

Policy on Geography

The Aims and objectives of Geography Teaching

Geography teaching in school aims to help pupils to;

- Develop a sense of what it might be like to live in different places in the world and explore the connections and links between these places.
- Acquire the background knowledge about locations which is necessary to understand the context of local, national and international events.
- Understand some of the important characteristics of the Earth's major physical systems and to consider the ways in which these systems are connected.
- Understand the relationships between people and their environment and develop an awareness of the need to protect and conserve the environment.
- Appreciate the ways in which patterns in human activities are influenced by their location and economic, social and political processes.
- Develop an appreciation of the ethnic, cultural and economic diversity of human society and the interdependence of people and places.
- Identify and investigate important cultural, social and political issues.
- Acquire the techniques and skills necessary for geographical enquiry.

Organisation of the Subject

The minimum time allocated to geography teaching is based on the starting points in the 2002 QCA guidance document.

Key Stage 1 – 30 hours per year

Key Stage 2 – 33 hours per year

The Key Stage plans allow for appropriate breadth, depth, continuity and progression in the study of geography. The provision in the Foundation stage is linked to the six areas of learning, especially the area about knowledge and understanding of the world.

In Key Stage 1 there is a significant focus on geography in one blocked unit each term to ensure continuity of Study.

In Key Stage 2 most of the teaching is blocked into 2 main units each year in order to allow for an appropriate balance between continuity and depth of study.

The time which is allocated to the subject will be organised in flexible units, depending upon the nature of the activities which are planned in each scheme of work. This will enable pupils to engage in a variety of learning activities in sufficient depth and will ensure that each topic is crisply placed. It will also facilitate effective links with the literacy, numeracy and ICT strategies.

This approach will however lead to a greater focus on the subject in some half terms than others and teachers will adjust their weekly timetable as is appropriate.

The Relationship of Skills, Themes and Places

Each of the topics will provide opportunities to explore the inter-relationships between geographical skills, themes and places. Skills will be developed in real contexts and in circumstances where there is an identifiable purpose for the activity. In accordance with local authority guidance, global awareness and sustainability will be included, where possible, into present topics.

Key Stage 1

The Key Stage 1 plan is mainly based around the integration of geographical skills and places into a series of thematic topics. The children will begin to develop a sense of the weather, of their own locality and of people and places beyond their immediate experience, leading to growing awareness of ethnic and cultural diversity.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2 the majority of topics are locality focused, which helps the pupils to build up a coherent and detailed picture of life in a variety of places. At Hill Farm we feel it is important for children to build up a feeling of sense of place. We have chosen units from the QCA document that emphasise environmental understanding and the need for sustainable development as we want the children in our school to develop a feeling of belonging to and caring for the world.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Teaching and learning will focus on a range of agreed entitlement experiences and there will be a focus on;

- Developing progression in the key elements of the subject
- Ensuring that appropriate opportunities are taken to develop the major cross curricular skill including literacy, numeracy and ICT
- Studying real places at the appropriate scale and insufficient depth for pupils to begin to appreciate what life is like there
- The study of geographical features, issues and changes which affect peoples lives
- The consistent use of a variety of interesting, engaging and challenging approaches to learning, including opportunities to engage in observation and recording, written and oral questioning, class and group discussion and role play
- The constructive use of a range of resources including books, photographs, statistical data, audio-visual materials, ICT, websites and maps and atlases
- The regular use of first hand experiences, including visits and fieldwork
- Enabling pupils to start to develop the conceptual framework which helps them to compare and contrast places, to identify links, connections and patterns and to explain why things are as they are
- A variety of teaching and learning styles (VAK) will be incorporated into the planned activities

Equal Opportunities

All children have an entitlement to fully access all areas of Geography. In implementing the aims and objectives, staff will need to provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils and be aware of the take into account the schools equal opportunities policy, which recognizes that each child should have access to the curriculum regardless of gender, race, disability or learning difficulty.

Our aims are;

- Children are taught in mixed ability classes. Planning reflects equality regardless of gender, culture or need.
- Teachers will draw on the different strengths, interests and experiences of pupils in selection activities and areas of work
- Teachers will differentiate work according to the specific needs of the class, including children who are gifted and talented
- Teachers will liaise with the SENCO to ensure that particular needs are being met
- Please refer to EAL, SEN, AG&T and Equal Opportunities policies for further guidance.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The school is working towards a situation where assessment, recording and reporting is based around the following;

- A realistic number of learning tasks that are appropriate for assessment purposes identified in the schemes of work as key assessment tasks
- Teachers identify the different outcomes they would expect for each of the key assessment tasks for their topics
- Teachers then assess the work and record the outcomes pupils achieve in their normal record books or on particular recording sheets
- This assessment information is used to assist teachers to plan their work with the class and prepare their reports to parents
- The co-ordinator(s) collects together a portfolio of examples of student's work that illustrates pupil's performance in each of the key assessment tasks. The co-ordinator(s) monitor these key tasks to ensure that the main elements of the subject are covered.

The Role of the Co-ordinator

The geography co-ordinator(s) will be responsible for;

- Producing an agreed policy and key stage plan which is compatible with the school's curricular aims
- Providing advice to teachers on appropriate resources, teaching strategies and approaches to assessment
- Developing an overview of the curriculum in the school to ensure pupils experience a sufficient variety of experience
- Co-ordinating the purchase, organisation and storage of the resources
- Collecting a portfolio of pupils work in the subject to ensure a consistency of standards and monitoring approaches to assessment to ensure that there are a variety of tasks

- Assisting with the regular evaluation and monitoring of the quality of provision in the subject
- Keeping abreast of recent developments in the subject, attending relevant in-service courses and participating in the planning and delivery of school based INSET and discussions

The Role of the Teacher

Class teachers will be responsible for;

- Participating in the collaborative development of geography schemes of work and lesson plans which meet the criteria agreed by the school.
- Developing an appropriate number of learning tasks which can be used for assessment purposes and recording outcomes
- Reporting to parents on pupil's progress in geography
- Participating in the collaborative review of the effectiveness of schemes or work and lesson plans

Health and Safety

When undertaking any trips of fieldwork it is essential that staff and other adults adhere to the LEA's advice. Please refer to the Educational Visits CD ROM which is available in school.

Geography and ICT

A number of the topics and schemes of work lend themselves towards the use of ICT to support learning.

Year 3 – Weather Around the World

This lends itself to internet research and use of the interactive CD Rom atlas that we have purchase.

Year 4 – Village in India

This lends itself to internet research about India, life in India and the village in particular.

Year 5 – Contrasting Locality

Research on the internet looking at tourist websites of Wales

Year 6 – The Mountain Environment

Internet research on mountains and habitats would be appropriate for this unit.

We have tried to pick the QCA units that we thought provide a balanced mix between studying the immediate locality and wider environments. All units, whether implicit or explicit, are themed around protecting the environment and caring for the planet through sustainable development.

We decided that we would like the children at Hill Farm to leave our school with a balanced and caring view of the world, it's cultures and it's future.

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