

The Bishops' C of E and RC Primary School

Geography Provision Overview



Purpose

The purposes of this policy are 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 from EYFS to Year 6;
- Ensure continuity, sequencing and progression in terms of substantive knowledge, disciplinary knowledge, the mastery of subject techniques and skills, conceptual understanding and the acquisition of specialised vocabulary and technical terms;
- Clarify how we will assess, record and communicate the performance of our pupils in geography as they progress through the school;
- Clarify the pedagogical approach we take to supporting our pupils to learn geography as young geographers through outcomes focused and key question led enquiries which are relevant, meaningful and rigorous;
- Provide an overview of how standards in geography will be monitored and evaluated and professional development needs of colleagues identified.

Our vision for Geography

At The Bishops', the study of geography involves our 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 eleven 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 and predicting natural hazards such as tsunamis 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. This vision for Geography supports our whole school curriculum vision that:

A curriculum for the 21st century will reflect an understanding and acknowledgement of the changing nature of young people as learners and the challenges and demands that will continue to shape their learning in the future. Young people will need a wide and adaptive set of skills to meet

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the changing expectations of society and to contribute to the creation of a more productive, sustainable and just society.’ (ACARA, University of Melbourne. 2009)

Learning the disciplinary skills and applying critical thinking skills alongside progressive substantive knowledge in geography helps to prepare Bishops’ pupils 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, we seek to develop young geographers. Geographers make links and connections between the natural world and human activity. In line with the statutory requirements of the national curriculum for geography 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. In addition, we will ensure that what our pupils learn in geography, and how they learn it, not only inspires and challenges 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 an increasingly globalised world.



In accordance, therefore with the importance we attach to geography our subject provision will:

- stimulate pupils’ interest in their surroundings and in the rich variety of human and physical conditions on the earth’s surface;
- foster pupils’ sense of awe and 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 an increasingly sophisticated range of technology 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 and develop a positive outlook and disposition;



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- take into consideration our local area and adapt schemes of work to be locally relevant
- enable pupils to study the above across a range of places, cultures and environments and at a variety of scales, from local to global;
- foster a sense of understanding about how all peoples and communities around the world are interconnected and interdependent with each other and the ecosystems of which they are an integral part and upon which we all depend;
- help build our pupil's **cultural capital** through, in addition to providing the essential knowledge and understanding they need to be successful, enhancing their experiences and interactions with the 'awe and wonder' of the world especially through regular fieldwork in contrasting environments.

The Geography Curriculum Intent

We have planned a curriculum in geography EYFS – Year 6 which is:

- **Aspirational** in terms of instilling in our pupils a desire to achieve the highest levels of success. We do this through providing pupils with the appropriate opportunities to build their substantive and disciplinary knowledge, master and apply subject skills and techniques and acquire the specialist language and technical terms to communicate their understanding effectively. Such high aspirations are clearly identifiable in the progressive and increasingly challenging objectives and end points of learning detailed in the medium term plans (MTPs) of each enquiry, which define what the pupils will know, understand and be able to do;
- **Coherent**, relevant and broad and balanced in terms of the areas of subject content we have selected which reflect the guidance of and are commensurate with the scope and ambition of the national curriculum. For example, we have ensured that content coverage includes an even proportion of physical and human investigations such as the effect of rivers on the landscape and the design and role of the cities in the world. Consideration has also been given to making certain that our geography curriculum maintains relevancy and topicality through including enquiries that engage pupils in studying issues such as climate change, flooding and trade;
- **Sequenced** to ensure that pupils can build on prior knowledge and understanding as they tackle more complex and demanding enquiries. For example, at Key Stage 1 pupils observe and record the distinctive geographical features of the local area of the school and compare and contrast these with a similarly sized area around a school in Borneo. At Key Stage 2 this knowledge and understanding is both consolidated and extended as pupils investigate the nature of environmental change in their local area and reach judgements as to the cost and benefits such change

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brings. Similarly the understanding gained and concepts explored through an enquiry on the impact of earthquakes at Lower Key Stage 2 are revisited and extended when the pupils study the impact of living on a volcanic island in Iceland at Upper Key Stage 2;

