

Keston Primary School



Geography Policy

Why teach Geography?

Children have the right to knowledge of the world in which they live in. They should have awareness of places near and far to enable them to appreciate and value the differences between places, climates, physical features, people and their cultures. They need to know that what happens in the world has an impact on their own lives. Geography has a key role in developing children's sense of belonging and identity. Geography enables children to look at a wide range of issues, to consider the effects of certain actions and then to make informed decisions both on a local and international scale.

Aims

The aims of Geography are:

- To encourage children's ability to question and so develop their concepts of:
 - Location and place
 - Spatial patterns
 - Process and systems
 - Attitude, values and issues
 - Similarities and Differences

- 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 develop awareness of where these localities are, how localities are similar and different and how people and places inter-relate and interconnect.
- To develop children's geographical skills e.g. correct geographical vocabulary, using and making maps of different scales, fieldwork and using secondary sources of evidence.
- To develop geographical enquiry i.e. children devising questions, collecting data and drawing conclusions.
- To teach children about the physical and human features of different environments. To encourage children to investigate geographical themes such as rivers and weather.
- To stimulate an interest in and encourage an appreciation of the world around us.
- To make children aware of how environments change and how people pursue ways to halt any future damage to the environment.
- To develop an informed concern for the world around us and an ability and willingness to take positive action both locally and globally.
- 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.

Objectives

The National Curriculum splits geography into two broad areas:

Knowledge, skills and understanding to include:

- Geographical enquiry and skills
- Knowledge and understanding of places
- Knowledge and understanding of pattern and processes;
- Knowledge and understanding of environmental change and sustainable development

Breadth of study, where pupils are taught in the knowledge, skills and understanding through specific areas of study, localities and themes.

Planning and Delivering the National Curriculum

Geography is usually taught through topics. Some topics contain a larger element of Geography than others. Therefore, more geography will be taught at some times of the year than at others. When geography does not lend itself to a topic, it will be taught as a distinct subject.

Teachers plan topics in year group, on a long term, medium term and short term basis. Planning is based on the National Curriculum programmes of study, as set out in the geography scheme of work.

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.

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 offer them the opportunity to use a variety of data, such as maps, statistics, graphs, pictures, and aerial photography, and we enable them to use ICT 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.

Differentiation

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 task 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.

Differentiation of tasks will ensure all abilities are catered for.

Foundation Stage

We teach geography in the foundation stage as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. 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 six. Geography makes a significant contribution to the learning objectives for developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world.

Links with other areas of the curriculum

Geography makes significant contribution to the teaching of other subjects, notably science, history and design technology. There are opportunities to contribute to other curriculum areas, for example, citizenship, environmental education, the world of work and aspects of children's spiritual moral, social and cultural development.

Special Needs

When planning and delivering the geography curriculum, teachers take into account individual children's special needs and the targets set in Individual Education Plans (IEP's). We provide learning opportunities that match the needs of all the children including those who are gifted and talented. All children will be given work appropriate to their level of understanding.

Equal Opportunities

It is important when teaching geography that we encourage certain values and attitudes. Through understanding and knowledge comes respect. Through the study of different places we aim to develop children's understanding and knowledge of peoples' race, religion and culture. Geographical learning will offer equal interests and opportunities to both boys and girls and prepare them adequately for adult membership of a multi ethnic and multicultural society.

Racial Equality

Geography has an important role to play in the promotion of equality. Equal opportunities are an integral part of teaching and learning in Keston Primary School. Racial equality is a central consideration within equal opportunities. When teaching geography, teachers should be aware of the progress of children's learning within the context of their ethnic origin. In geography we should be aware of different cultures and traditions and of children's past learning experience. When teaching about distant localities the children's own experience of these should be considered.

Every Child Matters

Geography at Keston Primary School is designed to be enjoyed so that all children achieve. It helps build stronger relationships with the wider community and develops a respect for all cultures and beliefs. Children are engaged in decision making processes and support the community and the environment,

Progression and Continuity

The Scheme of work ensures structure, continuity and progression throughout the school. It plans for breadth of learning experience and a balance across the whole curriculum, both in each class and across the school as a whole.

This is achieved by:

- arranging topics so that children meet them at a time when they can contribute to the benefit from them most;
- starting from where the children are at and building on these experiences;
- detailed planning and evaluations to ensure continuity between groups and key stages and extension of the children's present knowledge and understanding;
- use of scheme of work;
- ensuring that the different parts of the Geography Programme of Study appears regularly across each key stage;
- introducing new concepts, skills and themes throughout each key stage;
- and that work planned is in line the National Curriculum.

We will achieve progression and continuity within our teaching by;

- an increase, not only in breadth, but also in depth of studies;
- an increase in the spatial scale of what is studied;
- a continuing development of skills

- an increasing opportunity for the children to examine social, economic, political and environmental issues.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in geography is formative and ongoing. Teachers will continually assess children's work through marking, talking to children, asking and answering questions and making informational observations.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In planning, the Geography Co-ordinator will review and contribute to teacher planning, and will review and monitor with members of staff the scheme of work for geography. They will arrange meetings with year groups and key stages to evaluate work carried out over a period of time and update the scheme accordingly. 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 colleges in the teaching of geography and for being informed about current developments in the subject.

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. At 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. At Key Stage 2 the children do a study of the local area.

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