



# Leamington Community Primary School

*Together we make a Difference*

## Geography Policy



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# Geography Policy

## 1. Aims and objectives

1.1 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. Geography teaching also motivates children to find out about the physical world and enables them to recognise the importance of sustainable development for the future of mankind.

1.2 The aims of Geography are:

- to inspire pupil's curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives.
- to 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.
- to provide children with a growing knowledge about the world which will help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments.
- To provide the frameworks and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.
- 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 develop a variety of other skills, including those of enquiry, problem solving, computing, investigation and how to present their conclusions in the most appropriate way.

## 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 computing in Geography lessons, where this serves to enhance their learning. Children take part in role-play and discussions, and they present reports to the rest of the class. The children 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.

2.2 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 learning support officers to support the work of individual children or groups of children.

### **3. Geography curriculum planning**

3.1 We have created our Geography planning around the 2014 National Curriculum objectives and adapt our planning and teaching to suit our children's needs when necessary to ensure we are providing all children the opportunity to meet these key objectives. We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in each unit and we build planned progression into the scheme of work so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move up through the school.

3.2 We carry out curriculum planning in Geography through a thematic approach, and where possible adapt the 'Mantle of the Expert'. The long-term plan, maps the Geography topics studied in each term during each key stage and the children study Geography topics in conjunction with other subjects. We teach the knowledge, understanding and skills set out in the National Curriculum through the corresponding programme of study.

3.3 We use a knowledge, understanding and skills based assessment criteria which reflect the age related expectations of each child as the basis for our medium-term plans. The Geography subject leader keeps and reviews these plans and assessment criteria on a regular basis.

3.4 For each topic that is planned and taught within our school, children are told the new learning challenge that they will be looking at. Children then provide questions or ideas about what they would like to learn from the learning challenges they have been given. Teachers then produce a learning journey and plan their lessons around the new learning challenges and what the children would like to learn, whilst maintaining national curriculum knowledge, understanding and skills coverage.

### **4. Foundation Stage**

In Foundation stage, staff provide the children with a variety of opportunities to develop their geographical knowledge and understanding of the world. Staff use Development Matters to plan a range of adult led and child initiated activities which encourage children to find out and ask questions about the world in which we live. There are lots of opportunities for children to develop their geographical knowledge through our well planned continuous provision. For example, in our role play area children will imitate everyday activities and events from their own family and cultural background. Our outdoor area provides opportunities to investigate, explore and research the natural world. Throughout our provision children are exposed to a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts which generate discussions linked to their growing understanding of the world.

### **5. The contribution of Geography to teaching in other curriculum areas**

#### **5.1 English**

Geography makes a significant contribution to the teaching of English in our school because it actively promotes the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We ensure that some of the texts that we use in the English lesson are geographical in nature. Children within both key phases also complete a variety of written tasks such as recounts of their fieldwork experiences, postcards from their pupil in role tasks as well as persuasive texts in the form of travel brochures. In Key Stage 2 we also organise debates on environmental issues because we believe that these develop speaking and listening skills. We also use environmental issues as a way of developing the children's writing ability by asking them to record information and write reports and letters.

We also use the narrative immersion approach in teaching our English which consolidates and supports the children's geographical learning as the children are immersed into the life in a particular country, place or a journey e.g. The teaching of North America is consolidated in English lessons which are based on the book 'Molly's Route 66 Adventure' or rainforests are consolidated through English lessons based on the book 'Journey to the River Sea.' This is a teaching approach we aim to in conjunction with our Geography planning.

## 5.2 Maths

Geography in our school contributes to the teaching of maths in a variety of ways. We teach the children how to represent objects with maps. The children study space, scale and distance and they learn how to use four- and six-figure grid references as well as using directional vocabulary within Maths lessons. They also use graphs to explore, analyse and illustrate a variety of data.

## 5.3 Computing

We make provision for the children to use computers/Ipads in Geography lessons where appropriate. Children use computers in Geography to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work. They also research information through the Internet. We also offer children the opportunity to use the digital camera or iPads to record and use photographic images. In addition the children use the digital mapping programme Digimaps to plan routes or make comparative maps of the UK.

## 5.4 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Firstly, the subject matter lends itself to raising matters of citizenship and social welfare. For example, children study how environments are changed for better or for worse. Secondly, the nature of the subject means that children have the opportunity to take part in debates and discussions. Geography in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship.