- **Progressive** and more challenging EYFS through Year 6 both in terms of the complexity of the subject knowledge we want our pupils to acquire and also the disciplinary thinking skills we support them to master and apply to ensure they understand the significance of that knowledge. These anticipated outcomes in knowledge and understanding and skills acquisition are detailed in the objectives of the schemes of work of each enquiry and also appear alongside the end points of learning in the MTPs which inform each investigation. In



terms of the geographical techniques we want our pupils to master as they progress through the school our curriculum planning has been informed by the identification of the coverage required at EYFS/Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2. These are integrated into our half termly enquiries to ensure full coverage through the curriculum;

- **Continuity** with the provision for geography established in the EYFS and in particular that which addresses the knowledge and skills expectations of the *Understanding the World* area of learning and the *People, Culture and Communities* Early Learning Goal;
- **Inclusive** in terms of delivering the same curriculum to all of our pupils and differentiating provision where necessary through, for example, in class support, providing different learning environments, alternative learning activities and assessment outcomes.



Curriculum planning and organisation

Provision in geography has been carefully designed to ensure both continuity with prior learning and progression EYFS – Year 6 in:

Substantive knowledge – what our pupils will know by the end of each enquiry;

Disciplinary knowledge – the subject skills and techniques our pupils will master and apply in order to understand the significance of what they know;

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Conceptual understanding – increasing awareness and application of second order and substantive subject concepts;

The acquisition of subject specialist vocabulary and technical terms in order to communicate their understanding effectively.

This continuity, sequencing and progression of geography provision is detailed in the following planning documentation:

Long term plan – which provides an overview of provision EYFS – Year 6 and how what we teach delivers the scope and ambition of the national curriculum for geography and the requirements of the EYFS *Understanding the World* area of learning.

Medium Term Overview Plans – which detail what the pupils will know at the end of each enquiry, the disciplinary skills and techniques they will master and apply to understand the significance of what they have learned; links to prior learning and the end points of learning against which they will be assessed for both ‘making good progress’ and ‘working at greater depth’.

Schemes of work – which provide all of the background subject knowledge for each enquiry, guidance as to how learning might be structured into ‘bite size’ steps, suggestions for interactive learning activities and recommendations for formative and ongoing assessment.

Learning organisers – used collaboratively by both teachers and pupils during the course of each enquiry to support knowledge building, conceptual understanding and the acquisition of increasingly specialised subject vocabulary and technical terms.

Medium Term Lesson plans – which identify the key objectives, outcomes and learning activities of each teaching session in geography.

Through this careful planning and organisation our pupils’ knowledge and understanding of geography develops because:

- 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 techniques and skills occurs in more precise and complex contexts;

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- The focus of what pupils learn becomes gradually more issues-based enabling them to explain links, patterns and processes and be more informed in their thinking and self-reflection in terms of recognising the importance of attitudes and values.

Curriculum implementation – learning through enquiry as young geographers

We adopt a constructivist paradigm of learning and teaching in geography which enables our pupils to learn as young geographers and to understand the kind of questions that geographers ask of the world. Through enquiry our pupils not only build their substantive knowledge and understanding but become increasingly adept at disciplinary thinking, conceptual understanding and the use of specialised vocabulary and technical terms. We structure learning in geography through big question led enquiries about relevant geographical topics, places and themes. Our curriculum is therefore ‘knowledge rich’ rather than content heavy as we recognise that if we attempt to teach geographical topics, places, themes and issues in their entirety we will create a very shallow learning experience for our pupils. Consequently we adopt a policy of immersive learning in geography that provides sufficient time and space for our pupils not only to acquire new knowledge and understanding but also to develop their appreciation of the importance of subject concepts.

Through enquiry our learning and teaching in geography is interactive and practical allowing opportunities for pupils to work independently, in pairs and also in groups of various sizes both inside and outside of the classroom. Learning activities are very varied to ensure that all pupils have opportunities to demonstrate their strengths. Similarly we provide differentiated ways for pupils to record the outcomes of their work including the use of PowerPoint, concept mapping, annotated diagrams, improvised drama and the application of a wide range of writing genres. Only in this way will knowledge become embedded and ‘sticky’ and ensure that our pupils can build on what they know and understand from one year to the next.

The MTPs and schemes of work for each geographical enquiry highlight both the objectives and anticipated outcomes of the investigation – the end points of learning. They are also carefully structured through the use of ancillary questions, to enable pupils to build their knowledge and understanding in incremental steps of increasing complexity until they reach the point where they are able to answer in full the question posed at the beginning of the investigation.

