Long Row Primary and Nursery School

Geography Policy

Review Date: Summer 2024

Intent

At Long Row Primary and Nursery School, we believe that geography helps to provoke and provide answers to questions about the natural and human aspects of the world. Children are encouraged to develop a greater understanding and knowledge of the world, as well as their place in it. Our geography curriculum enables children to develop knowledge and skills that are transferable to other curriculum areas, which are also used to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Geography is, by nature, an investigative subject, which develops and understanding of concepts, knowledge and skills. We seek to inspire in children a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people which will remain with them for the rest of their lives; to promote the children's interest and understanding of diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. The curriculum is designed to develop knowledge and skills that are progressive, as well as transferable, throughout their time at Long Row Primary and Nursery School and also to their further education and beyond. The curriculum progression will expand outwards from the immediate locality to the global, but with a comparison and contrast to the touchstone of the local at each step. The curriculum will engage our children and facilitate and inspire them to become inquisitive, resilient, independent, challenging thinkers and active global citizens with the confidence to use, and build on, their cultural capital, learning and experiences - both inside and outside of the classroom.

We will deliver a curriculum that:

• will create confident geographers and prepare them for the journey beyond;

• is scaffolded by excellent teaching practices;

• allows children to develop key geographical skills, including the gathering, communication and critical analysis of data and sources of information;

• creates deep-seated learning and skills, as a permanent foundation for the next steps in progression;

• promotes higher order analytical and creative thinking, in considering real-world features, problems and solutions;

• will challenge children to research information and think for themselves, give reasoned answers, work independently, be socially aware of local and global geographical issues, and develop good resilience and attitudes to learning;

• creates fun, enjoyable, engaging, memorable learning experiences;

• gives children the opportunity to consider and apply cross curricular learning.

Implementation

The geography subject leader leads and oversees the subject, to promote sustainable, continuous improvement by leading a regular programme of monitoring, evaluation, review and sharing of good practice. The curriculum incorporates the statutory requirements of the geography programmes of study and other experiences and opportunities, which best meet the learning, and the developmental and aspirational needs of the children in our school.

In addition, the subject leader will identify training needs and opportunities for themselves to promote continuous improvement of their own subject knowledge, skills and understanding, and maximise their support for curriculum development and their colleagues throughout the school.

Teaching and Learning Style:

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 learning opportunities. 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 technology 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. They engage in a wide variety of problem-solving learning. Wherever possible, we involve the children in 'real' geographical opportunities, e.g. research of a local environmental problem or use of the internet to investigate a current issue. 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, considering their relative starting points. Inclusive approaches, such as pre-teaching of vocabulary, ensure that pupils are included and engaged, accessing the same curriculum with their peers. Our geography planning comprises of 'basic', 'advancing' and 'deep' content, therefore consideration is given to how children working above age related expectations are challenged within each lesson.

We achieve this by:

• setting common learning opportunities which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;

• setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks;

• expectations of learning outcomes through geographical skills, depth of conclusions and analysis;

• 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.

Teaching geography to children with SEND

At our school we teach geography to all children. Our curriculum is successfully adapted, designed or developed to be ambitious and meet the needs of pupils with SEND - developing their knowledge, skills and abilities, to apply what they know and can do with increasing fluency and independence. Geography forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children, regardless of their starting points. Through our geography teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress across a lesson and over time. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against P-Scales and national expectations allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, adaptation – 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. We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning geography. Where children are to participate in learning opportunities 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 and their learning needs.

Geography Curriculum Planning:

At Long Row Primary and Nursery School, our geography curriculum includes topics that are selected to ensure all programmes of study set out by the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021) and National Curriculum (2014) are covered over a 2-year cycle in KS1 and KS2 during our 'explore term' of the year (spring), and throughout the year in EYFS. To support the development and planning of our EYFS curriculum we also use Development Matters. Even though all of our children become geographers during the spring term, our learning in this subject is woven into other subjects throughout the year. We have adapted our planning to the local circumstances of our school, i.e. we make use of the local environment in our fieldwork and we also choose a locality where the human activities and physical features provide a contrast to those that predominate in our own immediate area before investigating national and global physical and human features. At other times we arrange for the children to carry out a geographical study independently or make links through research projects. Our medium-term plans follow the national guidelines and give details of each unit of work for each term. The geography subject leader reviews these plans on a regular basis ensuring key skills are being taught; learning objectives are being covered, in relation to a child's age-related expectations.

The class teachers create a plan for each lesson. The class teacher keeps these individual weekly plans in a file on the shared area and in their planning folders, and often discusses them with the geography subject leader on an informal basis. We plan the topics in geography so that they build upon prior learning. Children of all abilities have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and, through planned progression built into the scheme of work, we offer them an increasing challenge as they move up the school.

Early Years Foundation Stage

As part of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021), we teach geography in EYFS as an integral part of the Understanding the World work covered during the year. Understanding the World involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

Impact

The geography curriculum will:

• Provide opportunities for all children to explore the environment around them and understand the similarities and differences with other environments at different scales.

• Give children an insight into how physical and human geography can both influence and be influenced by human activities on a local, national and international scale.

• Set a firm foundation of factual and disciplinary knowledge to create a smooth transition to KS3.

• Create confident geographers that will move through, and leave the school, with the self-assurance that they understand the world around them and the impact their activities can have on the world around them.

• Create a belief in students that qualifications and careers incorporating geography are within their capability.

The contribution of geography to teaching in other curriculum areas:

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 English are geographical in nature. In KS2, we organise debates on environmental issues because we believe that these develop speaking and listening skills. Reports, letters and recording information will all develop children's writing ability. We also use environmental issues as a way of developing the children's writing ability by asking them to record information and write reports, letters and present news broadcasts.

Mathematics

Geography in our school contributes to the teaching of mathematics 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. They also use graphs to explore, analyse and illustrate a variety of data and there are opportunities in UKS2 to investigate time zones and scales using degrees of longitude and latitude.

Computing (ICT)

We make provision for the children to use the computers and laptops in geography lessons where appropriate. We incorporate ICT in our geography curriculum planning at KS2, and we use it at KS1 when appropriate. Children use ICT in geography to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work. The children use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied. They research information through the internet. We offer children the opportunity to use the digital camera to record and use photographic images as well as the interactive globe to record and present learning in geography.

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 contrasting locations, the way people live and how environments are different and 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. We allow them to organise campaigns on matters of concern to them, such as helping the poor or homeless. Thus, geography in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship, promoting British Values through respect and tolerance of others and their differences.

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 and what it means to be a responsible citizen. 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 as well as moral ethos. Geography contributes to the children's appreciation of what is right and wrong by raising many moral questions during the programme of study, again promoting fundamental British Values.

Assessment and recording

We assess the children's work in geography by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lessons. Once the children complete a piece of work, we mark and comment, providing next steps as necessary. Once they complete a unit of work, we make a summary judgement of the work of each pupil in relation to the national expectations and levels of progress made. Teachers record the attainment and progress, and will use this to plan future work with pupils, to provide the basis for assessing progress, and to pass information on to the next teacher at the end of the year with their achieved level.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

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. 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.