



Providing the keys to success for every child

Whole School Policy on:

GEOGRAPHY

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Kent County Council

Document Title:	Policy – GEOGRAPHY
Document Number:	PBS-P-GEO 2014 -11
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Governing Body Acceptance Date:	13 November 2014
Date for Next Review:	Autumn Term 2, 2016



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1 Introduction

1.1 Responsibility for the Policy

Geography Co-ordinator: **Mrs J Middleton**

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff.

1.2 Overview

A high-quality geography education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the frameworks and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

The national curriculum for geography aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes;
- understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time;
- are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
 - collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes;
 - interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS);
 - communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.



This policy has been developed with the geographical site and situation of the school in mind. In accordance with the National Curriculum, comparative studies feature prominently; they bring real meaning to the child's understanding of geography.

1.3 Aim of the Policy

The Whole-School Policy on the Teaching of Geography aims to ensure that:

- the teaching and learning of geography is both motivating and stimulating and cultivates within the child a genuine interest in the subject based on a sound understanding of the part that geography plays in everyday lives;
- the requirements of the National Curriculum are met;
- the course of study is enhanced and made more relevant through direct experience, practical activities and field work.

It aims to ensure also that pupils:

- have access to an effective course of study which builds on their existing knowledge and understanding and cultivates within them a desire for further knowledge and understanding;
- have access to ICT so that they can understand the role of ICT in areas such as geography;
- develop the skills which enable them to find out about places;
- develop a wider understanding of the world in which they live;
- develop a sense of location - their location relative to the town, the county, the country and the world;
- develop a sense of place through knowing about the features and character of places, contrasts and relationships between places and how people live in them;
- develop an understanding of the patterns and physical and human processes which enable us to make sense of places;
- develop a sense of their own identity and place in the world, whilst appreciating the wonder which can be inspired by both natural and man-made environments; children are able to develop a sense of wonder at the world.

2 Roles & Responsibilities

The Geography Co-ordinator will:

- be available to advise and support colleagues on any aspect relating to the effective delivery of the geography curriculum;
- monitor the implementation of the policy and the quality of work;



- arrange for the review of the policy and update as necessary;
- plan for the continued development of the subject;
- prepare and update documentation as necessary;
- attend courses on the subject and promote attendance of other members of staff as appropriate;
- familiarise themselves with publications so as to be continuously aware of initiatives in the subject;
- ensure an appropriate level of resourcing;
- arrange for the effective management of the resources;
- consult as necessary with those providing support for the subject beyond the school.

The class teacher will:

- plan and deliver the geography curriculum in accordance with the school's policies on geography, planning and assessment;
- ensure that the school, local and wider environment are used to optimise the course of study;
- provide a classroom which includes displays and resources related to the geography work;
- contribute to the evaluation of the policy and resources and to any amendments that might be felt necessary.

3 The Teaching and Learning of Geography

The National Curriculum requires that teaching should ensure that geographical enquiry and skills are used when developing knowledge and understanding of places, patterns and processes and environmental change and sustainable development.

The whole-school geography programme will therefore aim to ensure that at appropriate stages, children:

- undertake studies which focus on geographical questions and carry out systematic geographical enquiries with an increasing degree of independence;
- undertake fieldwork using a variety of skills, instruments and techniques;
- make, use and interpret maps and plans at a variety of scales;
- use plans, maps, atlases and globes to build a locational framework of the size and position of places and how they fit together;



- use ICT as an information source and to assist in handling, sorting and presenting evidence;
- find out about a variety of real people's lives through meeting and talking with them and through carefully chosen case studies, using ICT/DVDs, text and/or photographs;
- visit a variety of places so that they may share first hand sensory experiences and language of what those places are like;
- use a variety of up-to-date secondary sources which help them learn about the nature of a variety of other places they cannot visit;
- collect, sort and present data in diagrams and maps so that they can recognise and explain patterns and relationships within and between places;
- find out about physical and human geographical processes through their first hand geographical enquiries, through direct teaching and through geographical written resources which both they and the teacher have chosen;
- undertake studies that focus on the way environmental, social and political issues have influenced the character of places and continue to influence the way places are changing;
- carry out geographical studies about the nature of familiar places to which they belong and about their own role within those places;
- investigate the ways that they are connected and linked with other places and people, and the interdependence of peoples throughout the world;
- engage in learning activities which reinforce the development of positive values and attitudes towards other people and towards the world on which they depend;
- have the opportunity through visits and/or the use of visual materials to be amazed at the qualities of natural and human-influenced landscapes.

