

Vernon Primary School

Geography Policy



The vision and intent of the Geography curriculum at Vernon Primary School is to provide every pupil with:

- An excellent knowledge of where places are and what they are like.
- An excellent understanding of the ways in which places are interdependent and interconnected and how much human and physical environments are interrelated.
 - An extensive base of geographical knowledge and vocabulary.
- Fluency in complex, geographical enquiry and the ability to apply questioning skills and use effective analytical and presentational techniques.
 - The ability to reach clear conclusions and develop a reasoned argument to explain findings.
- Significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity as shown in interpretations and representations of the subject matter.
 - Highly developed and frequently utilised fieldwork and other geographical skills and techniques.
- A passion for and commitment to the subject, and a real sense of curiosity to find out about the world and the people who live there.
- The ability to express well-balanced opinions, rooted in very good knowledge and understanding about current and contemporary issues in society and the environment.
- A secure understanding of sustainability, climate change and environmental responsibility, in line with the Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy and Ofsted's focus on curriculum relevance and real-world learning.

Introduction

At **Vernon Primary School** we value Geography because it allows all children the opportunity to explore and explain the World in which we live in and discover the relationship between themselves and the environment. Geography also provides a key platform for children to understand the challenges facing the planet today, including climate change, environmental degradation and the need for sustainable living.

Rationale

Geography teaches an understanding of place and environment. In this subject, children will begin by learning about their local area and progress their knowledge to compare their life in this area with that in other regions of the United Kingdom and other parts of the world. Children will learn different skills such as drawing and interpreting maps. They will also develop their skills in research, investigation, problem solving and analysis. Through their growing knowledge and understanding of Geography, children will also gain appreciation of life in other cultures as well as finding out information about the physical world. Children will be exposed to a rich vocabulary to develop their language and knowledge. Where appropriate the Geography curriculum will promote key British Values. The children will have exposure to a wide experience of local and global learning where there are opportunities for the children to embrace differences within the world while demonstrating respect and tolerance. In addition, the Geography curriculum supports pupils to understand the impact of human activity on the physical environment and the importance of sustainable development. This ensures that pupils are prepared for a future shaped by climate change and environmental challenges.

Aims and objectives

The aims of Geography at Vernon Primary School are:

- To enable children to have a deep understanding of their local area.
- To enable children to gain knowledge and understanding of places in the world.
- To increase children's knowledge of other cultures whilst teaching children respect, tolerance and what it means to be a positive citizen in a multi cultural country whilst embedding fundamental British Values.
- 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 develop and progress other skills including those of enquiry, ICT, investigation and how to present their conclusion appropriately.
- To carry out fieldwork on a termly basis linked to their subject of learning.
- To obtain Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills.
- To carry out fieldwork and deepen children's understanding.
- **Additional sustainability and climate-related aims:**
- To develop children's understanding of climate change, its causes, impacts and possible responses.
- To raise awareness of sustainability, including energy use, waste reduction, resource management and responsible consumption.
- To support children in understanding their role as responsible global citizens who can contribute positively to environmental protection and climate action.

Teaching and Learning

Teaching staff at Vernon Primary School are fully committed to using the National Curriculum and their planning and teaching is reflective of this. 'Kapow' is an online tool that aids teachers in the planning, teaching and assessment of Geography. All National Curriculum learning objectives are covered and this is outlined in the geography progression map. Fieldwork is a priority and fed through the curriculum throughout each term. The staff plan creatively to develop inspiring activities based around a termly theme. We recognise that the children at Vernon Primary School respond to different learning styles and therefore a range of teaching styles are used

when delivering geography-based lessons. The teaching of climate change and sustainability are embedded meaningfully within the curriculum, rather than only being taught in isolation.

In order to ensure high quality, creative teaching, the children should be given opportunities to learn through:

- practical investigation
- fieldwork
- asking questions
- collecting and analysing data
- discussion and debate
- drama and role play
- the use of secondary sources to stimulate geographical enquiry and to answer posed questions.
- the use of ICT tools to further their knowledge and understanding
- the use of real-world environmental data and local case studies linked to sustainability and climate change where appropriate.

In order to enhance children's learning in geography, opportunities are also planned, when necessary, for:

- Fieldwork on a termly basis.
- educational visits linking to aspects of geography,
- enrichment days, with links to other areas of the curriculum, ie; Languages (study of France),
- study book work to consolidate Geographical understanding,
- after school extra-curricular activities, such as Environment club.
- participation in environmental initiatives and projects that promote sustainability and climate awareness. Such as sustainability projects and national programmes including the *National Education Nature Park*, enabling pupils to apply geographical knowledge through biodiversity mapping, habitat improvement and monitoring environmental change over time.

Sustainability and Climate Change

Vernon Primary School is committed to embedding sustainability and climate change education within Geography.

Pupils will have opportunities to:

- Learn about weather patterns, climate zones and climate change over time.
- Understand the impact of human activity on the environment, including pollution, deforestation and carbon emissions.
- Explore ways individuals, communities and governments can work towards a more sustainable future.
- Develop knowledge and skills that support informed decision-making and responsible environmental behaviour.

