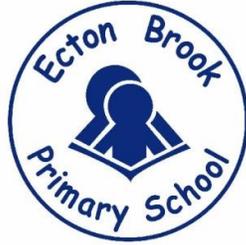


Ecton Brook Primary School



Geography Policy

1 Aims and objectives

1.1 Geography teaches an understanding of places and environments. Through their work in geography, children learn about their local area, and they compare their life in this area with that in other regions of 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 objectives of teaching geography in our school 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 in children a variety of other skills, including those of enquiry, problem-solving, ICT, investigation, and that of presenting 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 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, for example linked to 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 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.

3 Geography curriculum planning

3.1 At Ecton Brook Primary School, we teach geography through our linked curriculum. We have identified aspects of the different subjects which work together to make a better cohesive curriculum which is enjoyable and stimulating for the children. There will be a Geography focus for three topics each year.

3.2 Our curriculum planning is created as a team during PPA sessions. These sessions are also attended by a member of the senior management team.

3.3 Medium Term plans list specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson. The class teacher keeps these individual plans which they annotate and will discuss them with the geography subject leader on an informal basis.

3.5 We plan the topics in geography so that they build on 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 The Foundation Stage

4.1 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 development of each child's knowledge and understanding of the world.

5 The contribution of geography to teaching in other curriculum areas

5.1 English

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 Literacy are geographical in nature. At Key Stage 2, we discuss questions on environmental issues, because we believe that these develop speaking and listening skills. Reports, letters and recording information will all develop children's writing ability.

5.2 Mathematics

The teaching of geography in our school contributes to children's mathematical understanding 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 and tables to explore, analyse and illustrate a variety of data and learn about co-ordinates.

5.3 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 recycle 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 organise campaigns on matters of concern to them, such as helping the poor or homeless. Therefore geography in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship.

5.4 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. 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.

6 Geography and ICT

6.1 Information and communication technology enhances our teaching of geography, wherever appropriate, in each key stage. Children use ICT to enhance their skills in data handling (mountain, climate, population or river data) and in presenting written work. They research information through the Internet and libraries of digital images (aerial photographs, for example). We also arrange for the children to communicate with pupils in other schools and countries via e-mail/Skype, and we offer children the opportunity to use digital cameras, ipods, ipads and macbooks.

7 Geography and inclusion

7.1 At our school, we teach geography to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. Geography implements the school curriculum policy of providing 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. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

7.2 We promote skills of understanding, tolerance and respect through all aspects of our curriculum, and aim to positively prepare children for life in a multicultural society.

7.3 We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning geography. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, such as a visit to a river, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

8 Assessment for learning

8.1 Children demonstrate their ability in geography in a variety of different ways. Younger children might, for example, dress up in costumes from different parts of the world, whilst older pupils might produce a *PowerPoint/Prezi* presentation based on their investigations. Teachers will assess children's knowledge and understanding of a subject before each unit is taught; this is to ensure that they are teaching each child at the correct level, that children are grouped appropriately and that children's existing knowledge and skills are built upon.

8.2 We assess 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. All of this information is then used to plan future work with the pupils, to provide the basis for assessing the progress of the children, and to pass information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

8.3 Twice a year, members of staff complete an assessment sheet indicating the level of attainment in geography for their class/year group. These are then kept by the subject leader as evidence for attainment levels in their subject throughout the school. Any necessary interventions can then be actioned.

8.4 Reporting to parents is done twice yearly, through parent consultations and annually, through a written report.

9 Resources

9.1 We keep our Geography resources in a central store. We also keep a collection of geography equipment which the children use to gather weather data, and a set of atlases for both key stages. In the library, we have a good supply of geography topic books and also use the NCC Learning Resources project boxes.

10 Fieldwork

10.1 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, both locally and when on residential visits.

10.2 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 and local area. At Key Stage 2, the children do an environmental study of the local area. We also offer opportunities to take part in a part week residential trip in year 3/4 and a week's residential in year 6.

11 Monitoring and review

11.1 The subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in geography. The subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in their teaching, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for geography in the school. The subject leader takes the lead in staff sessions auditing the subject. The subject leader gives the Headteacher/s an annual report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and indicates areas for further improvement. The school uses a specific timetable for subject leaders of foundation subjects to undertake lesson observations/learning walks. The subject leader interviews children to gain a pupil's voice on the subject.

11.2 This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.