



The Wolds Federation

Geography Policy

“The child Jesus grew and became strong; he was full of wisdom gaining favour with God and with people.” *Luke 2.54*

Our Vision for Geography

Teaching of geography at The Wolds Federation is closely interlinked with our Christian Vision; that our children will be agents for change in their own lives, in their local community and in their global community. We believe that the teaching and learning of Geography is unique in the way in which it gives children a perspective on their place in the world. It stimulates an interest in, and a sense of wonder about places and helps make sense of a complex and dynamically changing world. It explains how places and landscapes are formed, how people and the environment interact, and how a diverse range of economies and societies are interconnected. Our vision is for high quality geography teaching across the Wolds Federation which stimulates children’s interest in the wider world, encourages them to recognise and modify their impact on their local community and beyond, and to realise that they can ultimately pursue a career linked to the skills learned in geography if they choose to.

Aims and Objectives

Geography teaches an understanding of places and environments. 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 the rest of the world. They learn how to draw and interpret maps and they develop 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. Geography teaching motivates children to find out about the physical world and enables them to recognise the importance of sustainable development for the future of mankind.

The National Curriculum for Geography aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Develop knowledge of the location of places of global significance, their defining physical and human characteristics and how they relate to one another; this place knowledge should provide a sound context for understanding geographical processes.

- Understanding the processes that gives 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, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS).
- Communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps and writing at length.

Geography Curriculum Planning

We use the National Curriculum scheme of work for Geography as the basis for our curriculum planning. We have adapted the national scheme to the local circumstances of each of our schools, i.e. we make use of the local environment in our fieldwork and we also choose a locality where the human activities and the physical features provide a contrast to those that predominate in our own immediate areas.

Our curriculum planning is in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). Our long-term plans map the geography content spread over a range of curriculum topics. Some topics have a greater focus on geography than others. The Geography subject leader works this out in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each teaching phase, i.e. Key Stage One and Key Stage Two. We combine the geographical study with work in other subject areas. At other times we arrange for the children to carry out a geographical study independently.

Our medium-term plans identify which areas of the national scheme of work are covered in each topic. The Geography subject leader reviews these plans on a regular basis. Because we have mixed-age classes, we do the medium-term planning on a rotation cycle. In this way we ensure that children have a complete coverage of the National Curriculum but do not have to repeat topics. Teachers in each Key Stage work collaboratively across the Federation; sharing planning and resources.

Continuity and Progression

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.

Geography teaching is based on the same four areas of learning in both KS1 and KS2. These are: Locational Knowledge, Place Knowledge, Human and Physical Geography and geographical skills and fieldwork. This allows children to revisit and review previous learning and to build on their knowledge and understanding.

- Throughout their Geography work, children will use specific vocabulary, adding to this as they progress through the school.
- Throughout the school, questioning will follow a similar structure ensuring that children can focus on the geographical content.

Wolds Federation – Geography Policy

- When topics and ideas are introduced, references will be made to past learning in previous years, for example exploring and discussing features of the local environment in the Foundation Stage and making comparisons with contrasting localities in Key Stage 1. Progression is concerned with advances in pupils learning. Each topic the pupils learn about will build on the generic skills of enquiry as they move through the school.
- Progression in Geography will be evaluated by the increasing depth of studies and the development of pupils' reasoning skills when backing up judgements;
- Some children will be working at levels above or below others of the same age. These children will progress at their own rate; teachers providing a range of differentiated activities to optimise each child's opportunity to progress at a pace and content which is suitable for the individual child.

Intent

Geography is held in high regard across The Wolds Federation, with each school celebrating and using their own geographical setting as a starting point for learning. Through geographical learning, children realise and understand the impact they have on the world around them and inline with our school vision of being 'agents of change', consider and implement ways they can have a positive impact on the environment. Teaching equips pupils with knowledge about places and people, resources in the environment and an understanding of the interactions between physical and human processes that have shaped our landscape and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the framework to explain how the Earth's features are shaped, interconnected and change over time. We want the children to develop geographical skills: collecting and analysing data, using maps, atlases, globes, aerial photographs and digital mapping to name, identify and locate countries, continents and oceans. We want the children to be able to communicate their learning in a variety of ways including sketch maps with a key and diagrams, tables and graphs and writing. We want children to enjoy and love learning about geography both inside and outside the classroom, including educational visits to develop fieldwork and to practice their geographical skills.

Implementation

Geography is taught in blocks throughout the year, so that children achieve depth in their learning. Teachers have identified the key knowledge and skills of each topic and consideration has been given to ensure progression across topics throughout each year group across the school.

