

# Gwladys Street Primary Community Primary and Nursery School

## Geography Policy



## Links To Whole School Aims

We want our school to be one:-

1. Where everyone has access to an engaging, creative and challenging curriculum that promotes a love of learning.
2. Where everyone feels safe, happy and secure in our learning community.
3. Where everyone works in partnership with the wider school community.
4. Where Golden Opportunities are provided in an Inclusive Setting.
5. Where everyone respects each other and works as a team to achieve our GOALS.
6. Where children develop lively, enquiring minds, self confidence and independence.
7. Which promotes a healthy lifestyle and positive, spiritual and moral values.

### **1. Intent**

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 The intent of geography in our school is:

- fostering and nurturing a curiosity towards the subject that will stay with them for the rest of their lives.
- for children to appreciate, understand and value their own geography and environment through local studies, learning visits and enrichment opportunities underpinned by safe messages.
- for children to investigate a range of locations during their time in our school locally, nationally or globally.
- building on prior knowledge - this is a key part of our curriculum, allowing children to become fluent in understanding the world that we live in and the challenges it faces. Progressive and transferable skills make Geography an

exciting and rewarding subject here at Gwladys Street Community Primary School.

## 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 computing 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, for example 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 tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty;
- 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.

### Implementation

2.3 Through focussed teaching, we ensure our geographers show the following characteristics:

- A range of vocabulary, that builds on prior learning, allowing children to draw upon these when learning Geography.
- An understanding of where places are in the world and their own locality in relation to the rest of the world.
- Show confidence, through speaking and listening activities, to take part in enquiry-based lessons resulting in detailed, informative presentations.
- Curiosity towards relevant and current issues in society and the environment.
- Understand that fieldwork is an essential component in the study of Geography, using it to draw conclusions.
- Appreciate the ways in which locations are interconnected and interdependent.

## Impact

2.4 Our aim is for children to have developed an awareness of the world that they live in, and think proactively about how to protect and sustain it. Within geography, we strive to create a supportive and collaborative ethos for learning by providing investigative and enquiry based learning opportunities. Children are given the opportunity to reflect on what they have learnt each topic, collate new vocabulary to support their understanding and celebrate their achievements in the subject. We track children's progress in Geography by using targets taken from the National Curriculum and assessing the children against these. This informs future planning and learning opportunities. Planning and teaching is reviewed termly by the subject lead through learning walks, book monitoring and pupil voice. Written marking in books allow teachers to either consolidate learning through tips or challenge the learner to explain, explore and delve deeper.

### 3. Geography curriculum planning

3.1 The school uses the New National Curriculum as the basis of its curriculum. The scheme has been adapted to the local circumstances of the school in that we make use of the local environment 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 planning maps the geography units studied in each topic for each year group. The subject leader devises this plan in conjunction with the Prospectus scheme of work to suit our children and the context of the school.

3.3 Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The subject leader will plan the medium term plans ensuring coverage of the National Curriculum.

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 Geography curriculum is an integral part of Understanding of the World and is taught through topics. To facilitate the development of concepts and skills, teachers provide experiences by drawing on an assortment of resources and opportunities to explore the world around them through hands on experiences. Children explore the school, the Wild Woods and the local area and create representations of these places using, everyday objects, blocks and drawing their own maps. A strong emphasis is also placed on caring for the environment. Children also follow their own interests and study countries of their choice, focusing on climate in particular and make comparisons between the countries and to Liverpool. Children have a greater exposure to countries from around the world as they travel through Gwladys Street. Each class is named after a different country, and children take part in a week of study around this country. This allows the children to explore, investigate and understand a variety of cultures and geographical locations.

#### **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 lesson are geographical in nature. This is because we believe that these activities develop the children's speaking and listening skills; reading skills and writing abilities.

##### 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, scale, distance and measure, 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 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 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. We allow them to organise campaigns on matters of concern to them, such as helping the poor or homeless. Thus geography in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship.

#### 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. 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. Through teaching about contrasting localities, we enable the children to learn about possible inequalities and injustices 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.

#### 5.5 Cross-curricular teaching of geography

Geography may be taught in a cross-curricular approach across a range of subjects in order to enhance the knowledge and understanding of the world nature of the subject. The teaching of scientific skills or knowledge may not always be through a 'geography' lesson.

## **6, Geography and Computing**

6.1 Information and communication technology enhances the teaching of science in our school significantly, because there are some tasks for which computing is particularly useful. It also offers ways of impacting on learning which are not possible with conventional methods. Software is used to animate and model geographical concepts, and to allow children to investigate processes which it would be impracticable to do directly in the classroom. Children use computing to record, present and interpret data,

to review, modify and evaluate their work, and to improve its presentation. Children learn how to find, select, and analyse information on the Internet and on other media.

## **7. Geography and inclusion**

7.1 At our school we teach geography to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. 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 good progress. 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.

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, 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 ensure that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

7.3 Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to geography.

7.4 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 a river, 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. Younger children might, for example, dress up in costumes from different parts of the world, whilst older pupils might produce a PowerPoint presentation based on their

investigations of different sources of energy. Teachers will assess children's work by making informal judgements during lessons. 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 progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work.

8.2 We assess the children's work in Geography while observing them working during lessons. Geography is assessed in accordance with the school's assessment policy. This enables the teacher to make an annual assessment of progress for each child, as part of the child's annual report to parents. We pass this information on to the next teacher at the end of each year.

8.3 The subject leader keeps samples of the children's work in a portfolio which shows the expected level of achievement in geography in each year of the school.

## **9. Resources**

9.1 We have sufficient resources for all geography teaching units in the school. We keep these in a central store, where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. We also keep a collection of geography equipment and a set of atlases for both key stages.

## **10. Fieldwork**

10.1 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.

10.2 All of the children will carry out investigations into the local environment, and we give them opportunities to observe and record information around the school site.

## **11. Monitoring and review**



11.1 The monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in Geography is the responsibility of the subject leader. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching, being informed about current developments in Geography and providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject in the school. The subject leader reviews and evaluates the action plan, budget and planning annually.

11.2 This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.