

## Topic Policy (Incorporating History and Geography)



Little Acorns to Mighty Oaks

### History Policy

#### Rationale

This policy details the provision we make for the learning and teaching of History at our school and in particular:

- The value the school attaches to the learning and teaching of History and working historically as an entitlement for all our pupils;
- To provide a framework and terms of reference for all staff engaged in facilitating the learning and teaching of History with our pupils and in particular to ensure consistency of standards across the school;
- How the curriculum is organised to ensure breadth, balance, continuity and progression in subject outcomes;
- The preferred learning styles we encourage to engage and motivate pupils in History;
- How the curriculum is organised, monitored and evaluated on a regular and ongoing basis;
- How pupils are routinely assessed against objectives and sticky knowledge which define the outcomes they will achieve in each historical investigation they pursue;
- To clarify that the implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all staff engaged in the learning and teaching of History.

#### Purpose

The purposes to this policy are to:

- Highlight the importance and value our school attaches to pupils learning History and to developing as young historians;
- Recognise and establish an entitlement to learning and teaching in History for all our pupils as a statutory educational requirement;
- Make explicit our expectations in terms of subject outcomes and performance for pupils in History as they progress through the school;

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- Ensure continuity and progression in terms of subject knowledge, skills application and the development of appropriate attitudes and values;
- Clarify how we will assess, record and communicate the performance of our pupils in History as they progress through the school;
- Outline the approach to learning and teaching History our school has adopted through outcomes focused and key question/ sticky knowledge led enquiries, which are relevant, meaningful and rigorous.

### **The value of History within our curriculum**

*Engaging children and young people in investigating questions about people and events in the past helps them to better understand their lives today, the contested nature of knowledge and prepares them for the future as more informed citizens.*

Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum 2009 Final Report

Engaging pupils with a relevant, exciting and challenging History curriculum which inspires curiosity and is appropriate for preparing them for an adult life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is essential since it:

- Helps the learner to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as the challenges of their time;
- Develops skills of critical thinking which means making reasoned judgements that are logical and well thought out and not merely accepting arguments and conclusions as they are presented but having a healthy, discerning and questioning attitude about new information;
- Supports the learner to appreciate that all knowledge is socially constructed and its objectivity and reliability is therefore open to challenge and question through asking perceptive questions, weighing evidence, sifting arguments and developing perspective and judgement;
- Builds a sense of identity and belonging on a personal, cultural, national and global level as learners come to appreciate the diversity of human experience and consequently understand more about themselves and as members of society;
- Enables the learner to understand core concepts and most notably cause and consequence, similarity and difference, continuity and change, change and progress/regression, significance, evidence, chronology, empathy, context, diversity, perspective, interconnectivity and validity which have broad relevance and significance in the modern world;

## **Organisation and planning**

### **Years 3 – 6**

In Key Stage 2, each year group undertakes on average three half-termly enquiries in History (adapted from the Clive Davis curriculum) and these enquiries inform detailed planning completed by each year group. Each of these enquiries has objectives, vocabulary, and sticky knowledge, learning and teaching activities. The medium term plan informs teacher planning on a session-by-session basis throughout each half term. Starting in autumn 2022 year groups have maintained a portfolio, which includes evidence of pupil's achievement for many of the questions and this, is a working piece of evidence for moderation purposes. Additionally they are to monitor and evaluate that anticipated pupil progress in History is occurring as planned. The portfolios also contain evidence of each terms planning.

### **Inclusion, equality of opportunity and differentiation**

History forms an integral and statutory element of a pupil's entitlement to learning and at our school we ensure that all pupils can engage with historical learning and develop as young historians irrespective of their race, cultural background, gender, sexual identity, religion, creed, level of intellectual ability or physical and emotional circumstances. Mutual respect and the fostering of empathy and community understanding at local, regional, national and global scales lies at the heart of the study of History and at our school we model this in terms of the inclusive nature of the learning and teaching we provide.

Ensuring adaptive teaching is a fundamental and core element of inclusion. As such we plan and resource our learning, in line with our whole school policies, to enable all pupils to make good and sustained progress in History including those with special educational needs, those with disabilities and those identified as Able Gifted and Talented for one reason or another; and those with English as an additional language. In our differentiated planning we take due regard of factors such as classroom organisation, learning materials and the learning environment.

### **Expectations of outcomes – Progression Year 3 – Year 6**

At our school an important objective is for all pupils to develop as young historians and we achieve this by recognising and planning for what becoming better at History entails – progression - and consequently challenging and supporting our pupils to work historically in a more rigorous manner as they progress through the school. To enable this to happen we have established an outcomes driven curriculum which recognises the crucial importance of identifying not just what we want our pupils to know and do in History but also the intellectual outcomes we intend them to achieve through their learning. As pupils progress as historians this involves developing historical perspective through:

- Wider, more detailed and chronologically secure knowledge;
- More focused and precise methods of enquiry and communication of understanding;
- A deeper understanding of more complex historical issues and concepts;
- Pursuing historical valid questions to achieve the following subject outcomes:

Recognise

Identify

Describe

Observe

Select

Categorise

Classify

Sequence

Connect and make links

Compare and Contrast

Recall

Reason/Speculate

Summarise

Synthesise

Construct informed responses

Interpret and explain

Demonstrate understanding

Empathise

Reach Informed Conclusions

Make reasoned Judgements

Reflect

Justify

Apply

Evaluate

Critique

Hypothesise – devise historically valid enquiry questions

Reason/Speculate

## Key Stage 2

In Years 3 through 6 our expectations of pupil outcomes build on what has already been achieved at EYFS, Key Stage 1 (underlined above), and in particular we support pupils to:

- Continue to develop a sense of chronology and a secure knowledge of history;
- Identify connections, contrasts and historical trends over time in relation to the people and events that they investigate, sticky knowledge and our whole school sticky timelines particularly supports this;
- Use an increasingly sophisticated and specialised subject vocabulary and use of historical terms;

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- Begin to suggest and devise their own lines of historical investigation in addition to pursuing lines of enquiry which have been planned for them, this is complemented by our fantastic finishes at the end of each topic;
- Understand how knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources and that such sources may not be entirely objective or trustworthy;
- Select and organise information from historical sources;
- Understand that different versions of the past may exist and provide explanations for why this may be the case;
- Describe and make links between events within and across different historical periods, which is aided by our sticky knowledge timelines;
- Explain why some people and events in the past may be considered more historically significant than others.
- In Years 3 and 4 we focus on pupils being able to master the skill of distinguishing between providing basic reasons for historical events and changes they have studied and demonstrating understanding through reaching explanations by synthesising evidence from an increasingly wide range of historical sources. At the same time we expect greater alacrity in language from our pupils and we plan accordingly for the use of more specialised subject vocabulary and terms. In particular we aim to achieve the following subject outcomes in History at our school for the end of **Lower Key Stage 2**:

Summarise

Synthesise

Construct informed responses

Interpret and explain

Demonstrate understanding

- At Upper Key Stage 2 our expectations in History are that pupils will more regularly and consistently apply information that they have learned from one context to another, make links and identify patterns in their historical learning and to recognise and understand the contested nature of historical evidence. We challenge them to reach conclusions and make judgements about historical events and changes and to evaluate and critique evidence and to generate questions of their own. In particular our aim is to achieve the following outcomes in Years 5 and 6 for pupils at our school by the end of **Upper Key Stage 2**:

Empathise

Reach Informed Conclusions

Make reasoned Judgements

Reflect

Justify

Apply

Evaluate

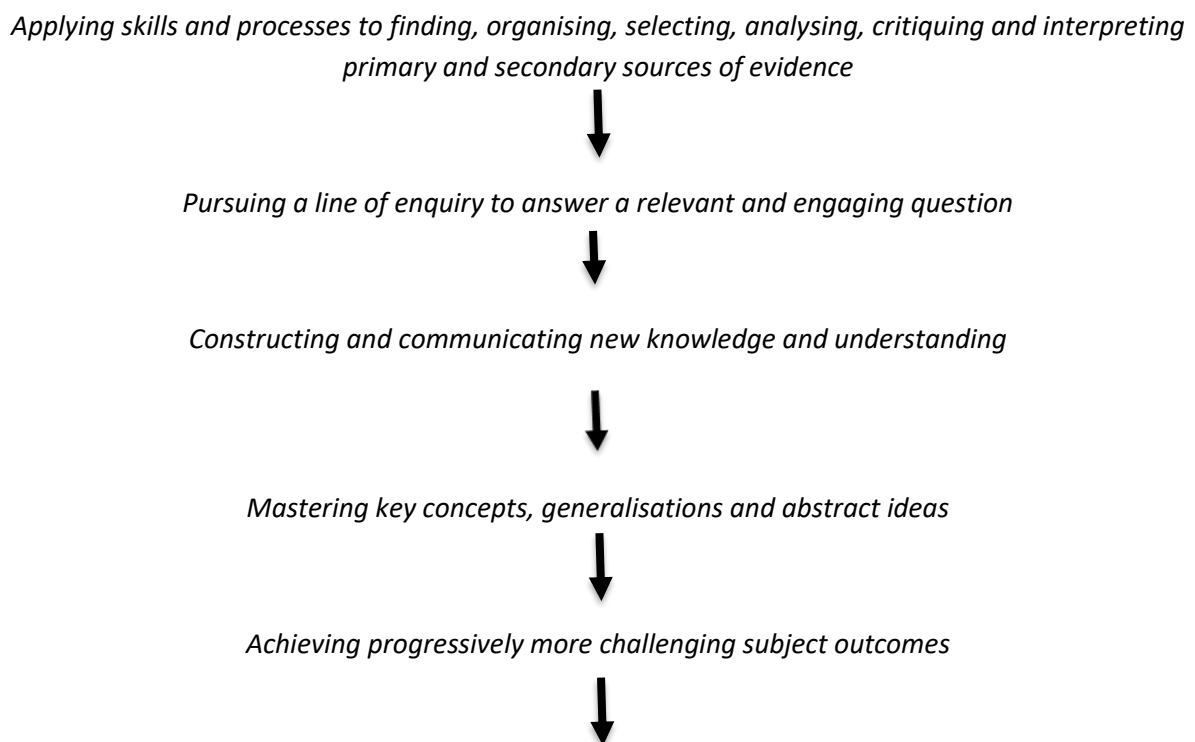
Critique

Hypothesise – devise historically valid enquiry questions

### **Learning and teaching through enquiry**

In History learning is facilitated through pupils pursuing a key question led enquiry approach, which encourages them to take increasing responsibility for their learning, think independently and achieve challenging subject outcomes. At our school therefore we seek to encourage pupils to learn their History through big question led enquiries about significant events, people and changes which allows them sufficient scope and time to really engage in high order subject skills such as developing explanations (even though there are very often no 'right' answers to questions in History), reaching conclusions, making judgements, evaluating, applying information learned in one context to another and generating their own ideas and questions to investigate through hypothesising. Whilst knowing more subject information as the pupils progress through the school is important we are careful in our planning to ensure that there is always a balance between new content and the development of important subject skills and the ability of children to think critically about what they are learning and why. This approach is reflected in all of our planning. We are very careful to be selective about the subject content we use to ensure that a balance is achieved between knowing more content and the development of key subject skills and outcomes.

Rather than attempting to teach historical periods, societies, events or significant individuals in the past in their entirety, we ask insightful questions about them, which in turn supports pupils to delve deeply into aspects of historical topics. Our historical enquiries are carefully planned to enable pupils to construct knowledge, master subject concepts and generate questions of their own through the application of a range of critical thinking skills. This approach is summarised in the following flow diagram:



### *Generating further questions to investigate*

In line with the school's learning and teaching policy, in History teachers:

- Design enquiries to pursue which are relevant, engaging and appropriately challenging in terms of anticipated outcomes which help pupils answer significant questions about events, changes and the lives of significant individuals.
- Share with pupils what they are expected to learn and how they are expected to learn it;
- Ensure that objectives for lessons always define the outcomes to be achieved and are presented in the form of "key questions" that need to be answered; sometimes these are raised by the teacher, sometimes with pupils and sometimes independently;
- Key question led enquiries are structured to include a number of ancillary questions, the completion of which enable the pupils to progress gradually towards arriving at an answer to the overall big question;
- Provide a variety of learning activities that are used regularly, including observation, enquiry, investigation, games, mysteries, puzzles and problem-solving;
- Encourage pupils to evaluate critically information, ideas and different viewpoints;
- Provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to work as individuals, in pairs and in groups;
- Encourage discussion and insightful questioning so that pupils clarify their thinking;
- Set high expectations and ensure that learning objectives and activities are always sufficiently challenging;
- Provide pupils with regular feedback about their work and about what they need to do next in order to improve;
- Use assessment, including the use of focused questions, to determine the pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding, before, during and after units of work;
- Expect pupils to record their work in a variety of ways, including diagrams, illustrations, pictures, letters, posters, annotated drawings and maps, reports, PowerPoints and oral accounts and presentations of their work.

### **Assessment**

#### **Skills, Knowledge and Understanding Assessments**

Assessments are made each half term to track skills in History. This records whether pupils have met, not met or surpassed skills, knowledge and understanding taught in each individual topic. Extra support is then put in place for those pupils who have not met the standard when they next have to demonstrate that skill or build on that understanding e.g. timeline work in history. Those that are more able are given the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in a way they have designed themselves in our Fantastic Finishes that come at the end of each topic.

#### **Sticky Knowledge**

In order to help the children know more and remember more and to develop the children's cultural capital, teachers have identified the core facts or 'Golden Nuggets' from each History, Geography

and Science topic that they want the children to particularly take away with them. These are called Sticky Facts. **They are not new and different, but are intrinsic to the topics taught. They are not a test of the work taught, but *are* the work taught.**

We understand that it is unlikely that children will remember every fact from our broad topics, but we have identified the ones that will provide a good base to build future knowledge on. By highlighting these core facts we are helping to develop the children's memories without overloading them. In addition to our usual assessments, we will assess the children's retention and understanding of these facts through:

- The work done in the children's books in book trawls and observations
- What the children produce in workshops and Fantastic Finishes, which can be art work, drama or writing
- Quizzes, games and puzzles at the end of the topic and year
- Teacher assessment through marking and Assessment for Learning
- Pupil voice and discussions with subject champions
- Self-assessment for pupils and teachers assessment on the topic front pages as to whether the children know these facts or not
- The WOW FACTOR when pupils record the aspect of the topic that they found most engaging
- Curriculum strands displayed around school and prior knowledge built upon so that facts are consolidated

Each History plan sets clear objectives, which define the anticipated outcomes for the pupil; these are closely linked to sticky knowledge. The planning also suggests a range of ways in which the teacher can carry out ongoing assessment to ascertain whether a pupil has achieved these outcomes. Evidence is drawn from a wide range of sources to inform this process including interaction with pupils during discussions and related questioning, day to day observations, practical activities such as model making and role play drama, the gathering, presentation and communication of fieldwork data and writing. The outcomes of each enquiry serve to inform the teacher's developing picture of the knowledge and understanding of each pupil and to plan future learning accordingly.