Fieldwork

Through our curriculum EYFS – Year 6 provision is made for regular and high quality fieldwork which we recognise as a core element of our pupils’ statutory entitlement in

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geography. Our fieldwork 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 comprehend the questions that geographers ask of the world. 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 has been incorporated as a core element of geographical learning in each phase of learning – EYFS, Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2. This provision is important not only in terms of learning and teaching differentiation but also from the perspective of inclusion and cultural capital building.

Curriculum impact – assessing outcomes against end points of learning

Each enquiry which forms our programme of learning and teaching in geography sets out clear objectives and outcomes for the pupils in terms of substantive and disciplinary knowledge and understanding and skills' acquisition. These outcomes are listed as 'end points of learning' i.e. the criteria against which a pupil will be judged to be making good progress. Additional criteria define what 'working at greater depth' will entail. The schemes of work also suggest a range of formative and ongoing ways in which a teacher can assess whether a pupil has achieved the appropriate end points of learning. We ensure that when assessing our pupils, evidence is drawn from a wide range of sources to inform the 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 in different genres. 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 or address gaps in learning accordingly. We do not make summative judgements about individual pieces of pupil work but rather use these formative assessments to build an emerging picture of what the pupil knows, understands and can do in relation to the end points of learning. Consequently at the end of each enquiry a teacher is able to make an informed and confident 'best fit' judgment as to whether the pupil is making good progress or working at greater depth.

Inclusion

Geography forms an integral and statutory element of a pupil's entitlement to learning and at our school we ensure that all pupils can engage with geographical learning and develop as young geographers irrespective of their race, cultural background, gender, sexual orientation, religion or creed. Mutual respect and the fostering of empathy and community

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understanding at local, regional, national and global scales lie 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 and access to learning for all is a fundamental and core element of inclusion. As such we plan and resource our learning, in line with our whole school EAL policies, to enable all pupils to make good and sustained progress in geography by ensuring that the challenge of learning opportunities always accords with the ability of each pupil. Therefore in our differentiation planning we take due regard of factors such as classroom organisation, learning materials and the learning environment. We ensure inclusion through constructing enquiries which are graduated in 'bite size' steps allowing for the setting of personalised targets and a broad range of learning and teaching strategies including questioning and working with additional adults where appropriate.

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. In addition, we recognise that as well as having an inclusive curriculum and approaches to learning and teaching our assessment procedures must also be inclusive. To this end our formative assessment methods are holistic and wide ranging, valuing oracy and practical outcomes equally alongside more conventional written responses.

In line with our school policy, we ensure inclusion through constructing enquiries which are graduated in 'bite size' steps allowing for the setting of personalised targets, a broad range of learning and teaching strategies including questioning, working with additional adults where appropriate and a holistic approach to assessing achievement.

Connecting geography to other areas of the curriculum

In our planning we have made, where appropriate, meaningful links with other subject areas of the national curriculum and these are detailed in the enquiry schemes of work. In particular careful consideration has been given to supporting the development of reading and writing across the curriculum in liaison with English and literacy colleagues. Making such links are important because they highlight to pupils the interconnectedness and interdependence of the world. However, we also recognise the importance of ensuring that the incorporation of cross-curricular links, particularly in relation to English and Mathematics, always add value to the building of geographical knowledge and understanding. High levels of literacy and numeracy in geography should always be matched by equally high levels of subject knowledge and understanding.

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Monitoring, evaluation and professional development

Monitoring activities undertaken by the subject lead for geography are planned across the year and can include the following:

- staff meetings to analyse samples of pupils' work in geography to moderate standards to ensure consistency and to inform colleagues of subject developments at local and national levels;
- lesson observations to ensure that learning and teaching is appropriately engaging and challenging and that appropriate progress is being made by all pupils;
- the sampling of pupils' work to ensure that expectations in terms of subject outcomes are being maintained through the curriculum;
- meetings and discussions with pupils from across year groups.

An important outcome of this ongoing monitoring and evaluation will be the identification of professional development needs amongst colleagues. The subject lead will, in the context of whole school priorities seek to address these through engaging appropriate external and internal support.

The subject lead uses the intelligence gained from monitoring and evaluation provision to inform the priorities for the annual **Action Plan for Geography**.

Supporting documentation

- Long term plan for Geography;
- Medium Term Plans for each geographical enquiry;
- Scheme of work for each geographical enquiry;
- Learning Organiser for each geographical enquiry;
- Geography Annual Action Plan.

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