

# Geography Policy Document



## **1 Aims and objectives**

Our aim is for all pupils at Holden Lane Primary to be empowered to make greater sense of the world by organising and connecting information and ideas about people, places, processes and environments. Our Geography curriculum creates the excitement, creativity and critical thinking about the world around us that will equip our young people to make their own way in it.

In line with the National Curriculum, our curriculum aims to:

- Increase children's motivation, enthusiasm and engagement in their learning by making learning meaningful through putting it into a context
- Support the raising of standards in both teaching and learning
- Help children to become more independent and take greater ownership of their learning, developing their confidence and motivation to learn through the use of a range of teaching and learning styles
- Establish strong cross curricular links to ensure a broader understanding
- Create and maintain an exciting and stimulating learning environment
- Provide opportunities to apply knowledge and learning in practical ways and to solve problems in a variety of situations
- Provide enrichment opportunities where learning and teaching can take place beyond the classroom
- Give opportunity for a flexible timetabling approach to make space for true depth of study.

**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 enable children to gain knowledge and understanding of places in the world;
- to increase children's knowledge of other cultures and, in so doing, teach a 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 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. They 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 classroom assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children;
- provide tasks to ensure that the children who are Gifted and Talented and those who have Special Educational Needs are given the appropriate level of challenge to suit their needs.

### **3 Geography curriculum planning**

**3.1** We use topic based learning as the basis for our geography curriculum planning; based upon the National Curriculum key skills. We have adapted the plans to meet the local circumstances of our school, i.e. we make use of the local environment in our fieldwork (for example Stanley Head) 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 (for example the Orkney Islands).

**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 term during each key stage. The geography subject leader works this out in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group. In many cases we combine the geographical study with work in other subject areas. At other times we arrange for the children to carry out a geographical study independently.

**3.3** Our medium-term plans follow the topic based learning model and give details of each unit of work for each term. The geography subject leader reviews these plans on a regular basis.

**3.4** 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.

#### **4 Foundation Stage**

**4.1** We teach geography in our Nursery and Reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As they are part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the geographical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the ELG objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world through activities such as collecting postcards from different places and singing songs from around the world.

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

Geography contributes to all areas of the curriculum for example;

##### **5.1 Literacy**

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 literacy hour are geographical in nature. For example, in Key Stage 1, we use the Katie Morag books by Mairi Hedderwick to develop children's knowledge and understanding. At Key Stage 2, we 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, for example linked to Rainforest deforestation.

##### **5.2 Numeracy**

Geography in our school contributes to the teaching of Numeracy 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.

##### **5.3 Computing**

We make provision for the children to use the computer in geography lessons where appropriate. The Interactive Whiteboards and networked computers within all classrooms ensure that Geography lessons are dynamic. We incorporate Computing in our geography curriculum planning across the Key Stages. Children use technology in geography to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work. They research information through the Internet and use of Google Earth. We also offer children the opportunity to use the digital camera and class iPads to record and use photographic images.

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

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 the way people re-

cycle material and 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. We allow them to organize 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.

### **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 also 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 progressive curriculum.

## **6 Teaching geography to children with special needs**

**6.1** At Holden Lane 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 match the needs of children with learning difficulties and we take into account the targets set for individual children in their Pupil Passports or as part of their Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). We also provide suitable opportunities for those children who are Gifted and Talented; ensuring that they are given the correct challenge to suit their needs.

## **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. Once the children complete a piece of work, we mark and comment as necessary. Once they complete a topic, we make a summary judgement of the work of each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum levels of attainment using the KS1 and KS2 assessment documents. We assess the children against the criteria stated within National Curriculum and record using standardised criteria. We use these assessments to plan future work with that pupil, 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 keeps samples of the children's work in a portfolio which shows what the expected level of achievement is in geography in each year of the school.

## **8 Resources**

**8.1** We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all the geographical aspects of the curriculum and we keep these resources within our own classrooms and general geography equipment within a central store. A full class set of atlases are kept in the school's learning street and we also have a good supply of geography topic books and a range of educational software to support the children's individual research.

## **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** In the EYFS and Key Stage 1, we let 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. We utilise the local area on trips and visit a contrasting locality; for example, Amerton Farm and Tanglewood at Cannock Chase. In Key Stage 2 the children do a study of the local area, Year 5 visit Stanley Head to take part in a River Study and we also offer Years 4 and 5 the opportunity to take part in a residential visit to Condoover Hall where the children complete many different Geographical activities including map-reading and orienteering.

## **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 report in which they evaluate 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.

**Reviewed:**

**July 2023**

**To be reviewed:**

**September 2024**