

# Mere Brow C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

## A Policy for Geography



### **Intent**

At Mere Brow CE Primary School we seek to inspire a curiosity and fascination in our children which will provoke questions and help to provide answers about the world around them, the wider world and their place in it. 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; skills which are transferrable to other curriculum areas. 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 recognise the importance of sustainable development for the future of mankind.

### **Implementation**

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 activities. 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 computers/ipads 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 activities. Wherever possible, we involve the children in 'real' geographical activities, e.g. research of a local environmental problem or use of the Internet to investigate a current issue. Teachers are encouraged to consider opportunities available to use the school grounds and the local area for fieldwork to enable children to base learning on first-hand experiences to enhance teaching and learning in geography.

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. We achieve this by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks;
- grouping children based on ability and setting different tasks to each ability group, whilst ensuring a level of challenge and extension for each learner.
- 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.

### **Impact**

Children's topic books as well as links in their English and Science work evidence the acquisition of identified geographical knowledge appropriate to each key stage, along with the application of key skills through fieldwork opportunities. As our children move through the school, their knowledge and skills will develop progressively so that they not only meet the requirements of the National Curriculum but are also prepared and inspired to become competent geographers in their future education and beyond. Children will be curious about life in other parts of the world and will have a range of skills at their disposal to help them seek out more information. Their opportunities to explore what life is like in another culture, are enriched for the children at Mere Brow CE Primary through our links with the Shalom Academy, a school in Irovo, Kenya, where children from both schools have opportunities to write letters, watch videos and share news with each other. Children will be familiar with and confident users of key vocabulary for each topic covered throughout the school, through being given regular opportunities to revise, contextualise and explore these words. In each class, Creative Homework is set at the start of a new topic not only allowing children to demonstrate what they have learnt in school, but also encouraging them to extend their learning independently. The type of Homework tasks set also encourage valuable links with home which can be a rich environment for geographical exploration, especially of our local area.

### **Subject Content**

**Our school curriculum for geography aims to ensure that all pupils:**

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their

defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes

- understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time
- are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
- collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
- interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.

### **Key stage 1**

Pupils should develop knowledge about the world, the United Kingdom and their locality. They should understand basic subject-specific vocabulary relating to human and physical geography and begin to use geographical skills, including first-hand observation, to enhance their locational awareness.

Pupils should be taught to:

#### **Locational knowledge**

- name and locate the world's seven continents and five oceans name, locate and identify characteristics of the four countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas.

#### **Place knowledge**

- understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom, and of a small area in a contrasting non-European country.

#### **Human and physical geography**

- identify seasonal and daily weather patterns in the United Kingdom and the location of hot and cold areas of the world in relation to the Equator and the North and South Poles
- use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to:
  - key physical features, including: beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather
  - key human features, including: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shop.

#### **Geographical skills and fieldwork**

- use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the United Kingdom and its countries, as well as the countries, continents and oceans studied at this key stage
- use simple compass directions (North, South, East and West) and locational and directional language [for example, near and far; left and right], to describe the location of features and routes on a map
- use aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features; devise a simple map; and use and construct basic symbols in a key
- use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of their school and its grounds and the key human and physical features of its surrounding environment.

## **Key stage 2**

Pupils should extend their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to include the United Kingdom and Europe, North and South America. This will include the location and characteristics of a range of the world's most significant human and physical features. They should develop their use of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to enhance their locational and place knowledge.

Pupils should be taught:

### **Locational knowledge**

- locate the world's countries, using maps to focus on Europe (including the location of Russia) and North and South America, concentrating on their environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries, and major cities
- name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, key topographical features (including hills, mountains, coasts and rivers), and land-use patterns; and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time
- identify the position and significance of latitude, longitude, Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle, the Prime/Greenwich Meridian and time zones (including day and night)

### **Place knowledge**

- understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region of the United Kingdom, a region in a European country, and a region within North or South America

### **Human and physical geography**

Describe and understand key aspects of:

- physical geography, including: climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle
- human geography, including: types of settlement and land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water.

#### **. Geographical skills and fieldwork**

- use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied
- use the eight points of a compass, four and six-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build their knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world
- use fieldwork to observe, measure, record and present the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods, including sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technologies.

#### **Geography curriculum planning**

We use the National Curriculum for geography as the basis for our curriculum planning. When appropriate we use the local environment as the starting point for aspects of our work. 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.

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. The geography subject leader works this out in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group. In some cases we combine the geographical study with work in other subject areas, especially at Key Stage 1. At other times we arrange for the children to carry out a geographical study independently.

Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The geography subject leader reviews these plans on a regular basis. Because we are a small school we complete a four year planning scheme. In this way we ensure that children have complete coverage of the National Curriculum but do not have to repeat topics.

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.

#### **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

We teach geography in the reception/nursery class as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception/nursery class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the geographical aspects of the children's work to the objectives working towards the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) for Understanding of the World, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to these objectives through activities such as collecting postcards from different places, singing songs from around the world, or investigating our local area.

### **The contribution of geography to teaching in other curriculum areas**

#### **English**

Geography makes a significant contribution to the teaching of English in our school because it actively promotes the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We ensure that some of the texts that we use in English are geographical in nature. For example, in Key Stage 1 we might use the Katie Morag books by Mairi Hedderwick to develop children's knowledge and understanding of life on an island. At Key Stage 2 we organise debates on environmental issues because we believe that these develop speaking and listening skills. Reports, letters and recording information will all develop children's writing ability. We also use environmental issues as a way of developing the children's writing ability by asking them to record information and write reports and letters.

#### **Maths**

Geography in our school contributes to the teaching of mathematics in a variety of ways. We teach the children how to represent objects with maps. The children study space, scale and distance and they learn how to use four- and six-figure grid references. They also use graphs to explore, analyse and illustrate a variety of data.

#### **Computing/Remote Learning**

We make provision for the children to use computers in geography lessons where appropriate. We incorporate Computing and Geography in the Creative Curriculum planning in both Key Stages. Children use ipads/laptops in geography to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work, they also use a data logger for temperature, noise etc. They research information through the Internet and Google Earth. We arrange for the children to communicate with other pupils in other schools and countries by using e-mail. We also offer children the opportunity to use the digital camera/ipads to record and use photographic images. Across the school, teachers can use Seesaw to provide remote learning opportunities to which all children have access if they cannot attend school for whatever reason. Seesaw also provides an opportunity to share learning in school with parents at home.

#### **Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship**

Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Firstly, the subject matter lends itself to raising matters of citizenship and social welfare. For example, children study the way people re-cycle material and how environments are changed for better or for worse. Secondly, the nature of the subject means that children have the opportunity to take part in debates and discussions. We allow them to organize campaigns on matters of concern to them, such as helping the poor or homeless. Thus geography in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

We offer children in our school many opportunities to examine the fundamental questions in life through the medium of geography. For example, their work on the changing landscape and environmental issues leads children to ask questions about the evolution of the planet. We encourage the children to reflect on the impact of mankind on our world and we introduce the concept of 'stewardship' in relation to sustainable development. Through teaching about contrasting localities, we enable the children to learn about inequality and injustice in the world. We help children to develop their knowledge and understanding of different cultures so that they learn to avoid stereotyping other people and acquire a positive attitude towards others. We help contribute to the children's social development by teaching them about how society works to resolve difficult issues of economic development. Geography contributes to the children's appreciation of what is right and wrong by raising many moral questions during the programme of study.

### **Teaching geography to children with special needs**

At Mere Brow CE Primary 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. Through our geography teaching we provide learning opportunities that match the needs of children with learning difficulties and we take into account the targets set for individual children. Geography can excite and inspire learners. The wide range of skills, techniques and recording formats used in Geography makes it potentially accessible to children with special needs, including G&T learners.

### **Inclusion**

Effective learning opportunities for all pupils are achieved by:

- Setting suitable learning challenges.
- Responding to pupils diverse learning needs.
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

### **Resources**

Resources are kept in a central store where there is a selection of equipment for each topic area. We also keep a collection of geography equipment which the children use to gather weather data, and a set of

atlases for both key stages. In the library we have a good supply of geography topic books and a range of educational software to support the children's individual research.

### **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 the children are given a range of opportunities to carry out investigations into the local environment together with opportunities to observe and record information around the school site. At Key Stage 2 the children do a study of the local area. We also offer them the opportunity to take part in a residential visit and also a field work visit to partner school a contrasting locality.

### **Assessment**

We assess the children in order to ensure that they make good progress in Geography. Assessments are carried out informally during lessons and also more formally at the end of each topic/term. This can be in the form of an end of topic quiz or a written question and answer. We use Knowledge Organisers for each topic which contain the key information for the topic and also the key vocabulary. Key vocabulary is revisited, revised and extended as children progress through the school.

### **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.

Signed: Sarah McCreavy

Geography Co-ordinator

Autumn 2020

It was approved by the Governing body \_\_\_\_\_

This policy will be reviewed in the Autumn of 2022.