## 5.5 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

We offer children in our school many opportunities to examine the fundamental questions in life through the medium of Geography. For example, their work on the changing landscape and environmental issues leads children to ask questions about the evolution of the planet. We encourage the children to reflect on the impact of mankind on our world. Through teaching about contrasting localities, we enable the children to learn about inequality and injustice in the world. We help children to develop their knowledge and understanding of different cultures so that they learn to avoid stereotyping other people and acquire a positive attitude towards others. We help contribute to the children's social development by teaching them about how society works to resolve difficult issues of economic development. Geography contributes to the children's appreciation of what is right and wrong by raising many moral questions during the programme of study.

## **6. Teaching Geography to children with Special Educational Needs**

6.1 At Leamington Community 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. Assessment against knowledge, understanding and skills allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

6.2 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.

6.3 Intervention through the Graduated Approach will lead to the creation of a Pupil Passport for children with Special Educational Needs. The Pupil Passport may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to Geography.

6.4 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 field trip, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

## **7. Assessment and recording**

7.1 We assess the children's work in Geography by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lessons. Throughout the topic, teachers complete a RAG sheets which assesses children's progress against their knowledge, understanding and skills. Once the children complete a unit of work, we make a summary judgement of the work for each pupil as to whether they are working below, at or above the expectations of the unit. We record the results in our assessment files and we use these to plan future work, to provide the basis for assessing the progress of the child, and to pass information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

7.2 The Geography subject leader will complete a book scrutiny to check pupils' work and class teachers will keep evidence of Geography lessons in a Geography book as well as on Seesaw.

## **8. Resources**

8.1 We have are continually reviewing resources in our school to be able to teach all the Geography units. We keep these resources in one central store cupboards, where there is a box of equipment for each unit of topic. We also keep a collection of Geography equipment which the children use to gather weather data, and a variety of atlases. In the library we have a good supply of Geography topic books.

## **9. Fieldwork**

9.1 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.

9.2 Throughout the whole school, our pupils complete at least one fieldwork experience each year. We ensure our fieldwork provides opportunities for our pupils to consolidate their knowledge and understanding and provide opportunities for our pupils' to use their Geographical skills. Our staff plan our fieldwork opportunities to include 3 phases:

1. The planning phase- This includes activities such as locating the destination of their fieldwork trip on maps, mapping their route for their fieldwork and completing health and safety assessments.
2. The fieldwork experience- The teachers then carry out investigations and observational tasks during the fieldwork experience using appropriate equipment including maps, compasses and measuring equipment.
3. The reflection phase- this is completed back in the classroom. Here children will complete activities that reflect their fieldwork experience, which may include presenting data collected, annotating photographs taken by the pupils on the experiences or creating information texts and presentations.

9.3 We ensure children complete a wide variety of fieldwork experiences. KS1 begin by investigating our local area, suburb and Liverpool City Centre before KS2 begin to extend this to following the route of the River Alt across Liverpool and hiking Moel Famau. We also offer the opportunity to take part in a residential visits to PGL, where fieldwork is carried out in relation to the topic of the term.

## **10. Monitoring and review**

10.1 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 for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The Geography subject leader gives the Head teacher an annual action plan in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. We allocate special time for the vital task of reviewing samples of children's work and for visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.

## **How has the pandemic affected the Geography Curriculum at Leamington Primary?**

### **Before the pandemic**

Before lockdown, teachers were delivering a broad and balanced curriculum through an immersive approach. We planned a bespoke, immersive and engaging Geography curriculum that teaches children Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills with the aim to empower children to take on the role of Geographers. Throughout our Geography curriculum, the 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. Children also learn how to draw and interpret maps and they develop the skills of research, investigation, analysis and problem-solving. We put a strong focus on providing enrichment opportunities and prior to lockdown our priority was to provide every year group with the opportunity to take part in fieldwork experiences outside of our school grounds. For example, Year 2 take a trip into Liverpool city centre to investigate places to visit which provides our pupils with the opportunity to use their knowledge, understanding and skills to interpret OS maps, make simple comparisons and use Geographical vocabulary.

