



Redesdale Primary School

Geography Policy

Introduction:

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the teaching and learning of Geography in our school. It has been adopted by the staff of Redesdale Primary School. This policy outlines the guiding principles that school will implement in relation to geography in the national curriculum. It is reviewed periodically. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff.

Rationale for Geography Teaching

Geography is an integral part of the curriculum as it provokes and answers questions about the natural and human worlds, using different scales of enquiry to view them from different perspectives. It develops knowledge of places and environments throughout the world, an understanding of maps, and a range of investigative and problem solving skills both inside and outside the classroom. As such, it prepares pupils for adult life and employment. Geography is a focus within the curriculum for understanding and resolving issues about the environment and sustainable development. The aim of geography is to raise awareness of the world around us. Geography lessons allow children to develop a deeper understanding of their locality.

Aims for the Teaching of Geography at Redesdale Primary School

At Redesdale Primary School, we will provide quality teaching and learning of geography. We aim:

- To provide a range of geographical experiences, both in and out of the classroom, which encourage children to build interest and enjoyment, knowledge, understanding and confidence, as well as allowing them to achieve to the maximum of their potential in the subject.
- To foster a sense of wonder and curiosity about the world in which they live and develop a sense of place.
- To develop their geographical vocabulary and a range of skills and apply them in an increasing range of situations to carry out geographical enquiry and to interpret geographical information.
- To communicate geographical information in a variety of ways.
- To become familiar with their own surroundings and extend their interest, knowledge and understanding of contrasting localities in Britain, Europe and the wider world.
- To develop knowledge and understanding of the human and physical processes and patterns which shape places and extend this to an appreciation of interconnections within and between different places.
- To adopt an enquiring approach to the world around them, developing in their ability to formulate appropriate questions, research, handle data and draw conclusions.
- To appreciate similarity and difference in the world around them, having empathy for the lives of others and respect for others' beliefs, attitudes and values.
- To enhance their sense of responsibility for the care of the earth and its people.
- To develop an understanding of environmental sustainability and how they can be actively involved in living as sustainably as possible.

Through Geography we can also:

- Improve pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT;
- Develop pupils' thinking skills;
- Promote pupils' awareness and understanding of gender, cultural, spiritual and moral issues;
- Develop pupils as active citizens;
- Develop independent learning and collaborative skills.

Skills and Attitudes

We seek to encourage children to develop the following skills and attitudes:

- Empathy;
- Interpretation of primary and secondary sources relating to our world and its environments;
- Geographical enquiry;
- Communicating understanding of Geography dramatically, verbally and in written formats;
- Research.

The Role of the Geography Subject Leader is

- Taking the lead in the development, evaluation and amendment of teaching and learning;
- Acting as a consultant to colleagues on resources, visits, visitors, curriculum changes, classroom teaching and learning ideas;
- Monitoring and evaluating pupils' work, pupils' views about the subject and displays around school;
- Monitoring and evaluating teachers' planning to ensure progression and coverage of the curriculum;
- Reviewing and revising policy;
- Liaising with the School Governor with responsibility for Geography;
- Contributing to the school development plan;
- Auditing resources and ordering resources when needed;
- Keeping up to date with developments in history and disseminating information to the rest of the teaching staff;
- Leading staff meetings as appropriate;
- Attending relevant in-service training and prompting others about relevant training.

The subject leader has specially-allocated time for reviewing and monitoring teaching and learning across the school.

Foundation Stage

Geography in the Foundation Stage and Nursery is taught 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, Understanding the world, which underpin the curriculum planning for Foundation Stage children. Geography makes a significant contribution to the objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world through a range of different activities.

Key Stage One

The National Curriculum Programmes of Study at Key Stage One focuses on developing children's knowledge, skills and understanding of geography. Children 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.