The school recognises the importance of developing pupils' environmental literacy and contributing to a whole-school approach to sustainability.



Rewilding

Vernon Primary School is committed to sustainability and to protecting and enhancing the wildlife within its local community. In partnership with the **University of Manchester**, and working alongside Dr Anna Gilchrist, the Pupil Parliament and Environmental Club are actively involved in a long-term Rewilding Project designed to support biodiversity, environmental education and climate resilience.

Phase One of the project has included the installation of night-vision wildlife cameras to identify and monitor the species inhabiting the school grounds, alongside a reduction in grass cutting at the boundaries of the school fields to allow natural habitats to regenerate.

Phase Two will focus on further habitat creation and enhancement, including the introduction of a *scrape pond*, the planting and laying of hedgerows, and the planting of trees and vegetation to encourage shade, diversity and improved ecological balance. These actions support the continued development of the school grounds' natural biodiversity, allowing ecosystems to establish and thrive with minimal human intervention.

Through this project, pupils gain first-hand experience of biodiversity conservation, ecological monitoring and the principles of rewilding, reinforcing their understanding of sustainability and the role individuals and communities play in protecting the natural environment.



Planning

Geography planning is based upon the National Curriculum using the programmes of study and the school's Geography progression map as a reference point for progression from Year One to Year Six. Plans for Reception are based on the 'Early Learning Goals' with Geography taught under the area of 'Understanding the World'. All teachers are involved in the planning of Geography. Plans are then monitored by the Head teacher, Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Head teachers, SLT and the Subject Leader.

The planning for each year group comprises:

- the curriculum map for each year group, which identifies the Geography units to be covered in each term and ensures an appropriate balance and distribution of work from EYFS to Year Six. Pupils build knowledge incrementally, beginning with an understanding of their immediate environment and progressing to more complex concepts such as global climate patterns, human–environment interaction and sustainable development.
- the termly overview and short-term plan for each year group, which provides further details of the units of work for each term including: learning objectives, outcomes and crosscurricular links for each unit. The Geography subject leader reviews these plans on a regular basis. The plans are adapted from 'Kapow' to ensure they are relevant for the pupils in this locality and are in line with National Curriculum expectations.

Teachers are responsible for annotating their plans to identify successful aspects of lessons as well as any areas or gaps, which may inform future planning. Planning also considers opportunities to include sustainability, climate change and environmental themes where they naturally support curriculum objectives.

Planning for inclusion

At Vernon Primary School we value the importance of inclusion. The National Curriculum sets out a number of key principles essential to planning and teaching:

- Setting suitable challenges
- Responding to pupils' needs 'Nobody else is quite like me'
- Overcoming potential barriers for individuals and groups of pupils

These principles highlight the importance of settings and schools planning Geography teaching in order to meet the needs of all children. Planning should also ensure that the needs of children within specific groups, such as those with Special Educational Needs (SEND), or more able learners, are addressed in full. Planning for inclusion should be an integral part of a wider, coherent approach to effective Geography planning.

Assessment

Teachers assess children's progress in Geography by observing their work and involvement in each lesson and judging this by the objectives and outcomes for the lesson. Assessment may be in the form of:

- Written work – study book end point piece
- Photographic evidence
- A group presentation
- A 'Kapow' assessment at the end of each unit

These observations are used to determine future planning. Parents are informed of their child's progress in Geography at Parents' Evenings and in the annual report at the end of the academic year. Examples of children's work are kept by the subject leader as evidence of progression and expected level of achievement in Geography throughout the school.

Responsibilities

The Role of the Subject Leader: The role of the Geography Subject Leader is to ensure that the geography curriculum is being delivered in a way which meets the learning objectives and inspires and motivates the children. This is done by:

- monitoring the teaching and learning of geography throughout the school
- taking the lead in the development, evaluation and amendments of the long term plan and progression map for Geography as and when necessary
- providing advice and support to colleagues
- keeping up to date with any new subject developments and informing colleagues of changes or developments in the subject
- The Geography Subject Leader will keep up to date with developments in sustainability and climate change education and share relevant guidance and resources with staff where appropriate.
- purchasing, ordering and maintaining teaching resources
- monitoring and reviewing the targets outlined in the Geography action plan
- ensuring a whole school approach to the planning, recording and assessment of Geography
- ensuring the professional development needs of staff when and where necessary
- Identifying training needs of staff through monitoring and appraisal reviews.

The role of the Class Teacher

To provide opportunities for children to develop their geographical knowledge

To plan exciting, stimulating lessons to foster a love of the subject

To ensure all children can fully access and engage with the lessons

To develop and evaluate planning

To identify CPD needs and attend training sessions. 'Nobody else is quite like me'

Parent/Carer Involvement

- Parents/Carers are invited into school three times each year to share their child's work and discuss progress
- Parents/Carers are invited to an Open Evening in the summer term
- Parents/Carers are welcomed into school to work within the classroom.

Monitoring and Review

We are aware of the need to regularly review our policies to take into account the new initiatives, changes in curriculum or developments in technology.

Geography Subject Leader & Sustainability Lead: Laura Hough

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Review Date: January 2029

Ratified by Governors: January 2026