places first hand.
- Gaining a better knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Developing an interest in their surroundings by building skills of inquiring into and communicating about the world.
- Develop a sense of wonder into the beauty of the world.

Aims

The aims of teaching geography are to enable pupils to:

- Develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes.
- Understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time.

And that they are competent in the geographical skills needed to:

- collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes.

- Interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS).

Geography Curriculum Planning

We follow the National Curriculum Programmes of Study as the basis for our curriculum planning, whilst trying to make firm links to other areas of the curriculum, where possible. We have adapted these to the local circumstances of our school, i.e. we make use of the local environment in our learning and we also choose localities where the human activities and physical features provide a contrast to those that predominate in our own immediate area.

At Eastfield Primary School we believe the guiding principles for planning good Geography must be:

- To use the National Curriculum attainment targets to plan and level descriptors to check the learning outcomes.
- To inter-relate the themes, skills and concept of place.
- To give fundamental first hand experiences through practical interactive fieldwork where possible.
- To offer an enquiry based approach to the skills, concepts and attitudes of the subject.
- To maximise the cross-curricular links with other subjects, themes and dimensions.
- To use IT where possible, as an aid for research and presenting findings and results.

In the Foundation Stage, we relate the geographical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Foundation Stage Profile which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

Within Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 we incorporate topic and theme based learning. The medium and short term plans incorporate the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Objectives are skills based and these are checked and monitored to ensure that children have complete coverage of the National Curriculum throughout the school.

All of the topics studied allow for a progression of both learning facts, applying knowledge and developing skills.

Teaching and Learning Style

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 in geography lessons where possible.

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.

We deliver geography in a way which reflects the ethos and philosophy of the school. 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:

- Knowledge/instruction given by the teacher.
- Giving support where required to aid the work of individual children or groups of children.
- Questions and answers.
- Setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses.
- Individual/group enquiry and problem solving.
- Use of secondary sources e.g. books, maps, atlases, ICT .
- Use of appropriate tools, compasses, thermometers etc.
- Fieldwork in the local area and further a-field.

Geographical studies should be enquiry based and teachers should facilitate this. Enquiry may include:

- Asking questions.
- Collecting relevant data from primary and secondary sources using geographical skills and techniques.
- Analysing and interpreting data through understanding geographical patterns and processes.
- Presenting finds in a variety of ways.

Cross Curricular Links

Geography is the science of the earth and can be said to be field of study not an isolated subject with clearly defined limits. It lends itself across the curriculum and therefore has many links with other subjects.

English

Geography provides a wide range of classroom and fieldwork experiences through which literacy skills can be developed. Geography provides the stimulus of people, places and environments at a range of scales from local to global, as the context for language work.

Geographical vocabulary is introduced and developed ensuring a sound understanding of the subject to enable them to use appropriate vocabulary when describing photographs and pictures of places, for example.

Pupils need to be able to read from a range of sources when gathering information.

Geographical study enables pupils to write in various forms in order to report experiences, observations and factual information.

Mathematics

Geography in our school contributes to the teaching of mathematics in a variety of ways. It enables pupils to use and apply mathematics in practical tasks, and to devise and refine their own ways of recording. Numeracy skills will be developed through gathering, handling, representing and interpreting data, i.e. census details, results of surveys, population statistics etc. They also use graphs to explore, analyse and illustrate a variety of data.

Pupils will use and develop a range of mathematical skills in their geographical studies. Mapping activities, for example, will require their application of calculating scale, distance and location. Pupils will need an awareness and understanding of co-ordinates, angles and ratios. The understanding and using of measures will be involved in weather and mapping studies.

Computing

We make provision for the children to use the computer in geography lessons where appropriate. We also offer children the opportunity to use the digital camera to record and use photographic images.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education

Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social, health and economic education. 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.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through the teaching of Geography we seek to enrich the pupils' knowledge and experience of their own and other cultural traditions. Moral and social issues are encompassed in many aspects of human geography.

We encourage the children to reflect on the impact of mankind on our world. 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.

Geography is organised and presented in such a way that it encourages pupils to relate positively to others, to take responsibility and to participate in the community.

Children With Special Educational Needs

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 that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Every effort is made to match activities to the needs of the pupils.

Appropriately differentiated activities takes account of:

- The difficulty of materials being used
- The level of teacher or peer support
- Evidence from previous assessments of pupils' strengths and weaknesses
- The amount of background knowledge required
- The form in which the outcome of the activities is to be presented (written, oral, visual, drama).

Assessment, Evaluation and Record Keeping

Formative assessment of work is based on learning objectives derived from the programmes of study, this informs short term planning.

By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

Teachers will use their knowledge of a pupils' work to judge which subject milestone description "best fits" the pupils' performance. The aim is for a rounded judgement where teachers use their knowledge of pupils/ work over time including

- Written work
- Practical work
- Oral work

The geography subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in geography. The geography subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of geography, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The geography subject leader gives the headteacher an annual report in which she evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

Resources

The school has a range of geographical resources with which to deliver the subject in a meaningful and varied manner. These include photocopiable resource material, atlases, globes, maps, aerial photographs, artefacts, ICT programmes and pictures of locations, postcards, weather recording apparatus etc.

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