

Geography Policy 2021



Low Road and Windmill Music Federation

Curriculum intent

We are committed to providing all children with learning opportunities to engage in geography. Geography is an essential part of the curriculum, it provides a means of exploring, appreciating and understanding the world in which we live and how it has evolved. Geography explores the relationship between the earth and its people through the study of place, space and environment. It contributes to the cultural, social, spiritual and moral life of children as they acquire knowledge of a range of different cultures and traditions, and learn tolerance and understanding of other people and environments. Geography is the subject in which pupils learn the skills of understanding a locality and how and where people fit into its overall structure.

Developing geographical skills is essential as children live in a world that is wide open to them. With opportunities to travel and work in different cities and countries across the world, pupils need to efficiently use maps, charts and other geographical data. The opportunities for the children to carry out geographical enquiry are also of value.

The teaching of geography would be difficult without acknowledging the future of our planet. The geography curriculum places great importance on the interaction between the physical and the human environment. Many areas of study give opportunities to make children aware of these effects upon their surroundings, their own responsibilities and how they can contribute to improving the environment, however small that contribution might be.

Aims

The aims of our geography curriculum are:

- To stimulate children's interest in their surroundings and develop a knowledge and understanding of the physical and human processes which shape places.
- To increase children's knowledge of other cultures and, in so doing, teach a respect and understanding of what it means to be a positive citizen in a multi-cultural country.
- To provide learning opportunities that enthuse, engage, and motivate children to learn and foster a sense of curiosity and wonder at the beauty of the world around them.
- To encourage in children a commitment to sustainable development and an appreciation of what 'global citizenship' means.

- To make sense of their own surroundings through learning about their own locality and the interaction between people and the environment.
- To develop the geographical skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps of different scales, and the vocabulary necessary to carry out effective geographical enquiry.
- To be able to apply map reading skills to globes and atlas maps and identify geographical features.
- To formulate appropriate questions, develop research skills and evaluate material to inform opinions.
- To enable children to work geographically in a range of appropriate contexts, using a variety of materials and equipment including other people's experiences and knowledge.

Curriculum Coverage EYFS

Geography is an integral part of the Understanding the World area of learning, and The World strand within the EYFS curriculum. Throughout the EYFS the children begin to explore, investigate and make comparisons about the features of the world around them through local visits and first hand observations and experiences. We focus on the seasons, the weather, their local environment and its key geographical features. Children also have the opportunity to explore these concepts through areas of provision such as small world, loose parts and construction where they can build and recreate features of their own environment. The use of first hand experiences and resources within provision promotes discussion about key topics and themes, and gives the children opportunities to ask questions and find out answers to further their knowledge and understanding. Staff use observations to assess each child in this strand and demonstrate the progress made each term.

Curriculum Coverage Yr 1-6

We deliver our Geography through Rising Stars Geography which is a complete curriculum programme for primary geography providing 18 half-termly units of work to interest pupils and encourage curiosity about their own locality and the wider world. It offers complete coverage of the Programme of Study for Geography (2014) and the criteria of the new Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (2019). From starting points suitable for all, pupils develop to tackle appropriate challenges for KS1 and KS2 pupils of varying abilities. The units have key questions to encourage the use of geographical enquiry, as well as a focus on the acquisition and application of key subject knowledge, concepts and vocabulary throughout. Skills, knowledge and understanding in geography progress through Year 1 to Year 6, being taught, developed and applied throughout the schemes of work. A range of opportunities are provided to enable all pupils to communicate their knowledge and understanding of the subject. Links are made within and across units to support pupils in making connections. Some encounters are comprehensive and address the statement fully, but others provide an opportunity to introduce or develop some aspects, for further development in later units. Also, within these documents are expected standards for each statement at each year group, enabling teachers to track the course of progression through the scheme from start to finish.

Each unit employs the same structure and includes: Unit Overview: An at-a glance overview of what will happen in the half termly unit. It offers practical advice regarding the resourcing and teaching the unit of work. It starts with the unit title and key enquiry question for the unit and includes these features:

- Unit Overview: Information on progression – how this unit builds on previous ones and is linked to subsequent units.
- Knowledge, skills and concepts: Key geographical knowledge and skills developed through the unit.
- Background information: The subject knowledge underpinning this unit that the teacher will need.
- Cross-curricular links: Suggestions on how this unit could be used in a cross curricular way alongside work in other subject areas.
- Big Finish: Information on the final task and the end of the unit and how it showcases the pupils' learning.
- Independent learning area: Suggestions for displays and ideas on how to create a learning area related to the unit.
- Map work: Opportunities for any relevant map work related to the unit.
- Fieldwork: Opportunities for any relevant fieldwork related to the unit.
- Assessment: What pupils might be expected to achieve at the end of the unit, expressed as what 'all', 'most' and 'some' pupils can achieve.

