



Geography Policy

Reviewed September 2024

Geography Policy

Aims and objectives

Geography gives children 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 become familiar with and understand the varying landscapes and climates across the world. They learn how to draw and interpret maps and 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.

The aims of geography are:

- to enable children to gain a knowledge and understanding of places in the world
- to increase children's knowledge of other cultures and, in doing so, teach a respect and understanding of what it means to be a positive citizen in a multi-cultural country
- to enable children to draw, use and interpret maps
- to enable children to know about and understand environmental problems at a local, regional and global level
- to develop children's enquiry and investigative skills

Teaching and learning style

We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our geography lessons. We combine whole-class teaching methods with enquiry-led activities which take place in groups. Children learn about geographical concepts through collaborative learning; they are encouraged to discuss and explain geographical concepts within their groups and then with the whole class. 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; we also encourage children to use online resources in geography lessons where this deepens their learning. Geography learning also takes place through fieldwork, where possible, enabling children observe different environments and to develop an understanding of certain physical features.

We recognise the fact that there are children of widely different geographical abilities. Hence, we provide children with the opportunity to learn collaboratively; by sharing ideas and experiences, discussing and explaining geographical concepts, and making connections to different areas of the curriculum. We achieve this by:

- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses
- providing a range of resources to develop and strengthen children's understanding
- setting enquiry led activities/tasks that enable children to discuss and explain geographical concepts

Geography curriculum planning

We have used the National Curriculum and Oddizzi (online geographical resource) to identify a set of skills that need to be developed within all year groups and within each unit of work. Oddizzi have created medium term plans and detailed lesson plans based on specific objectives for each unit. Additionally, each unit of work includes a KWL grid and Knowledge Organiser to facilitate learning throughout the unit; these are specifically

designed to aid memory and retention. There is also an assessment grid for children to complete at the end of each unit of work.

Our Geography planning provides the opportunity to teach geography skills both discretely and through making links with other curriculum areas, such as Literacy. (See below.) As well as this, children's speaking and listening skills are developed through discussions and presentations on geographical topics. We are developing a bank of reading resources to enhance our provision of Geography across the school.

The Geography planning also enables children to build upon prior learning. Children of all abilities have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit. Through planned progression, we offer them the opportunity to strengthen and deepen their understanding of geographical concepts as they move up through the school.

Early Years Foundation Stage

We teach Understanding of the World (UW) in Reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. Children develop their geographical skills from the UW area of learning through a combination of teacher directed and child initiated activities. Geography makes a significant contribution to the Early Years Foundation Stage developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world through a range of practical activities. Children engage in a range of activities that focus on their immediate environment such as tree walks. Children also identify features of contrasting environments and identify different places around the world that they come from.

The contribution of Geography to teaching in other curriculum areas

Literacy

Geography makes a significant contribution to the cross curricular teaching of Literacy in our school because it actively promotes the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Children present their geographical learning in longer pieces of writing, i.e reports, leaflets, fact files. Children develop their speaking and listening through collaborative learning. Children also engage in a range of geographical comprehensions to develop their reading skills. Through the Power of Reading scheme children are exposed to texts from and about other countries and extend their learning through reading and research.

Mathematics

Geography teaching contributes to the development of mathematics in a variety of ways. Children learn to interpret information presented in graphical or diagrammatic form, for example statistics on different climate zones. Children also collect and present their own data such as on weather patterns or survey results.

Science

Geography uses scientific methods for data collection, analysis and interpretation. There are many crossovers between the two subjects including the study of the water cycle, the formation of rocks and soil and the characteristics of habitats.

This means that connections can be made and this aids in promoting memory retention and retrieval in both subjects.

Foundation Subjects

Geography contributes to the understanding of History. To understand the geography of past times and how geography has played important roles in the evolution of people, their ideas, places and environments contributes to the development of the understanding of timelines which is crucial in the study of History. To develop a mental map of your community, province or territory, country and the world so that you can understand the “where” of places and events contributes to an understanding of how and why civilisations rose and fell.

Art links with Geography in the countries that artists have come from and looking at the forces that may have shaped their art. Drawing diagrams and cross-sections etc. complements the development of artistic skills.

Music shows the influence of climate on musical traditions and how those traditions slowly seeped across the world. The connection between Geography and Music is evident based on the fact that many different types of music often use location or geography as part of their lyrics.

Some of our D.T. units of work correlate closely to a Geography influence such as with that covering plastic pollution.

P.E. links strongly with Geography firstly in showing why certain sports developed in certain climates.

There is also a strong tie with global competitions like the Olympics which spark an interest for the hosting country and those countries competing.

Using computing skills complements Geography in such areas as populating data bases and spreadsheets, formatting fact files, analysing surveys and depicting results etc.

We teach Spanish as our MFL and this links directly to the unit on Europe.

PHSE and RE benefit from geographical input in the curriculum. Where children are educated about the differences in countries this develops tolerance. The study of Geography helps to create positive citizens in a multi-cultural country with an increased knowledge and understanding of other cultures.

Teaching Geography to children with Special Educational Needs

At Parkside, we teach Geography to all children and we aim to make it engaging for all. We use a range of resources including visual and online resources to make the learning accessible. Additionally, collaborative learning gives all children the opportunity to engage in geography comfortably and in a supportive yet challenging environment. By using collaborative learning we encourage children to work in their zone of proximal development.

Assessment and recording

We assess the children's work in Geography by making judgements as we observe the children during lessons. Verbal feedback is provided to them at the point of learning to address misconceptions, clarify comprehension and encourage the children towards greater depth of understanding.

We use motivational marking stamps and each child is given a stamp (Bronze, Silver or Gold) based on the child's effort. A Learning Achieved stamp is awarded when the child has shown understanding of the work covered.

Children write a learning comment at the end of every lesson. The children are trained to be increasingly insightful about their learning as they progress through the school. This also encourages them to be in control of their own learning. Children reflect on their learning and identify what they need to do to achieve the next stamp. In some classes children, on occasion, are able to decide themselves on the stamp they receive. They are expected to write a rationale for this.

Learning comments also give children the opportunity to put forward any questions they may have about their learning for the lesson. Teachers respond to learning comments accordingly.

Children self-assess at the end of every unit of work through completion of self-assessment sheets. These allow children to assess their learning and understanding based on a set of key objectives. Children have the opportunity to reflect on their learning and record their comments.

Teachers also complete [half-termly] an assessment of which children in their class have reached the expected level in Geography.

Resources

There are resources for all geography teaching units. All classes have a set of Atlases and a globe along with a map of the world, UK and Europe. Staff and children have access to Oddizzi (an online Geographical resource) at home and in school. Oddizzi provides children with a strong research platform for geographical topics. As well as this, the Oddizzi scheme of work has quality reading resources, mapping resources and a range of engaging activities to facilitate children's learning.

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.

A range of fieldwork takes place across all year groups and this includes making use of the school grounds, the environment and local area. We use a range of resources to study localities where the human activities and physical features provide a contrast to those that predominate in our own immediate area.

At Key Stage 1 we let all the children carry out an investigation into the local environment and we give them opportunities to observe and record information on the school site and in their local immediate area. At Key Stage 2 the children carry out surveys in their local

area and conduct field work on rivers and coasts. In addition, virtual fieldwork takes place through Oddizzi's videos of Antarctica and the Amazon Rainforest.

Monitoring and review

The geography subject leader and senior management team are responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in geography. The subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of geography, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leader reports the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. Time is allocated for the vital task of reviewing samples of children's work, conducting pupil interviews and for visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.

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