



Geography Policy

Safeguarding Statement

West Heath Primary will continuously strive to ensure that everyone in our school is treated with respect and dignity. Each person in our school will be given fair and equal opportunity to develop their full potential with positive regard to gender, ethnicity, cultural and religious background, sexuality or disability. West Heath Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff to share this commitment. Please also refer to the No Platform, Visiting Speaker Policy.

Owner – CSTL

Date for review – September 2025

Governor's signature -

Audience

This policy is designed to be used by teachers at West Heath Primary School to ensure that the expectations for the teaching of Geography are clear.

Curriculum Statement

Geography is a core, foundation subject in the National Curriculum. This policy will form the basis upon which we map out the intent, implementation and impact of geography at West Heath Primary School. It will outline the purpose, nature and management of how geography is taught and learned in our school and will inform new teachers of expectations. All staff are fully aware of their role in its implementation. Staff have access to the policy via the schools server on the Teachers' Drive.

“Geography explains the past, illuminates the present and prepares us for the future. What could be more important than that?”

Intent:

At West Heath Primary School, we believe that Geography helps to provoke and provide answers to questions about the natural and human aspects of the world. By creating an enquiry-led curriculum, we believe children will become engrossed in their topic and given a focus to strive towards within their learning.

The topics within Geography, at West Heath Primary School, have been picked and placed in a systematic, coherent way. They are broken down into 3 golden threads: Place and Space, Environment and Earth Systems. The initial focuses within Key Stage 1 are the local area, the UK, a compare and contrast of the UK and Africa (to first introduce the wider world). The focuses gradually expand to more elaborate enquiries encompassing a variety of locations and geographical elements in Key Stage 2. Enquiries are chosen systematically and build on existing knowledge acquired the previous year: e.g. Year 1 and Year 2 – Local area, Year 2 and Year 3 - Africa, Year 3 and Year 4 - biomes Year 4 and Year 6 – Water.

A progression of skills map is followed to ensure coverage and that skills are being built upon throughout children's Geography journey. Fieldwork is highlighted in red on the curriculum map and takes place in every year group. Map work has also been carefully considered and is highlighted in blue to show the clear thought and progression. In Year 1, children are introduced to what a map is, directional language, an aerial photograph and then draw their own map with a key. In year 2, these map skills are built upon and children then learn the correct vocabulary for the 4 cardinal directions. They are also introduced to atlases and digital maps; being encouraged to locate countries and capitals. Following on from children drawing their own map in the previous years, children are then encouraged to follow a route on a larger scale map. In year 3, letters and co-ordinates are introduced for the first time, as well as OS maps. They also build on the skills of following a route which was covered the previous year. These skills are revised in year 4 as well as the introduction of 4 figure grid references and the comparing of maps from different dates. In year 5, the children are introduced to topographical and satellite maps. They are also introduced to 8-point compass directions which is revisited in year 6. Within their final year, they revisit many of the map skills taught throughout their time at West Heath and these skills are used to plan a route across South America.

Implementation

Through a question-based, enquiry approach, we believe children will become engrossed in their topic and given a continuous focus throughout. Children are introduced to the enquiry question in their first lesson of the topic and understand they will answer it at the end, using all the knowledge they have acquired throughout the half-term. This means an inherent thread is intertwined throughout: curriculum maps, planning, delivery and assessment. Although each lesson will have a different outcome and set of skills, the children understand that new knowledge, wedded with prior knowledge, will help them answer their over-arching topic question. This answer, teamed with teacher assessment, is used to form an overall assessment on Fischer Family Trust.

We start every new topic with a *Where in the world?* lesson. This happens from the first topic in year 1 to the last lesson in year 6. Although there are elements of progression within these lessons as they move up the school, the main focus is to repeat, embed and secure key geographical knowledge that we see as essential components to children's understanding of their sense of place. These include the 7 continents, 5 oceans, a variety of capital cities, Regions of England, and Districts near to our locality.

