Guide to teaching Geography

Ethos and Mindset

'For we are God's Masterpiece; created in Christ to do good things.' (Ephesians 2:10)

We have created a curriculum in Geography that instils children with a curiosity about the world and gives them the opportunity to learn through an enquiry led approach. We set high aspirations for the children to build their understanding of the world through learning key knowledge and vocabulary and application of geographical skills.
Our Geography curriculum is designed to develop children's innate fascination and interest in the world and its people, building on skills that allow them to actively investigate places and form opinions on their own environment so that this positively impacts their future. We focus on enquiry-based learning that encourages our pupils to use investigative skills to make sense of their world. By doing this, we aim for our pupils to demonstrate greater fluency with world knowledge, whilst connecting ideas about people, places and environments.

As with all the learning in our curriculum, emphasis is placed on the Team Prestbury Christian Values and the key learning behaviours that comprise the **Prestbury Learner**: **responsibility**, **respect** and **readiness** to learn. We approach all of our geography units with enthusiasm, readiness and a curiosity to learn more about our world, while valuing all places and cultures with equal love and respect. Through continually developing our understanding of the world that we live in, we understand the shared responsibility that we all have to care for our environment so that we live happily and sustainably.

EYFS and Key Stage One

Children in EYFS learn about the world through their work in 'Understanding the World' and extensive use of stories to develop the early language of making observations and comparisons about locations. Through EYFS and Key Stage One, children investigate a range of places – both in Britain and abroad – to help develop their knowledge and understanding of the Earth's physical and human processes. We are committed to providing children with opportunities to investigate and make enquiries about their local area, Prestbury, and place this into the context of the wider world. We want our pupils to gain a real sense of who they are, and what makes our local area unique and special. Through high quality geography teaching, we strive to develop the following characteristics and skills in our pupils:

- An excellent knowledge of where places are and what they are like, both in Britain and the wider world;
- An extensive range of geographical knowledge and vocabulary;
- Fluency in geographical enquiry and the ability to apply questioning skills, as well as effective communication techniques to explain their findings;
- The ability to reach clear conclusions;
- Excellent fieldwork and observational skills;

- The ability to express well-balanced opinions, rooted in very good knowledge and understanding about the world and current issues;
- A genuine interest in the subject and a real sense of curiosity about the world and the people who live here.

Key Stage Two

The areas studied follow the scope and balance of the National Curriculum and combine elements of both human and physical geography to allow the children to understand the interaction between these features. Work is sequenced between and within year groups to build on prior learning, starting from the learning in Key Stage One and building through Key Stage Two. Key areas and concepts are built upon to ensure learning is embedded and transferred to children's long-term memories. For example, in Year 3, children will look at the how tectonic plates influence the creation of mountains and this understanding of tectonic plates is built further upon in Year 5 when the children look at volcanic eruptions and earthquakes.
As children progress through Key Stage Two, the curriculum is designed to be increasingly progressive in both the complexity of the knowledge the children learn and also in the application of their thinking skills on how concepts affect the world around them. This will include gaining an understanding of the local geography they experience daily and how this compares and relates to the wider world.
We are inclusive in delivering the same curriculum to all children, considering their needs and differentiating when appropriate to support individual needs. Approaches may include in class support, providing different learning environments, alternative learning activities and assessment outcomes.

Implementation

We use the Geography Progression Ladder from EYFS through to Year 6 to allocate learning objectives and learning outcomes for each year group. From the Progression Ladder a whole Federation Geography Breadth Map has been completed. The Breadth Map outlines the terms in which each unit is taught, the key vocabulary for that unit and also recaps over what has been taught before in previous year groups. Teachers use this document to create medium-term plans which indicate the sequence of activities for each individual lesson.

EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum supports children's understanding of Geography through the planning and teaching of 'Understanding the World'. This aspect is about how children make observations about their own world through hands-on experiences involving all of their senses. Gradually, a picture of the world is developed so that children can make simple comparisons with environments that are different to their own. Knowledge of these contrasting localities is gained through methods such as themed days, stories, songs, small world play, role play and visits. Through exploring their own locality with walks, photographs, simple maps and satellite images, children are encouraged to see what they recognise from their daily lives so that connections are made. Children also learn about the different jobs that people do so that

they develop a stronger understanding of their society as a whole. This early acquisition of knowledge and understanding involves our pupils becoming active learners as they ask and answer questions about the world through an enquiry – based approach where interests and curiosities are explored further.