3.1 Teaching strategies

At Key Stage 1 much of the pupils' learning is drawn from their own experiences and fieldwork within their most immediate environment, in order to develop a sense of place and to establish the relationships between the various elements of their environment. As they develop, the environment studied widens progressively. This continues throughout Key Stage 2 when children will further develop their skills, knowledge and understanding through geographical enquiries involving field work.

3.2 Skills

The development of geographical skills and fieldwork will be integrated within work on places and themes and will feature in the medium-term planning.



An investigative approach to geography will be taken throughout, with children actively participating in enquiry, field work, map work and the use of information technology for information retrieval, work presentation and data handling as appropriate.

3.3 Map work

Wherever possible, the maps that children use will be directly related to the area being studied.

Children will be provided with the opportunity to work with a wide range of maps at a variety of scales. Through constructing maps and interpreting maps, children develop the necessary skills and knowledge: location, symbols, scale, perspective, etc.

Map work is further enhanced through the use of a wide range of aerial photographs - oblique and vertical. As a general principle, oblique photos are considered more appropriate for younger children; vertical photos are considered more appropriate for Key Stage 2. However, this is not binding and teachers are at liberty to use all resources to maximum effect.

3.4 First-hand experience

It is a firm belief of the school that understanding and awareness of any concept is best developed through first-hand or direct experience. Geography is no different. Wherever possible practical activities will be built into planning and trips and visits will be arranged to places of geographical interest and relevance.

3.5 Planning

The underlying strategy in the planning for the delivery of the geography curriculum is based on the philosophy that children learn first of all from their own experiences and immediate environment. Having come to terms with this environment, they are then better equipped to study areas that are increasingly further a-field and remote.

The school's long-term plans ensure full and appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum. They define work units for each class for the academic year. Medium-term plans provide a sharp focus on the identified learning outcomes.

Short-term plans provide the planning at a daily level and plan for the appropriate levels of differentiation. The nature of short-term plans is at the teacher's discretion.

3.6 Subject content

The National Curriculum requirements form the basis of the school's planning.

Key Stage 1

Pupils should develop knowledge about the world, the United Kingdom and their locality. They should understand basic subject-specific vocabulary relating to human



and physical geography and begin to use geographical skills, including first-hand observation, to enhance their locational awareness.

At Key Stage 1 – Pupils should be taught to:

Locational knowledge

- name and locate the world's seven continents and five oceans;
- name, locate and identify characteristics of the four countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas.

Place knowledge

- understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom, and of a small area in a contrasting non-European country.

Human and physical geography

- identify seasonal and daily weather patterns in the United Kingdom and the location of hot and cold areas of the world in relation to the Equator and the North and South Poles;
- use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to:
 - key physical features, including: beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather;
 - key human features, including: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shop.

Geographical skills and fieldwork

- use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the United Kingdom and its countries, as well as the countries, continents and oceans studied at this key stage;
- use simple compass directions (North, South, East and West) and locational and directional language (for example, near and far; left and right), to describe the location of features and routes on a map;
- use aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic physical features ; devise a simple map and use and construct basic symbols in a key;
- use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of their school and its grounds and the key human and physical features of its surrounding environment.



Key Stage 2

Pupils should extend their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to include the United Kingdom and Europe, North and South America. This will include the location and characteristics of a range of the world's most significant human and physical features. They should develop their use of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to enhance their locational and place knowledge.

At key Stage 2 – Pupils should be taught to:

Locational knowledge

- locate the world's countries, using maps to focus on Europe (including the location of Russia) and North and South America, concentrating on their environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries, and major cities;
- name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, key topographical features (including hills, mountains, coasts and rivers), and land-use patterns; and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time;
- identify the position and significance of latitude, longitude, Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle, the Prime/Greenwich Meridian and time zones (including day and night).

