

Willoughby Primary
School

'Learning for Life'



Geography Policy

1. Aims and objectives

1.1 Geography education seeks to inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. At Willoughby we equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the frameworks and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

1.2 The aims of Geography in our school follow the National Curriculum for Geography to ensure that all pupils:

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes
- understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time
- are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
 - collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
 - interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
 - communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.

2. Teaching and learning style

2.1 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 IT in geography lessons where this serves to enhance their learning. 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.

2.2 We recognise the fact that there are children of widely different geographical abilities in our 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 year group in the room and where appropriate setting different tasks to each group;
- using Teaching Assistant to support the work of individual children or groups of children.

3. Geography curriculum planning

3.1 We follow the requirements of the National Curriculum for geography, using the subject content as the basis for our curriculum planning.

3.2 Our curriculum planning is in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). Our long-term plan maps the geography topics studied in each year during each key stage. We combine the geographical study with work in other subject areas (e.g. Themed weeks France, Germany, Italy).

3.3 Our medium-term plans give details of each topic. Because we have mixed-age classes, we organise the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle in KS1 and a four-year cycle in KS2. In this way we ensure that children have complete coverage of the National Curriculum but do not have to repeat topics.

3.4 Each class teacher has a plan for each lesson. These daily lessons have specific learning objectives.

3.5 Children of all abilities have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit. We offer them an increasing challenge as they move up the school.

4. Foundation Stage

4.1 We teach geography in Foundation as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. Our Foundation children are part of Class 1 (with Year 1 & 2), so they may sometimes touch on aspects of the KS1 topic. We relate geographical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Geography makes a significant contribution to the EYFSP of developing a child's Knowledge and Understanding of the World through activities such as tasting food from around the world, collecting postcards from different places and singing songs from around the world.

5. Teaching geography to children with special educational needs

5.1 At Willoughby Primary 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 do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs.

5.2 When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. 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 action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

5.3 Intervention through extra support will lead to the creation of an Extra Support Plan (ESP) for children with special educational needs.

5.4 We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning geography. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a visit, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

6. Assessment and recording

6.1 We assess the children's work in geography by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lessons. Only information of exceptionally gifted or below national expectations is kept, otherwise it is assumed that national expectations are being achieved.

6.2 Class teachers keep the children's geography work in a topic folder or book.

7. Resources

7.1 We review resources in our school to be able to teach all the geography units in the National Curriculum. We keep many of these resources in the One-to-One room. We also keep a variety of atlases in the classrooms along with a supply of geography library books. The Internet is used to support children's individual research in the classes and recommended websites are used. We also purchase the help of the Schools Library Service, which provide an excellent and invaluable source of books for specific topic areas.

8. Visits

8.1 Visits are encouraged and we include as many opportunities as we can to involve children in practical geographical research and enquiry.

8.2 In the Foundation stage and at 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. At Key Stage 2 the children do a study of the local area.

9. Monitoring and review

9.1 We have a named teacher as Geography coordinator and a named Governor. Governors will visit to observe the teaching and learning of Geography in line with the Programme of Governors' visits. As we are a small school every teacher wears many hats, so we have a team approach to responsibility for the standard of children's work and the quality of the teaching.

This policy will be reviewed during the Summer Term 2024.

Policy Updated 11/7/2016 & 20/05/2020