

BURFORD SCHOOL



Burford School

Geography Policy



Geography Policy

This policy was approved by the governing body in September '11
This policy will be reviewed in September '13

Introduction

At Burford School, we value Geography because it allows all children the opportunity to explore the inter-relationships between the Earth and its peoples through the study of place, spatial pattern and the environment.

The study of Place seeks to describe and understand not only the location of the physical and human features of the Earth, but also the processes, systems and inter-relationships that create or influence those features.

The study of Spatial Relationships seeks to explore the relationships between places and patterns of activity arising from the use people make of the physical settings where they live and work.

The study of the Environment addresses the resources, sometimes scarce and fragile, that the Earth provides and on which all life depends; the impact on those resources of human activities; and the wider social, economic, political and cultural consequences of the inter-relationship between the two.

Aims

Geography teaching offers opportunities to:

- stimulate children's interest in their surroundings and in the variety of human and physical conditions on the Earth's surface;
- foster children's sense of wonder at the beauty of the world around them;
- help children to develop an informed concern about the quality of the environment and the future of the human habitat; and thereby enhance children's sense of responsibility for the care of the Earth and its people.

Objectives

In the Foundation Stage Geography is taught under the heading of Knowledge and Understanding of the World.

To give all children the best opportunities for developing effectively their knowledge and understanding of the world, practitioners should give particular attention to:

- activities based on first-hand experiences that encourage exploration observation, problem solving, prediction, critical thinking, decision making and discussion;
- an environment with a wide range of activities indoors and outdoors that stimulate children's interest and curiosity.

In Key Stage 1, Geography is about developing knowledge, skills and understanding relating to children's own environment and the people who live there, and developing an awareness of the wider world.

To develop children's ability to:

- investigate and learn about the physical and human features of their own environment and appreciate how their locality is similar to and different from other places;
- focus on geographical questions like Where is it? What is it like?
- develop and use geographical enquiry skills, including fieldwork skills, geographical terms, making and using maps, and using photographs.

In Key Stage 2, Geography is about developing knowledge, skills and understanding relating to people, places and environments at different scales, in the United Kingdom and overseas, and an appreciation of how places relate to each other and the wider world.

To develop children's ability to:

- study places and themes at different scales from local to national in the United Kingdom and overseas, and investigate how people and places are linked and how they relate to the wider world;
- study how and why physical and human features are arranged as they are in a place or environment, and how people are influenced by and affect environments;
- focus on geographical questions like What is it like? How did it get like this? How and why is it changing?
- develop and use geographical enquiry skills, including fieldwork and IT skills, geographical terms, making and using maps, and using photographs.

Teaching Strategies

Geography is delivered through the creative curriculum with reference to the National Curriculum.

Different learning styles should be accommodated in the teaching of Geography to ensure effective learning opportunities for all children.

Teaching should ensure that 'geographical enquiry and skills' are used when developing 'knowledge and understanding of places, patterns and processes', and 'environmental change and sustainable development'.

Within both the Key Stages, pupils' work should incorporate a strong element of enquiry.

Questions are formulated to develop ideas and concepts and to explore places and geographical themes. Effective questioning can enhance the quality of geographical education developing curiosity and interest in the learning process

Throughout the school teachers should encourage language and communication skills so that children:

- develop language skills through talking about their work and presenting their own ideas using sustained and systematic writing and recording of different kinds;
- use geographical language and draw maps and diagrams to communicate geographical information;
- read fiction and non-fiction, and extract information from sources such as reference books, CD-ROMS, e-mails and the Internet.

Teachers also encourage positive values and attitudes so that children:

- work with others, listen to each other's ideas, and treat them with respect;
- have opportunities to consider their own attitudes and values, and those of other people;
- develop respect for evidence and critically evaluate ideas which may or may not fit the evidence available;
- develop a respect for the environment and be encouraged to evaluate their own and others' effect or impact on it.

Inclusion

It is important that Geography is accessible and challenging to all children, meeting the specific needs of individuals and groups of pupils. Learning and Teaching should be meaningful and appeal to all learners in respect of gender, race, the needs of the most able and those children with special educational needs.

