

Geography Intent, implementation and impact.

Intent -How we have planned our geography curriculum

The study of geography involves our pupils exploring the relationship and interactions between people and the environments in which they live and upon which they and all life on Earth depends. Many of the pupils who now attend our school will live to see the next century and inhabit a world of 11 billion people. The many opportunities and challenges that will arise during their lifetime will be very much about geography at personal, national and global scales. What we intend pupils to learn in geography reflects this throughout the curriculum. We have established a school curriculum plan for geography as an entitlement for all pupils that is:

- **Aspirational** in terms of instilling in our pupils a desire to achieve the highest levels of success through providing them with the opportunities to excel in terms of their acquisition of long-lasting knowledge and understanding and mastery of core geographical skills. Such high aspirations are clearly identifiable in the progressive and increasingly challenging objectives of the schemes of work of each enquiry, which define what the pupils will know, understand and be able to do
- **Logical, relevant, broad and balanced** in terms of the areas of subject content we have selected which reflect the guidance of and are commensurate with the demands of the National Curriculum. For example, we have ensured that content includes an even proportion of physical and human investigations such as the effect of rivers on the landscape and the impact of the rise of megacities in the world. Due consideration has been given also to making certain that our geography curriculum maintains relevancy and topicality through including enquiries that engage pupils in studying issues such as climate change, flooding and trade
- **Sequenced** to ensure that pupils can build on previous knowledge and understanding as they tackle more complex and demanding enquiries. For example, at Key Stage 1 pupils observe and record the distinctive geographical features of the local area of the school and compare and contrast them with a similarly sized area around a school in Borneo. At Key Stage 2 this knowledge and understanding is both consolidated and extended as pupils investigate the nature of environmental change in their local area and reach judgements as to the cost and benefits such change brings. Similarly, the understanding gained and concepts explored through an enquiry on the impact of earthquakes at Lower Key Stage 2 are revisited and extended when the pupils study the impact of living on a volcanic island in Iceland at Upper Key Stage 2
- **Progressively more challenging** from Years 1 through to 6, both in terms of the complexity of the subject knowledge we want our pupils to acquire and the critical thinking skills we support them to utilise to ensure they understand the significance of that knowledge (3). These anticipated outcomes in knowledge and understanding and skills acquisition are detailed in the objectives of the schemes of work of each enquiry. In terms of the geographical techniques we want our pupils to master as they progress through the school, our curriculum planning has been informed by our identification of the coverage required at Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2 (4). These are integrated into our half termly enquiries to ensure adequate coverage through the curriculum
- **Built upon and has continuity** with the provision for geography established in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in particular that which addresses the knowledge and skills expectations of the People, Culture and Communities Early Learning Goal
- **Inclusive** in terms of delivering the same curriculum to all of our pupils irrespective of specific learning needs or disabilities and differentiating where necessary through, for example, in class support, providing different learning environments, alternative learning activities and assessment outcomes.

Implementation - How we teach our geography curriculum

We adopt an enquiry focused approach to learning and teaching in geography which develops our pupils as young geographers. Through enquiry our pupils not only build subject knowledge and understanding but become increasingly adept at critical thinking, specialised vocabulary and their grasp of subject concepts. We structure learning in geography through big question led enquiries about relevant geographical topics, places and themes. Our curriculum is therefore 'knowledge rich' rather than content heavy as we recognise that if we attempt to teach geographical topics, places, themes and issues in their entirety we restrict opportunities for pupils to master and apply critical thinking skills and achieve more challenging subject outcomes.

We adopt a policy of immersive learning in geography that provides sufficient time and space for our pupils not only to acquire new knowledge and subject vocabulary but also to develop subject concepts and understand the significance of what they have learned. Our learning and teaching in geography is interactive and practical allowing opportunities for pupils to work independently, in pairs and also in groups of various sizes both inside and outside of the classroom.

Learning activities are varied including the use of mysteries, maps at different scales, GIS, geographical puzzles, photographs and drama. Similarly, we provide varied and differentiated ways for pupils to record the outcomes of their work including the use of PowerPoint, concept mapping, annotated diagrams, improvised drama and the application of a wide range of writing genres. Only in this way will knowledge become embedded and ensure that our pupils can build on what they know and understand from one year to the next.

The schemes of work for each geographical enquiry highlight both the objectives and anticipated outcomes of the investigation. They are also carefully structured through the use of ancillary questions, to enable pupils to build their knowledge and understanding in incremental steps of increasing complexity until they reach the point where they are able to answer the question posed at the beginning of the investigation. Our learning and teaching in geography also recognises the importance of fieldwork with a number of our investigations involving observation, recording, presentation, interpretation and the evaluation of geographical information gathered outside of the classroom.

Impact -How we assess the progress our pupils make in geography

Each enquiry which forms our programme of learning and teaching in geography sets clear objectives and outcomes for the pupils in terms of knowledge and understanding and skills acquisition. The schemes of work also suggest a range of ways in which the teacher can assess whether a pupil has achieved these outcomes. We ensure that when assessing our pupils' evidence is drawn from a wide range of sources to inform the process including interaction with pupils during discussions and related questioning, day to day observations, practical activities such as model making and role play drama, the gathering, presentation and communication of fieldwork data and writing in different genres. The outcomes of each enquiry serve to inform the teacher's developing picture of the knowledge and understanding of each pupil and to plan future learning accordingly. We do not make summative judgements about individual pieces of pupil work but rather use the outcomes to build an emerging picture of what the pupil knows, understands and can do.

At the end of each year we make a summative judgement about the achievement of each pupil against the subject learning goals for geography in that year. At this point we decide upon a 'best fit' judgement as to whether the pupil has achieved and embedded the expected learning goals, exceeded expectations or is still working towards the goals. This decision draws upon the professional knowledge and judgement that teachers possess about the progress of each pupil, developed over the previous three terms which allows an informed and holistic judgement of attainment to be made. Achievement against the learning goals for geography at the end of the year is used as the basis of reporting progress to parents.