

Westmoor Primary School



Geography Policy

Autumn 2017

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Phillip Potts

Geography Policy

Introduction

Geography is concerned with the study of places, the human and physical processes which shape them and the people who live in them. It helps pupils make sense of their surroundings and the wider world.

Teachers, parents and other caring adults can help children to take a careful look at the world. Through discussion children can be encouraged to explore and observe; and in due course be able to answer more complex and searching questions about the world in which they live. We strive to help our children develop lively and enquiring minds. We aim to teach geographical skills and knowledge by building in their natural curiosity. We endeavour to develop the children's sense of place.

Aims

- To help pupils develop geographical knowledge and understanding of the location, physical and human, of contrasting localities.
- To begin to develop an understanding of geographical patterns and human and physical processes.
- To develop an informed concern for the environment. To enhance pupils' sense of responsibility for the care of the Earth and its people and to understand how it can be damaged and improved by human activity.
- To develop some understanding of the effects of change in the localities studied.
- To stimulate interest in, and build a view of, the world and their place in it.
- To help educate all children for life in a culturally diverse society by introducing them to the reality of cultures and ways of life in other countries or localities.
- To develop and apply a range of skills and techniques appropriate to geographical enquiry.

Objectives

To increase their knowledge and understanding of their own locality, the European Union and contrasting localities in the wider world that will help them to set local, national and international events within a global context.

- To develop an awareness and understanding of features, physical processes and change in their immediate environment and other localities which they study.
- To understand and compare the physical and human characteristics and processes e.g. weather, settlement, transport and employment in different localities
- To appreciate and compare for the environment and to understand how and why people seek to manage and sustain environments and to identify ways in which damage can be repaired

- To develop the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to identify and investigate important cultural, social and environmental issues with sensitivity to people's attitudes and values.
- To help pupils to develop an understanding of the nature of multi-cultural and multi-ethnic societies and a sensitivity to cultural and racial prejudice and injustice.
- To develop competency in using maps, atlases, photographs, fieldwork techniques and to develop skills appropriate to geographical enquiry e.g. the ability to observe, analyse and communicate, to gather and interpret information and use ICT to support their learning where appropriate.

Differentiation

During whole class teaching, questioning techniques are adapted to enable children with either learning difficulties or outstanding strengths to make a positive contribution. Group activities will reflect the varying ability levels, either in tasks set or in expectation of outcome. Classroom support can be used, when available, for those with special needs whether it is for Special Needs or Gifted and Talented children.

Equality of Opportunity

All children should have equal access to the geography curriculum. Differentiated activities allow all pupils to access the geography curriculum. Geography naturally relates to studying links with other cultures and these will be developed wherever possible. Particular care will be taken when children study different countries to ensure that discussions challenge the stereotypes that exist. In Westmoor Primary School, we value the cultures of all pupils and encourage them to share their experiences with other member of the school community.

Assessment and Recording

We believe that assessment is an integral part of the process of teaching and is essential to a sound teaching strategy. It allows us to detect and diagnose learning difficulties as well acknowledge those children who hold a deeper understanding of the topic and adjust our lessons accordingly.

Assessment for learning involves using assessment in the classroom to raise pupils' achievement. It is based on the idea that pupils will improve most if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim and how they can achieve the aim (or close the gap in their knowledge).

Effective assessment for learning happens all the time in the classroom. It involves:

- sharing learning goals with pupils
- helping pupils know and recognise the standards to aim for
- providing feedback that helps pupils to identify how to improve
- believing that every pupil can improve in comparison with previous achievements
- both the teacher and pupils reviewing and reflecting on pupils' performance and progress
- pupils learning self-assessment techniques to discover areas they need to improve
- recognising that both motivation and self-esteem, crucial for effective learning and progress, can be increased by effective assessment techniques.

All staff in Westmoor Primary follow the Assessment for Learning approach in their daily practice. Formative assessment of a child's progress is made throughout the teaching of any particular unit of work or topic. This may not necessarily be formally recorded but could result in changes to the prepared plans. It also shows us if our teaching is purposeful and effective. The most important purpose of assessment is to give us information, which will help us improve pupils learning. Incorporating the Assessment for Learning strategies into our teaching allows the children to assess their own progress and discuss their learning with a talking partner. At the end of each topic, teachers record the names of children who have showed particular strengths or weaknesses and detail objectives of the topic and decide upon an overall national curriculum level. As the creative topic is taught, staff highlight National Curriculum objectives to record the different strands that have been delivered. The coverage is then reviewed, within phases, to discuss the pace and progress made throughout the topic.

The geography subject leader completes a curriculum stroll and book scrutiny every year to gain a deeper understanding of the subject throughout the school.

Resources

Each key stage has a large globe and atlas. Further maps (large wall maps, local street maps, OS maps, google earth), atlases (UK and World), teachers' guides, reference books and photocopiable material are located in the teachers' resource area. There is also a selection of geography books in the school reference library and teachers can use the Children's Library Service to support topics. Class teachers have own ipads to evidence and record the childrens work as well as support their learning. Every phase has access to ipads which are used to engage and support learning as well as record and evidence work. Teachers have access to Espresso which has a wealth of video clips, news reports and related websites based on a variety of geographical topics. Westmoor Bear is available for children to take with them on holiday to encourage families to consider the different aspects and attractions of the country that they are visiting. The library holds a selection of their holiday recollections and provides an interesting and very real resource for children and staff to use within their creative topics.

Health and Safety

When children engage in fieldwork or any other practical task the teacher is required to complete a risk assessment form prior to the activity. Children and adults will be informed of any safety measure to be taken. Appropriate adult supervision will be provided.

SEN statement

Children with special educational needs will be recognised and will follow the National Curriculum Programmes of Study through work schemes that promote the child's development and self-esteem.

Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural Development

Pupils at Westmoor Primary School are encouraged to have a developing awareness and respect for their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people. All pupils will experience a wide range of activities that encourage a deeper understanding and appreciation of other faiths and cultures. Teachers provide information that helps children to understand why people do things different from each other and encourage children to think and talk about these differences.

The Creative Topic Curriculum

Westmoor Primary follows a cross curricular topic approach to teaching and learning. This allows teachers to select a theme for the term and deliver key objectives from the National Curriculum. Relevant links are drawn together but where objectives do not link with the topic, discrete teaching is timetabled into the curriculum. Geographical topics alternate with history, art, science to ensure coverage and development of skills.

Early Years

The foundation year begins when the children are three years old and covers their early education in school and nursery until they leave their reception class and start year one. The early learning goals sets out the learning objectives for the six areas of learning, Physical Development, Creative development (Music, Art and Drama), Personal and Social Development, Knowledge and Understanding of the world (Science, History, ICT, Geography and Technology), Communication, Language and Literacy, and Problem Solving, Reasoning in Numeracy.

Teaching Styles

- Whole class for the introduction of new information or reinforcement of concepts and skills
- Contribution of visitors and outside speakers
- Role Play, debate, hot seating
- Thinking skills activities
- Teacher led classroom activities
- Fieldwork
- Research and enquiry using ICT
- Games and quizzes
- Assessment for Learning, Talking partners, group discussions

Review

The geography policy will be reviewed on a 2 yearly cycle.