Differentiation

Teachers should:

- adapt plans and resources to meet the needs of the children in the class, particularly if they are not attaining at levels broadly appropriate for their age;
- ensure that children with special educational needs of all kinds may participate fully and demonstrate their achievements.
- ensure that the breadth and depth of study should be challengingly extended for able, talented and gifted children.

Further requirements, as detailed in children's provision maps, should be integrated into planning of all activities and use of different teaching methods.

Homework

Geography often provides opportunities for teachers to set worthwhile tasks that can be completed outside formal teaching time sometimes with parental involvement.

Cross Curricular Connections

Since Geography is taught as part of a creative curriculum in cross-curricular topics there will be a variety of specific links depending on the topic studied. Other broader links include:

English

Reading and writing are essential for the processes of finding out about and communicating an understanding of Geography. Discussion, drama and role play are important ways for children to develop their understanding that people have different viewpoints and perspectives on their world.

The goal of Geography lessons should be to develop children's geographical understanding. However Geography lessons can provide valuable opportunities to reinforce what children have been doing during the literacy hour and practice using their literacy skills in a different context.

Mathematics

There are many opportunities for children to develop mathematical skills. Children

work with numerical data which relate to real situations and often they collect, record, present and interpret such data themselves.

Mathematical skills are also developed in the context of map work; for example, work on co-ordinates, map references, distances and scales.

ICT

Opportunities for the use of ICT (information and communication technologies), enhance children's learning of Geography. ICT are the facilities and features that support teaching and learning, such as CD-ROM sources of information and appropriate software.

The use of ICT helps children's learning in Geography:

- by enhancing their skills of geographical enquiry;
- by providing a range of information sources to enhance their geographical knowledge;
- by supporting the development of their understanding of geographical patterns and processes;
- by providing access to images of people, places and environments;
- by contributing to pupils' awareness of the impact of ICT on the changing world.

PSHE

Multi-cultural themes are often encountered in Geography, which creates opportunities to promote understanding.

Children are encouraged to develop:

- an interest in people and places beyond their immediate experience;
- an awareness of cultural and ethnic diversity within our society, while recognising the similarity of activities, interests and aspirations of different people;
- tolerance toward people who hold different values and beliefs.

Assessment

Teachers' planned work for each topic will enable the children to demonstrate their learning and the work the children do themselves will serve as a record for classes. Their achievements are assessed against the National Curriculum targets and are reported to parents through parents' evenings and end of year reports.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Development

It is the responsibility of the subject coordinator to monitor and evaluate the teaching, learning, planning and assessment of Geography in school.

This may be done through regular work sampling; observation of lessons in each class/year group; analysis of planning documents; monitoring of assessment evidence; discussion with colleagues to learn of difficulties, to inform and advise.

From this an action plan, outlining development of the subject to improve each of these elements, will be created.

Health and Safety

Local field work

In Geography, it is important that teachers plan work that is suited to their own geographical environment and local opportunities. Fieldwork is first hand experience and is an essential integral part of geographical place study.

Teachers must consider:

- What safety aspects are involved in the visit?
- Has a risk assessment been carried out that complies with the school's policy for visits?
- Has the teacher undertaken a preliminary visit prior to the children's visit?
- What other resources are available locally? Is a visit or a visitor appropriate?
- What are the main physical and human features of the local area, and which aspects of the geographical themes can therefore be adequately covered by first hand study?
- How much fieldwork can realistically be undertaken? Will this require a visit of an hour, a half-day or a whole day visit, or even residential fieldwork in the UK?
- Which aspects of the geographical themes can be adequately and safely covered by first hand study in the local area?
- Are there sufficient adults available to supervise children on visits?

Resources

Resources and audio-visual materials relevant to the topics being taught will be available within each year group. Some resources such as maps, atlases and more
CHughes & JMartin/01/09/11

general textbooks are held in the stock room behind the staff room.

Equality and Cohesion

We aim to reflect the diversity of our local community and society and ensure that the education we offer reduces the chances of social divisions by recognising, celebrating and valuing different backgrounds, lifestyles and identities.

Sep '09/CH/JM