



The Federation of North and South  
Cowton Community Primary School and  
Melsonby Methodist Primary School



# Geography Policy

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## **Introduction**

**1.1** Geography at The Federation of North and South Cowton Community Primary School and Melsonby Methodist Primary School teaches pupils an understanding of places and environments and provides them with key geographical skills that they can apply independently. Through their work in geography, children throughout the school learn about their local area and make comparisons with other regions of the United Kingdom, and in the rest of the world. They learn how to draw and interpret maps and develop fieldwork skills, which include the skills of research, investigation, analysis and problem-solving. Through their growing knowledge and understanding of human geography, children gain an appreciation of life in other cultures around the world. They also learn about the physical world, the interaction between human and physical geography and the affect this interaction is having, and will continue to have, on the world. As a result of this understanding, our pupils will recognise the importance of sustainable development for the future welfare of the planet, and their role in ensuring this future.

## **2 Aims and objectives**

**2.1** The aims of geography are:

- to enable children to gain knowledge and understanding of places in the UK and 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 mapping skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps;
- to allow children to develop skills of using globes and atlases to identify continents, countries, equator, hemispheres, poles, tropics and lines of latitude and longitude
- 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;
- to enable children to gain a thorough understanding of countries, cultures and environments thus making comparisons to the UK; to encourage children in key stage 2 to write creatively incorporating key skills and prior learning;
- to develop an understanding of key geographical terms and phrases;
- to foster a sense of responsibility and respect for the environments and people of the world we live in.

### **3 Teaching and learning style**

- 3.1** 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 research activities. We encourage children to ask, as well as answer geographical questions. We offer them the opportunity to use a variety of data, such as maps, statistics, graphs, pictures, and aerial photographs, and we enable them to use technology 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.
- 3.2** 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 by:
- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
  - grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks to each ability group (variation);
  - 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.

### **4 Geography curriculum planning**

- 4.1** We use the National Curriculum for geography as the basis for our curriculum planning. We have tailored our curriculum to the local circumstances of our school, 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.
- 4.2** 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 during each key stage. The geography subject leader works this out in conjunction with SLT and 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.
- 4.3** Our medium-term plans follow the bespoke scheme of work and give details of each unit of work for each term. The geography subject leader reviews these plans on a regular basis.
- 4.4** Each class teacher creates a plan for each lesson. These lesson plans list specific learning objectives.
- 4.5** 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.

**4.6** Our teaching of Geography is based on the 2014 National Curriculum Programmes of study. The programmes of study for KS1 and KS2 are based on the following 4 areas:

- Locational knowledge
- Place knowledge;
- Human and Physical geography;
- Geographical skills and fieldwork.

Teaching should ensure that geographical enquiry skills are used when developing knowledge and understanding of places, patterns and processes, and environmental change and sustainable development.

## **5 The Foundation Stage**

**5.1** We teach geography in Reception as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As these classes are a part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the geographical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the ELG objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world through activities such as collecting postcards from different places, singing songs from around the world, or investigating what makes a 'good' playground.

## **6 Teaching geography to children with special educational needs**

**6.1** In our federation we teach geography to all children, whatever their ability. Geography is a part of the school curriculum policy. This helps to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our geography teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

**6.2** When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, variation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

**6.3** Intervention through SEN Support and EHC plans will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to geography.

**6.4** We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning geography. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a field trip, we carry out a risk assessment prior to

the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

## **7 Assessment and recording**

- 7.1** 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 unit of work, we make a summary judgement of the work of each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum expected standards. We record the attainment grades on the Pupil Tracker and we use these to plan future work with that pupil, to provide the basis for assessing the progress of the child, and to pass information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

## **8 Fieldwork**

- 8.1** 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.
- 8.2** At Key Stage 1 we let all the children carry out an investigation into the local environment and we give them opportunities to observe and record information around the school site. At Key Stage 2 the children do studies based on improving the local area and changes in the local area. As well as the immediate local area, visits are also carried out further afield.

## **9 Monitoring and review**

- 9.1** The geography subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in geography. This is through termly monitoring of teacher planning and children's' books. Pupil interviews, learning walks and summative assessments also contribute to the monitoring of the subject. Data and feedback is then analysed to identify strengths and areas for development to address the following term. 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 gives the head teacher a termly report in which she evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