Pupils should be taught to:

- Name and locate the world's continents and oceans
- Name, locate and identify characteristics of the four countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas
- Understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom, and of a contrasting non-European country
- Identify seasonal and daily weather patterns in the United Kingdom and the location of hot and cold areas of the world in relation to the Equator and the North and South Poles
- Use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to:
- Key physical features, including: beach, coast, forest, hill, mountain, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, and weather
- Key human features, including: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, and shop
- Use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the United Kingdom and its countries, as well as the countries, continents and oceans studied at this key stage
- Simple compass directions (North, South, East and West) and locational language (e.g. near and far) to describe the location of features and routes on a map
- Use aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic physical features; devise a simple map; and use and construct basic symbols in a key
- Use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of their school and the key human and physical features of its surrounding environment.

The points above are addressed throughout Key Stage One.

Key stage Two

The National Curriculum Programmes of Study at Key Stage Two also focuses on developing children's Knowledge, skills and understanding of geography. Pupils should extend their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area and the United Kingdom to include 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 tools and skills to enhance their locational and place knowledge.

Pupils should be taught to:

- Locate the world's countries, using maps to focus on Europe and North and South America and concentrating on their environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries, and major cities
- Name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, including hills, mountains, cities, rivers, key topographical features and land-use patterns; and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time

- Identify the position and significance of latitude, longitude, Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle, and time zones (including day and night)
- Understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region or area of the United Kingdom (different from that taught at Key Stage 1), a region or area in a European country, and a region or area within North or South America
- Describe and understand key aspects of:
 - Physical geography, including: climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle
 - Human geography, including: settlements, land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals, and water supplies
- Use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied
- Use the eight points of a compass, four-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build their knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world
- Use fieldwork to observe, measure and record the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods, including sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technologies.

Recording of Geography

Pupils are encouraged to record their work using a variety of methods and therefore communicate their findings to others. These may include written or verbal reports, charts, collages, models, pictures and role play activities. Children's written evidence will also be recorded in their individual topic book. Examples of children's work will be retained to provide evidence of on-going geography, including photographic evidence of displays, presentations or field trips, and to ensure progression and continuity throughout the school.

Classroom management

The geography curriculum is annually reviewed to ensure current initiatives are included and to adapt for cross curricula links.

Planning is completed on the school medium term plan pro-forma to illustrate skill development, lesson content, learning objectives, resources and differentiation. Planning is monitored regularly and copies are stored in Class Share folders on the school's network.

Geography outside the classroom

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. Where possible, visits are arranged to enhance learning opportunities.

In the Foundation stage and at Key Stage 1, children carry out an investigation into the local environment and we give them opportunities to observe and record information around the school site. At Key Stage 2 the children also study an aspect of the local area and the school grounds.

Cross - Curriculum links in Geography

English

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. We focus on the key vocabulary of the subject and use writing frames as appropriate.

Children are provided with opportunities to write at length in geography with the aim of showing consistency in writing across all subjects.

Mathematics

Our field work investigations develop data handling and graphing skills. The spatial dimension of map-work is mathematical, too, through direction and locational work. Our map work develops ability to understand and use co-ordinates. It also develops understanding of compass points and provides opportunity for them to practise giving directions using a compass.

Science

There are similarities between the enquiry approach and scientific investigation. The skill of identifying similarities and differences is also mirrored. Children gain an understanding of different topics that have an underlying scientific concept and therefore need to use their scientific understanding to allow them to develop their knowledge.

ICT

Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop and apply their ICT capability to support their learning in geography. Information and communication technology enhances our teaching of geography, wherever appropriate, in each key stage. Each teacher ensures it is used as a teaching tool where appropriate and provides opportunities for children to also use it.

ICT is used to enhance skills in data handling and in presenting written work. They are also able to research information through the internet and also able to look at maps relating to the topic taught in school. We also use the digital camera for fieldwork and classroom follow up.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

There are many ways in which geography can contribute towards spiritual development, the study of real people in real places, and of our relationship with the environment, is at the heart of the geography curriculum. As such, there are many occasions when we can give pupils the opportunity to reflect on their own values and beliefs, and those of others. Most geographical issues have a moral dimension. Environmental relationships, in particular, provide a wealth of opportunities for distinguishing a moral dimension; for example, should the rain forest be exploited?