At the end of a unit of work, 'Fantastic Finishes', are an open-ended way for children to demonstrate their learning. This is a particularly good way for our GDS learners to extend themselves further. Fantastic Finishes assess children's learning and their ability to use higher order thinking skills to develop their own opinions and research about a topic, without being onerous or too formal.

We will report to parents at least once per year.

On these occasions, teachers should draw upon the intelligence gained from the assessment of pupils, which is integral to each enquiry, to make a judgement as to whether the pupil has achieved



the expected level of attainment, exceeded the expectations or has yet to reach the anticipated level.

At the end of each year, the teacher will be able to use their knowledge and understanding of the pupils to reach an accurate judgment of what they know and can do. At this point they need to take into account the relative strengths and weaknesses of each pupil and reach a 'best fit' summative judgement. **Most critically, this decision is based on the professional knowledge and judgement that the teacher possesses of the pupil, built up over an extended period of time, which is then used to make a rounded and holistic judgement of their attainment in history.**

### **Lower Key Stage 2 Performance Descriptor**

Pupils at the **expected level of attainment** at the end of Lower Key Stage 2 will be able to:

Demonstrate both knowledge and understanding of history through identifying and explaining some of the ways that significant individuals and events during a set time period have contributed to shaping life in present day Britain. In doing so they use an increasing range of basic and more specialised subject vocabulary accurately and show that they can synthesise information from a broader range of historic sources including artefacts to help formulate their explanations. They will be able to make insightful links between their different enquiries (sticky knowledge) to compare and contrast life in Britain at different times and offer sound historic reasons for the similarities and differences they observe. As they do this they will show an understanding of key historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and effect and significance.

Pupils **exceeding the expected level of attainment** will, in addition to the above, be able to:

Question the validity of some of the sources of historical evidence they use and exhibit an understanding of why different interpretations of artefacts and the actions of people and events in the past may not be altogether trustworthy. In doing so they use confidently and accurately a wide range of specialist subject vocabulary and demonstrate an awareness of more sophisticated historical concepts such as significance and perspective.

### **Upper Key Stage 2 Performance Descriptor**

Pupils at the **expected level of attainment** at the end of Upper Key Stage 2 will be able to:

Understand some of the most significant aspects of the lives of people in the ancient civilizations that they have investigated, through interpreting and evaluating a range of source material of various kinds including written, visual, cartographic and artefactual evidence. They will also show a capacity to reach conclusions, make judgements and justify their views about the significance of major historic developments and events in Britain. In doing this they will also demonstrate a basic understanding of the importance of perspective when reaching conclusions in history. Through a detailed local historical study they will be able to explain some of the ways in which national and

international events in the past have impacted their own community and evaluate some of their effects. In achieving these things they will use specialised historical vocabulary and skills confidently and regularly and apply more demanding concepts such as empathy insightfully.

Pupils **exceeding the expected level of attainment** will, in addition to the above, be able to:

Make and justify more informed and subtle judgements about the causes and outcomes of the historical events and developments that they have investigated. In doing so they exhibit some awareness of the questionable validity of much historical evidence, and generate meaningful questions of their own to pursue in order to gather further relevant information.

### **Connecting History to other areas of the curriculum**

In our planning we have made meaningful links between History and other subject areas of the National Curriculum and to Spiritual, Moral Social and Cultural Development (SMSC) where incorporating content and perspectives adds value to and extends the historical understanding of our pupils. Making such links is important because it highlights to pupils the interconnectedness and interdependence of the real world but when making such connections we must maintain subject rigour and appropriate expectations in History for each stage of learning. For example the primary objective of applying key literacy and numeracy conventions to History is to enable our pupils to achieve more and better in History – i.e. to develop as young historians. To this end we must ensure that high standards of literacy and numeracy when applied to History result in equally and appropriately high standards of historical subject attainment. In each of our historical enquiries links made to other subject areas are clearly documented and as a consequence many are able to deliver effectively substantial elements of the content of other disciplines in a cross-curricular manner.

### **Homework**

Homework in History is in line with whole school policy and as such is given where appropriate within the documentation and planning for each historical investigation.

### **Monitoring, evaluation, and the role of the History subject co-ordinator**

All teachers at our school are responsible for monitoring standards in History but the History Co-ordinator, under the direction of the Head teachers, takes a lead in this. Monitoring activities are planned across the year and form part of the History Co-ordinator's leadership schedule. In summary, these are:

- Regular analysis of samples of pupils' history work to moderate standards (attainment and progress against outcomes and end of stage performance descriptors) to ensure consistency and that colleagues are informed of subject developments at local and national levels with which the Co-ordinator has been involved;
- The moderation of year groups' planning and sticky knowledge ideally once per term to monitor coverage and delivery of planned enquiries;
- Lesson observations/ Learning Walks termly to ensure that learning and teaching is appropriately engaging and challenging and that the anticipated subject progress is being made by the pupils;

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- The sampling of pupils' work a minimum of twice per year to ensure that expectations in terms of subject outcomes are being maintained through the curriculum;
- In collaboration with the Headteacher, Governors and teaching colleagues the co-ordinator drafts and finalises a one year History Action Plan ;
- A portfolio in each year group containing samples of pupil's work and lesson plans illustrates how outcomes can be achieved and gives guidance to colleagues and to ensure consistency of standards.

