

# Geography Policy

## Intent

A high-quality Geography education inspires in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people, that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. It is essential for pupils at Town Lane Infant School to develop their knowledge of diverse places, people, and natural and human environments, in order for them to understand and thrive in the world around them. Geography is a strong and varied discipline that develops critical thinking, global awareness and problem-solving abilities. By studying Geography, pupils will understand how the world is a global stage and they are global citizens on this platform. As a result of a dynamic, varied and broad curriculum, our pupils will become more knowledgeable and 'worldly' in their views, forming the platform of developing into global citizens.

At Town Lane Infant School, we align with the National Curriculum for Geography as we recognise that this provides pupils with a well-rounded geographical understanding of both Human and Physical Geography and interweaves the skills necessary to become successful Geographers and active, global citizens.

It is our intention that pupils become more expert as they progress through the curriculum, accumulating and connecting **substantive** and **disciplinary** geographical knowledge.

- **Substantive knowledge** - this is the subject knowledge and explicit vocabulary used to learn about the content.
- **Disciplinary knowledge** - this considers how geographical knowledge originates and is revised. It is through disciplinary knowledge that children gradually become more expert by *thinking like a geographer*.

## Implementation

Geographical knowledge is taught explicitly in Geography lessons so that children know more, remember more and can do more. Adaptations to the curriculum and its provision are carefully thought out for lower and higher attaining pupils in order for them to make excellent progress against starting points.

Substantive knowledge is organised into four interrelated forms - **locational knowledge, place knowledge, human and physical processes**, and **geographical skills** - to ensure that pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are built upon through successive years towards clearly identified year group learning outcomes.

Wherever possible learning in Geography is linked to overall topics to enable children to add new learning to increasingly complex schemata that demonstrate the inter-relatedness of curriculum content.

To ensure our curriculum is taught to develop cumulatively sufficient knowledge by the end of each Key Stage we follow the stages outlined below:

- 1.) **Substantive** knowledge for each subject is mapped from EYFS to Year 2 to ensure our children learn cumulatively sufficient knowledge by the end of each Key Stage.
- 2.) **Disciplinary** knowledge as geographical skills and fieldwork is mapped from EYFS to Year 2 to enable children to apply their knowledge as skills.
- 3.) Explicit teaching of **vocabulary** is central to children's ability to connect new knowledge with prior learning. Planning identifies Tier 2 words, high frequency words used across content e.g. plan, and Tier 3 words, specific to subject domains e.g. manmade.

## Impact

Our Geography curriculum ensures that children leave Town Lane:

- Remembering key knowledge of places and locations as outlined in the National Curriculum and how to source geographical information as required.
- Able to use a variety of vital vocabulary with which to discuss their geographical knowledge and understanding.
- Knowing how their actions affect the local environment and the sustainability of the Earth's resources.
- Knowing how their actions support the continued award of Eco-School's **Green Flag Award**.

## Assessment

Books are marked or discussed regularly and inform assessments in line with our Teaching and Learning policy, and staff carefully explore the progression in learning from our 2 year old provision to Year 2. Assessment comes as a result of teacher observations, and pupil discussion, alongside evidence from work generated. Teachers will make regular progress and attainment judgements.

## How does the Geography curriculum support the whole school curriculum aims?

- To promote a love of reading and improve vocabulary acquisition.
- To promote cultural capital by teaching students a broad range of geographical knowledge. Learning also extends beyond the classroom with a range of fieldwork trips and afterschool Geography enrichment clubs.
- To develop students into global citizens by supporting them to develop outstanding character and to engage with education and the wider world responsibly and with curiosity. Within the Geography curriculum, this is exemplified by ensuring pupils are aware of their responsibilities within the local, national and international context.

## **What British values underpin the curriculum content?**

- Tolerance and appreciation of other cultures and societies
- Recognising difference and similarities between groups of people
- Appreciation and desire to protect the natural environment
- Respecting the British Values of Democracy and how the decisions and laws of the government can impact our environment

## **Geography in the Early Years**

Teaching of Geography in EYFS comes under the area of 'Understanding the World' which is sub divided into 'Past and Present', 'People Culture and Communities' and 'The Natural World'. At Town Lane, our staff carefully guide children to make sense of their physical world and their community.

At our school, the local area and our school grounds are at the heart of our EYFS Geography curriculum. Children develop a sense of place in relation to their own environment and an understanding of the physical world around them and their community. We also encourage our children to appreciate places and people all over the world. From starting in nursery, children are taught key geographical vocabulary which is then built upon as they progress through school. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters.

In the foundation stage children will have the opportunity to explore the world around them to develop their understanding of the world through practical hands-on experiences, alongside carefully chosen texts and media sources. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains.

In EYFS, children begin to develop their geographical knowledge by exploring features of our school and nursery. Plans are used to investigate different places as we begin to compare and contrast different environments. Children have rich opportunities to make use of school grounds to enhance and apply their skills as geographers. Throughout the year, children observe and discuss the weather and seasonal changes.

## **Forest school**

Our Forest School is an inspirational programme that offers our children regular opportunities to appreciate and enjoy their local physical environment. We aim to nurture an understanding and respect for their world through our curriculum offer. Forest schools originated in Sweden during the 1950s and were a way of teaching children about the natural world. The idea was adopted by Denmark as an important part of Early Years provision.

## **Fieldwork and its importance at Town Lane**

Fieldwork can include a range of ways of coming to know a place, from holistic experiences that nurture pupils' sense of place to building their knowledge and understanding of the physical and human geographical processes that shape our environment. We provide authentic learning activities at Town Lane Infant School, that are motivating for pupils, especially as, from the outset, they know that they will report their findings to a relevant, real audience – be it their peers, the Head teacher, school governors, local officials/ politicians, or the wider community. We believe that this can provide the impetus for practical action or campaigning to change things for the better, ensuring our pupils develop a sense of agency as local and global citizens who can make a difference.

