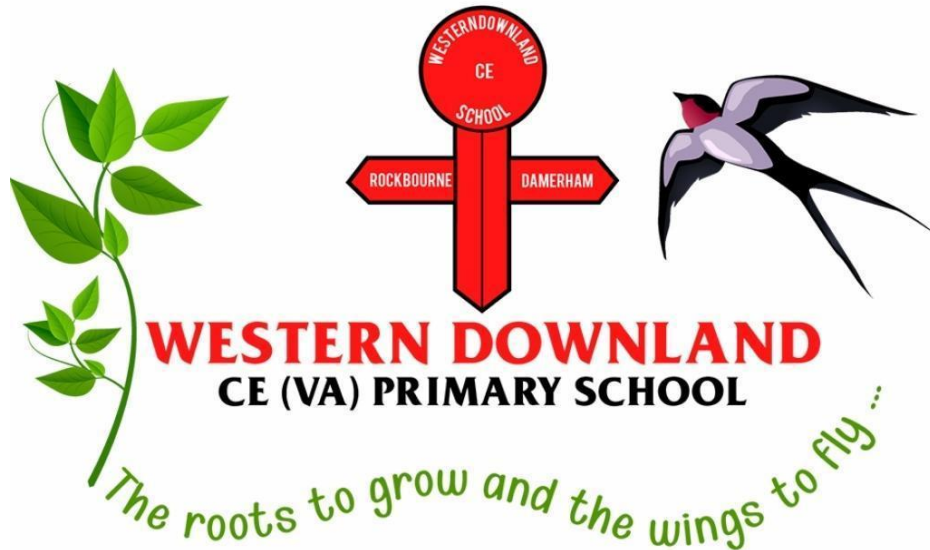


WESTERN DOWNLAND C. of E. (V.A.) PRIMARY SCHOOL

In partnership with parents we aim to provide:

'The roots to grow and the wings to fly'



Geography Policy

Western Downland CE (VA) Primary School

Reviewed
Next Review

Summer 2022
Summer 2024

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Western Downland CE (VA) Primary School

Geography Policy

1. AIMS

Intent

At Western Downland, we want to equip our children with the skills and concepts which allow them to better understand and appreciate the wonderful diversity of both the natural world, and the ways that we as humans both rely upon and shape our environment. We want them to begin to see some of the complexities of our world and the interdependencies that exist, which have increasingly important implications for our future.

Implementation

In the curriculum, we build that appreciation of diversity and difference in the natural and human world by making comparisons, initially with a focus on a specific locality, then over the years gradually building both the scale and scope of enquiry. Finding both similarities and differences between locations is a powerful tool for building understanding.

We build the geography-specific skills such as map and field work, using satellite imagery and interpreting different presentations of data, which allow children to develop a factual understanding of a place, and also see the impact of people moulding these places into different kinds of spaces, organised – and at times exploited - for human benefit. They learn how to apply these skills, and build their geographical vocabulary, so they are also equipped to describe the physical and human world around them with growing precision and sophistication.

Deepening understanding of a place also requires an appreciation of some of the key natural and human processes in play. Over the course of the curriculum we look at physical processes such as the changing weather, climatic zones, rivers and flooding, the water cycle, volcanic activity, how the coastline is formed, and how climate, vegetation and animal life interact within biomes. We also look at the interplay between people and the physical environment they live in, and how this can shape and organise that environment for different purposes, such as settlement, agriculture, tourism and the use and distribution of natural resources.

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Impact

Progressively, we look for evidence that our children are learning how to “think like geographers” – for example in their ability to map, describe and portray the world they live in and further afield with factual accuracy and insight, both as places and spaces.

We look to see if their understanding is formed by using important ways of geographical thinking, such as finding similarities and differences between places, or by identifying the processes at work to create a particular environment, by finding important interdependencies that exist in given environments, perhaps even spotting how the impact of processes can vary according to scale.

Ideally, we will see children whose critical understanding of the world and their place in it is also adding a growing ethical awareness of the decisions we need to make individually and collectively, to ensure the sustainability of our world.

2. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The Geography curriculum is driven by the requirements of the National Curriculum guidance.

Foundation Stage

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (March 2014, updated September 2021).

Key Stage 1 & 2

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of Geography National Curriculum 2014.

3. THE GOVERNING BODY

The school governing body is responsible for strategic oversight of the Geography curriculum and its delivery across the school, ensuring the intent, implementation and impact of the curriculum actually meets expected standards, is fit for purpose and in line with the wider learning ethos of the school.

4. SUBJECT ORGANISATION

With single class year groups, coverage of the geography curriculum is embedded within half-termly topic enquiries, and mapped across year groups in line with NC guidance, reflecting the best opportunities for enquiry subjects that match the growing ability of the children, year by year.

