

## Practice Guidance for Geography

### Why is Geography important to the children in our school?

Geography enables our children to understand the world in which they live and gain an understanding of the world beyond their own experience. It supports understanding and appreciation of the diverse and ever changing world in which they live. We aim to inspire a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching equips children with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a growing understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes.

### What is Geography?

The study of Geography is about understanding the complexity of our world and appreciating the diversity of cultures that exist across continents. Geography supports us to use geographical knowledge to bridge divides and bring people together. Geography learning in our school includes locational knowledge, place knowledge, human and physical processes and geographical skills and fieldwork.

### Our approach to planning Geography:

Geography is planned as part of year group topics and through cross-curricular activities following Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and National Curriculum guidelines as set out in our STAR curriculum and intent for Geography (see appendices).

Objectives are included in medium term topic planning and activities are planned for in blocked sessions. Individual Music lessons are planned in detail in a whole class format as part of weekly topic planning (approximately 18 hours over the year). This approach enables our children to make meaningful links and connections in their learning and to build on and embed their prior learning over a short period of time.

Geography is taught using a Mastery approach. Challenge is provided through the planning of 'Earth, Moon and Stars' activities to allow children to show greater depth in their learning with all children being encouraged to 'reach for the stars'.

## Essential resources for Geography:

Each year group have an age specific world maps, atlases and globes. Aerial photographs and maps support topic and fieldwork.

Each year group has a range of carefully selected texts to support the Geography curriculum.

Resources to support small world imaginative play are stored in the nursery store cupboard. Geography specific resources are located in each class. An audit of resources can be seen in the Appendix.

## Our approach to teaching and learning in Geography:

Geography is taught across the academic year in all year groups following a Mastery approach using the 5 key principles for learning and progress below;

1. Teachers have high expectations and learning tasks match the needs of the children
2. Teachers prioritise learning and progress over task completion
3. Teachers focus on what children 'know and remember'
4. High quality texts and authentic resources linked to children's experience and interests ensure learning is meaningful and real.
5. Learning tasks are carefully designed to;
  - ✓ be fun,
  - ✓ actively involve children
  - ✓ offer high challenge with low threat
  - ✓ apply key vocabulary
  - ✓ make good use of visuals

In EYFS and KS1 Geography is teaching focuses on the four main forms of geographical knowledge

### 1. Locational knowledge

Building children's locational knowledge helps children to;

- Identify specific features
- Build their own identity and develop a sense of place
- Develop an appreciation of distance and scale
- Learn about the orientation of the world, including references such as continents and oceans that they can navigate from.

Children gain a knowledge of distance, orientation, scale and positioning which begins in the early years.

'Knowing where's where' supports children's identity and sense of place and helps them to understand geographical processes.

Over time, children learn and remember more locational knowledge. They become increasingly fluent in identifying specific places.

## **2. Place knowledge**

Place knowledge is prioritised to enable children to locate or orient themselves with respect to the larger global space and to other places. The geographical term 'place' is a physical area that can be located (found on a map) and that has personal meaning, attachment or purpose. Giving a location a name is one of the ways children attach meaning and so a space becomes a place. Linked closely to locational knowledge, children's place knowledge supports them in their understanding of scale.

Children's knowledge of place is taught by exploring places children already know well, such as their homes, classrooms, areas along their route to school, their town and city. Teaching then moves to more conceptual understanding of national and global scales. In KS1 the emphasis is on exploring localities and understanding similarities and differences.

## **3. Environmental, physical and human geography**

From early years through to KS1 children build knowledge of environmental, human and physical processes so they can;

- Describe their own and other's environments.
- Recognise similarities and difference between the world around them and contrasting environments.
- Understand important processes and changes in the world around them, including those that affect land, water, air and wildlife.

## **4. Geographical skills and fieldwork**

Geographical skills allow children to collect, represent and interpret information. Children develop these skills through first-hand use of maps, globes and atlases, and through constructing their own plans and maps.

Fieldwork allows children to explore first-hand and connect their learning with the real world.

## **Geography in the learning environment:**

Every classroom has an 'Imagination Den' which provides small world imaginative play opportunities where children develop their use of geographical vocabulary and apply their geographical knowledge and skills. Children explore environments by creating enclosures, buildings, towns, roads and train tracks using key natural and human features. Culturally diverse play people provide opportunity to explore the relationship between people and places. Children are encouraged to explore a range of stories and props to support place, locational, human and physical knowledge.

Outdoor learning environments 'Willow Garden', 'Blossom Field', 'Hawthorn Hill' and 'The Oak Garden' provide opportunity for geographical fieldwork.

The teaching and learning of Geography is evident in all classrooms through geographic vocabulary posters and knowledge mats, children's work and photographs displayed as appropriate.

### **Our approach to assessment in Geography:**

Geography is taught and assessed using a Mastery approach with a 'Learning Without Limits' strategy. Challenge is provided through the planning of 'Earth, Moon and Stars' activities with all children encouraged to 'Reach for the stars'.

Geography is assessed as part of the EYFS curriculum at summative assessment points during the year – September (Baseline), February (AP1) and June (AP2). Judgements are made against 'People, Culture and Communities' aspect statements in the EYFS 'Development Matters' document with children judged to be working at an 'Working Towards' (WTS/WTS+), Expected (EXS/EXS+) or Greater Depth (GDS) level of learning. Children are assessed against People, Culture and Communities Early Learning Goal at the end of the year in EYFS2.

### **Intervention in Geography:**

As we teach Geography using a mastery approach, Geography is accessible to all children with varied outcomes and levels of support.

### **Geography across the curriculum:**

As with all foundation subjects in our school, the teaching and learning of Geography takes place across topics with an emphasis on cross-curricular links. Geography, particularly the use of vocabulary is incorporated consistently into daily classroom routines and is used to enhance learning in other curriculum subjects wherever possible.

### **Enrichment opportunities in Geography:**

Educational visits in each year group offer opportunity to use fieldwork and geographical skills to;

- ✓ locate the destination of the visit on a regional map
- ✓ plan a route using location plan or map
- ✓ explore familiar and new environments
- ✓ recognise similarities and differences

## Geography References:

National Curriculum in England: Primary Curriculum  
Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.  
Early Years Foundation Stage Development Matters (non-statutory)  
Ofsted Research Review Series: Geography

## Geography Appendices:

Whole school STAR intent and curriculum  
EYFS assessment statements and Early Learning Goals.  
Knowledge mats  
Resources audit

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