Place knowledge

- understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region of the United Kingdom, a region in a European country, and a region within North or South America.

Human and physical geography

- describe and understand key aspects of:
 - physical geography, including: climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle;
 - human geography, including: types of settlement and land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water.

Geographical skills and fieldwork

- use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied;
- use the eight points of a compass, four and six-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build their knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world;



- use fieldwork to observe, measure, record and present the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods, including sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technologies.

3.7 ICT

The school has a network which embraces all classrooms as well as a 32 base network room. Access to the Internet is available in all areas. The Internet and a range of software offer additional sources of geographical information and the potential for enhanced presentation of work and data handling. The teaching of geography through ICT is an important part of the overall approach to the delivery of the subject. As with any another subject, ICT will be used in the programme of study if it is the most effective strategy and/or enhances the course of study.

3.8 Organisation

A range of organisational strategies are deployed in order to optimise the opportunities for learning. As such, whole-class activities, group activities and individual work will all feature regularly throughout the course of study.

3.9 Time allocation

The time allocated for Geography is as follows:

Key Stage 1: One hour per week – over three terms in the school year, often blocked together as topics.

Key Stage 2: One hour per week - over three terms in the school year.

This must be regarded as a minimal level of provision and is a figure averaged out over the course of the half-year.

3.10 Assessment and Record-keeping

Medium-term plans identify activities that have an assessment focus. In addition, teachers will assess throughout the course of study in accordance with the school's policy on assessment.

Progress in the use and application of skills, including enquiry, is the key focus of summative assessment. In lessons, teachers assess progress towards the learning objectives they have set pupils and shared with them, and use their judgements to adjust future work or set targets. Formative and summative assessments are used, related to the National Curriculum requirements, to aid in reporting to parents/carers.



4 Additional Educational Needs

Work will be appropriately differentiated for children who have additional learning needs. It is a fundamental aim to do all that we can to minimise the impact that a child's additional needs may have on his/her ability to develop geographical skills and processes. Where possible, additional adult support should be provided.

For our able pupils we will expect:

- a greater range of resources to be used;
- extension tasks to be provided;
- greater independence in working, e.g. a pupil to be able to carry out their own simple geographical enquiry by Year 6; this may involve homework tasks.

5 Equal Opportunity

Classroom activities will aim to challenge and involve all pupils appropriately, according to age and capability:

- resources for teaching will avoid stereotyping, and bias, towards gender or role; and
- such issues, when they arise, will be dealt with clearly and sensitively.

In accordance with the school's policy on Equal Opportunities, the school will make every effort to ensure that equal access to the subject is provided for all children irrespective of gender, religion, culture, race, ability or any other potentially discriminatory factor. Particular regard is paid to eliminating or reducing to a minimum any gender based under-achievement. The school also recognises the potential for geography to provide a multi-cultural element to the curriculum and thus the opportunity to raise the achievement of ethnic minorities. (*See Equal Opportunities Policy for further details*). It provides also an opportunity to develop a wider knowledge and understanding of the countries of origin of ethnic minority children.

6 Resources

The Geography resources comprise a wide range of library books, sets of atlases, topic and location packs, O/S maps, aerial photographs, DVDs, CD ROMs, digital technologies and a list of useful websites. There is an ongoing programme to develop the resources still further.

The local environment provides us with one of our richest and most diverse resources.



The Geography Co-ordinator is responsible for all the geography resources, including ordering.

7 Health & Safety

Teachers will, at all times, act in accordance with the relevant sections of the school's *Health & Safety Policy* and the *Educational Visits and Off-site Activities Policy*.

Particular regard will be paid to the safe and effective management of children when taking them out on field trips. The school's policy on *Educational Visits and Off-site Activities* will provide the necessary detail and guidance.

Hazard perception is crucial for geography visits. Whenever possible a preliminary visit will be carried out to facilitate a risk assessment.

Pupil supervision guidance must be followed.

8 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually (every even year) during Term 2.

The next review of this policy is due: Autumn Term 2, 2016.

The Geography Co-ordinator is responsible for implementing the review.