



Geography Rationale

This comprehensive and bespoke curriculum has been designed with the needs and experiences of our children in mind and ensures that all children are given the best possible chance to succeed and develop the skills and knowledge they will need to enjoy and achieve at the end of Key Stage 1 and beyond. It draws on local inspiration and the children's own experiences and is unique to our school.

Intent and Implementation

Nursery

The Nursery is where we encourage children to start looking at the world around them. Much of the learning takes place informally and on a daily basis- things like discussing the weather everyday leads to work later on, in the school around seasonal change, where weather comes from and climate change. Introducing key vocabulary such as near and far, becoming familiar with the geography of their learning environment and the wider school and leaving the school grounds to go on seasonal walks helps the children to experience geography through first-hand, concrete, sensory experiences. Children are encouraged to share what they do at home, giving them an opportunity to talk about places they have visited and what they did there. Some children may also be able to make connections between their own experiences and other people's and even ask other children questions about what they have heard. Children can also explore different geographical locations through play such as a small world farm, famous landmarks in the construction area or making a beach scene in the sand tray, and they are prompted to make connections and describe what they see. Through all these rich learning activities and experiences, the children develop the initial skills on which everything else is built.

Reception

In Reception, children expand on this learning by continuing to develop their sense of place. This often comes from the children's own experiences and will be shared with teachers and their classmates. Incidental learning opportunities are built on by the teaching staff as they happen and are part of the 'Understanding the World' curriculum. There is also an emphasis on geographical vocabulary from three categories- human features, physical features and geographical map skills and fieldwork which are hugely beneficial for the learning in Year 1.

However, specific geographical learning is also planned at opportune moments throughout the year. The children experience every season of the year by going on a seasonal walk outside the school grounds and engaging with the natural environment. This way the children are able to engage all their senses as they learn and by returning to the same places regularly can make comparisons and predictions about how this might change throughout the year. The children in Reception also have a 'curiosity cube' in the continuous provision area where the teachers place interesting items to provoke questioning and discussion around geographical concepts. An example of this could be a set of polar animals, some interesting photographs of the Arctic and Antarctic and a globe. This gives the children a chance to use vocabulary, share experiences and make connections independently. When learning about Chinese New Year the children find out about China and where it is in the world. The children also build geographical learning opportunities into their topics for example when finding out about 'Minibeasts' the children are able to express their opinions about the most likely place within our school grounds to find a ladybird or a worm.

The EYFS curriculum for Understanding the World is taught in a variety of ways through adult-led and adult-supported tasks and child-initiated learning. Learning takes places both indoors and outdoors. Much of the learning in EYFS occurs informally on a daily basis as well as specifically planned activities.

Key Stage 1

In Year 1 and Year 2, the curriculum is covered on a half-termly basis. History is taught the next half-term. Lessons are taught weekly in KS1. This enables children to focus on Geography for a longer period of time which enables greater depth of study rather than simultaneously teaching History to the children. Given the age of our children we feel this allows them to fully immerse themselves into our Geography curriculum and have a clear understanding of what Geography really is.

Year 1

When the children embark on the National Curriculum in Year 1 we make sure that the sometimes abstract concept of geography is presented to them in a thoughtful and concrete way to give the children as much opportunity as possible to understand and succeed. Because of this, the first area of learning in the Autumn term specifically deals with the local area around school. This gives the children the opportunity to talk about familiar places, leave the school site to walk to go and look at the amenities we have nearby, compare human and physical features that they have actually seen and give them a familiar point of reference on which to build their future learning.

Building on this, in the Spring term we widen our field and the children learn about the UK as a whole. In an effort to keep this still based on something familiar, the learning is based around the topic of weather and seasons. During this time the children learn the names of the countries, capital cities and seas of the UK. They also look at weather patterns and seasonal change in our local area and find out whether the whole of the UK has the same weather at the same time. This builds on prior learning in EYFS and gives the children the knowledge they need to learn about climate change in Year 2.

Once the children have learned about their local area and the UK, this is widened further in the Summer term to looking at the world as a whole. At this point, the focus is on naming the continents and oceans of the world and then moves on by visiting different localities and making comparisons between them. Children are introduced to the vocabulary and features of rainforests, deserts, cities,

coasts and begin to identify their similarities and differences. Use of technology such as google maps as well as other high-quality resources help the children to visualise the abstract concepts and embed the key vocabulary needed for further learning in Year 2.

Year 2

In the Autumn term of Year 2, we build on the learning about weather and seasons which has been covered every year since Nursery. In Year 2, because of the knowledge of the world developed in Year 1, we are able to take this further by looking at the concept of climate change, the contributing factors and what we can do as individuals to try and combat it. The children are encouraged to look for patterns, revisit the continents and seas, develop their understanding of the North and South poles and the equator and identify the cold and hot parts of the world.

In the Spring term, we shift our focus back to the UK and look at 'Where in the UK is the best place for a holiday and why?'. Children revisit their learning from year 1 about the UK (its 4 countries, capital cities and surrounding seas). They build on this by learning in more detail what each country and capital city looks like with a focus on some of the key human and physical characteristics. For example: children use atlases to identify where the coast, rivers and mountains are and they then go on to plot these on a map of the UK. There is extensive use of maps during this topic so that the children can familiarise themselves with the sort of information a map can provide. The knowledge and skills developed prepare the children for further learning in Year 3 and beyond.

In the summer term, the Year 2 children use the wealth of knowledge they have to compare where they live with a small non-European country. This year we have chosen Japan as it hosted the Olympics last year and we know that the children will be excited and engaged in this. This may change in connection to other key events. The children will firstly revisit our local area, building on the Year 1 knowledge developed, and identify the key features of Cheadle Hulme. From there, they will make contrasts with the capital city Tokyo and a more rural area. The children will put to use all the vocabulary that they have learnt over the last three years as well as using maps, technology and a loan box from the Society of Japan to bring the topic to life.

Progress and Assessment

EYFS

In Nursery regular observations and assessments are recorded using the online journal Tapestry. In Nursery and Reception learning is recorded in floor books. This contributes towards a summative assessment at the end of EYFS using the Early Years Outcomes for Understanding the World.

Key Stage 1

Frequent, ongoing observational assessments are made throughout the half-terms learning. Sticky learning helps teachers to assess the learning that is 'sticking' in the children's memory. Discussions are regular between staff.

Impact

This curriculum ensures that all children have covered everything they need in order to succeed across our school and paves the way well for their success in the Junior School. The impact of the curriculum will be reviewed through observations, teacher assessment, pupil voice activities, book scrutiny and learning walks. The impact will be reviewed throughout the year and at the end of the school year.

Signed: Ellie Ward

Date: September 2023