



Signed.....*SA*.....

Date.....July 2019

Review.....June 2022

Woodford Valley C of E Primary Academy Geography Policy

This School is committed to creating the ethos in which children can grow towards Christian life, love and learning.

And now I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples.”
John 34-35

This policy document is a statement of the aims and principles for the teaching and learning of geography at Woodford Valley C of E Primary Academy.

What is Geography?

Geography is the study of places and the relationships between people and their environments. Through geography we investigate the environment from a local to a global scale and explore the physical and human processes that shape and change this environment over time.

Geography is essential to our understanding of both the physical and the social world. It provides an invaluable link between the natural and social sciences and is a journey of discovery that encourages us to explore and engage in the world around us.

Intent

Our intentions in teaching geography are:

- to stimulate children’s curiosity about the world around them
- to help children develop an understanding of the physical and human features of their own surroundings as well as in the wider world
- to encourage children to learn about their local area and make comparisons with other regions, both within and outside the UK
- to enable children to draw and interpret maps
- to encourage children to develop skills of research, analysis and problem-solving through a process of critical enquiry based on observation, description, explanation & interpretation
- to inspire children to think about their place in the wider world and to enable them to consider their own values and responsibilities both to other people and to the environment.

Principles

We believe geography is important because:

- it is essential to our understanding of the world, including global issues
- the skills and knowledge are applicable to everyday life
- environmental awareness is necessary for being a responsible citizen and living well together.

Implementation

The three aspects of pupils' achievements in geography are:

- contextual world knowledge of locations, places and geographical features
- understanding of the conditions, processes and interactions that explain features and distributions, patterns and changes over time and space
- competence in geographical enquiry, and the application of skills in observing, collecting, analysing, mapping and communicating geographical information.

Teaching & Learning Styles

We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our geography lessons. We believe in 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 ICT in geography lessons where this serves to enhance their learning. Children take part in role-play and discussion, 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
- detailing teaching assistants to support children individually or in groups.

Geography Curriculum Planning

The geography curriculum is organised on a topic basis and is adapted to meet the local circumstances of our school i.e. we make use of the local environment in our fieldwork and we also choose a locality where the human activities and physical features provide a contrast to those that predominate in our own immediate area.

Our curriculum planning is in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). Our long-term plans map the geography topics studied in each term during each Key Stage. Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. Teachers can create short-term plans for each lesson and these list the specific learning objectives.

We plan the topics in geography so that they build upon prior learning. Children of all abilities have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge and, through

planned progression built into the scheme of work, we offer them an increasing challenge as they move up the school.

Foundation Stage

We teach geography in Reception Class as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the Reception Class is part of the Foundation Stage, we relate the geographical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELG) that underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the ELG objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world in relation to place and their links with it.

Special Needs

At Woodford Valley Primary Academy we teach geography to all children, whatever their ability. Geography forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education for every child. Through our geography teaching we provide learning opportunities that match the needs of children with learning difficulties and we take into account their individual learning styles. The use of an enquiry-based approach means that pupils are able to work at their own level. The varied products of geographical work mean that pupils with abilities in different areas will be able to achieve in this subject.

Cross-Curricular Links

Geography makes a significant contribution to learning across the curriculum. Where there is a genuine link between subjects, cross-curricular links are made and geography is brought into, and taught in conjunction with, other areas of the curriculum.

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.

In Key Stage 1 all the children carry out an investigation into the local environment and we give them opportunities to observe and record information around the school site.

In Key Stage 2 the children do a study of the local area. We also offer them the opportunity to take part in a residential visit.

From time to time, cross-curricular weeks are run for the whole school. These have included a week focusing on Stonehenge and its environment and another looking at 'What's under your school?'. Both of these offered rich links to the geography curriculum.

Progression & Continuity

In order for pupils to become better at geography, progress is necessary in the three aspects of geography mentioned above under Implementation. This will involve:

- demonstrating greater fluency with world knowledge by drawing on increasing breadth and depth of content and contexts
- extending learning from the familiar and concrete to the unfamiliar and abstract, from our own locality to the wider world
- making greater sense of the world by organising and connecting information and ideas about people and places, processes and environments

- working with more complex information about the world, including the relevance of people's attitudes, values and beliefs
- increasing the range and accuracy of investigative skills, and advancing their ability to select and apply these with increasing independence to geographical enquiry.

Although some geography progression is dependent on progress in literacy and numeracy, assessment of progress is not based solely on these skills. A pupil who is really good at geography is able to:

- make connections and links between geographical phenomena
- explain and communicate geographical concepts orally
- apply 'visual literacy' to their work i.e. the pictorial communication of spatial information.

Assessment and Recording

Principle of Assessment

Although it is possible to teach geography through other areas of the curriculum, it is important to keep geographical assessment fit for purpose: children are therefore assessed on their geographical knowledge, understanding and skills and not on their literacy or numeracy skills.

Purpose of Assessment

- to give children feedback on their learning
- to monitor standards of children's work
- to raise children's achievements
- to be able to report regularly to parents

Resources

Each class has a globe and a topic box for the units of work studied. The topic boxes contain a selection of books, pictures, videos, artefacts and posters. In addition, we have a central resource cupboard with extra resources to support the teaching for all key stages, including a range of up-to-date atlases suitable for KS1 & KS2, a set of OS Explorer maps for KS2, a set of compasses, dry wipe maps of the UK and laminated mapping symbol sheets.

The school is a member of the Geographical Association and regularly receives the Association's 'Primary Geography' magazine. We use the Wiltshire Library Service and have a variety of educational software packages to support the children's research.

Monitoring and Review

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