The History Co-ordinator has the responsibility to take a lead in developing History further across the school within the school's improvement plan; monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning; and the use of resources. Teachers and educational support staff can expect support from the History Co-ordinator arising from targets identified in the school improvement plan and from the outcomes of performance management and induction programmes.

To develop staff confidence and competence in teaching History the subject co-ordinator will:

- Attend subject professional development opportunities as they arise and in the context of the priorities of the whole School Improvement Plan together with the History Action Plan;
- Identify and source staff training needs arising from the above and through induction programmes and performance management reviews;
- Arrange for relevant advice and information from professional development programmes, including courses, to be disseminated and where appropriate included in subject improvement planning;
- Where necessary lead (or arrange) school-based subject improvement training for colleagues.

### **Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed in line with the school's policy review programme and no later than the following date: November 2027

Signed Subject Co-ordinator

*Belinda Quiles*

Date 22.11.24

## Geography Policy

### Rationale

This policy details the provision we make for the learning and teaching of Geography at our school and in particular:

- The value the school attaches to the learning and teaching of Geography and working geographically as an entitlement for all our pupils;
- To provide a framework and terms of reference for all staff engaged in facilitating the learning and teaching of Geography with our pupils and in particular to ensure consistency of standards across the school;
- How the curriculum is organised to ensure breadth, balance, continuity and progression in subject outcomes;
- The preferred learning styles we encourage to engage and motivate pupils in Geography;
- How the curriculum is organised, monitored and evaluated on a regular and ongoing basis;
- How pupils are routinely assessed against objectives and sticky knowledge which define the outcomes they will achieve in each geographical investigation they pursue;
- To clarify that the implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all staff engaged in the learning and teaching of Geography.

### Purpose

The purposes to this policy are to:

- Highlight the importance and value our school attaches to pupils learning Geography and to developing as young geographers;
- Recognise and establish an entitlement to learning and teaching in Geography for all our pupils as a statutory educational requirement;
- Make explicit our expectations in terms of subject outcomes and performance for pupils in Geography as they progress through the school;
- Ensure continuity and progression in terms of subject knowledge, skills application and the development of attitudes and values;
- Clarify how we will assess, record and communicate the performance of our pupils in Geography as they progress through the school;
- Outline the approach to learning Geography our school advocates through outcomes focused and key question led enquiries, which are relevant, meaningful and rigorous.

### The importance of and entitlement to Geography

The study of geography involves pupils exploring the relationship and interactions between people and the environments in which they live and upon which they depend. Many of the pupils who now attend our school will live to see the next century and inhabit a world of 11 billion people. The many opportunities and challenges that will arise during their lifetime will be very much about geography – personal, local, national and global. From adapting and mitigating the impact of climate change to predicting natural hazards such as Tsunami and Earthquakes, to understanding the causes and effects of population migration around the world our pupils will need to know about geography and

to think like geographers. Geography helps to prepare them for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with all of its currently unknown possibilities. In terms of what we teach in geography and how we encourage and support our pupils to learn; we seek to develop young geographers who are able to make links and connections between the natural world and human activity. Our pupils need to understand the kind of questions geographers ask such as *Why is this place like it is? How is it changing? What will be the costs and benefits of these changes when they happen?* In line with the statutory requirements of the school curriculum which must be balanced and broadly based, our school commits to ensuring that every pupil at every stage of learning has regular and appropriately challenging and engaging learning in Geography which is informed by the National Curriculum. In addition we will ensure that what our pupils learn in Geography and how they learn it not only inspires and stretches them intellectually but also contributes to their spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development and helps to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In accordance with the importance we attach to Geography our school aims to:

- stimulate pupils' interest in their surroundings and in the variety of human and physical conditions on the earth's surface;
- foster pupils' sense of wonder at the beauty of the world surrounding them;
- help pupils develop an informed concern about the quality of the environment and the future of the human habitat;
- enhance pupils' sense of responsibility for the care of the earth and its people and secure their commitment to promoting and living sustainable lifestyles;
- develop pupils' skills of critical enquiry and an ability to handle and interpret information, through asking and answering geographical questions and using computing to communicate with and explore a variety of people, places and environments across the world;
- help pupils explore values and attitudes about complex issues such as sustainability and sustainable development;
- enable pupils to study the above across a range of places, cultures and environments at a variety of scales, from local to global;
- foster a sense of understanding about how we are interconnected and interdependent with other people and ecosystems around the world.

### **Inclusion, equality of opportunity and differentiation**

Geography forms an integral and statutory element of a pupil's entitlement to learning and at our school, we ensure that all pupils can engage with geographical learning and develop as young geographers irrespective of their race, cultural background, gender, religion, creed, level of intellectual ability or physical and emotional circumstances. Mutual respect and the fostering of empathy and community understanding at local, regional, national and global scales lies at the heart of the study of Geography and at our school we model this in terms of the inclusive nature of the learning and teaching we provide.