## **Creating deep learning for long term memory**

Meaningful fieldwork builds, through memorable real-life learning activities, the geographical knowledge that is essential for pupils' understanding of the geographical processes that shape their environment. Fieldwork involves 'doing Geography', and through this active learning, makes otherwise abstract geographical concepts concrete. For example, Year 2 questionnaires designed to ask about services and leisure opportunities in place in the local area, in order to consider opportunities for their planning proposal puts Geography into a real-life context for our pupils.

The school grounds and the local area within walking distance of the school and provide many opportunities for pupils to plan and conduct simple geographical enquiries that involve fieldwork. Fieldwork investigations in KS1 are linked to the themes and topics in our Curriculum Plan, to enhance and enrich pupils' knowledge and understanding of place, and of physical, human and environmental Geography.

As pupils move through the school, they have opportunities to:

- undertake fieldwork in the school grounds, local area and increasingly unfamiliar environments
- ask and answer increasingly more complex geographical questions
- use increasingly specific vocabulary to name and describe the features they observe
- employ an increasingly sophisticated range of techniques to collect, analyse, evaluate and communicate the data they have collected

Key stage 1 Pupils have a wider range of fieldwork experiences, from free exploration and imaginative engagement (Bog Baby in Year 1) to more structured enquiries that involve the use of simple techniques to record field data and answer geographical questions (Planning Proposal in Year 2). Fieldwork at Town Lane involves plentiful opportunities for first-hand sensory exploration, observation and discussion with peers and adults.

Pupils are provided with opportunities to:

- investigate the physical and human features of the school and school grounds: naming and describing what they see (e.g. different areas including playground, car park, field, wildlife area) and how these areas are used; routes around the school site, people's jobs, places that have been/could be improved, and so on.
- investigate different weather conditions through observation and by making and using simple measurement devices (e.g. to record wind direction, to measure rainfall).
- observe and record seasonal changes (e.g. to flowering plants and deciduous trees) in the school grounds and local area.
- explore the local area of the school to investigate the range of buildings, roads, green spaces and other local features.
- visit some local facilities (e.g. shops, a church) and talk about what happens there and investigate why people go there.
- take a short journey to investigate a slightly more distant site that contrasts with the immediate local area (Barnstondale residential visit in Year 2).
- visit a park or local green space to observe its physical and human features and investigate how people use and enjoy it.
- investigate environmental issues (e.g. where litter collects).

### **Fieldwork in the Early Years**

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils have plentiful opportunities for free exploration of their setting and outdoor area and to visit places in the immediate vicinity (e.g. local streets, park, shop, church). Here, they can become familiar with these places through first-hand sensory exploration, observation and talk. Pupils have opportunities to ask questions and follow their own interests, and these early experiences provide opportunities for language development as pupils name and describe what they see to peers and adults.

Pupils are provided with opportunities to:

- explore their setting's outdoor area, noticing and naming its features (e.g. play equipment, different areas and surfaces, flower beds).
- experience different weather conditions and their impact on the environment.
- examine and discuss natural objects (e.g. leaves, twigs, stones).
- explore the immediate local area through walks and visits to selected sites.
- using small world play or the role play area to represent a visited place.
- making drawings (e.g. of their favourite place in the outdoor area, what they saw at the park).
- taking digital photos (e.g. of a collection of natural objects, buildings in the locality).
- sequencing photos to recall features seen on a visit or short walk.
- drawing a map (e.g. of the outdoor area).
- counting (e.g. cars parked at the start/end of the day).
- expressing their feelings about places they visit, saying which features they like/dislike.

## **Recording of work**

Evidence of Geography study can be formally recorded in Topic books or Remarkable Moments books, or it can be in the form of photographs or videos. Evidence is collected by the curriculum lead to ensure continuity across year groups and progression.

## **Parental and community involvement**

Parents and carers are invited into school for a curriculum workshops, which provides key information regarding teaching and learning in all foundation subjects. Parents and carers are also encouraged to help on school field trips as they play a vital role in supervising and supporting children whilst on visits. As a school we have strong links with the local community, such as the local church, which provides an opportunity to enhance children's experiences of the world around them.

## **Health and Safety**

Staff will consider pupils' welfare at all times, especially when required to leave the school site for educational purposes. Adequate adult supervision must be employed for such trips. (See also the Educational Visits Policy)

## **Homework**

Research work linked to current studies will be given out when appropriate. This will be set in the form of a Learning log task in KS1. Homework in these books is commented upon at the back of the Learning Log book. Homework set comes back to school two weeks later.

## **Role of the lead**

The curriculum lead will keep up to date with current issues and will support staff through CPD development. The lead will monitor the subject in accordance with the school's policy and will support new staff members and student teachers as required with planning. The lead will report the effectiveness of the subject to members of SLT and its local governing body.

Training for, and supporting our Geography curriculum ensures:

- Teachers with secure subject knowledge, an appreciation of the structure of Geography as a subject and an appreciation of the relationship between the two.
- Teachers able to assess pupils' learning against our Progression Map objectives.

**Policy written by S Macaskill Autumn 2023**

**Updated by R Rimmer Autumn 2024**

**Links to UNCRC (*United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child*)**

Article 28 - Every child has a right to an education. Primary education must be free. Secondary education must be available for every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity. Richer countries must help poorer countries to achieve this.

Article 29 - Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

Article 31 - Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.