Progression

Skills and knowledge are introduced then revisited in different units and in different contexts. This enables progression to be identified, planned for, developed and monitored. Skills are not taught in isolation for their own sake, but in interesting and appropriate contexts. By providing a starting point accessible to all pupils, they can each make their own progress along a geographical journey, some getting further than others. The progression sequence below helps facilitate this as it extends geographical knowledge, understanding and thinking:

- Observe (through fieldwork and use of photos, artefacts, maps, etc.)
- Acquire appropriate geographical vocabulary
- Use the vocabulary through geographical talk
- Use the vocabulary to describe (e.g. geographical features, photos and events)
- Use the vocabulary to compare (e.g. geographical features, places and events)
- Ask geographical questions
- Give reasons for observations and answer questions
- Give explanations

Differentiation

Our curriculum is designed so that all pupils can and should receive their entitlement to geography within a broad and balanced curriculum. Those working towards expectations will work on the same tasks but may need greater support and may not complete all levels of an activity. They may choose to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding orally or visually to avoid limited literacy skills hindering their achievements within the subject.

Where possible, pupils will be supported through paired and group work. Questions posed within lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to be able to contribute.

Geography is dynamic, and work should be active and visual, not solely dependent on reading and writing. Visual literacy is important; it has been referred to as 'graphicacy', along with literacy, oracy and numeracy. Graphicacy is the pictorial communication of spatial information. It is a life skill needed to understand maps, diagrams (such as flat-pack furniture assembly, car maintenance, electrical wiring and plumbing) and photographs (such as choosing a holiday destination or clothing from a catalogue.) Pupils working above expectations are expected to undertake activities with greater independence and to be provided with some opportunities to make choices on how they learn and can communicate their knowledge.

Assessment

Each unit has a key assessment opportunity which links with the Rising Stars Geography progression framework that is cross-referenced to the National Curriculum. It also links to the information contained in the Curriculum Coverage and Progression Charts. These assessment opportunities will enable the teacher to monitor progress made by individual pupils and review areas where the class or groups excels, or where areas of learning need to be revisited, developed and consolidated in a different context. The subject leader can also utilise the information to inform and further develop curriculum design, teaching approaches and resourcing. It can provide opportunities for moderation across classes and enable pupils to know how they are performing in the subject and what they need to do to achieve the next stage in their learning journey. Formative assessment opportunities are integrated throughout the units. Some are informal and depend on the use of talk, eavesdropping on pupil-pupil discussion, or teacher-pupil conversation, checking that geographical vocabulary has been acquired, is understood and can be used correctly (associated with visual images where relevant). These opportunities check understanding, identify misconceptions, enable direct feedback and allow for adaptation without unnecessary elaboration or differentiation.

Support of Teacher Development

Subject knowledge for teachers.

The core geographical knowledge needed by teachers is identified in each session and explained as necessary.

'Real' geography teaching and learning

The focus throughout is on contextualized geography, using real, named, localities and environments which can be located on appropriate maps, and avoiding stereotypes.

Illustration of the variation in features is given wherever possible to overcome this.

Throughout the units, knowledge, skills and concepts are brought together holistically, underpinned by the development of a strong and evolving subject vocabulary with which to talk about and discuss the geography being learned.

An enquiry approach is used as a shared experience, with key and supplementary questions, to encourage curiosity, geographical thinking, exploration and research, and to combine

relevant knowledge with skills. This hopefully mitigates against a didactic approach and encourages teaching and learning to become a joint pupil / teacher 'adventure' or 'journey'. Pupils will often discover that some of the questions have more than one answer, some of which are 'better' than others. This is particularly true when environmental issues are discussed, and experts propose different solutions. Pupils can explore how 'real world' decisions are made!

Role of Subject Lead

We have a designated subject leader who is responsible for the maintenance and development of the subject.

They assure quality and standards in the subject by:

- Taking the lead in the development, evaluation and amendment of schemes of work as and when necessary.
- Identifying training needs of staff through monitoring and performance management review.
- Acting as a consultant to colleagues on resources, enriched learning possibilities, curriculum changes, classroom teaching ideas.
- Monitoring and evaluating pupils' work, colleagues' planning and classroom teaching.
- Analysing subject data to impact on individual and groups outcomes