Ensuring adaptive teaching is a fundamental and core element of inclusion. As such we plan and resource our learning, in line with our whole school policies, to enable all pupils to make good and sustained progress in Geography including those with special educational needs, those with

disabilities and those identified as Able Gifted and Talented for one reason or another; and those with English as an additional language. In our adaptive planning we take due regard of factors such as classroom organisation, learning materials and the learning environment. Adapting by learning environment is as crucial as adapting by task, outcome, learning style or aptitude and this is recognised through the inclusion of fieldwork opportunities in our geographical enquiries where possible.

### **Expectations of outcomes**

At our school, we want pupils to become better geographers and we achieve this by recognising and planning for what becoming better at Geography entails and consequently challenging and supporting our pupils to develop as young geographers as they progress through the school. To enable this to happen we have established a curriculum which recognises the crucial importance of identifying not just what we want our pupils to know and do in Geography but more crucially the intellectual outcomes we intend them to achieve by and through their learning. As pupils progress as geographers we recognise that whatever the content of their learning and the subject skills they are using our expectations of them must be focused on the following progression in subject outcomes:

Recognise – identify – Respond – Express – Basic Subject Vocabulary

Describe – Observe - Reason– Select – Speculate –Appropriate Subject Vocabulary

Classify – Categorise – Sequence – Compare and Contrast – Views and Opinions

Understanding through informed Explanation and Synthesis –Specialist Subject Vocabulary

Highlight and explain Links, Patterns, Processes and Interrelationships

Apply – Reach conclusions – Make judgements

Evaluate – Critique - Predict – Reflect – Hypothesise

Whilst we recognise that our expectations of pupil outcomes must never be confined by their stage of learning we nevertheless ensure that there is a particular focus on ensuring that our pupils are able to recognise, identify, describe, observe reason and begin to offer explanations for geographical phenomena whilst using basic and increasingly appropriate subject vocabulary. During Lower Key Stage 2 our expectations increase proportionately as we challenge our pupils not only to know more but also to master progressively more demanding subject outcomes such as reaching explanations through the synthesis of evidence, perhaps from a wide range of sources. At the same time we expect greater subject vocabulary alacrity from our pupils and we plan accordingly for the use of more specialised subject vocabulary. These expectations are laid out in our performance descriptor for the end of Lower Key Stage 2. At Upper Key Stage 2 our expectations in Geography are that pupils will more regularly and consistently apply information that they have learned in other contexts and at other stages to make links and identify patterns in their geographical learning. We challenge them to reach conclusions and make judgements about geographical issues and to evaluate and critique evidence and to generate questions of their own.

### **Ensuring continuity and progression in learning**

Whilst knowing more is an integral part of continuity and progression, it is nevertheless just one element of it and merely sequencing subject content will not ensure on its own that our pupils become better geographers. To ensure continuity and progression for all pupils the curriculum is carefully organised Year 3 – Year 6 to ensure that our pupil’s knowledge and understanding of geography develops (this is complemented by sticky knowledge) because:

- Expected subject outcomes in terms of developing as a young geographer increase in complexity and level of challenge as detailed above and are used as the starting point for all planning of content delivery and learning and teaching enquiries;
- There is increasing breadth and scale of study through the curriculum moving progressively from personal experiences to local, regional, national and global perspectives informed by the guidance of the National Curriculum;
- The curriculum becomes progressively more complex developing from discrete facts and bodies of information to conceptual awareness and generalised knowledge about more abstract ideas;
- The mastery and application of geographical tools and skills occurs in more precise and complex contexts;
- The focus of what pupils learn becomes gradually more issues based enabling them to explain links, patterns and processes and be more informed and mature in their thinking and self-reflection in terms of recognising the importance of attitudes and values about contested matters;

### **Approach to learning and teaching**

In Geography, the pedagogy, which underpins learning, is a key question led enquiry approach, which encourages our pupils to take increasing responsibility for their learning, think independently and achieve challenging subject outcomes. At our school, therefore we seek to encourage pupils to learn their geography through big question led enquiries about topics, places and themes. They focus on real people, places and geographical issues and we allow them sufficient scope and time to engage in high order subject skills. Such as developing explanations (even though there are very often no ‘right’ answers to questions in geography), reaching conclusions, making judgements, evaluating, applying information learned in one context to another and generating their own ideas and questions to investigate through hypothesising. Whilst knowing more subject information as the pupils progress through the school is important we are careful in our planning to ensure that there is always a balance between new content and the development of important subject skills and the ability of children to think critically about what they are learning and why (sticky knowledge). This approach is reflected in all of our planning. We are very careful to be selective about the subject content we use to ensure that a balance is achieved between knowing more content and the development of key subject skills and outcomes. We recognise that simply knowing more information in itself will not enable our pupils to progress as young geographers capable of making links, seeing things more conceptually and recognising the significance of attitudes and values in shaping the world in which they live. To this end, we identify important topics, issues, places and themes informed by the guidance of the National Curriculum to ask important questions about and then plan enquiries, which are carefully structured (sticky knowledge). We recognise that we cannot teach whole topics without risking the curriculum becoming largely content driven. Our approach to leading learning in geography through big investigative ‘How’ and ‘Why’ questions

ensures that achieving key subject outcomes and our pupils being able to develop as young geographers remains central to all we do.