### **Remote learning during the pandemic**

During the first lockdown (March - July 2020), the majority of pupils did not receive a full and balanced education. Children throughout the school were given a pack of workbooks in English, Maths and Science. We did not teach Geography units specifically as there were so few children in school, and those at home were not set up for online learning however some opportunities to complete non-specific Geography tasks were provided on Class Dojo and our school social media outlets.

In preparation for our September 2020 return to school, as the Geography lead I worked alongside the Curriculum Lead to identify knowledge, understanding and skills that needed to be prioritised in order to ensure no further gaps arise in the Geography curriculum. When we returned to school in September 2020, we implemented our ***Recapture Curriculum*** which included teachers working from the previous academic year's planning. The summer term plans were being used as a vehicle for teaching and learning were the most relevant KUS had been selected in order to merge two units of work into one. Each Year Group across the school used the previous year groups Summer term planning alongside the newly created knowledge organisers and previously identified priority KUS, to lessen the gaps in the Geography curriculum.

During the second lockdown (Jan - March 2021), we continued to deliver the full primary curriculum online and to the children of key workers that were in school. We provided laptops and Wifi dongles to ensure as many children as possible had access to our lessons. Our staff continued to teach the Geography curriculum both to the key worker children working in school throughout lockdown and the remote learners working at home. Throughout the second lockdown, our teachers filmed weekly Geography lessons that would've been taught if we were in school. Teachers filmed lesson inputs and uploaded the videos and differentiated tasks onto Class Dojo. This gave the children access to high quality teaching while at home and the opportunity to complete the tasks, add them to their portfolio and receive feedback from their teacher.

### **Returning to school post lockdown**

When we returned to school in September 2020, after the first lockdown, we taught the units from the previous year group that had been missed in the first lockdown. For example, Year 4 children completed tasks from the Year 3 Summer curriculum. As these units were taught in a shorter time as a catch-up curriculum, some of the key skills and knowledge may have been missed.

Having previously identified priority KUS before the September 2020 return to school, the staff continued to lessen the gap through the Recapture Curriculum. As the subject leader I am aware of arising gaps in the Geography curriculum and need to identify actions to lessen these gaps as the children continue progress throughout the school. In subject leader monitoring, I will identify continuing or developing gaps in the Geography curriculum, looking for any skills and knowledge that may need to be covered as the children progress through the school. Our Geography curriculum has always highlighted the importance of providing enrichment opportunities to every year group with the opportunity to take part in fieldwork experiences outside of our school grounds. We normally have several year groups taking part in residential trips which provide children with opportunities to complete fieldwork and to use their knowledge, understanding and skills and work as a true Geographer. I have already identified the lack of field work experiences and enrichment opportunities that our children have missed out on throughout both

the previous and current academic year and I'm aware of the need to ensure these enriching field work opportunities are implemented throughout our future Geography curriculum.

When we returned to school in March 2021, after the second lockdown, we continued to teach the curriculum from where we had left the last online lesson however our fieldwork and enrichment opportunities are currently limited by Covid restrictions and risk assessments.

### **What does the future look like?**

We will continue to deliver Geography units through the Spring and Summer Terms of 2021 as we would any other year. In Summer term, I will be monitoring the Geography curriculum and will be able to identify the areas for development throughout the curriculum and gain pupil feedback in order to identify their needs. As Amanda Spielman stated '*We know that most children have learned less than usual over the past year.*' However we need to assess their progress for an honest overview and '*teach them from where they are, not where you would have liked them to be*' (Amanda Spielman, ASCL Annual Conference 2021 ). On reflection, not every child at home accessed the online Geography lessons provided by their teachers and unfortunately, there is no provision in place for interventions that could cover these skills therefore teachers need to be aware of the ongoing impact of this on some pupils progress.

As part of our Recapture Curriculum, our teachers will complete the academic year teaching the planned Geography curriculum during the Spring and Summer term. After the subject leader review in the Summer term, I will share an updated gaps and KUS analysis with staff. This will ensure teachers are aware when teaching new skills of previous gaps in this area and possible need to address previous content.

As the restrictions ease, we are looking forward to providing opportunities for our young Geographers to get back into the environment to explore the world around them. Our teachers are eager to carry out investigations outside of the school grounds, complete fieldwork activities and enjoy enriching opportunities to support our pupils' curiosity of the world and broaden their Geographical experiences.