

Geography Policy

Purpose

This policy reflects the values, ethos and philosophy of Mount Pleasant Junior School in relation to the teaching of Geography. It gives a framework within which all governors, staff and children work together and it gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment.

The Geography Policy is very much an ongoing, working document and as such it reflects both the practices that are carried out and those to which the school is striving.

Audience

This document is a declaration of Mount Pleasant Junior School's policy towards the teaching of Geography and, as such, is available for any interested person. The policy is presented to and agreed upon by the whole staff and the governing body and is then distributed to all individual members of the teaching and non-teaching staff and the school governors. The school will ensure the accessibility of the document to visitors, for example, visiting teachers, support staff and parents. Extra copies of the document are available from the Geography co-ordinator.

Subject Aims

Geography is a foundation subject within the National Curriculum. The aims of teaching Geography at Mount Pleasant Junior School are consistent with our school Philosophy and takes account of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for Geography. We aim to ensure that geographical enquiry and skills are used when developing knowledge and understanding of places, patterns and processes, environmental change and sustainable development.

The aims of Geography are:

- To enable children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world they live in through investigation of that world
- To gain a perspective in which children can place local, national and international events
- To provide a geography curriculum which is interesting, broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated
- To fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum for Geography
- To measure the progressive development of geographical concepts, knowledge, skills and aptitudes
- To enable children to work geographically in a range of appropriate contexts, using a wide variety of materials and equipment
- To promote positive attitudes towards, and enthusiasm for Geographical work in school
- To gain understanding of the processes that have produced pattern and variety on the Earth's surface and those which can bring about change
- To become acquainted with a variety of maps, including large-scale local maps, and be able to apply skills of map-reading and interpretation to globes and atlas maps, and to identify geographical features

Work in Geography follows the requirements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and the Level Descriptions. The Geography Curriculum is organised into levels of increasing challenge and acquisition of geographical skills.

The children work at levels appropriate to their ability. It is expected that most children will perform within the range of Levels 2 to 5 by the end of Key Stage 2.

➤ Subject Objectives

Pupils should be able to:

- Acquire knowledge of a range of places and themes at local to national scale
- Describe and offer explanations for the characteristics of places, and their similarities and differences
- Identify, describe and offer explanations for physical and human processes
- Appreciate the effects of physical and human processes on places and geographical patterns
- Appreciate the relationships between people and their environment, and describe and offer explanations for the ways in which environments can be managed
- Apply geographical knowledge and understanding learned in one context to other studies at the same scale
- Develop and use appropriate geographical skills to investigate aspects of local and more distant physical and human environments

At Mount Pleasant Junior School the importance of geographical enquiry is appreciated.

Enquiry skills consist of:

- Observing and asking questions about geographical features and issues
- Collecting and recording information to answer the questions
- Analyse the evidence, draw conclusions and communicate findings

Examples:

- What/Where is it?
- What is it like?
- How did it get like this?
- How and Why is it changing?

These enquiry skills should be attained through fieldwork and classroom activities.

The National Curriculum Programmes of Study call for children to be educated geographically in the areas of:

- Geographical enquiry and skills
- Knowledge and understanding of places
- Knowledge and understanding of patterns and processes
- Knowledge and understanding of environmental change and sustainable development
- Localities
- Themes

Therefore the objectives of Geography Mount Pleasant Junior School reflect and build on these requirements.

Throughout the Key Stage there must be a progression of education.

- Gradual development of skills and strategies of enquiry
- Increasing breadth of study
- Increasing depth of study
- Increasing complexity of place/themes studied
- Increasing range of scales
- Greater understanding of key ideas
- Greater awareness of social, political, economic and environmental issues
- Greater range, accuracy and complexity of vocabulary used

Geography Guidance

Geography Skills

Throughout the Key Stage there is continuing development of a widening range of increasingly complex geographical skills.

Children will be able to:

- Use appropriate geographical vocabulary to describe and interpret their surroundings
- Undertake fieldwork use instruments to make measurements
- Undertake fieldwork – use appropriate techniques
- Make maps and plans at a variety of scales, using symbols/keys
- Use and interpret globes
- Use and interpret maps and plans at a variety of scales
- Use coordinates
- Use grid references
- Measure direction and distance on map/plan/globe
- Use the contents page of an atlas
- Use the index of an atlas
- Use of pictures to inform studies
- Use of photographs to inform studies
- Use of other sources to inform studies
- Use of IT to gain access to additional information sources
- Use IT to assist in handling evidence
- Use IT to assist in presenting evidence

Sense of Place

Three localities are studied. One is the school and the catchment area of most of its pupils. This work follows on that carried out in Key Stage 1.

Another area is a contrasting locality within Britain. The remaining area is India.

Thematic Studies

Three geographical themes are studied:

- Water
- Settlement
- Environment Change

Curriculum and School Organisation

The teaching of Geography at Mount Pleasant Junior School is approached in a flexible way throughout the school within each year group.

The Scheme of Work outlines in more detail how Geography is planned across the Key Stage, with each year group having areas of work allocated to them in the form of topics.

Planning and evaluation of work takes place in termly or half-termly plans (long-term plans).

Class Organisation and Teaching Style

At Mount Pleasant Junior School individual class teachers are responsible for their own class organisation and teaching style in relation to Geography, while at the same time ensuring that these complement and reflect the overall aims and philosophy of the school.

Children are given the opportunity to work as a class, as part of a group or as individuals. The learning task or activity, the nature of the topic being studied and the resources being used will determine the choice of class organisation. This applies to class based work and fieldwork activities.

Geography provides opportunities for teaching the following cross-curricular themes:

- Environmental Education
- Economic and Industrial Understanding
- Health Education
- Citizenship

It also lends itself readily to the teaching of the following cross-curricular dimensions:

- Equal Opportunities
- Special Education Needs
- Multicultural Education
- European Awareness
- Personal and Social Education

At Mount Pleasant Junior School the importance of fieldwork in Geography is appreciated. In order to facilitate this, help and advice will be given to staff.

Assessment

Teachers in the course of their teaching mostly carry out formative assessment. Opportunities for assessment should be highlighted in medium term plans.

Assessment tasks include:

- Short tests that can be answered orally or in writing.
- Specific activities that will highlight understanding of previously taught elements.
- Individual discussions with pupils.

Summative assessment takes place in the form of an annual report written by the class teacher. This will focus on the child's level of geographical skills and knowledge of places or themes studied during the year.

Marking

Effective marking will give pupils feedback about their own progress. Effective marking:

- Aims to help children learn, not to find fault, and comments are always positive and constructive.
- Is often done while a task is being carried out through discussion between child and teacher.
- Is sensitive to the needs of the child.
- Enables children to clearly see their next step.

I.C.T

Children must be given opportunities to apply and develop their ICT skills to support their learning in Geography. Children will be taught o:

- Find information from a variety of sources, including the internet.
- Develop their ideas using ICT tools to amend and refine their work.
- Exchange and share information, directly and through electronic media.
- Use ICT to assist in classifying evidence.
- Use ICT to assist handling evidence.

Resources and Accommodation

A range of Geography resources are available in school. Most of the resources are kept in topic boxes. The Geography coordinator is responsible for maintaining Geography resources, monitoring their use and ordering new resources. Resources are replaced and purchased by the coordinator following the general school ordering procedure. Staff are asked to inform the coordinator of any resources they would like to be added to the store.