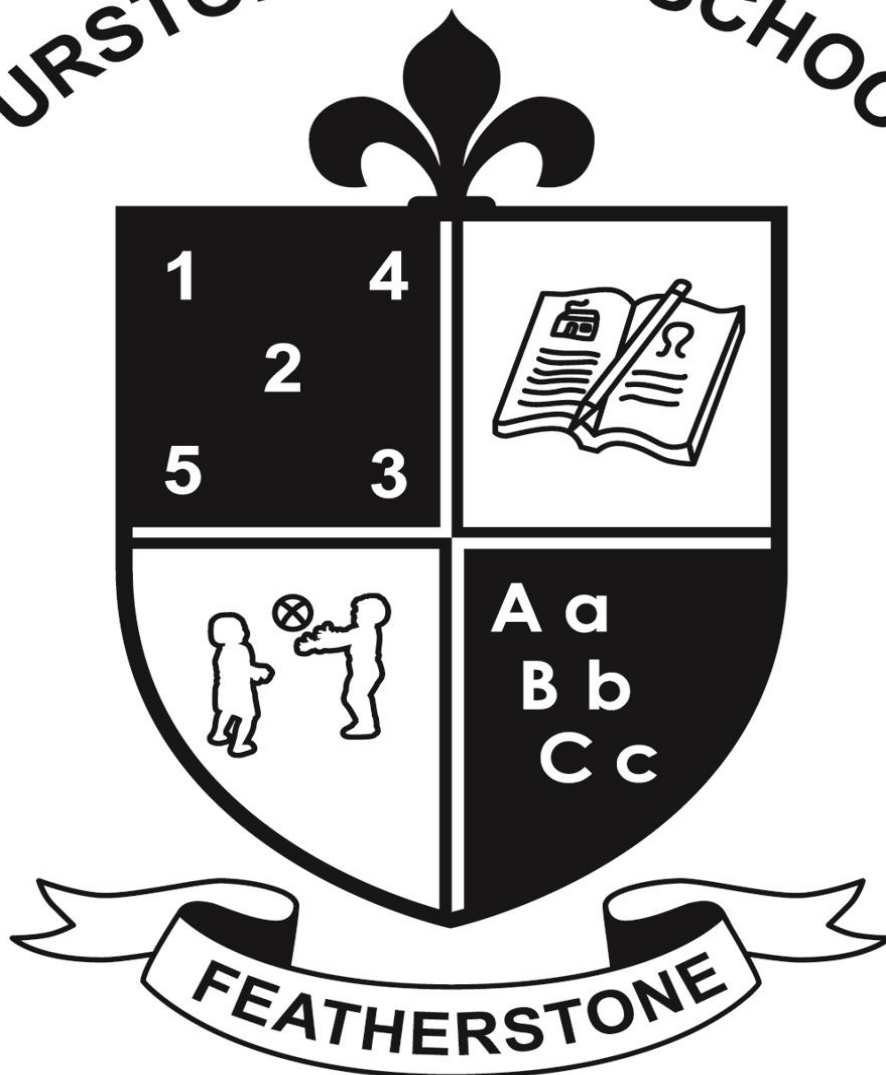


PURSTON INFANT SCHOOL



Geography Policy

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 in 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 also 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 aims of geography are:

- to enable children to gain knowledge and understanding of places in 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 graphic skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps
- 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 and investigation.

Teaching and learning

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 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 of the internet to investigate a current issue.

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
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks
- grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks to each ability group
- 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.

Geography curriculum planning

Key Stage 1

We use the National Curriculum for geography as the basis for our curriculum planning and adapt it 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.

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 for each year group. The geography subject leader works this out in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group. In some cases we combine the geographical study with work in other subject areas.

Medium term plans include the learning objectives taken from the National Curriculum. The geography subject leader reviews medium term plans on a regular basis to ensure that children have complete coverage of the National Curriculum. Our medium-term plans give details of the programmes of study. These plans can be found in the staff shared planning file.

Short-term plans for geography are included in the weekly timetable. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, although s/he and the history subject leader often discuss them on an informal basis.

Foundation Stage

At Purston we teach geography in the Foundation Stage as an integral part of 'Understanding the World'. We plan objectives from 'Development Matters' which underpins the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the 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.

The contribution of geography to other subjects

English

Geography makes a significant contribution to the teaching of English in our school because it actively promotes the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We ensure that some of the texts that we use in English are geographical in nature. We also use environmental issues as a way of developing the children's writing ability by asking them to record information and write reports and letters.

Mathematics

Geography in our school contributes to the teaching of mathematics in a variety of ways. We teach the children how to represent objects with maps. The children study space, scale and distance. They also use graphs to explore, analyse and illustrate a variety of data.

Computing

We make provision for the children to use technology in geography lessons where appropriate. Children use technology in geography to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work. They research information through the internet. We arrange for the children to communicate with other pupils in other schools and countries by using e-mail. We also offer children the opportunity to use the digital camera to record and use photographic images.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Firstly, the subject matter lends itself to raising matters of citizenship and social welfare. For example, children study the way people re-cycle material and how environments are changed for better or for worse. Secondly, the nature of the subject means that children have the opportunity to take part in debates and discussions.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

We offer children in our school many opportunities to examine the fundamental questions in life through the medium of geography. Through teaching about contrasting localities, we enable the children to learn about inequality and injustice in the world. We help children to develop their knowledge and understanding of different cultures so that they learn to avoid stereotyping other people and acquire a positive attitude towards others. We help contribute to the children's social development by teaching them about how society works to resolve difficult issues of economic development. Geography contributes to the children's appreciation of what is right and wrong by raising many moral questions during the programme of study.

SEND

We teach geography to all children, whatever their ability. Geography forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our geography teaching we provide learning opportunities that match the needs of children with learning difficulties and we take into account the targets set for individual children in their One Page Profile (OPPs).

Assessment and recording

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 Geography programme of study attainment targets. The geography subject leader keeps samples of the children's work in a portfolio which shows what the expected level of achievement is in geography in each year of the school.

Resources

We have sufficient resources for teaching all geography topics in the school. We keep these resources in a central store. In the library we have a good supply of geography topic books and a range of educational software to support the children's individual research. 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.

Monitoring and review

The geography subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in geography. 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 headteacher an annual report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. We allocate special time for the vital task of reviewing samples of children's work and for visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.