

Orchard Community Primary School



Geography Policy

This policy was approved by the Governing Body of Orchard Primary School at their meeting on.....

Signed..... Chair of Governors

Version	Date	Author	Reason for Change
1	12.01.25	L Chapman	Policy review

Review Frequency	Next Review Date
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Introduction

Geography is a valued part of the curriculum, providing a purposeful means for exploring, appreciating and understanding the world in which we live and how it has evolved. Geography explores the relationship between the Earth and its people through the study of place, space and environment. Geography is concerned with pupils learning about their own locality, whilst becoming aware of and developing knowledge and understanding of the world beyond their own environment.

Geography encourages children to learn through experience, particularly through practical and fieldwork activities. At Orchard we believe it is important to build a geographical curriculum that endorses the importance for outdoor learning to build a curiosity for learning to help them to know more, remember more and understand more. Geography taught at Orchard follows the National Curriculum for primary Geography and covers the following areas of study:

- Locational knowledge
- Place knowledge
- Human and physical geography
- Geographical skills and fieldwork

‘A successful geography curriculum reflects teachers’ careful thinking and rationale behind what is taught, the sequencing of learning and the relationships between the forms of knowledge. Over time, the curricular goals should be increasingly challenging. A high-quality geography curriculum takes a pupil from learning the basic building blocks to developing in-depth knowledge.

In a well-structured curriculum, the prior content that pupils have remembered allows them to understand the conditions, processes and interactions that explain geographical features, distribution patterns and changes over time and space. Building pupils’ knowledge in this way allows them to make comparisons with an increasing number of different contexts and at different scales. Thus, the curriculum helps pupils make greater sense of the world by organising and connecting knowledge and ideas about people, locations, processes and environments.’ *Government Research Review on Geography July 2021.*

Aims and objectives

At Orchard, we aim to teach children through a concept-based curriculum. We involve the use of specific key questions, which focus upon factual, conceptual and debatable content. Concepts are returned to throughout the year groups to ensure children have a clear understanding of them, therefore enabling them to be held within their long-term memory.

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 become aware of the variety of landscapes, cultures and lifestyles that exist on the earth.
- To recognise and study the natural environment and appreciate the beauty of the world around them

- To develop concern for the quality of the environment and to develop an increasing awareness of human effects upon this environment.
- 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 learning opportunities. 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. 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 learning. They engage in a wide variety of problem-solving activities, which are linked to the very core of each creative curriculum topic as a driver for learning, acquiring new skills and knowledge. This means we will involve the children in 'real' geographical activities that have a purpose, e.g. Upper KS2 will research the physical geography of Mexico within the unit 'Amazing Americas' to help a travel agent collate necessary information for a travel brochure.

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 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 teaching assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children;
- Expectations of learning outcomes through geographical skills, depth of conclusions and analysis.

Geography curriculum planning

Our school uses the New National Curriculum for geography and incorporates this into our **creative curriculum** and Learning Adventures. The long-term plan has been written to the local circumstances of our school so that use is made 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. Orchard Key Geography concepts are, **Place, Space, Environment, Interconnection, Sustainability, Scale, and Change**. Our curriculum planning is organised in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). Our long-term plan maps the geography objectives studied within each creative curriculum topic/learning adventure. Some learning adventures have a greater focus on geography than others which are known as leading programmes of study. We combine the geographical study with work in other subject areas so that it forms part of a learning journey that is identified by a curriculum map constructed to outline the objectives and skills for the unit. Our medium-term plans identify which areas of the national scheme of work are covered in each learning adventure. The geography subject leader reviews these plans on a regular basis. Because we have mixed-age classes, we do the medium-term planning on a 2-year rotation cycle. In this way, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the National Curriculum. We plan the Learning Adventures 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 learning adventures 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.

The contribution of geography to teaching in other curriculum areas

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. As a key driver subject we ensure that some of the texts that we use in literacy are geographical in nature. We organise debates and presentations on environmental issues which support the development of speaking and listening skills. In addition, reports, formal letter writing and recording information will support the development of children's writing ability.

Mathematics

Geography in our school contributes to the teaching of mathematics 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 to explore, analyse and illustrate a variety of data such as traffic flow in KS1 and rainfall and temperature of a region in KS2. By using Digimap, children can focus on scale and make comparisons when the area being observed on the screen is altered.

