**William Cassidi C. of E. Primary School**

**Geography Policy Statement**

**Introduction**

Geography is a subject packed with excitement and dynamism that synthesises aspects of the world and helps us to better understand its people, places and environments, and the interactions between them. Geography also helps us understand how and why places are changing, and to better imagine, predict and work towards, likely and preferred futures. Underpinning all of this is a strong spatial component that deepens our understanding of what places are like, why and how they are connected, and the importance of location. (Taken form the Geographical Association website.)

**Aims:**

**Through our teaching of Geography we aim to:**

Furnish children with knowledge about the location of globally significant places.

Stimulate the children's interest and curiosity about their own surroundings and other places in the world.

Encourage children to seek answers to such fundamental questions as:

* Where is this place?
* What is it like? (And why?)
* How and why is it changing?
* How does this place compare with other places?
* How and why are places connected?

Help children to learn about the physical and human processes that determine the character of places.

Develop an understanding of how physical and human processes interact to cause change, and an understanding that change can have both positive and negative consequences which have implications for the future.

Develop children's competence in geographical skills such as:

* collecting, analysing and communicating data gathered through experiences of fieldwork.
* interpreting a range of sources of geographical information.
* communicating geographical information in a variety of ways.

Foster a sense of responsibility for the earth, its resources and the citizens of the world.

Develop respect and an interest in people throughout the world regardless of culture, race or religion.

**Curriculum Planning and Teaching:**

Geography is taught in Nursery and Reception through topic and theme work and adheres to the requirements set out in the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, specifically within the ‘The World’ strand of the Understanding the World area of learning.

The statutory requirements of the 2014 geography National Curriculum programme of study for Key Stages 1 and 2 are used as the basis for planning for children in Years 1 to 6. Each Year group is given a number of units in the form of questions to investigate. Examples of questions are, ‘Why can’t a meerkat live in the North Pole?’ in Year 1 to ‘Why should the rainforests be important to us all? in Year 4. Each year group is made aware of the elements of the programmes of study which their units will cover, thereby ensuring comprehensive coverage of the relevant programmes of study on completion of a Key Stage.

Geography work may be included in a cross-curricular topic if it is appropriate to do so, although it can also be taught discretely. It is also taught through our focused curriculum weeks, where the children and their parents have the opportunity to see what learning in Geography looks like across the school.

In addition, there will be many and varied opportunities for children to learn about geography which is above and beyond the statutory programmes of study. For example, as a natural progression when learning about other subjects or when discussing current events.

**National Curriculum Requirements:**

**Foundation Stage:**

The statutory framework for the early years foundation stage states:

‘Understanding the World involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment’.

The Early Learning Goal for The World is:

Children know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They talk about features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another. They make observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur, and talk about changes.

Staff in our EYFS have developed a ‘The World’ curriculum by unpicking the skills and knowledge that the children will need to acquire in our Nursery and Reception classes to give them the best possible chance of achieving the Early Learning Goal by the end of the foundation stage.

**Key Stage One Programme of Study:**

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:

**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 Programme of Study:**

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 to:

**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.

**Homework:**

Children may be asked to undertake homework related to Geography when the class teacher feels that this is appropriate and that it will support and enhance learning within school.

**Assessment, Recording and Reporting:**

The children are encouraged to use a variety of means to communicate and record their work. Formative assessment is used regularly by teachers to inform future planning and next steps. Summative assessment of a pupil’s level of attainment is performed by class teachers on completion of each unit of work where the children are assessed as beginning/within/secure what is expected for their age. Teachers make an informed judgement, based on work produced and observation, guided by a series of progressive statements of key geographical skills. In addition, each unit of work has a list of suggested questions which teachers can use to inform their judgements. Continuing assessment will also be undertaken within the Foundation Stage and will form part of the Foundation Stage Profile.

Progress in Geography is reported to parents in the ‘foundation subjects’ part of our summer term report to parents.

**Monitoring, Evaluation and Review:**

It is the role of the geography co-ordinator to monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning of geography. Class teachers evaluate their geography lessons in order to improve the teaching of geography.

**Resources:**

Resources which are specific to a particular year are distributed to the relevant class teacher. Other resources can be found in the geography/history cupboard opposite the head teacher’s office. Resources which are used in a number of subjects may be found in the appropriate cupboards. For example, wind gauges are found in the science cupboard. We also have a subscription to Digimaps. This offers a range of on-line mapping and data download facilities which provide maps and spatial data from Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Landmark Information Group and SeaZone Ltd.

**Equal Opportunities and Special Needs:**

Every child at William Cassidi regardless of ability (including special needs and gifted and talented), gender or ethnicity, has access to a broad and balanced geography curriculum. The school reflects the principles from the statement on inclusion, in The National Curriculum Handbook for Primary Teachers in England.

These are:

* setting suitable learning challenges;
* responding to pupils’ diverse learning needs;
* overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals.

The school also adheres to the principles of the Human Rights Act.

**Parental and Community Links:**

Parents are encouraged to be involved with their children's work and their help may be requested on occasions. For example, providing information about the local area or a place they have visited or by lending artefacts. The village of Stillington and other surrounding areas are a rich resource which children will use many times to support their geography learning in school.

Parents are invited to our whole school events during theme weeks, where they have the opportunity to see the work covered by each class and how learning progresses throughout the school.

**Health and Safety:**

Visits undertaken to enhance geographical learning must firstly be sanctioned by the Head Teacher and then must be subject to a risk assessment to ensure the health and safety of pupils, teachers and helpers.

Policy written by: Mrs S. Hall

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