Key Stage One

Teachers are committed to designing an enquiry – based geography curriculum. In recent years, several group planning meetings have taken place in order to ensure the school's approach is consistent and that there is clear progression in knowledge and skills as children move through the school.

Geography units are designed using the following format so that enquiry – skills and active thinking are a key feature:

1. Engagement: A stimulus is provided to engage pupils (photos, artefacts, videos etc) before giving them information about a topic. On some occasions, a suitcase is used during this stage. It is introduced by the class teacher with visual clues placed inside to spark interest and curiosity so that children are excited to learn about their new topic.

2. The pupils ask questions about the stimulus that they have seen – these are recorded on a display or in a floor book.

3. After collecting pupils' questions, common themes are identified – these can often be turned into one overarching question.

4. 'Data collection': Instead of open – ended research, or giving the children data to analyse, they are encouraged to actively learn about the topic through activities that really immerse them in the location that they are learning about. This can often take place during an experience day, such as tasting Chinese food in EYFS, Brazil Day in Year One or the UK theme days in Year Two. Throughout these days, we record what the children can tell us about what they have learnt. Again, these can go on display and/ or in a floor book.

5. Teach any further lessons that cover specific objectives, skills or questions that the children had about the topic. Use questions at the start of lessons, instead of standard W.A.L.Ts.

6. 'Presenting findings': This could be individual work completed in lessons or a 'final piece' at the end of the topic.

7. Answering Questions – At the end of the unit of work, we look back at the questions that pupils had at the start.

Key Stage Two

We encourage children to become Geographers and learn through answering questions they have developed through an enquiry led process. Children use a variety of geographical skills to help them to build their geographical knowledge. Teachers plan for interactive and engaging lessons that create memorable learning experiences. Children will work independently, in pairs and in groups to allow them to share their experiences and understanding, allowing them to learn from

others. Maps, atlases, data, graphs, images, reference books and access to online resources provide the children with a variety of ways for them to engage and learn with the topics.

In each enquiry, children will be given the opportunity to showcase their learning and make individual choices on how best to do this. This might involve written explanations, annotated diagrams, the use of digital software and the children's own creativity. Often this will result in final 'display page' that will encompass the knowledge learned in that enquiry.

In each year group, there will be an element of fieldwork which involves engagement with the local area. Children will observe, record, gather data and evaluate what they find. The process of completing fieldwork allows the children to gain the practical experience involved with being a young geographer and find the answers to questions that geographers would ask.

Assessment

Across both Key Stage One and Key Stage Two the children are assessed against the learning outcomes as described on the Geography Progression Ladder.

Key Stage One

Our Geography Curriculum is high quality, well thought-out and is planned to demonstrate progression, whilst focusing on the needs and interests of the pupils. If children are keeping up with the curriculum and can recall key content after a unit has been taught they are deemed to be making good or better progress.

We measure the impact of our geography curriculum with the following assessment tools:

1. A reflection on standards achieved against the planned outcomes in independent work
2. Pupil discussions about their learning during each lesson
3. Regular monitoring of floor and individual books to assess outcomes for a range of pupils
4. Rapid Recaps at the start of every lesson to remind ourselves of key knowledge and skills from previously taught units, including those taught in previous years.
5. End of unit quizzes in Key Stage One to support teachers in assessing individual pupils' strengths and areas of development. These findings allow subject leaders and teachers to prioritise key areas to recap for future geography units.

Key Stage Two

Each enquiry question is formulated from objectives in the National Curriculum and children's understanding will be assessed against these objectives. Enquiry questions are focused clearly to allow an assessment to be made. Teachers will consider each child's understanding shown through the entire enquiry as well as completed pieces of work to gain a true picture of their understanding. To ensure inclusivity and that all children are able to be accurately assessed, assessment methods could include conversations with children, written tasks, responses from class discussions, final pieces of work and answers from end of unit quizzes.