



Geography Policy

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Vision Statement

At Southwood Infant school we foster a lifelong love of learning through an exciting, enjoyable, challenging and motivating curriculum. We firmly believe that every child deserves the very best start in life and have high aspirations for all.

We are committed to providing all children with learning opportunities to engage in geography. This policy sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can work, and gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. It has been developed through a process of consultation with school staff and governors.

Principles

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 develop competence in interpreting and using maps, charts and other geographical data. The opportunities for children to carry out geographical enquiry are also of great value.

The geography curriculum places great importance on the interaction between the physical and the human environment. The different areas of study give opportunities to make children aware of these factors and how they can impact upon their surroundings, their own responsibilities and how they can contribute to improving the environment, however small that contribution might be.

Aims

- 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 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

Children undertake a broad and balanced programme of learning that takes account of abilities, aptitudes and physical, emotional and intellectual development. Through geography children learn a range of skills, concepts, attitudes and methods of working.

Early Years

Geography is taught in reception 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 EYFS curriculum which underpin the planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to our curriculum objectives of developing a child's skills and knowledge through our Investigate Aspiration, which relates to the Understanding of the world strand of the Early learning Goals. This includes planned activities to allow the children to find out about different places and habitats and investigating our locality, including interpreting and creating maps.

Key Stage 1

During Key Stage 1, pupils investigate their local area and a contrasting area in the United Kingdom or abroad, finding out about the environment in both areas and the people who live there. They also begin to learn about the wider world and study other countries. They carry out geographical enquiry inside and outside the classroom. In doing this, they ask geographical questions about people, places and environments, and use geographical skills and resources, such as maps and photographs.

Teaching and Organisation

At Southwood Infant School geography is taught through a topic approach alongside Design & Technology, History and Art. Our Curriculum is carefully planned over a two year cycle in KS1 to engage and excite all our learners.

Our long-term and medium-term plans map out the themes covered each term for each key stage. These plans define what we will teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term.

The school uses a variety of teaching and learning styles in geography lessons. Our principal aim is to develop the children's knowledge, skills and understanding in geography. We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our geography lessons. We believe in whole-class teaching methods and combine these with enquiry-based research activities. We encourage children to handle artefacts and 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, aerial photographs, geographical footage 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, visiting relevant sites and carrying out fieldwork. We recognise the fact that we have children of differing ability in all our classes, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies which are differentiated by task, expected outcome and/or support from peers or adults.

SEN and Children who are Able, Gifted or Talented

- All children are entitled to a high quality geography education

- Differentiated or supported activities where appropriate so that all children can access outstanding teaching of geography
- Able, gifted and talented children are identified in line with the school's policy for able, gifted and talented children and will receive enrichment and extension activities as appropriate
- All children are provided with suitable learning opportunities by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies:
- Setting common tasks that are open-ended and can have a variety of results;
Providing a range of challenges through the provision of different resources;
Using additional adults to support the work of individual children or small groups.

Links with the wider community

Visits and fieldwork are an essential part of the Geography Curriculum helping to develop geographical enquiry and skills. Children learn best when the learning environment is ordered and they feel safe, any visit should be well organised and provide a stimulating and valuable experience. Pupil should be well-prepared for the visit and, on their return, use the experience to good effect in the classroom. The class teacher, or leader, should plan the visit meticulously, with the pupils' safety and welfare paramount. Please see the Policy for Educational Visits for detailed information.

All curriculum areas should seek illustrations and examples drawn from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Children are assessed after every unit of work to check progress. We also monitor the teaching and learning of geography through lesson drop-ins, learning walks and pupil conferencing. We encourage all pupils to take responsibility for their own and their peers learning. A range of Assessment for Learning strategies are used, for example peer reviewing: children are encouraged to comment on each other's work using vocabulary related to the skill taught, and demonstrate their understanding in discussion with each other. Key questions are used by teachers to draw out understanding throughout lessons, and children are encouraged to ask their own geographical questions. Books and planning are monitored termly by the geography leader.

Our school is agreed that, in order to achieve our aim, children, parents, governors and staff must work together to provide a framework for mutual success. This will be reviewed and amended as and when necessary, taking into account the views of all stakeholders.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Curriculum and Teaching and Learning policies.