

# Common Road Infant and Nursery School



Flying High Together

## Geography Policy

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## **Aims and objectives**

Geography teaches an understanding of places and environments. Through their work in geography, children learn about their local area and 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.

The aims of geography are:

- to enable children to gain knowledge and understanding of places in the world;
- 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 allow children to learn graphic skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps;
- to enable children to know and understand environmental problems at a local, regional and global level;
- to encourage in children a commitment to sustainable development and an appreciation of what 'global citizenship' means;
- to develop a variety of other skills, including those of enquiry, problem solving, ICT and investigation.

## Teaching and learning style

We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our geography lessons. We use 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 IT 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, e.g. research of a local environmental problem or use of the Internet to investigate a current issue.

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 common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks;
- grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks to each ability group;
- 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.

## **Geography curriculum planning**

We use the national curriculum programmes of study for geography as the basis for our curriculum planning. We make use of the local environment in our fieldwork and we also choose localities where the human activities and physical features provide a contrast to those that predominate in our own immediate area.

We carefully plan the coverage in geography so that it builds upon prior learning. Children of all abilities have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit through a planned skills progression from EYFS to Year 2.

We have overarching themes for each year group that are half-termly in EYFS and termly in KS1. Careful consideration has been given to the needs and experiences of our children and the themes are built up through the year. In term 1 the theme is relevant to the locality of the school, term 2 it is in the United Kingdom and in term 3 the world. Medium term plans map out each unit of work for the term. Lessons and content are detailed in weekly lesson plans.

### **Foundation Stage**

We teach geography in reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. We relate the geographical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Development Matters document, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the objectives of knowledge and understanding of the world. Children participate in activities such as collecting postcards from different places, singing songs from around the world, or investigating what makes a 'good' playground.

## **The contribution of geography to teaching in other curriculum areas**

### **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 English are geographical in nature. We also use environmental issues as a way of developing

the children's writing ability by asking them to record information and write reports and letters.

### **Mathematics**

Geography in our school contributes to the teaching of mathematics in a variety of ways. We teach the children how to represent objects with maps. The children study space, scale and distance. They also use graphs to explore, analyse and illustrate a variety of data.

### **Teaching geography to children with special needs**

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. We ensure that all children can access geography teaching and we adapt resources, scaffolds and provision according to need.

### **Assessment and recording**

We assess the children's work in geography by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lessons. Once the children complete a piece of work, we mark and comment following the marking and feedback policy.

The geography subject leader monitors books and displays and keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio, which shows what the expected level of achievement is in geography in each year of the school.

### **Resources**

Resources such as maps, aerial photographs, atlases and globes are stored centrally. Teachers order books for their geography theme from the School's Library Service each term. We also have geography topic books and laptops to support children's individual research.

### **Fieldwork**

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 especially within the school grounds and the local area.

## **Monitoring and review**

The geography subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of 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.

Geography co-ordinator: Libby Brown

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