

Panshanger Primary School Geography Policy

Rationale:

The study of geography involves pupils exploring the relationship and interactions between people and the environments in which they live and depend upon. Many pupils who now attend our school may live to see the next century and inhabit a world of over 11 billion people! The opportunities and challenges that will arise during their lifetime will be very much about geography - personal, local, national and global. From adapting to the impact of climate change, predicting natural hazards such as Tsunami and Earthquakes, and understanding the causes and effects of population migration around the world, our pupils will need to know about geography and to think like geographers. These aspects are taught through 4 main strands:

1. Locational knowledge
2. Place knowledge
3. Human and physical geography
4. Geographical skills and fieldwork

Aims:

Geography helps to prepare our 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 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 that geographers ask such as: *why is the 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 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 environments 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 develop their commitment to promoting and living sustainable lifestyles;
- Extend the 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 range 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.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

A geographical awareness helps children understand their place in the world and provides opportunities for children to learn about amazing geographical sights and features. Through reflecting on how the environment is impacted by our decisions, children can make informed choices about the future of their world. Through discussion about geographical issues such as climate change, pollution, habitat destruction, and resource depletion, children can learn to appreciate the moral dilemmas posed by introducing changes to the environment and the effects this can have. Geography encourages pupils to understand the need to consider the views of others when discussing localities, settlements and the environment. The study of a wide range of differing places in our world provides an opportunity to discuss social concerns such as poverty, displacement due to war, rising sea levels or waste disposal and the people that these issues affect. By exploring different settlements, the children can gain knowledge of different cultures, learning tolerance and understanding of their diversity. Fieldwork encourages collaborative projects, making the most of different strengths and interests within a team.

Inclusion, equality and differentiation:

In our school 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. The fostering of empathy and community understanding at local, regional, national and global scales lies at the centre of the study of geography and we model this in terms of the inclusive nature of the learning and teaching we provide.

Ensuring differentiation is a core element of inclusion. 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, those identified as Able, Gifted and Talented and those with English as an additional language. In our planning, we take account of factors such as classroom organisation and learning materials. Differentiating by learning environment is as essential as differentiating by task, outcome, learning style or aptitude and this is recognised through the inclusion of regular fieldwork opportunities in our geographical enquiries.

Progression and expectation:

At our school we want pupils to become better geographers and we achieve this by recognising and planning for what becoming confident at geography involves. To enable this to happen we have established a curriculum which recognises the importance of identifying not just what we want our pupils to *know* and *do* in geography but also the outcomes we intend them to achieve 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 should be focussed 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 our pupils should not be confined by their stage of learning, we nevertheless ensure that in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 our subject expectations enable pupils to learn and consolidate the fundamental skills of 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. During lower Key Stage 2 our expectations increase accordingly as we challenge our pupils not only to know more but also to master progressively more demanding subject outcomes such as forming explanations through the gathering of evidence, perhaps from a wide range of sources. At the same time, we expect greater subject vocabulary knowledge from our pupils and we plan accordingly for more specialised subject vocabulary. 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, to evaluate evidence and to generate questions of their own.

Continuity and progression:

To ensure continuity and progression for all pupils the curriculum is organised EYFS-Y6 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 learning and teaching activities;
- 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 National Curriculum;
- The curriculum becomes progressively more complex developing from discrete facts and bodies of information to theoretical awareness;
- 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.

Teaching and learning:

At our school we seek to encourage pupils to learn their geography through enquiries about topics, places and themes which focus on real people, places and geographical issues. These allow pupils sufficient scope and time to engage in higher order subject skills such as developing explanations, reaching conclusions, making judgements, evaluating, applying information learned in one context to another and generating their own ideas and questions to investigate. Whilst learning new subject information as the pupils progress through the school is important, we are careful to ensure that there is a balance between new content and the development of important subject skills and the ability for children to think critically about what they are learning and why.

Regular and high quality outdoor learning is central to learning in geography. It provides opportunities to develop and consolidate skills and ideas introduced in the classroom and allows pupils to extend their understanding of the 'real world'. Fieldwork enables pupils to become observant, to develop the skills of recording, analysis and deduction and start to develop enquiring minds. Fieldwork and learning outdoors involving the testing and investigation of ideas and theories through practical activities including observation, data collection, recording, presentation, interpretation and evaluation is therefore fundamental to the study of geography and the development of young geographers in our school. Consequently, fieldwork is a core element of geographical learning in every year group in line with the National Curriculum.

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

- Design activities which help pupils answer 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 about....?*
- Share with pupils what they are expected to learn and how they are expected to learn it;
- Provide a variety of learning activities that are used regularly, including observations, enquiry, investigations, games and problem solving;

- Encourage pupils to evaluate 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 opportunities for pupils to work as individuals, in pairs and in groups;
- Encourage discussion so that pupils can clarify their thinking;
- Provide pupils with regular feedback about their work and about what they need to do next in order to improve;
- Expect pupils to record their work in a variety of different ways, including diagrams, illustrations, pictures, letters, posters, annotated drawings and maps, reports, Power Points and accounts.

Assessment and reporting:

A range of assessment tasks involving written work, annotated maps and diagrams, satellite and photographic interpretation, improvised plays, film annotations, news reports, Power Point presentations, talks, discussions and fieldwork are used to assess the performance of pupils against objectives and used to form the basis of reporting to parents. An important aspect of geography at lower KS2 is that our pupils begin to see the world through the perspective of different communities. We therefore challenge and support our pupils to undertake geographical investigations which enable them to use and apply appropriate and increasingly specialised subject vocabulary, subject tools and fieldwork skills to recognise, identify, describe, observe, reason, explain and reach conclusions about the interaction of people with their environments. Higher outcomes in geography also involve children being able to apply what they have learned in one context to another and to understand concepts as well as more discrete areas of knowledge. Opportunities are planned in upper KS2 which allow pupils to achieve this skill.

Connecting geography to other areas of the curriculum:

Making links in geography is important because it highlights to pupils the interconnection and interdependence of the real world. Geography contributes to the development of a variety of other areas of the curriculum and likewise, other curricular areas can form the basis for or enhance geographical work. Therefore, in our planning we seek to continually make meaningful links with other subject areas of the National Curriculum and to use and study relevant, current real-life situations and issues which help to make geography applicable and meaningful for our pupils.