

St. Thomas the Martyr Primary School
Geography Policy

Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and a strategy for the teaching of geography in combined unit plans at St. Thomas the Martyr C.E. Primary School.

Purpose of Study

A high-quality geographical 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.

Aims

The national curriculum for geography aims to ensure that all pupils:

- 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
- 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)

Principles for Teaching Geography

Geography is important as it is a body of knowledge essential to our understanding of the world around us. It provides us with skills and knowledge which are widely applicable to everyday life. Environmental awareness is a prerequisite for responsible participation in society. This is a principle which echoes many of the school's aims.

Geography in the National Curriculum

Geography is a foundation subject in the National Curriculum. The staff have worked as Key stages to combine subjects into topics. These are known as combined unit plans or C.U.P.S. The emphasis is for the children to experience a creative approach to the curriculum.

The Foundation Stage

We teach geography in the Foundation Stage unit as part of the Understanding the World specific area of learning and development. As this class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the geographical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpins the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the development of each child's knowledge and understanding of the world. The Foundation Stage also follow combined unit plans and a creative curriculum.

At Key stage one; children develop knowledge about the world, the United Kingdom and their locality. They should understand basic subject-specific vocabulary relating to human and physical

geography and begin to use geographical skills, including first-hand observation, to enhance their locational awareness.

At Key stage two, children should extend their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to include the United Kingdom and Europe, North and South America. This will include the location and characteristics of a range of the world's most significant human and physical features. They should develop their use of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to enhance their locational and place value.

The Contribution of Geography to Teaching in Other Curriculum Areas

Literacy

Geography makes a significant contribution to the teaching of literacy in our school because it actively promotes the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. At Key stage two, reports, letters and recording information will all develop the children's writing ability

Numeracy

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

PSHE

Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education. Children study how we recycle and how environments are changed for the better, or worse. The nature of the subject means that children have the opportunity to take part in debates and discussions.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

We offer children in our school many opportunities to examine fundamental questions in life through the medium of geography. We encourage the children to reflect on the impact of mankind on the world. Through teaching about contrasting localities in the world, 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 to contribute to the children's social development by teaching them 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. What if? Questioning enables children to explore their spirituality and the Christian ethos that underpins the school in subjects other than R.E.

Geography and Computing

Computing enhances our teaching of geography, wherever appropriate, in each Key stage. Interactive smart boards are installed in all classrooms and a selection of maps, flags and other resources are available in the Smart Notebook software. Children use ICT to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting their written work. They can research information via the internet, Purple Mash, Digimaps and CD Roms. Detective role-play software helps teach them geographical facts incidentally. Classes have access to the suite during the week. G.I.S. is available to all year groups in the form of Digimaps.

In The Classroom

Children are taught in their normal class group for their C.U.P.s. All teachers are responsible for the planning of the topics each half term. Children are encouraged to work as individuals, in pairs, in groups and as a whole class when appropriate. A creative approach to the subject enhances the learning experience.

Inclusion

At our 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 children in their I.P.P.s. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with gifts and talents and those learning English as an additional language (EAL).

Assessment for Learning

Children demonstrate their ability in geography in a variety of different ways. Teachers set learning intentions linked to the curriculum and appropriate success criteria. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher or child marks the work. Written or verbal feedback may also be given to the child to help guide his or her progress e.g. next-step marking.

Learning outcomes within each C.U.P suggest ways that children can demonstrate their understanding in Geography. These act as a benchmark for staff to assess a child's achievement. Termly progress is monitored by the class teacher using the Lancashire Key Learning assessment materials. At the end of each academic year, this ongoing assessment will conclude with comments on the annual report to parents.

The Geography Subject Leader keeps samples of children's work in the Geography Portfolio which provides evidence of the levels of progression throughout the school. Evidence of displays in the classrooms and shared areas in the form of photographs is also kept in the subject portfolio.

Resources

General resources are stored in the infant resource area in the geography cupboard. Age specific resources are kept in classrooms. Children are given instructions in the safe and considerate use of resources. On-line resources e.g. digital mapping are available in the suite or classrooms. The Geography Subject Leader is responsible for the upkeep and purchasing of equipment.

Fieldwork and Health and Safety

When taking children out of school to undertake fieldwork, the school's educational visits policy must be adhered to. All children participating in local fieldwork must have a signed local visits consent form.

Teachers are responsible for carrying out a risk assessment prior to the fieldwork and distributing this to all accompanying adults. Appropriate adult/pupil ratios are explained in the educational visits policy. The school's usual charging policy applies to all out of school trips, including fieldwork.

Parts of the geography syllabus could require a visit to an area of open water. This is classed as a type B visit and requires LEA approval in addition to Head teacher, Governor and parental consent. When engaging in fieldwork, pupils are required to display the same standards of behaviour as those expected in school. They should behave in a considerate, responsible manner, showing respect for other citizens and the environment.

This policy will be reviewed regularly in line with statutory requirements.

Mrs. A. Davies.
Geography Subject Leader

Reviewed September 2022