



# Geography Policy

**Great Barton C of E Primary Academy**

**Geography Policy**

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Reviewed By -

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### **1.1 Rationale**

Geography teaches an understanding of places and environments. Through their work in geography, children learn about their local area and 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 recognize the importance of sustainable development for the future of mankind.

Where appropriate, the Geography curriculum promotes key British Values so our children have exposure to a wide experience of local and global learning where there are opportunities for respect and tolerance when embracing differences within the world we live.

### **1.2 Aims and objectives**

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, tolerance and understanding of what it means to be a positive citizen in a multi-cultural country; embedding fundamental British values
- 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 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.

### **1.3 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, and we enable them to use IT 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 learning. Wherever possible, we involve the children in 'real' geographical opportunities, e.g. research of a local environmental problem or use of the Internet to investigate a current issue.

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, taking into account their relative starting points.

We achieve this by:

- setting common learning opportunities which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;

- setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks;
- expectations of learning outcomes through geographical skills, depth of conclusions and analysis;
- 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 classroom assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children.

#### **1.4 Geography curriculum planning**

We have developed and reviewed the national scheme of guidelines for geography as the basis for our curriculum planning. We have adapted the national scheme to the local circumstances of our school, i.e. we make use 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 before investigating national and global physical and human features.

Our curriculum planning is in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). Our long-term plan maps the geography topics studied in each term during each key stage. In some cases we combine the geographical study with work in other subject areas. At other times we arrange for the children to carry out a geographical study independently or make links through research projects.

Our medium-term plans follow the national guidelines and give details of each unit of work for each term. The geography subject leader reviews these plans ensuring key skills are being taught; learning objectives are being covered, in relation to a child's age related expectations.

Each year group teachers create a plan for each lesson. These daily lesson plans list specific learning objectives with success criteria.

We plan the topics 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.

#### **1.5 Foundation Stage**

We teach understanding of the world in reception as an integral part of the topic work 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 Building Blocks focusing on People and Communities and The World which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world through activities such as collecting postcards from different places, singing songs from around the world, or investigating what makes a 'good' playground.

#### **1.6 Inclusion**

At our 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, regardless of their starting points. Through our geography teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress across a lesson and over time. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against Foundation Stage

objectives and National Expectations allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning geography. Where children are to participate in learning opportunities 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 and their learning needs.

### **1.7 Assessment and recording**

We assess the children's work in geography by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lessons. Once the children complete a piece of work, we mark and comment, providing next steps as necessary. Once they complete a unit of work, we make a summary judgement of the work of each pupil in relation to the National Expectations and levels of progress made. We record the attainment and progress and use these to plan future work with that pupil, to provide the basis for assessing the progress of the child, and to pass information on to the next teacher at the end of the year with their achieved level, if they have made less than, expected or exceeded age related expectations for their year group.

### **1.8 Resources**

We have a range of resources, including maps, atlases and textbooks within our school to be able to teach all the geography units in our Schemes of Work. We keep these resources within classrooms. We also keep a set of atlases for both key stages. In the library we have a good supply of geography topic books and access to a range of educational software to support the children's individual research.

### **1.9 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.

At Key Stage 1 we let all the children carry out an investigation into the local environment and we give them opportunities to observe and record information around the school site. At Key Stage 2 the children do a study of the local area.

### **2.0 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.