Regular and high quality outdoor learning is important for a young person's statutory entitlement in Geography. It provides opportunities to develop and consolidate skills and concepts introduced in the classroom and allows pupils to extend their understanding of the 'real' world. Fieldwork provision enables pupils to become observant, to develop the skills of recording, analysis and deduction and to start to develop 'enquiring minds'. Fieldwork and learning outdoors involving the testing and investigation of ideas and theories through practical exercises including observation, data collection, recording, presentation, interpretation and evaluation is therefore fundamental to the study of Geography and the development of young geographers at our school. Consequently, fieldwork is an element of geographical learning in every year group in line with the National Curriculum and this entitlement, along with the appropriate guidance on completing a risk assessment and ensuring awareness of school emergency procedures, is identified in the appropriate enquiries we have planned and resourced.

In line with the school's teaching and learning policy, in geography lessons teachers:

- design activities which help pupils answer the geographical questions such as: Where is it? What is it like? How has it changed? Why has it changed? How will it change next? What will happen if? How might it be better? What can be done about? How do I feel?
- share with pupils what they are expected to learn and how they are expected to learn it;
- ensure that objectives for lessons are presented in the form of "key questions" that need to be answered; sometimes these are raised by the teacher (sticky knowledge), sometimes with pupils and sometimes independently;
- provide a variety of learning activities that are used regularly, including observation, enquiry, investigation, games, mysteries, puzzles and problem-solving;
- encourage pupils to evaluate critically information, ideas and different viewpoints;
- encourage pupils to describe, explain, predict and evaluate places, geographical patterns and processes and environmental changes (sticky geography and displays);
- plan for pupils to make and use maps, atlases, satellite and GIS imagery and globes regularly in order to locate places being studied and make/use models to explore geographical patterns and processes;
- provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to work as individuals, in pairs and in groups;
- encourage discussion so that pupils clarify their thinking;
- set high expectations and use our performance descriptors at EYFS/Key Stage 1; Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2 to aid this so that learning objectives and activities are sufficiently challenging;
- provide pupils with regular feedback about their work and about what they need to do next in order to improve;
- use assessment, including the use of focused questions, to determine the pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding, before, during and after units of work;



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- expect pupils to record their work in a variety of ways, including diagrams, illustrations, pictures, letters, posters, annotated drawings and maps, reports, PowerPoints and accounts. As appropriate, pupils make oral presentations of their work.
- assess sticky knowledge informally using fun quizzes.
- Informally assess the children's knowledge and skills (especially GDS) with Fantastic Finishes at the end of a topic.

### **Assessment, Performance Descriptors and Reporting**

#### Skills, Knowledge and Understanding Assessments

Assessments completed each half term to track skills in Geography. This records whether pupils have met, not met or surpassed skills, knowledge and understanding taught in each individual topic. Extra support is then put in place for those pupils who have not met the standard when they next have to demonstrate that skill or build on that understanding e.g. timeline work in history. Those that are more able have the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in a way they have designed themselves in our Fantastic Finishes that come at the end of each topic. On these occasions, teachers should draw upon the intelligence gained from the assessment of pupils, which is integral to each enquiry, to make a judgement as to whether the pupil has achieved the expected level of attainment, exceeded the expectations or has yet to reach the anticipated level.

Each enquiry, which forms the learning and teaching in geography, sets clear objectives, which define the anticipated outcomes for the pupil. Evidence is drawn from a wide range of sources to inform assessment including interaction with pupils during discussions and related questioning, day-to-day observations, practical activities such as model making and role-play drama, the gathering, presentation and communication of fieldwork data and writing. The outcomes of each enquiry serves to inform the teacher's developing picture of the knowledge and understanding of each pupil and to plan future learning accordingly.

At the end of the year, the teacher will be able to use their knowledge and understanding of each pupil gained through assessment to reach an accurate judgment of what they know and can do. At this point they need to take into account the relative strengths and weaknesses of each pupil and reach a 'best fit' summative judgement taking into account the whole of the descriptor rather than specific parts of it. **Most critically, this decision is based on the professional knowledge and judgement that the teacher possesses of the pupil, built up over an extended period of time, which is then used to make a rounded and holistic judgement of their attainment in geography.**

#### Sticky Knowledge

In order to help the children know more and remember more and to develop the children's cultural capital, teachers have identified the core facts or 'Golden Nuggets' from each History, Geography and Science topic that they want the children to particularly take away with them. These are called Sticky Facts. **They are not new and different, but are intrinsic to the topics taught. They are not a test of the work taught, but *are* the work taught.**

We understand that it unlikely that children will remember every fact from our broad topics, but we have identified the ones that will provide a good base to build future knowledge on. By highlighting

these core facts, we are helping to develop the children's memories without overloading them. In addition to our usual assessments, we will assess the children's retention and understanding of these facts through:

- The work done in the children's books in book trawls and observations
- What the children produce in workshops and Fantastic Finishes, which can be art work, drama or writing
- Quizzes, games and puzzles at the end of the topic and year
- Teacher assessment through marking and Assessment for Learning
- Pupil voice and discussions with subject champions
- Self -assessment for pupils and teachers assessment on the topic front pages as to whether the children know these facts or not
- The WOW FACTOR when pupils record the aspect of the topic that they found most engaging
- Curriculum strands displayed around school and prior knowledge built upon so that facts are consolidated

