Dilton March C of E Primary School - Geography Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Highlight the importance and value our school attaches to pupils learning Geography and to developing as young geographers;
- Recognise and establish an entitlement to learning and teaching in Geography for all our pupils as a statutory educational requirement;
- Make explicit our expectations in terms of subject outcomes and performance for pupils in Geography as they progress through the school;
- Ensure continuity and progression in terms of subject knowledge, skills application and the development of attitudes and values;
- Clarify how we will assess, record and communicate the performance of our pupils in Geography as they progress through the school;
- Outline the approach to learning Geography our school advocates through outcomes focused and key question led enquiries which are relevant, meaningful and rigorous.

The importance of and entitlement to Geography

The study of Geography involves pupils in exploring the relationship and interactions between people and the environments in which they live and upon which they depend. Many of the pupils who now attend our school will live to see the next century and inhabit a world of 11 billion people. The many opportunities and challenges that will arise during their lifetime will be very much about geography – personal, local, national and global. From adapting and mitigating the impact of climate change, to predicting natural hazards such as Tsunami and Earthquakes, to understanding the causes and effects of population migration around the world, our pupils will need to know about geography and to think like geographers. Geography helps to prepare them for life in the 21st century with all of its currently unknown possibilities. In terms of what we teach in Geography and how we encourage and support our pupils to learn the subject we seek to develop young geographers who are able to make links and connections between the natural world and human activity and to understand the kind of questions geographers ask such as *Why is this place like it is? How is it changing?* and *What will be the costs and benefits of these changes when they happen?* In line with the statutory requirements of the school curriculum, which must be balanced and broadly based, our school commits to ensuring that every pupil at every stage of learning has regular and appropriately challenging and engaging learning in Geography which is informed by the National Curriculum. In addition we will ensure that what our pupils learn in Geography and how they learn it not only inspires and stretches them intellectually but also contributes to their spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development and helps to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in the 21st century. In accordance with the importance we attach to Geography our 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 computing to communicate with and explore a variety of people, places and environments across the world;
- Help pupils explore values and attitudes about complex issues such as sustainability and sustainable development;
- 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.

Inclusion, equality of opportunity and differentiation

Geography forms an integral and statutory element of a pupil's entitlement to learning and at Dilton Marsh we ensure that all pupils can engage with geographical learning and develop as young geographers irrespective of their race, cultural background, gender, religion, creed, level of intellectual ability or physical and emotional circumstances. Mutual respect and the fostering of empathy and community understanding at local, regional, national and global scales lies at the heart of the study of Geography and at our school we model this in terms of the inclusive nature of the learning and teaching we provide.

Ensuring differentiation is a fundamental and core element of inclusion. As such we plan and resource our learning, in line with our whole school policies, to enable all pupils to make good and sustained progress in Geography including those with special educational needs, those with disabilities and those identified as Able Gifted and Talented for one reason or another; and those with English as an additional language. In our differentiation planning we take due regard of factors such as classroom organisation, learning materials and the learning environment. Differentiating by learning environment is as crucial as differentiating by task, outcome; learning style or aptitude and this is recognised through the inclusion of regular fieldwork opportunities in our geographical enquiries.

Expectations of outcomes

At our school we want pupils to become better geographers and we achieve this by recognising and planning for what becoming better at Geography entails and consequently challenging and supporting our pupils to develop as young geographers as they progress through the school. To enable this to happen we have established an outcomes driven curriculum which recognises the crucial importance of identifying not just what we want our pupils to know and do in Geography but more crucially the intellectual outcomes we intend them to achieve by and through their learning. As pupils progress as geographers we recognise that whatever the content of their learning and the subject skills they are using our expectations of them must be focused on the following progression in subject outcomes:

Recognise – identify – Respond – Express – Basic Subject Vocabulary

Describe – Observe - Reason– Select – Speculate –Appropriate Subject Vocabulary

Classify – Categorise – Sequence – Compare and Contrast – Views and Opinions

Understanding through informed Explanation and Synthesis –Specialist Subject Vocabulary

