

Subject Policy

Geography

Reviewed by: Sarah Bailey and Jenny Hatch

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INTENT: At Debden Church of England Primary Academy, all of our curriculum disciplines are used to underpin our school vision, which is to ensure that the children in our care:

- Progress exceptionally well academically, across a broad and knowledge-rich curriculum;
- Develop into confident compassionate, well-rounded individuals, in a safe, caring, Christian environment;
- Become equipped with the learning skills needed to deal with future challenges;
- Create happy, positive memories of their childhood.

Our geography curriculum has been carefully constructed through close consideration of both the expectations of the National Curriculum and the vision and contextual requirements of our school and its children. Through our geography curriculum, we aim for children to:

- Stimulate their interest in their surroundings and develop a knowledge and understanding of the physical and human processes which shape places;
- Increase their 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 and the wider world.
- Develop a commitment to sustainable development and an appreciation of what 'global citizenship' means;
- Make sense of their own surroundings through learning about their own locality and the interaction between people and the environment;
- Develop the geographical disciplinary skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps of different scales, and the vocabulary necessary to carry out effective geographical enquiry.
- Work geographically in a range of appropriate contexts, using a variety of materials and equipment including other people's experiences and knowledge.

We have written unit overviews for each topic, and a progression of skills map to plot an ambitious rate of development for the children throughout their time at Debden. Teachers use these key documents throughout every stage of planning, implementation and assessment. Our curriculum map shows the units that children study in each term – this has been carefully considered to ensure that children are given a rich understanding of the geography of their local surroundings, a secure understanding of the geography of Britain, and a foundation understanding of the geography of the other continents of the world (aligning with their History study). Cross-curricular links, in addition to the rich diet of texts that children are exposed to throughout the curriculum, ensure that children's knowledge of geography concepts is enhanced.

At the heart of each geography unit is an enquiry question that guides the learning. By the end of the unit, children

should be able to answer this question in depth, demonstrating their understanding as part of their end-of-term assessment (see 'Impact'). The curriculum is underpinned by four key concepts: locational knowledge, place knowledge, human and physical geography, and geographical skills. Each unit revisits and develops these concepts, allowing children to deepen and broaden their geographical understanding over time. This progressive approach helps pupils build a rich schema of knowledge, enabling them to make meaningful comparisons and identify similarities and differences between places across the world.

Our geography curriculum has been tailored to our school's individual context. For example, children learn about both the physical and human geography of their immediate vicinity (Debden and surrounding villages), East Anglia and beyond. They also learn about local biomes, geographical features (e.g. rivers, topography, etc.) flora and fauna.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Geography is generally taught in 'blocks' for 3-4 weeks at the beginning of the second half term in each full term (the other blocked subjects are History, Art, DT, and Music, although they receive different time allocations depending upon the depth and breadth of curriculum content). We have found that this allows us to immerse children in a greater depth of study.

We have designed our own schemes and series' of lessons to fit the needs and context of our curriculum and our children. However, we do have some recommended resources that teachers may use to support planning and resourcing, including the Geographical Association and the Royal Geographical Society.

As with all lessons, teachers apply our agreed Debden pedagogical strategies, including:

1. Using the 'Principles of Instruction,' (e.g. regular review, small steps material) 'Teach Like a Champion' (e.g. cold calling, talk partners) and other research-approved pedagogical strategies to maximise children's engagement and progress and to continuously assess understanding.
2. Taking every opportunity to develop children's reading skills and vocabulary, through the use of a range of model texts and vocabulary-building strategies (which are displayed in every classroom);
3. Incorporating daily, weekly and monthly recall activities in order to ensure that children's understanding of important concepts is remembered and strengthened.
4. Encouraging children to develop their learning skills, such as resilience and independence, through models, guided learning practice, effective support and self-help strategies.
5. Tailoring learning to the needs of the children, adapting plans in the moment if necessary, based on continuous and accurate assessment for learning.

In addition to this, in geography, all teachers aim to:

- Build in many opportunities to develop children's geographical skills through the use of maps, atlases, globes, diagrams, digital computer mapping and fieldwork
- Enquiry led learning – begin units and lessons with one or more enquiry questions, the answers to which are explored during each lesson. Use children's experiences as starting points
- Find opportunities to further develop locational and place knowledge outside of geography lessons
- Locate and place the area of study within a wider context and linking learning of previous places to new places

-Maximise opportunities for fieldwork to enhance learning

IMPACT:

Outcomes in topic and literacy books - In addition to information gathered from student conversations and learning outcomes (see assessment below) evidence a broad and balanced geography curriculum and demonstrate the children's acquisition of identified key knowledge. Some form of independent, extended piece of work is completed by children at the end of each unit (ordinarily an extended piece of writing, a presentation, or a test) in order for children to demonstrate their understanding of the knowledge covered.

Whole-Class Feedback – In addition to the verbal feedback that is provided within each lesson, teachers are expected to complete at least one whole-class cycle within each geography block. This includes highlighting strengths, identifying misconceptions and next steps, and commenting upon the children's presentation. A 'blue sticker task' (the call to action) should be utilised to address misconceptions and learning that has not been secured.

End of Unit Assessment – Children complete one of our Debden Foundation Subject Assessments at the end of each learning unit. These assessments, marked out of 15 (as with all Foundation Assessments). Children's scores are tracked via our 'Insight' monitoring system, to enable us to understand the progress that they are making throughout the school, and to tailor our approaches accordingly. The assessment papers are written by the class teacher and overseen by the subject leader, and test the knowledge as prescribed in the unit plans, through progressively more complex questions (utilising Blooms Taxonomy). The questions should also enable students to showcase the skills in the appropriate area/s of the skills map.

Monitoring – 2-3 times per year, subject monitoring of history takes place, which is normally carried out by the subject leader (at times, this may be a senior leader). The link governor will participate in the learning walk or be provided with feedback following the visit. The subject monitoring process includes:

- Lesson visits;
- Book look;
- Student chats;
- Checking of student understanding of information from unit plans;
- Viewing classroom displays;
- Conversations with teachers;
- Analysis of assessment data;
- Subject leader 'deep-dive' questions and review of key subject documents (when with link Governor).

The information gathered from teachers is fed back in a timely fashion via our subject leader monitoring reports.

REVIEW:

This policy will be regularly reviewed by the Subject Leader and the Head of School. The maximum period between reviews is two years.