Planning is informed by and aligned with the National Curriculum. Consideration is given to how greater depth will be taught, learnt and demonstrated within each lesson, as well as how learners will be supported in line with the school's commitment to inclusion. Outcomes of work are regularly monitored to ensure that they reflect a sound understanding of the key identified knowledge.

Impact

Outcomes in topic and literacy books, evidence a broad and balanced geography curriculum and demonstrate the children's acquisition of identified key knowledge. Children review the agreed successes at the end of every session and are actively encouraged to identify their own target areas, with support from their teachers.

October 2020

Children also record what they have learned comparative to their starting points at the end of every topic. Emphasis is placed on analytical thinking and questioning which helps pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of their local area and with specific areas in the wider world.

Children complete Key Stage Two with an enquiring mind, they independently ask questions, investigate and think critically about issues affecting the world and people's lives, for the present and future. They have all the skills necessary to be ready for the Key Stage 3 curriculum and understand that pursuing further education in Geography will provide them with much sought after transferrable skills in future job markets.

Teaching and learning

We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our Geography lessons. We use a combination of whole class teaching and enquiry-based research activities. We encourage children to ask as well as answer geographical questions. We provide the opportunity 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 the internet to investigate a current issue.

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.

Early Years

We teach geography in Early Years classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. The objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and the guidance provided for Understanding the World: The World in Development Matters are used to plan and underpin geographical learning. The focus is mainly on the geography of the school and the surrounding environment, based on children's first-hand experiences. Maps and globes are included within continuous provision resources and children are encouraged to develop an early interest in and discuss people and places, near and far.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion (e.g. EAL/SEN/PPG/Provision for HA)

At the Wolds Federation, 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, special educational need or disability. Teachers use a range of strategies to ensure inclusion and also to maintain a positive ethos where children demonstrate positive attitudes towards others. Support for specific individuals is well considered and planned for, with consideration given to how greater depth and further challenge can be provided for and demonstrated by children who require further challenge. The school makes full use of additional adults who are deployed effectively to ensure that identified children are able to make progress in each curriculum area, according to their full potential.

Assessment

Assessment for learning is continuous throughout the planning, teaching and learning cycle. Assessment is supported by use of the following strategies:

- 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.
- Providing effective feedback, including interactive marking through purple pen questions where appropriate, to engage children with their learning and to provide opportunities for self-assessment, consolidation, depth and target setting.
- Book moderation and monitoring of outcomes of work, to evaluate the range and balance of work and to ensure that tasks meet the needs of different learners, with the acquisition of the pre-identified key knowledge of each topic being evidenced through the outcomes.
- Use of the 'what I know already, what I want to know and what I have learnt' (KWL) strategy throughout a unit, alongside specific and measurable LOs for each lesson with child and teacher review of the success criteria.

Resources

All children have access to atlases, maps and or globes within the classroom environment; this enables them to immediately and independently access information and answer questions as they arise within and outside of Geography lessons.

Topic specific resources are kept in the Resource Room, in topic boxes, across the three schools in the federation. An audit of Geography resources will be maintained by Geography subject leader. It is the responsibility of the subject leader to order, maintain and evaluate the effectiveness of the resources. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to use them appropriately, return them to the correct place and advise the subject leader of any breakages; ICT opportunities have been identified in each unit of work.

Health and Safety

Teachers and support staff are responsible in ensuring that curriculum activities in this subject area are safe. Therefore, it is important that they identify any hazards and assess risks in the learning environment, whether in school or in the local or wider environment. Staff members should ensure that children are taught to handle any equipment, tools, resources and artefacts in the appropriate and safe manner.

Role of the geography coordinator

The geography co-ordinator is responsible for:

- Producing an agreed geography policy and key stage plans which are compatible with the federation's overall curricular aims and which meet the statutory requirements

Wolds Federation – Geography Policy

- Providing the headteacher with an annual action plan in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.
- Providing advice to teachers on appropriate resources, teaching strategies and approaches to assessment
- Developing an overview of the geography curriculum in the school to ensure that pupils experience their key entitlement and that the subject policy is put into practice
- Co-ordinating the purchase, organisation and storage of appropriate geography resources
- Monitoring pupils' work and teacher assessment in geography to ensure consistency of standards and monitoring approaches to assessment to ensure that there are a sufficient variety of tasks
- Assisting with the regular evaluation and monitoring of the quality of provision in the subject, participating in the identification of agreed development tasks each year and reviewing the geography policy and key stage plans
- Keeping abreast of recent developments in the subject, attending relevant in-service courses and participating in the planning and delivery of school-based INSET and discussions

Written by Sophie Carr

October 2020

Review – Annually