

Our vision for Geography at Birley Spa Primary Academy

Intent

At Birley Spa Primary Academy, we are GEOGRAPHERS! We want our children to love Geography. We want them to have no limits to what their ambitions are and grow up wanting to be cartographers, environmental scientists, town planners or research analysts. Our aim is that, through the teaching of Geography, we stimulate all children's interest and understanding about the world around us. At Birley Spa we believe that Geography helps to provoke and provide answers to questions about the natural and human aspects of the world. Children are encouraged to develop a greater understanding and knowledge of the world, as well as their place in it. The geography curriculum at Birley Spa enables children to develop knowledge and skills that are transferable to other curriculum areas and which can and are used to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Geography is, by nature, an investigative subject, which develops an understanding of concepts, knowledge and skills.

The curriculum is designed to ensure that teaching equips pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress through the school, their growing knowledge about the world helps them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge and skills are progressive and are sequenced to provide the framework and approaches that provide explanation of how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

We seek to inspire in children a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people which will remain with them for the rest of their lives, equipping them well for further education and beyond.

Implementation (including pedagogy)

At Birley Spa Primary Academy, Geography is taught weekly in every year group, over three half terms per year. Topics are blocked to allow children to focus on developing their knowledge and skills, studying each topic in depth. We have developed a progression of skills with each year group, which enables pupils to build on, develop and revisit their skills each year.

Medium term planning for all units will cover key geographical concepts: Locational and Directional knowledge, Place Knowledge, Human and Physical Geography, Geographical Skills and Fieldwork. (See Geography Curriculum Progression document).

Through using a range of assessment tools, differentiation is facilitated by teachers, to ensure that each pupil can access the Geography curriculum. Pupils are regularly given the opportunity for Self or Peer Assessment, which will then be used to inform planning,

preparation, differentiation and address misconceptions within that lesson, or for the next lesson.

Educational, immersive displays that answer key questions help to create a rich learning environment for each Geography focus. Cross-curricular links are planned for, with other subjects such as Maths, Writing and Computing.

EYFS:

EYFS do not have discrete Geography lessons but instead incorporate Geography into the Understanding of the World Around Us ELG. This is the 'curiosity led' approach. In EYFS, children begin to develop their geographical knowledge by exploring features of our school. Maps and atlases 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. Children also learn about the different jobs which people do in our community.

Key Stage 1:

In line with the national curriculum 2014, the curriculum at Birley Spa aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes
- understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time
- are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
 - collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
 - interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
 - communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.

During Key Stage 1 pupils should develop knowledge about the world, the United Kingdom and their local area. 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.

Children will develop their locational knowledge; they will learn to name and locate the world's seven continents and five oceans. In addition, they will learn to name, locate and identify the characteristics of the four countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas.

They will also develop a greater understanding of place by comparing the 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. The specific geographical locations selected for these comparisons will be selected to link to other areas of the curriculum to allow for cross-curricular work and development. In addition to developing children's locational and place knowledge, they will have the opportunity to learn about human and physical geography. During this study, they will 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. They will also begin to use geographical vocabulary to refer to key physical features (beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather) and key human features (city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shops.)

Children will develop geographical skills and fieldwork skills, through these three areas of study, where they learn to use world maps, atlases and globes; simple compass directions; aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features and to use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of their local area.

Key Stage 2:

During Key Stage 2 Pupils extend and develop their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to include the United Kingdom and Europe, North and South America; studying the location and characteristics of a range of the world's most significant human and physical features. They continue to develop their use of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to enhance their locational and place knowledge.

They extend their locational knowledge when they learn to locate and name European countries as well as North and South America countries, concentrating on their environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries, and major cities. In addition to this, they extend their locational knowledge to be able to name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, describing key geographical regions, human and physical characteristics, key topographical features and land-use patterns. This is further extended to identify the position and significance of latitude, longitude, the Equator, the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, the Arctic and Antarctic Circle and the Greenwich Meridian and time zones.

They will build on their understanding of place by comparing the geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a region of the United Kingdom, a region of a European country and a region within North or South America.

As in Key Stage 1, the specific geographical locations selected for these comparisons will be selected to link to other areas of the curriculum to allow for cross-curricular work and development.

In Key stage 2 human and physical geography knowledge is extended to allow children to develop an understanding of aspects of physical geography (investigating climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle) and human geography (learning about types of settlement and land use, economic activity and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water.)

Children will continue to develop geographical skills and fieldwork skills, through these three areas of study, where they learn to use maps, atlases and globes and digital/computer mapping; eight-point compass directions; four and six-figure grid references, symbols and keys and the Ordnance Survey maps. They will also 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.

Geography pedagogy:

Key pedagogy that underpins the teaching of Geography at Birley Spa Primary Academy includes the following:

Core geographical knowledge is identified and explained throughout. A breadth of teaching approaches appropriate to the content and desired learning outcomes are used to engage all pupils and enable them to not just acquire knowledge but to apply it in meaningful contexts.

Appropriate discussion is recommended as a means of checking pupils' geographical learning systematically, identifying misconceptions and providing immediate feedback.

Questions and tasks to stretch and challenge the most able pupils are incorporated where appropriate. Revisiting ideas and concepts in different, more challenging, contexts in later units, using varied assessments and the inclusion of quizzes are all designed to help pupils remember content and integrate new knowledge into their evolving conceptual framework.

Quality resources and materials are provided online to support the geography curriculum and are sequenced towards the accumulation of skills, knowledge and understanding for pupils' futures.

The focus throughout is on contextualized geography, using real, named, localities and environments which can be located on appropriate maps, and avoiding stereotypes. Illustration of the variation in features (not all cliffs are white like those at Dover!) is given wherever possible to overcome this.

Throughout the units, knowledge, skills and concepts are brought together holistically, underpinned by the development of a strong and evolving subject vocabulary with which to talk about and discuss the geography being learned.

An enquiry approach is used as a shared experience, with key and supplementary questions, to encourage curiosity, geographical thinking, exploration and research, and to combine relevant knowledge with skills. This hopefully mitigates against a didactic approach and encourages teaching and learning to become a joint pupil / teacher 'adventure' or 'journey'.

Pupils will often discover that some of the questions have more than one answer, some of which are 'better' than others. This is particularly true when environmental issues are discussed, and experts propose different solutions. Pupils can explore how 'real world' decisions are made!

Wider curriculum Implementation expectations:

In order to support children in their ability to know more and remember more, there are regular opportunities to review the learning that has taken place in previous topics as well as previous lessons. At the start of each topic, children will review previous learning via a pre-assessment and will have the opportunity to share what they already know about a current topic.

Children (and parents/carers) are given a knowledge organiser at the start of each topic which details some key information, dates and vocabulary. This is not used as part of an assessment, but to support children with their acquisition of knowledge and is used as a reference document.

Effective CPD and standardisation opportunities are available to staff to ensure high levels of confidence and knowledge are maintained. To support teaching, staff access a range of resources and planning including Rising Stars.

Impact

Outcomes in topic books evidence a broad and balanced geography curriculum and demonstrate children's acquisition of identified key knowledge relating to each of the identified national curriculum strands, as appropriate to key stage; locational knowledge, place knowledge and human and physical geography. This is in addition to the development and application of key skills, supported by fieldwork.

As children progress throughout the school, they develop a deep knowledge, understanding an appreciation of their local area and its place within the wider geographical context. Geographical understanding, as well as children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Children learn about careers related to geography from members of the local and wider community, with specialist skills and knowledge (for example during science week and careers week) and this ensures that they are well prepared for the next steps of their education.