Highlight and explain Links, Patterns, Processes and Interrelationships

Apply – Reach conclusions – Make judgements

Evaluate – Critique - Predict – Reflect – Hypothesise

Whilst we recognise that our expectations of pupil outcomes must never be confined by their stage of learning, we nevertheless ensure that in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 our core subject expectations enable pupils to learn and consolidate the fundamental attributes of a being a geographer. At this stage there is a particular focus therefore on ensuring that our pupils are able to recognise, identify, describe, observe reason and begin to offer explanations for geographical phenomena whilst using basic and increasingly appropriate subject vocabulary. These anticipated outcomes are reflected in our performance descriptors for the end of Key Stage 1. During Lower Key Stage 2 our expectations increase proportionately as we challenge our pupils not only to know more but also to master progressively more demanding subject outcomes such as reaching explanations through the synthesis of evidence, perhaps from a wide range of sources. At the same time we expect greater subject vocabulary alacrity from our pupils and we plan accordingly for the use of more specialised subject vocabulary. These expectations are laid out in our subject performance descriptor for the end of Lower Key Stage 2. At Upper Key Stage 2 our expectations in Geography are that pupils will more regularly and consistently apply information that they have learned in other contexts and at other stages to make links and identify patterns in their geographical learning. We challenge them to reach conclusions and make judgements about geographical issues and to evaluate and critique evidence and to generate questions of their own. Once again these expectations are clearly outlined in our performance descriptor for the end of Upper Key Stage 2.

Ensuring continuity and progression in learning

Whilst knowing more is an integral part of continuity and progression, it is nevertheless just one element of it and merely sequencing subject content will not ensure on its own that our pupils become better geographers. To ensure continuity and progression for all pupils the curriculum is carefully organised EYFS – Year 6 to ensure that our pupil's knowledge and understanding of geography develops because:

- Expected subject outcomes in terms of developing as a young geographer increase in complexity and level of challenge as detailed above and are used as the starting point for all planning of content delivery and learning and teaching enquiries;
- There is increasing breadth and scale of study through the curriculum moving progressively from personal experiences to local, regional, national and global perspectives informed by the guidance of the National Curriculum;

- The curriculum becomes progressively more complex developing from discrete facts and bodies of information to conceptual awareness and generalised knowledge about more abstract ideas;
- The mastery and application of geographical tools and skills occurs in more precise and complex contexts;
- The focus of what pupils learn becomes gradually more issues based enabling them to explain links, patterns and processes and be more informed and mature in their thinking and self-reflection in terms of recognising the importance of attitudes and values about contested matters.

Approach to learning and teaching

In Geography the pedagogy which underpins learning is a key question led enquiry approach, which encourages our pupils to take increasing responsibility for their learning, think independently and achieve challenging subject outcomes. At Dilton Marsh therefore we seek to encourage pupils to learn their geography through big question led enquiries about topics, places and themes which focuses on real people, places and geographical issues and allows them sufficient scope and time to really engage in high order subject skills such as developing explanations (even though there are very often no 'right' answers to questions in geography), reaching conclusions, making judgements, evaluating, applying information learned in one context to another and generating their own ideas and questions to investigate through hypothesising. Whilst knowing more subject information as the pupils progress through the school is important we are careful in our planning to ensure that there is always a balance between new content and the development of important subject skills and the ability of children to think critically about what they are learning and why. This approach is reflected in all of our planning. We are very careful to be selective about the subject content we use to ensure that a balance is achieved between knowing more content and the development of key subject skills and outcomes. We recognise that simply knowing more information in itself will not enable our pupils to progress as young geographers capable of making links, seeing things more conceptually and recognising the significance of attitudes and values in shaping the world in which they live. To this end we identify important topics, issues, places and themes informed by the guidance of the National Curriculum to ask important questions about and then plan enquiries which are carefully structured. We recognise that we cannot teach whole topics without risking the curriculum becoming largely content driven. Our approach to leading learning in geography through big investigative 'How' and 'Why' questions ensures that achieving key subject outcomes and our pupils being able to develop as young geographers remains central to all we do.

Regular and high quality outdoor learning is central to a young person's statutory entitlement in Geography. 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'. Fieldwork and learning outdoors involving the testing and investigation of ideas and theories through practical exercises including observation, data collection, recording, presentation, interpretation and evaluation is therefore fundamental to the study of Geography and the development of young geographers at our school. Consequently fieldwork is a core element of geographical learning in every year group in line with the National Curriculum and this entitlement, along with the appropriate guidance on completing a risk assessment and ensuring

awareness of school emergency procedures, is identified in the appropriate enquiries we have planned and resourced.

