



GEOGRAPHY POLICY

Aims and objectives

At Stanhope Barrington C of E Primary School we strive to provide our children with the opportunities to become global citizens, deepening their interest and wonder in exploring their own place in the world. We believe it is important to provide 'Living Geography' concerned with children's lives, their futures and their world. Through our curriculum our children will develop a sense of their world at the local, national and global level, understanding the interconnections between how people and the environment interact. Fieldwork is an essential part of our work. Pupils learn to think critically, think spatially, use maps, visual images and new technologies, including geographical information systems to analyse and present information. They will have an adept understanding of their responsibilities within their own society whilst also having a coherent insight into sustainability of a dynamically changing world.

The aims of geography are:

- to enable children to gain knowledge and understanding of places in the world;
- to increase children's knowledge of other cultures and, in so doing, teach a respect and understanding of what it means to be a positive citizen in a multi-cultural country;
- to allow children to learn graphic skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps;
- to enable children to know and understand environmental problems at a local, regional and global level;
- to encourage in children a commitment to sustainable development and an appreciation of what 'global citizenship' means;
- to develop a variety of other skills, including those of enquiry, problem solving, ICT, investigation and how to present their conclusions in the most appropriate way.

Teaching and learning style

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 learning. We encourage children to ask and answer geographical questions. We provide opportunities for children to use a variety of data, such as maps, statistics, graphs, pictures, and aerial photographs, and we enable them to use IT 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.

We recognise that children have widely different geographical abilities so therefore 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 by ability in the room and setting different tasks to each ability group;
- 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.

Geography curriculum planning

We use the National Geography Programmes of study as the basis for our curriculum planning. We have adapted the national scheme to our local environment, 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 for each key stage. The geography subject leader works 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 planning is drawn from the topics/themes outlined in the long term plans. The geography subject leader reviews these plans on a regular basis. Because we have some mixed-age classes, our medium-term follows a two-year rotation cycle. In this way we ensure that children have complete coverage of the National Curriculum but do not have to repeat topics.

Each class teacher creates a plan for each lesson. These daily lesson plans list specific learning objectives. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and often discusses them with the geography subject leader on an informal basis.

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.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Early Years we aim to inspire children's curiosity and fascination about the world and its people, places, cultures and lives so that this remains with them for the rest of their lives. We also aim to develop and deepen the children's geographical knowledge, understanding and skills for them to use and apply to benefit themselves and others. Children explore environments in their own and their family's lives. They experience a variety of geographical events such as, journeys locally, where children go shopping, to the park, to the river etc. We encourage our children to share experiences or photographs of family holidays at home or abroad. Our children deepen their understanding of features of their environment through small world play (eg buildings, farm, trains) and through topics about homes and local buildings. They learn about different types of environments, land and sea, urban and rural, farmland and woods, seaside, hot and cold places. We encourage our children to show care and concern for the environment and for living things. We also observe similarities and differences between places and communities.

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 the literacy hour are geographical in nature. For example, in Key Stage 1 we use the Katie Morag books by Mairi Hedderwick to develop children's knowledge and understanding about an island home. 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.

Mathematics

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.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

We make provision for the children to use the computer in geography lessons where appropriate. We incorporate ICT in our geography curriculum planning at Key Stage 2, and we use it at Key Stage 1 when appropriate. Children use ICT in geography to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work. They research information through the Internet and Encarta. 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 to record and use photographic images.

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 Stanhope Barrington C of E 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 in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Assessment and recording

We assess the children's work in geography by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lessons. Once the children complete a piece of work, we mark and comment as necessary. Once they complete a topic/theme, we make a summary judgement of the work for each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. We use these to plan future work and to provide the basis for end of year progress judgements.

The geography subject leader keeps samples of the children's work in a portfolio which shows the expected level of achievement in geography for each year group.

Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to enable us to teach all the geography themes. We keep these resources in a central store clearly labelled related to themes/topics. 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. Our library houses a wide range of geography topic books and a selection 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 carry out investigations in the local area and observe and record information in and around the school site. At Key Stage 2 the children do a study of the local area. We also offer upper key stage 2 children the opportunity to take part in a yearly residential visit to Kingswood.

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. The geography subject leader provides the Headteacher with an annual report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. We allocate special time for the vital task of reviewing samples of children's work and for visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.

Last Reviewed: September 2025

Next Review: September 2026