Wootton Bassett Infants' School

Geography Policy

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Introduction

Geography teaches 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 learn how to draw and interpret maps, and they 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. At Wootton Bassett Infant school we believe that the teaching of Geography should motivate children to find out about the physical world and enables them to recognise the importance of sustainable development for the future of mankind.

Aims

Our geography curriculum ensures that all elements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021) and the Geography programme of study for Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum (2014) are covered. At Key Stage 1 this will involve knowledge, skills, processes and understanding being taught through areas of study.

Our aims are:

- To provide a broad, balanced and inspiring geography curriculum which balances key knowledge with the development of skills.
- To foster a curiosity about other countries and cultures and in so doing, teach respect and understanding of what it means to be a positive citizen in a multi-cultural country.
- To allow children to learn graphic skills, including how to use draw and interpret maps.
- To enable children to know and understand environmental problems at a local regional and global level.
- To encourage in children a commitment to sustainable development and an appreciation of what "global citizenship" means.
- To help every children develop a variety of skills, including those of enquiry, problem solving, communication and investigation skills.

Teaching and Learning Style in Geography

At Wootton Bassett Infant School, we believe our curriculum should enable our children to become future geographers and global citizens. In order to do this our children need to attain a range of skills (disciplinary knowledge) and subject specific knowledge of places, landmarks and geographical facts

(substantive knowledge). We have identified key concepts which weave into our geography planning across all year groups (highlighted below):

Family and Belonging	Environment	Safety
Friendship	Exploration	Tradition

These concepts reoccur in the geography curriculum over time so that children develop a clear sense of their meaning in a range of different contexts.

The Foundation Stage

We teach geography 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 Development Matters document (2021) which complement the curriculum planning for The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. Geography makes a significant contribution to the objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world through activities such as looking at a variety of maps and comparing different places, understanding that life may be different in different areas of the world. The children are introduced to fieldwork by investigating the school environment and our local community. The children have experience of answering "Big Questions" and enquiry through practical examples in preparation for Key Stage 1.

Key Stage 1

Our teachers deliver our curriculum using Big Questions to investigate local, national and global geography and develop an understanding of concepts, knowledge and skills. Through enquiry our pupils not only build subject knowledge and understanding but become increasingly adept at critical thinking, the use of specialised vocabulary and their grasp of subject concepts. We adopt a policy of immersive learning in geography that provides sufficient time and space for our pupils not only to acquire new knowledge and subject vocabulary but also to develop subject concepts and to give deeper purpose to learning and provide our children with opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills. We use stories, play-based learning, art and writing opportunities to support the geographical learning while ensuring that we do not dilute the requires of the National Curriculum programme of study for geography. Our learning and teaching in geography is interactive and practical allowing opportunities for pupils to work independently, in pairs and in groups of various sizes both inside and outside of the classroom. Wherever possible we provide our pupils with a range of geographical resources and equipment including maps, photographs, data, compasses and atlases to complete investigations. Similarly, we provide varied and differentiated ways for pupils to record the outcomes of their work including use of computer technology, play activities, verbalised group work, improvised drama and the application of a range of writing genres. We

also encourage children to ask as well as answer geographical questions. Only in this way will knowledge become embedded and 'sticky' and ensure that our pupils can build on what they know and understand from one year to the next. We provide opportunities for children to review their learning with games and activities so that knowledge is embedded deeper into long term memory. The schemes of work for each enquiry highlight both the objectives and anticipated outcomes of the investigation. They are also carefully structured using smaller questions, to enable pupils to build their knowledge and understanding in incremental steps of increasing complexity until they reach the point where they are able to answer the question posed at the beginning of the investigation. Our learning and teaching in geography also recognises that 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 our school grounds and within the local community. Wherever possible, we involve the children in 'real' geographical activities conducting a virtual tour or exploring the local environment. Our school also has an eco-committee to tackle environmental issues within our establishment.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

All pupils are provided for in lessons, regardless of gender, race, disability or, in the case of external visits and visitors to the school, financial considerations. We avoid stereotypical assumptions about the abilities and aptitudes of children. 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;
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children.

Health and Safety

All school trips with a geographical emphasis will follow the procedures of the school health and safety policy. A risk assessment form will be completed and on the day of the trip the children will be supervised in small groups using teachers, teaching assistants and parent helpers.

Assessment

Each enquiry which forms our programme of learning and teaching in geography sets clear objectives and outcomes for the pupil in terms of knowledge and understanding and skills acquisition. We ensure that when assessing pupils' evidence is drawn from a wide range of sources to inform the process, including interaction with pupils during discussions and related questioning, day to day observations, practical activities such as model making and role play drama, the gathering, presentation and communication of writing in different genres. The outcomes of each enquiry serve to inform the teacher's developing picture of the knowledge and understanding of each pupil and to plan future learning accordingly. We do

not make summative judgements about individual pieces of pupil work but rather use such outcomes to build an emerging picture of what the pupil knows, understands and can do.

At the end of each year we make a summative judgement about the achievement of each pupil against the National Curriculum Statements. At this point teachers decide upon a 'best fit' judgement as to whether the pupil has achieved and embedded the expected learning goals, exceeded expectations or is still working towards the goals. These decisions are based on the professional knowledge and judgement that teachers possess about the progress of each pupil, developed over the previous three terms, which allows an informed and holistic judgement of attainment to be made. Teachers use the Geography End Points document and "Four Squares for Learning" visual aids to support their judgements, ensuring the children are able to demonstrate both substantive and disciplinary knowledge. Assessments are shared with parents in the end of year annual reports.

Monitoring of Subject Provision

The subject leader monitors and evaluates the teaching and learning of geography throughout the school. This includes learning walks, planning and work scrutiny and pupil voice. The results of these findings are fed back to staff in staff meetings and to the Senior Leadership team. Targets for geography provision are created on an annual basis in the subject leader action plan/ foundation subject action plan, based on termly assessed results and feedback. 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 for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The geography policy is evaluated and reviewed by the subject leader and senior management and agreed by governors. The subject leader also provides the governors with an annual report evaluating the subject provision and the impact of actions undertaken.