

## **NORFOLK PARK COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **Geography Policy**

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. It can inspire them to think about their own place in the world, their values, and their rights and responsibilities to other people and the environment. 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.

### **Aims and objectives**

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, ICT, investigation and how to present their conclusions in the most appropriate way.

### **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 activities. The teaching and learning of Geography may take place as the major focus, a shared focus or a minor part of another topic. 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 IT 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.

### **Geography curriculum planning**

We use the national scheme of work for geography as the basis for our curriculum planning. We have adapted the national scheme 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.

At Norfolk Community primary school the subject co-ordinator is responsible for selecting the appropriate programmes of study. The programmes of study have been carefully chosen to ensure that, as a school, we are meeting the National Curriculum criteria across all year groups. On occasion QCA guidelines have been used for guidance. The school's curriculum map shows which programmes of study are taught, when and by which year groups. It is also part of the co-ordinator's role to use their expertise to create medium term plans for each topic studied. These identify the geographical learning objective, alongside possible cross curricular opportunities such as extended writing. Class teacher's short term planning expands upon the medium term learning objective through a range of tasks that may vary or be differentiated accordingly, dependant upon the children in the class.

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. 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. Our medium-term plans follow the national scheme of work and give details of each unit of work for each term. 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.

### **Foundation Stage**

We teach geography in reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is 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

### **Information and communication technology (ICT)**

We make provision for the children to use the computer in geography lessons where appropriate. Children use ICT in geography to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work. They research information through the Internet. We also offer children the opportunity to use the digital camera to record and use photographic images.

### **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 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. Geography in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship.

### **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 we introduce the concept of 'stewardship' in relation to sustainable development. 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.

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

At Norfolk 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 the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

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, 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.

Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. This may identify skills that can be developed during geography lessons, for example speaking and listening or independent learning. 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.

### **Assessment and recording**

We assess the children's work in geography by making informal judgments as we observe the children during lessons. Formal assessment is not required but teacher assessment forms an integral part of teaching and learning, offering a picture of the children's achievements and supporting planning for future work. It is done by observation, discussion and examining outcomes, and will be informally recorded to suit the teacher's needs. The geography subject leader keeps samples of the children's work in a portfolio.

### **Role of the Subject Co-ordinator**

The role of the co-ordinator is largely to ensure the geography curriculum is being delivered in a way which meets the learning objectives and hopefully inspires and motivates the children. The co-ordinator aims to continually improve the Humanities provision within the school. This is done by:

- Creating suitable medium term plans for each programme of study.
- Monitoring the teaching and learning of geography.
- Offering advice and support to colleagues.

- Keeping up to date with any new subject developments.
- Purchasing, ordering and maintaining teaching resources whilst managing a delegated budget.
- Take the lead in policy development and continuing to ensure progression and continuity through school.
- Lead staff meetings and training days.

## **Resources**

We are continually reviewing resources in our school to be able to teach all the geography units in our Scheme of Work. We keep these resources in a central store 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.

## **Fieldwork**

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 the Foundation stage and at Key Stage 1 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. At Key Stage 2 the children do a study of the local area. We also offer the opportunity to take part in a residential visit to Thornbridge Hall in Derbyshire where fieldwork is carried out in relation to the topic of the term.

## **Equal opportunities**

We aim to provide equal access to geography for all children. Activities are differentiated to ensure that all children are able to access the topic at their own level, thereby ensuring every child reaches their potential. All children's efforts and achievements will be praised. We wish to encourage full and active participation by all

children irrespective of ability. We also value personal worth and self esteem, for example, sensitivity and awareness of other cultures. We reject discrimination. Particular care should be taken in geography that there is no discrimination on grounds of gender, race or class. Through the teaching of geography we will promote mutual respect and tolerance for all cultures. We also encourage responsibility to the community and the environment.

### **Monitoring and review**

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 headteacher an annual action plan in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.