### **Lower Key Stage 2 Performance Descriptor**

Pupils at the **expected level of attainment** at the end of Lower Key Stage 2 will be able to:

Demonstrate geographical understanding by describing and explaining in basic terms the similarities and differences in the physical and human features of their home area and another region, including offering some reasons why both places are changing. They will also be able to locate, describe and explain some of the reasons for the distribution of globally important physical and human geographical features including climate zones and earthquakes. Additionally they will also be able to identify, describe and explain features of significance on a world map and globe. They will now demonstrate detailed locational knowledge of the geographical features of the United Kingdom. Together with those of the other countries and locations around the world, they study through their enquiries. In achieving the above pupils show, they understand and apply some specialised subject vocabulary and use effectively more complex techniques to gather, present and communicate geographical information, including digital technologies, inside and outside the classroom.

Pupils **exceeding the expected level of attainment** will, as well as the above, be able to:

Demonstrate a more sophisticated understanding of how physical processes influence the lives of people around the world and how people can affect the environment positively and negatively. In doing so they begin to formulate conclusions and make judgements as to the kind of actions people can take to improve and sustain the environment locally and globally.

### **Upper Key Stage 2 Performance Descriptor**

Pupils at the **expected level of attainment** at the end of Upper Key Stage 2 will be able to:

Demonstrate that they can interpret a range of sources of geographical information and communicate their knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways e.g. through oracy, maps, numerical and statistical techniques and writing at length. Through the study of physical features such as rivers and mountains, pupils show that they understand how distinct landscapes are formed by natural processes and can make basic informed judgements about some of the challenges and benefits they present to humans. Pupils show they are able to evaluate information from conflicting viewpoints and perspectives and make their own informed judgments and geographical decisions. In achieving this pupils use mostly specialised subject vocabulary and techniques to communicate their knowledge and understanding.

Pupils **exceeding the expected level of attainment** will, in addition to the above, be able to:

Make and justify more informed and subtle judgements about geographical issues they study such as the issue of climate change, which draws upon some of their own research and ideas. These pupils will also demonstrate a capacity to question the validity and trustworthiness of sources of information they use as well as generating further questions of their own to investigate. Both their oral and written narrative will draw upon a comprehensive range of specialist subject vocabulary and more advanced data collection, presentation and interpretation techniques both inside and outside the classroom.

### **Connecting Geography to other areas of the curriculum**

In our planning, we have made meaningful links with other subject areas of the National Curriculum and to Spiritual, Moral Social and Cultural Development (SMSC) where incorporating content and perspectives adds value to and extends the geographical understanding of our pupils. Making links is important because it highlights to pupils the interconnectedness and interdependence of the real world but when making such connections we must maintain subject rigour and appropriate expectations in Geography for each stage of learning. For example, the primary objective of applying key literacy and numeracy conventions to Geography is to enable our pupils to achieve more and better in Geography – i.e. to develop as young geographers. To this end, we must ensure that high standards of literacy and numeracy when applied to Geography result in equally and appropriately high standards of geographical subject attainment. In each of our geographical enquiries, links made to other subject areas are noted and consequently many are able to deliver substantial elements of the content of other disciplines in a cross-curricular manner.

### **Homework**

Homework in Geography is provided in line with whole school policy and as such is identified where appropriate within the documentation and planning for each geographical investigation.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and the role of the Geography Co-ordinator**

All teachers at our school are responsible for monitoring standards in Geography but the Geography Co-ordinator, under the direction of the Head teachers, takes a lead in this. Monitoring activities are planned across the year and form part of the Geography Co-ordinators leadership schedule. In summary, these are:

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- staff meetings as needed to ensure colleagues are informed of subject developments at local and national levels with which the Co-ordinator has been involved;
- the moderation of teachers' planning once per term to monitor coverage and delivery of planned enquiries;
- lesson observations/ learning walks to ensure that learning and teaching is appropriately engaging and challenging and that progress is being made by the pupils;
- the sampling of pupils' work twice per year to ensure that expectations in terms of subject outcomes are being maintained through the curriculum;

### **Geography Co-ordinator**

The Geography Co-ordinator has the responsibility to take a lead in developing Geography further across the school within the school's improvement plan; monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning; and the use of resources. Teachers and educational support staff can expect informal support from the Geography Co-ordinator, support arising from the school improvement plan and identified in performance management and induction programmes. To develop staff confidence and competence in teaching Geography:

- the Geography Co-ordinator will attend subject professional development opportunities as they arise and in the context of the whole School Improvement Plan together with the Geography Subject Action Plan;
- whole-school training needs are identified as a result of the monitoring and evaluation programme;
- other training needs are identified through induction programmes and performance management review;
- the subject leader will arrange for relevant advice and information from professional development programmes including courses to be disseminated and, where appropriate, included in improvement planning;
- where necessary, the subject leader leads (or arranges) school-based subject improvement training for colleagues.

- **Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed in line with the school's policy review programme and no later than the following date: November 2027

Signed Subject Co-ordinator

*Belinda Quiles*

Date 22.11.24