Geography also has a key role in developing an understanding of citizenship. Learning about trade fosters a sense of the interdependence of people and places; and through geography pupils develop a knowledge and understanding of the concept of sustainable development. Through its study of real people in real places, geography makes a major contribution to cultural development. Pupils learn about the characteristics of their local area, and why it is like that, and contrast where they live with more distant localities, in this country and abroad. A sense of place requires a knowledge and understanding of the cultural traditions of the people who live there.

Assessments

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning in school.

Children's progress will be monitored through observation and by using planning and learning objectives from the National Curriculum.

Marking

Feedback to pupils should be provided on their attainment against the objectives of geography. Pupils are encouraged to improve their own learning performance through the school marking policy.

Monitoring and Evaluating

Geography will be monitored throughout the school by the geography subject leader who will be responsible for gathering samples of curriculum work.

The geography subject leader will also monitor geography work in books and schemes of work to ensure that the Programmes of Study are being effectively taught and match the needs and abilities of the pupils.

The geography subject leader will be responsible for evaluating geography within the school and ensuring appropriate strategies are put in place to improve.

Inclusion

Equal opportunity

In line with our Equal Opportunities Policy we are committed to providing a teaching environment that promotes learning. Children are given opportunities to work with others, listen to each other and treat everyone with respect:

- We plan our classroom activities to challenge and involve all pupils appropriately, according to age and capability, ethnic diversity, gender and language background.
- We are aware of different learning styles and the need to allow pupils to be able to work in their preferred learning styles for some of the time.
- We use materials for teaching which avoid stereo-typing, and bias, towards race, gender, role or disability.
- We deal with such issues clearly and sensitively when they arise.

Differentiation

At our school 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. Through our geography teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We use a range of strategies to support pupils and ensure that pupils' needs are catered for in each aspect of the curriculum. A few of these, particularly relevant to geography are:

- The use of several levels of difficulty of vocabulary in class lessons by the teacher e.g. areas of housing/residential areas.
- Modified text passages as expected in other curriculum areas.
- Different levels of written or oral questions for pupils investigating photographic or other visual materials.
- Modified graphs, e.g. the use of ICT to graph data, axis provided and labelled.
- Careful use of support for pupils with English as an additional language.

- The use of large scale maps, always colour highlighted for pupils with particular additional needs.
- Awareness of the problems colour keys provide for colour-blind pupils.

Our assessment process looks at a range of factors: classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation, so that we can take some additional or different actions to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with Special Educational Needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to geography

For our more able pupils we will expect:

- Teachers to provide teaching and learning experiences that encourage pupils to think creatively, explore and develop ideas, and try different approaches. Pupils should be encouraged to set their own questions, offer ideas, suggest solutions or explanations, and reflect on what they have heard, seen or done in order to clarify their thoughts.
- Greater independence in working, e.g. a pupil to be able to carry out their own simple geographical enquiry.
- Avoid giving gifted pupils additional writing tasks and encourage them instead to communicate their understanding in a variety of ways, giving them responsibility for choosing and evaluating the most appropriate method.
- Provide opportunities within geography for pupils to develop their skills in other areas, such as intrapersonal skills (for example, opportunities to use initiative), and interpersonal skills (for example, leadership and group membership). These opportunities also relate to the key skills of working with others and improving own learning and performance.
- Opportunities to make the school more environmentally sustainable.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Aspects

- Some of our objectives explicitly develop social, moral, cultural and spiritual education.
- Environmental sustainability and citizenship are integral to the subject.
- Dealing with attitudes and values are an integral part of geography and may link directly with PSHE.

Resources

Resources, including a set of atlases, are located centrally, available for teachers to use in all lessons. There is a resource box for each topic taught in school. We make use of interactive, online activities and websites to support teaching and learning.