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Teachers use Enquiry Organisers to plan each 5 -7 week unit, identifying potential key questions within the enquiry, the expected prior knowledge, understanding and skills, the known knowledge and skills to be taught, key vocabulary to be acquired and potential misconceptions to be addressed. The medium term plan is then broken down into a weekly progression of lessons, each with a specific learning objective.

4.1 Foundation Stage

The areas of learning and development

Early years explore geographical themes in line with the EYFS framework. Children are guided to develop a sense of their physical world, as well as their community, through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment. The key knowledge and skills in reception provide the foundation to those 5 identified in phase 1 and specifically Y1. Children are assessed according to the Development Matters Attainment targets.

5. BREADTH OF STUDY

The breadth of curriculum coverage is closely informed by the National Curriculum.

- The disciplinary concepts of place and environment are developed in unit studies across all the year groups, while the more sophisticated concepts of interconnection and sustainability are explored in later year groups.
- Likewise, the key physical and human processes that help deepen understanding of place are explored progressively – for example some river processes in Year 3, followed by an examination of the wider water cycle in Year 4.
- In terms of scale, KS1 studies focus on a restricted locality and make comparisons on a similar scale elsewhere in the world. In Year 1 the comparison is between land use in the locality of the school, and a village of a similar size on the Brahmaputra River in Bangladesh. In Year 2 the comparison is made in terms of climate and its impact on garden design in the UK and Morocco.

In KS2 the scale of analysis increases. In Year 3 rivers, and in particular their flooding characteristics, are investigated for an area in the UK and Egypt. In Year 4 the interplay between physical geographic features and human habitation is explored for a region around Portsmouth in the UK and Naples in Italy. In Year 5 the scale of analysis expands to look at national and some international patterns of resource distribution and use. In Year 6 the enquiry has a global scale, looking at the key interdependencies at play within different biomes.

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- Key geographic skills, such as field work, the use of maps, aerial and satellite imagery, and the interpretation of different data sources and representations, are built upon year by year, to growing levels of complexity and sophistication that support the level of enquiry in that year group. Likewise, locational knowledge is developed year by year, building on the previous foundations.

6. PARENTAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

We value parental engagement and support. Parents are kept informed of the planned learning each half term through the Routes 2 Roots communication, which contains ideas for how parents can help both prepare and support their child with the learning. Opportunities are taken with home learning to extend learning with some parental support, and to allow children to pursue specific interests of their own within the enquiry topic. Parents with specific knowledge and skills are welcomed to help enrich the class learning experience.

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Class teachers use their Enquiry Organisers to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their curriculum delivery and identify improvements they can make, year on year.

The Subject Leader is responsible for regular monitoring and evaluation of both planning and the tangible outcomes of the children's learning, through planning monitoring and book scrutiny, providing feedback to teachers and feeding the findings into their development planning for the subject.

The Staff PDM process also gives the opportunity for teachers to come together and share their plans and outputs, to help the staff team as a whole evaluate how well the progression of learning is working.

8. ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

Teachers' planning is informed by an expectation of the prior knowledge, understanding and skills they will be building upon, and they will use formative assessment at the start of a unit to identify whether they have that expected baseline.

Teachers assess childrens' attainment and progress in line with the learning objectives identified in their plans, and specific outcomes identified for the unit as a whole. Childrens' effort and attainment is formally recorded and reported to parents in the annual report for each child.

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9. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Subject Leader is responsible for pursuing professional development opportunities to ensure they keep up to date with subject knowledge and pedagogy, for example through regular Hampshire Subject Leader Network meetings, and then disseminate this to staff colleagues.

Within the staff PDM process, there are Subject Spotlight opportunities to update staff on key developments and promote specific subject initiatives.

The Subject Leader also works directly with teaching colleagues to support the development of plans and resources as required, either in the course of curriculum changes or in the light of monitoring feedback.

10. RESOURCES

There are shared resources at each site (KS1 and KS2) in terms of age appropriate maps, atlases and school library books relating to specific topic areas, as well as resources to support field work activities. Class teachers can also access the Hampshire SLS to request topic-related books to support each unit.

11. INCLUSION

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 in a number of ways, including:

- 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;
- differentiated levels of questioning so that children are challenged to think about a concept
at a level that is appropriate to their ability.
- 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.

12. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All children are provided with equal access to the mathematics curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

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This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

Teaching and Learning Policy

Assessment and Record Keeping

Responding to pupils' work / Feedback / Marking policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

ICT Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Member of staff responsible: Lindsey Fish

Date policy updated: November 2022

Date to be reviewed: November 2024