Computing

We make provision for the children to use the computer in geography lessons wherever appropriate. Children are able to 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 ipads to record and use photographic images. Children become familiar with online maps through Digimap, which enables children to increase their skills of and can locate aerial views of the school. Children can also use Google Earth to allow children to have a 'bird's eye view of an area or landmark.

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 and developing their disciplinary knowledge. 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 Orchard 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 individual needs. Work set may be challenging, however we put scaffolding in place to support all our learners. 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.

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.

How do I assess in Geography and other foundation subjects?

We use a range of assessment tools for our foundation schemes of work. End of unit Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) - Pupil performance in all foundation subjects is judged against key learning objectives/statements for each unit, largely demonstrated in pupils' work and through responses to questioning and low stakes quizzing. Teachers will judge whether a child has met these objectives and is therefore working at age related expectations, or is working below. End of unit quizzes - For RE, History, Computing, Geography and Science teacher devised end of unit quizzes may be used. Knowledge Organisers – Teachers will also refer to the unit knowledge organiser (subject specific content for each curriculum area covered) to reflect on the degree to which children have demonstrated and applied their knowledge, concepts, skills and vocabulary throughout the unit of study. Revisit Sessions & Spaced Learning – Revisit sessions and/or quizzes, may be used to identify what has been learnt and remembered either throughout a unit, as well as sometime after the teaching input. Knowledge Catchers - For each Learning Adventure, we have adapted the KWL activity to create opportunities for pre and post assessment tasks using questioning via knowledge catchers. At the start of the unit, knowledge catches (questions/mind maps) are used to create interest in the new learning adventure and assess what pupils already know and what has been retained from previous learning. At the end of the unit, pupils combine their understanding of all of these different lines of enquiry to answer 'The Big Question' QFLS (Question for Learning) and 'The Big Question' - Asking and subsequently answering bite-sized 'Questions for Learning' each 'jigsaw lesson' allows children to feel a sense of progression as they chip away at the larger, overarching 'Big Question'. The 'Big Question' allows teachers to frame narratives and focus the learning within each Learning Adventure. Each overarching, generally open 'Big Question' has multi-dimensional responses that require a breadth of knowledge to answer comprehensively. Answering 'The Big Question' will require children to apply everything they have learned independently of adult support in a single piece of assessed work that children are asked to complete at the end of every Learning Adventure covered. Progression Grids – For each foundation subject, subject leaders have written an end of year assessment overview in the form of a 'Progression Grid'. This looks at the knowledge and skills that are taught in each year group and the expectations outlined in the national curriculum. Evidence is gathered throughout the year against these statements to help make judgments of attainment across each foundation subject, largely to inform the final assessment recorded in the annual report.

Resources

We are continually reviewing resources in our school in order to be able to teach all geography units within our creative curriculum. Resources are kept in a central store with boxes of equipment allocated for each unit. We also have a range of equipment, which the children use to gather weather data, maps of the school for local scale study and orienteering, a variety of atlases for KS1 and KS2, compasses, Ordnance Survey maps and map posters and picture packs to promote discussion and debate. In addition, we have a wide range of geography topic books covering physical and human geography. Digmap is available as a valuable online resource via annual subscription and the site allows a wide range of activities to be completed. It is operated by EDINA, the University of Edinburgh and there are free, regular online training sessions for staff professional development.

Displays

Displays will be used for a variety of purposes, which may: improve the environment, present information, encourage participation, demonstrate process, focus attention, reinforce learning and confirm values.

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. We make good use of our local area for human geography skills. We also include trips further away in the East Midlands to allow a comparison of the physical and human features of our local area with Matlock Bath by Lower KS2.

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. Work scrutinies are regularly completed during staff meetings using the proforma for subject leader monitoring across the school and feedback given to each phase including how to address any issues and action points.

Time is allocated for the vital task of reviewing samples of children's work, visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject and seeing how children engage in tasks and answer key questions. Finally, the Geography Subject Leader will carry out pupil interviews to ensure the school has evidence of 'pupils' voice' and enable the leader to capture the thoughts of these pupils on the Geography curriculum and make any adaptations to further enhance Geography at Orchard.

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