In line with the school's teaching and learning policy, in Geography teachers:

- Design activities which help pupils answer the geographical questions such as: *Where is it? What is it like? How has it changed? Why has it changed? How will it change next? What will happen if? How might it be better? What can be done about? How do I feel?*
- Share with pupils what they are expected to learn and how they are expected to learn it;
- Ensure that objectives for lessons are presented in the form of 'key questions' that need to be answered; sometimes these are raised by the teacher, sometimes with pupils and sometimes independently;
- Provide a variety of learning activities that are used regularly, including observation, enquiry, investigation, games, mysteries, puzzles and problem-solving;
- Encourage pupils to evaluate critically information, ideas and different viewpoints;
- Encourage pupils to describe, explain, predict and evaluate places, geographical patterns and processes and environmental changes;
- Plan for pupils to make and use maps, atlases, satellite and GIS imagery and globes regularly in order to locate places being studied and make/use models to explore geographical patterns and processes;
- Provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to work as individuals, in pairs and in groups;
- Encourage discussion so that pupils clarify their thinking;
- Set high expectations and use our performance descriptors at EYFS/Key Stage 1; Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2 to aid this so that learning objectives and activities are sufficiently challenging;
- Provide pupils with regular feedback about their work and about what they need to do next in order to improve;
- Use assessment, including the use of focused questions, to determine the pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding, before, during and after units of work;
- Expect pupils to record their work in a variety of ways, including diagrams, illustrations, pictures, letters, posters, annotated drawings and maps, reports, PowerPoints and accounts. As appropriate, pupils make oral presentations of their work.

Assessment, Performance Descriptors and Reporting

We will make and report to parents a **summative judgement** about a pupil's knowledge and understanding of geography on three occasions during the primary phase:

At the end of Key Stage 1:	Summer term of Year 2
At the end of Lower Key Stage 2:	Summer term of Year 4
At the end of Key Stage 2:	Summer term of Year 6

On these occasions teachers should draw upon the intelligence gained from the formative assessment of pupils, which is integral to each enquiry, to make a summative judgement as to

whether the pupil has achieved the expected level of attainment detailed in the performance descriptor, exceeded the expectations or has yet to reach the anticipated level.

Each enquiry which forms the programme of learning and teaching in geography sets clear objectives which define the anticipated outcomes for the pupil. The scheme of work also suggests in the 'Assessment' section an extensive range of ways in which the teacher can carry out ongoing assessment to ascertain whether a pupil has achieved these outcomes. Evidence is drawn from a wide range of sources to inform this process including interaction with pupils during discussions and related questioning, day to day observations, practical activities such as model making and role play drama, the gathering, presentation and communication of fieldwork data and writing. The outcomes of each enquiry serve to inform the teacher's developing picture of the knowledge and understanding of each pupil and to plan future learning accordingly. Summative assessments should not be made of individual pieces of work or for that matter of separate enquiries.

At the end of the each of the three learning stages, the teacher will be able to use their knowledge and understanding of each pupil gained through extensive formative assessment over the previous two years to reach an accurate judgment of what they know and can do. At this point they need to take into account the relative strengths and weaknesses of each pupil and reach a 'best fit' summative judgement taking into account the whole of the descriptor rather than specific parts of it. **Most critically this decision is based on the professional knowledge and judgement that the teacher possesses of the pupil, built up over an extended period of time, which is then used to make a rounded and holistic judgement of their attainment in geography**.

Key Stage 1 Performance Descriptor

Pupils at the **expected level of attainment** at the end of Key Stage 1 will be able to:

Identify, describe, compare and contrast and offer reasons for the similarities and differences they observe in the physical and human geographical features of their school grounds, the locality of the school and a number of contrasting environments in the United Kingdom and around the world. In achieving this pupils will have shown a capacity to use accurately a wide range of basic geographical vocabulary together with simple fieldwork, mapping and aerial imagery techniques to observe, present and communicate geographical information. Consequently they possess a sound locational knowledge of the basic geographical characteristics of the United Kingdom, the wider world (Continents, Oceans, North and South Poles and the Equator) and can also identify, describe, compare and contrast and suggest reasons for daily weather patterns in the United Kingdom and contrasting hot and cold locations in other parts of the world.

Pupils **exceeding the expected level of attainment** will, in addition to the above, be able to:

Demonstrate greater understanding by offering more developed explanations (as opposed to reasons) for the location and distribution for some of the physical and human geographical features they observe in their own locality and at contrasting locations. Furthermore these pupils know in simple terms how some physical and human geographical processes interact to create distinctive features and influence the behaviour of people. In doing this they draw upon, and apply, some specialised subject vocabulary and more demanding fieldwork and recording skills outside and inside the classroom.

Lower Key Stage 2 Performance Descriptor

Pupils at the **expected level of attainment** at the end of Lower Key Stage 2 will be able to:

Demonstrate geographical understanding by describing and explaining in basic terms the similarities and differences in the physical and human features of their home area and a region in North America, including offering some reasons why both places are changing. They will also be able to locate, describe and explain some of the reasons for the distribution of globally important physical and human geographical features including climate zones, deserts, tropical rain forests, earthquakes and the world's largest urban areas. Additionally they will also be able to identify, describe and explain the significance on a world map and globe of important lines of latitude and longitude, the Northern and Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn together with the Arctic and Antarctic Circle, the Greenwich Meridian and Time Zones. They will now demonstrate more detailed locational knowledge of the geographical features of the United Kingdom together with those of the other countries and locations around the world they study through their enquiries. In achieving the above pupils show they understand and apply some specialised subject vocabulary and use effectively more complex techniques to gather, present and communicate geographical information, including digital technologies, inside and outside the classroom.

