



Geography Policy

Adopted: Spring 2023
Review: Spring 2026

1. Curriculum Statement

Intent

At Meadgate Primary School, we believe that geography helps to provoke and answer questions about the natural and human world, encouraging children to develop a greater understanding of their world and their place in it. It helps to develop a range of investigation and problem-solving skills that are transferable to other curriculum areas and which can be used to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Geography is, by nature an investigative subject, which develops an understanding of concepts, knowledge and skills. 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; to promote children's interest and understanding about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with an understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes.

Implementation

Through the framework of the 2014 National Curriculum, geography taught at Meadgate Primary School, aims to ensure that all children:

- develop age-appropriate, accurate knowledge of the location, physical and human characteristics of a range of globally significant places
- to use this knowledge to provide a geographical context to study and understand the actions of important geographical processes
- understand that these processes give rise to the key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about variation and change to the geographical landscape
- to be able to use geographical vocabulary which is appropriate and accurate and which develops and evolves from EYFS to KS1 and through to KS2
- collect, analyse and present a range of data, gathered through experiences of fieldwork, to deepen understanding of geographical processes
- use and interpret a wide range of sources of geographical information, including maps, atlases, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and digital mapping
- develop skills in Geographical Information Systems (GIS) (software and interactive resources) which allow for digital mapping, analysis of data and data models
- are able to communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, diagrams, charts, drawings and writing
- to fulfil the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum for Geography
- to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development helping them to have a greater understanding of their place in the world, and their rights and responsibilities to other people and the environment

At the EYFS the children will be encouraged:

- to arouse awareness of their own environment and use appropriate vocabulary to describe observations and express opinions
- to know about similarities and differences between themselves and others regarding different communities and traditions beyond their own life

Impact

Within geography, we strive to create a supportive and collaborative ethos for learning by providing investigative and enquiry based learning opportunities. Emphasis is placed on investigative learning opportunities to help children gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of each unit of work covered throughout the school. Children will deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes and how this affects landscapes and environments.

2. Teaching and Learning

Through their work in geography, children learn about their local area and compare their life in this area with that in other regions in the United Kingdom and in the rest of the world. As children progress, they deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. They learn how to draw and interpret maps and use subject-specific vocabulary relating to human and physical geography, with accuracy and confidence. Through their growing knowledge and understanding of human geography, children gain an appreciation of life in different societies, helping to develop a sense of other cultures, and how nations rely on each other. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the framework and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

3. Assessment

Assessment for learning is continuous throughout the planning, teaching and learning cycle. Key geographical skills are taught and the assessment of the acquisition these skills are assessed by:

- Observing children at work, individually, in pairs, in a group and in class during whole class teaching.
- Using differentiated, open-ended questions that require children to explain and unpick their understanding.
- Setting appropriate tasks and work that teachers assess and use to inform future planning as well as to make informal and formal judgements.
- Use of effective marking, to engage children with their learning and to provide opportunities for self-assessment.
- Book moderation to monitor children's work, to evaluate the range and balance of work and ensure that tasks are differentiated and promote children's learning and progress.
- Once a unit of work is completed, a summary judgement is made each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum levels of attainment. Attainment is recorded in subject tracking grids to provide the basis for assessing the progress of each child and to pass information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

The reporting of children's progress in geography occurs annually, with a written report to parents at the end of the academic year.

4. Planning and Resources

Existing geography resources are mostly stored and organised into topic themes. We continue to gather resources for all geography teaching units in the 2014 curriculum. We keep these in a central store, where there is equipment for use in many of the areas covered. The library contains a good supply of geography topic books to support children's individual research. Further books can be requested as part of the topic loans for each year group from the Essex Library Service. Children can also use ICT resources and educational software to support their learning and investigations. In addition to this, class teachers are encouraged to display maps and geographical vocabulary when focusing on a unit of work.

Planning is in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the geography topics studied in each term during each key stage. In most cases we combine the geographical study with work in other subject areas. The medium-term plan outlines the skills being covered each term/half term. The short-term plans are created by the individual class teachers to outline what they will teach in order for the pupils to acquire the skills.

5. EYFS

Early Years explore geographical themes and content through the 'Understanding of the World' strand of the EYFS curriculum. This 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. They are assessed according to the Development Matters Attainment targets.

6. KS1 and KS2

During KS1, children will investigate their local area and a contrasting area in the United Kingdom or abroad, finding out about the environment in both areas and the people who live there. They also begin to learn about the wider world. They carry out geographical enquiry inside and outside the classroom. In doing this they ask geographical questions about people, places and environments, and use geographical skills and resources such as maps and photographs.

During KS1 children 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 **location 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 **place knowledge** 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 decided on to link to other areas of the curriculum, to allow for cross-curricular work and development.

In addition, 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; 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.

During KS2 children 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 **location knowledge** when they learn to locate and name European countries and North and South American 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 Circles and the Greenwich Meridian and time zones.

They will build on their **place knowledge** 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 KS1, the specific geographical locations selected for these comparisons will be decided on to link to other areas of the curriculum to allow for cross-curricular work and development.

In KS2 **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.

7. Equal Opportunities

At Meadgate Primary School, we are committed to providing a teaching environment which ensures all children are provided with the same learning opportunities regardless of social class, gender, culture, race, disability or learning difficulties. As a result we hope to enable all children to develop positive attitudes towards others. Resources for children with SEND and gifted & talented will support and challenge appropriately.

8. Inclusion

All children are entitled to access the geography curriculum at a level appropriate to their needs.

At Meadgate Primary School we aim to meet the needs of all our children by differentiation in our geography planning; providing a variety of teaching and learning styles and differentiated opportunities appropriate to ability levels. Some children will require more adult support and supervision to allow them to make progress, whilst more able children will be extended through differentiated activities. By giving enhancing, challenging and enriching opportunities, more able children will be able to progress to a higher level of knowledge and understanding appropriate to their abilities.

9. Role of the Subject Leader

The subject leader's responsibilities are:

- to establish a secure profile of the subject
- to ensure that the resources are sufficient and appropriate
- to replace and acquire new resources
- to monitor books, planning and the teaching of geography
- to ensure that progression of key geographical skills throughout the school are effectively planned for
- to assist colleagues to identify key skills to be taught, within a particular unit, and how to assess this learning
- to assist colleagues in the planning and delivering of lessons

10. Parents

At Meadgate Primary School we actively encourage the involvement of families and the wider community to help support the teaching of geography. Parents and carers are involved with supporting their children through topic based homework.