Impact

A high-quality geography education should inspire pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people and natural and human environments together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical processes. Geography presents a unique contribution to the national curriculum. It studies peoples' interaction with the environment. It allows children to explore social, environmental, economic and political aspects of place, whilst comparing local and global settings. At West Heath, we see the importance of giving Geography its own independence and importance. It should not always be labelled as 'Topic' or 'Humanities', but given its own autonomy and significance, to which it warrants.

EYFS

Children are exposed to explore their immediate environment, taking part in observations using maps; comparing similarities and differences between life in our country and in others. At West Heath Primary School, children explore the natural world around them, drawing on their own experiences and using a range of non-fiction texts. Children are exposed to some of the important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons.

Key Stage 1

The main focus in Key Stage 1, as the National Curriculum requires, is to begin to develop an understanding of the wider world, whilst mainly focusing on *the United Kingdom and their locality*. In **Year 1**, this is done through topics on: British seaside, the 4 seasons and the local area of West Heath. Again, in **Year 2**, there is a strong focus on locality with topics on: the UK and land use in their local area. However, in Year 2, the focus begins to dilate from the local area by introducing an African focus. By using a compare and contrast question (with the UK), the children will be able to wed this new knowledge with existing knowledge on their local area, acquired throughout KS1.

Key Stage 2

In **Year 3**, children use their prior knowledge of Africa to learn about savannahs and deserts. However, children's knowledge of the wider world should now be growing as they look at deserts and savannahs from around the world. The ethos of building on prior knowledge continues, with the local-centric topic of *UK*. **By year 4**, the children are beginning to look at more complex geographical knowledge, such as the intricacies of a volcano and a compare of contrast of 2 major European cities. These topic will be further expanding their knowledge of countries / continents bordering the ring of fire and major European countries.

The **Year 5** focus shifts much more to land use, trade and migration, to meet the human and (with focuses on local businesses) physical geography aspects of the National Curriculum. **Year 6** initially focus on Rivers, with a emphasis on local rivers as well as rivers across the globe. They then complete an enquiry question which focuses on a migration journey throughout South America. The purpose of this enquiry is to incorporate and assess not only the knowledge taught in that half term, but also the knowledge they have acquired throughout the whole of KS2 such as: continents, savannahs, volcanoes / the ring of fire, human geography and rivers etc.

Assessment

Children are introduced to the enquiry question in their first lesson of the topic and understand they will answer it at the end, using all the knowledge they have acquired throughout the half-term. This means an inherent thread is intertwined throughout: curriculum maps, planning, delivery and assessment. Although each lesson will have a different outcome and set of skills, the children understand that new knowledge, wedded with prior knowledge, will help them answer their over-arching topic question. This answer, teamed with teacher assessment, is used to form an overall assessment on Fischer Family Trust.

Inclusion

At West Heath 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. Through our geography teaching, we provide learning opportunities that match the needs of all children. Through an active, holistic approach to teaching and learning, we are giving opportunities for all children to develop as geographers, including those who do not always thrive in a classroom setting.

Role of the subject leader

The subject leader's responsibilities are:

- To ensure a high profile of the subject
- To ensure a full range of relevant and effective resources are available to enhance and support learning.
- To model the teaching of geography.
- To ensure progression of the key knowledge and skills identified within each unit and that these are integral to the programme of study and secure at the end of each age phase.
- To monitor books and ensure that key knowledge is evidenced in outcomes, alongside and as supported, by SMT.
- To monitor planning and oversee the teaching of geography.
- To lead further improvement in and development of the subject as informed by effective subject overview.
- To ensure that the geography curriculum has a positive effect on all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have low attainment.
- To ensure that the geography curriculum take account of the school's context, promotes children's pride in the local area and provides access to positive role models from the local area to enhance the geography curriculum.
- To ensure that approaches are informed by and in line with current identified good practice and pedagogy.

Review

This will be reviewed biannually by the Geography coordinator.