

## **Geography Policy for Hillside Community First School**

<b>Adopted date:</b>	<b>Summer 2016</b>
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## Geography Policy

### Document Purpose

This policy reflects the values and philosophy of Hillside Community First School in relation to the teaching and learning of Geography. It provides a framework within which all teaching and non-teaching staff work, and it gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment.

The policy is in line with the new National Curriculum guidelines for 2014 and can be used as a springboard to develop the individual teacher's ideas in a personal way within the school's guidelines. This should enable teachers to design a programme of activities that is responsive to their own and children's skills and needs in history at that particular time.

This policy relates to pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2. The children in the Foundation/Reception Year will follow the Early Learning Goals which can be found in the policy for the Foundation Years.

This document is intended for all teaching staff and non-teaching staff, the school Governors, parents, inspection teams and LEA.

### Introduction

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 in 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.

### The Aims of Geography and How These Contribute to The School's Aims

The school aims to:

- Stimulate pupils' interest in their surroundings and in the variety of human and physical conditions on the Earth's surface;
- Foster pupils' sense of wonder at the beauty of the world surrounding them;
- Help pupils develop an informed concern about the quality of the environment and the future of the human habitat;
- Enhance pupils' sense of responsibility for the care of the Earth and its people and secure their commitment to promoting and living sustainable lifestyles;
- Develop pupils' skills of critical enquiry and an ability to handle and interpret information, through asking and answering geographical questions and using ICT to communicate with and explore a variety of people, places and environments across the world;
- Help pupils explore values and attitudes about complex issues;
- Enable pupils to study the above across a range of places, cultures and environments at a variety of scales, from local to global;
- Foster a sense of understanding about how we are interconnected and interdependent with other people and ecosystems around the world.

## **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 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 research of a local environmental problem, or use of the Internet to investigate a current issue. Geography Policy

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;
- 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.

## **Strategy for Implementation**

### **Entitlement and Curriculum Provision**

At Key Stage 1 pupils investigate our local village and contrasting locality in the UK or one overseas, to find out about the environment in both areas and the people who live and work there. They learn about the wider world in which they live and carry out simple geographical investigations inside and outside the classroom. Whilst doing this, they are encouraged to ask geographical questions about people, places and environments, and use geographical skills and resources such as maps and photographs.

At Key Stage 2 pupils investigate a variety of places and environments at different scales in the UK and abroad, and make links between different places in the world. They find out how people affect the environment and how they are affected by it. They carry out geographical enquiry inside and outside the classroom, ask geographical questions and use geographical skills and resources such as maps, atlases, aerial photographs and ICT.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and ensures that:

- Pupils experience geography regularly throughout the academic year.
- There are planned fieldwork activities using the school grounds and local area;
- Opportunities for pupils to use ICT are included in medium-term planning for each year group and teachers must cover those which are planned;
- Fieldwork is an essential component of pupils' entitlement. It provides opportunities to develop and consolidate skills and concepts introduced in the classroom and allows pupils to extend their understanding of the 'real' world. Fieldwork provision enables pupils to become observant, to develop the skills of recording, analysis and deduction and to start to develop 'enquiring minds'.

### Key Stage 1

Pupils should be taught:

- 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.
- 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
  - 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
- 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 human and 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 be taught:

- 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)
- 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.
  - 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.
    - 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.

## **The Curriculum**

Medium-term planning has a clear focus that is based on enquiry. Key questions, which encourage pupils to describe, explain, predict and evaluate, form the main structure of each topic of work.

Most planning focuses on topical geographical issues.

Topics of work contain precise learning objectives and learning outcomes which are related to the programmes of study. They blend geographical skills, events and themes together. There are regular opportunities to use a wide range of primary and secondary sources within our topic work.

As a **level 2 Rights Respecting School**, we aim to make sure these rights and responsibilities are imbedded throughout our curriculum. Our geographical topics allow for the children to develop an understanding on how these effect people from different places.

Planning highlights the key learning objectives for each lesson, key aspects of geography that are revisited/reinforced, and details of pupils' learning needs (e.g. arising from IEPs).

## **Assessment and Reporting**

Teachers assess children's progress in history against the key skills in geography. Progress is recorded through the use of '**Pupil Tracker**' which are updated at the end of a geography based topic.

Teachers make comments when marking work that encourage children to improve and develop their geographical understanding and skills.

## **Continuity and Progression**

Long-term planning ensures that pupils meet new knowledge, gain new understanding and develop new skills appropriately. In addition, it ensures that pupils have sufficient opportunities to revisit this learning from time to time. Long-term planning gradually extends the content, for example by increasing the number of places and people studied and through increasing depth of study.

## **Organisation**

All classes are mixed ability and are taught by their class teacher. Lessons are planned from the relevant topics of work.

## **Learning Resources**

A central resource is established in which there are a wide range of topic linked primary and secondary sources; videos, CD ROMs and lists of visitors who have, in the past, contributed to units of work.

Some topics of work are assigned a box of resources. Please replace and return these at the end of a topic. All non-fiction is kept in the school library.

Teachers will find it useful to refer to the staff room's PC, where useful websites have been recorded. These are also included in the relevant topic boxes for each unit of work.

## **Learning Environment**

Each classroom should focus on one major display or exhibition of pupils' work each year. Whenever a topic of work is in progress, displays should include information useful to the pupils for their work. The key questions must be displayed alongside appropriate technical vocabulary. We encourage all teachers to display a map of the UK/Europe/World somewhere in their classroom.