Pupils **exceeding the expected level of attainment** will, in addition to the above, be able to:

Demonstrate a more sophisticated understanding of how the lives of people around the world are influenced by physical processes and how people can impact the environment positively and negatively. In doing so they begin to formulate conclusions and make judgements as to the kind of actions people can take to improve and sustain the environment locally and globally.

Upper Key Stage 2 Performance Descriptor

Pupils at the **expected level of attainment** at the end of Upper Key Stage 2 will be able to:

Demonstrate that they can interpret a range of sources of geographical information including GIS and communicate their knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways e.g. through oracy, maps, numerical and statistical techniques and writing at length. Through the study of physical features such as rivers and mountains pupils show that they understand how distinct landscapes are formed by natural processes and can make basic informed judgements about some of the challenges and benefits they present to humans. Pupils show, for example, through investigating the impact of volcanoes in Iceland, the rationale behind Fair Trade and role of National Parks in the United Kingdom that they are able to evaluate information from conflicting viewpoints and perspectives and make their own informed judgments and geographical decisions. In achieving this pupils use mostly specialised subject vocabulary and techniques to communicate their knowledge and understanding.

Pupils **exceeding the expected level of attainment** will, in addition to the above, be able to:

Make and justify more informed and subtle judgements about geographical issues they study such as the issue of climate change which draws upon some of their own research and ideas. These pupils will also demonstrate a capacity to, on occasion, question the validity and trustworthiness of sources of information they use as well as generating further questions of their own to investigate.

Both their oral and written narrative will draw upon a comprehensive range of specialist subject vocabulary and more advanced data collection, presentation and interpretation techniques both inside and outside the classroom.

Connecting Geography to other areas of the curriculum

In our planning we have made meaningful links with other subject areas of the National Curriculum and to Spiritual, Moral Social and Cultural Development (SMSC) where incorporating content and perspectives adds value to and extends the geographical understanding of our pupils. Making links is important because it highlights to pupils the interconnectedness and interdependence of the real world but when making such connections we must maintain subject rigour and appropriate expectations in Geography for each stage of learning. For example, the primary objective of applying key literacy and numeracy conventions to Geography is to enable our pupils to achieve more and better in Geography – i.e. to develop as young geographers. To this end we must ensure that high standards of literacy and numeracy, when applied to Geography, result in equally and appropriately high standards of geographical subject attainment. In each of our geographical enquiries links made to other subject areas are clearly documented and as a consequence many are able to deliver substantial elements of the content of other disciplines in a cross-curricular manner.

Monitoring and Evaluation and the role of the Geography Co-ordinator

All teachers at our school are responsible for monitoring standards in Geography but the Geography Co-ordinator, under the direction of the Head teacher, takes a lead in this. Monitoring activities are planned across the year and form part of the Geography Co-ordinators leadership schedule. In summary, these are:

- Yearly staff meetings to analyse samples of pupils' geography work to moderate standards (attainment and progress against outcomes and end of stage performance descriptors) to ensure consistency and that colleagues are informed of subject developments at local and national levels with which the Co-ordinator has been involved;
- The moderation of teachers' weekly planning files once per term to monitor coverage and delivery of planned enquiries;
- Lesson observations to ensure that learning and teaching is appropriately engaging and challenging and that progress is being made by the pupils;
- The sampling of pupils' work twice per year to ensure that expectations in terms of subject outcomes are being maintained through the curriculum;
- Once per year the subject leader provides feedback to staff about the quality of Geography being taught and uses the Geography Portfolio of evidence to lead a discussion on standards being achieved within the subject.
- In collaboration with the Head teacher, Governors and teaching colleagues the Co-ordinator drafts and finalises a three year Development Plan for Geography and a one year Action Plan which informed by it.

The Geography Co-ordinator 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 Geography Co-ordinator, support arising from the school improvement plan and

identified in performance management and induction programmes. To develop staff confidence and competence in teaching Geography:

- The Geography Co-ordinator will attend subject professional development opportunities as they arise and in the context of the whole School Improvement Plan together with the Geography Subject Development Plan;
- 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 professional development programmes including courses to be disseminated and, where appropriate, included in improvement planning;
- Where necessary, the subject leader leads (or arranges) school-based subject improvement training for colleagues.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed in line with the school's policy review programme and no later than the following date:

June 2022