## **Staffing Issues/Staff Development**

The subject leader will attend relevant training in order to keep abreast with developments in the teaching and learning of geography. The subject leader maintains a file in the staff library containing useful updates, newsletters and bulletins as well as a folder on the shared school network.

## **Safe Practice and Out-Of-School Opportunities**

All fieldwork within and outside of the school grounds is carried out in compliance with statutory requirements and recommendations laid out in the document "Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits" DfEE 1998. Teachers must also take full account of guidance within the 'Educational Visits Policy' (2015)

## **Role of Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers have an important role to play in helping their pupils learn geography, discussing the pupils' experiences in geography, linking these to the home and family environment and, where possible, increasing pupils' contact with different places and events.

## **The Contribution of Geography to Other Subjects in The Curriculum**

### **Literacy**

Work in geography provides opportunities for pupils to apply their language and literacy skills. The opportunities are identified in medium-term planning and teachers exploit them fully in lessons. At Key Stage 1 pupils are expected to extend their technical vocabulary; talk about what they see and read and communicate this in different ways. They are expected to look for similarities and differences and engage in finding out answers to questions about where and why. At Key Stage 2 pupils are expected to use technical vocabulary in their talk, reading and writing. They are expected to use the index of atlases in order to locate places. They apply their writing skills in reports and accounts for different audiences. They read fiction and non-fiction to find out about different places and apply their comprehension skills to drawing inferences and locating information which is particularly relevant to the work in hand. They use geographical language and draw maps and diagrams to communicate geographical information.

### **Numeracy**

Geography provides an excellent context for mathematical investigations. In addition, many tasks in geography require numeracy skills such as collecting numerical information, data processing, and data presentation. Pupils apply their numeracy skills in the use of grid references, distances and bearings in map work and analysis of data. Medium-term planning identifies clearly where links with numeracy should be made.

### **ICT**

It is a statutory requirement to use ICT in geography work at Key Stage 2. Planning identifies where this should be included at Key Stage 2 and it includes opportunities where it might be included at Key Stage 1. ICT is used to help pupils find things out, explore things that they would not normally be able to do and analyse and present information in different ways. They apply their ICT skills in exploring the Internet, interrogating databases, locating information in CD-ROMs and videos, e-mails and the Internet

### **Spiritual Development/RRS**

Geography provides many rich opportunities for spiritual development, for example, to appreciate the beauty and scale of geographical features of the world in which we live, the influence of natural phenomena on our lives and in the lives of others. There are several opportunities included in the planning

for pupils to discuss issues of ultimate concern, for example, the need for sustainable development and stewardship of the earth's resources. In doing this they develop a respect for the environment.

## **Jigsaw (PSHE)**

Personal development is encouraged through discussion of matters of personal concern relating to local, national and global environmental issues. Pupils are encouraged to express their own points of view and evaluate their own and others' impact upon places, people and environments. They develop the skills of reflection, observation, analysis and questioning and, in doing so, develop respect for evidence and critically evaluate ideas that may or may not fit the evidence available. PSHE is fostered through JIGSAW activities which investigate the local area, for example how changes in transport locally have affected different groups of people. As a result, pupils develop empathy for other people and start to take into account the values and attitudes of other people and develop their own values and attitudes towards geographical issues. Geography contributes to cultural development by studies about places. Pupils find out about different traditions and activities of people in other places and explore the similarities and differences between their own culture and that of others.

## **Leadership and Management**

### **Staff Development and Training Opportunities**

To develop staff confidence and competence in teaching geography:

- Whole-school training needs are identified as a result of the monitoring and evaluation programme;
- Other training needs are identified through induction programmes and performance management review;
- The subject leader will arrange for relevant advice and information from courses to be disseminated and, where appropriate, included in improvement planning;
- Where necessary, the subject leader leads (or arranges) school-based training.

### **Leadership and Management Roles**

The subject leader has the responsibility to take a lead in developing geography further across the school within the school's improvement plan; monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning; and the use of resources. Teachers and educational support staff can expect informal support from the subject leader, support arising from the school improvement plan and identified in performance management and induction programmes.

### **How the subject is monitored and evaluated**

All teachers are responsible for monitoring standards but the subject leader, under the direction of the headteacher, takes a lead in this.

Monitoring activities are planned across the year. In summary, these are: annual staff meetings to analyse samples of pupils' geography work to evaluate standards (attainment and progress); the subject leader to analyse teachers' weekly planning files once per term to monitor coverage and balance of curriculum planned; subject leader to undertake lesson observations; the subject leader to discuss with named governor the school's planning and developments. The subject leader is to monitor ongoing displays and work in hand in classrooms by termly visits, outside of lesson time; the subject leader to analyse annual teacher assessments; to sample the reliability of these in each class using the school's portfolio once per year; the headteacher to monitor annual reports to parents.

Teachers' assessments are monitored and moderated by an annual work scrutiny.

Once per cycle the subject leader provides feedback to staff about the quality of geography being taught and uses the geography portfolio to lead a discussion on standards being achieved within the subject. The subject leader follows this with an update of their action plan. The action plan should identify plans for the following year, which includes staff development and training activities where appropriate, resource needs and changes to planning.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed every two years. The subject leader is responsible for reporting to the governors' curriculum committee about the quality of its implementation and its impact on standards. In the light of this, policy amendments may be made.

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Gary Alford