

# Geography Curriculum Statement

*“Geography underpins a lifelong conversation about the earth as the home of humankind.”*



Geography Association

## Intent – What we are trying to achieve?

**At Orchard, we want our Geography curriculum to be a great adventure that can be experienced though the soles of the feet.**

Our intent, when teaching Geography, is to inspire in children a curiosity and fascination about the world and people within it; to promote the children's interest and understanding of diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. We want our children to develop their observational, questioning and investigative skills through first hand experiences and high-quality teaching will helps to build on their knowledge, skills and interests and encourages a commitment to sustainable development and 'global citizenship'.

## Implementation – How do we translate our vision into practice?

### Ambitious - Planning & Design

- Geography at Orchard is taught in blocked cross-curricular Learning Adventures on a two-year rolling programme to accommodate mixed aged classes and ensure that children can achieve depth in their learning.
- To be able to provide the bespoke teaching and learning experience that we want for our pupils, teachers have identified the key knowledge and skills of each unit and these are mapped across the school, ensuring that knowledge builds progressively and that children develop skills systematically.
- Our Geography curriculum covers all of the relevant National Curriculum (2014) requirements for each key stage.
- Geography is planned to foster a life-long love of learning. High quality, engaging and memorable lessons are taught through a practical, thematic approach to ensure coverage and progression across a number of curriculum areas where History, Geography and Science are 'key drivers' for each Learning Adventure.

### Relevant – Progression

- We rigorously drive home knowledge which underpins pupils' learning in Geography and enables the progressive use and application of skills in a range of contexts.
- Meaningful links with other subjects are made where appropriate to ensure that the Geography curriculum is a rich base of factual knowledge and vocabulary that helps pupils to make connections within a 3D model.
- Connections between concepts provide the basis for progression. The curriculum framework across each phase (EYFS, Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2) has been carefully mapped to set out the necessary knowledge that will be taught, and how these essential concepts develop cumulatively throughout each unit.
- In light of educational research about cognitive load, horizontal, diagonal and vertical links have been plotted within our curriculum to ensure that pupils revisit key information and concepts in different contexts, subjects and at different ages. These logical connections are planned purposefully and explicitly to build the structure of our curriculum and enable staff to refer back to prior learning on which new layers of knowledge can be successfully laid.

- Existing knowledge is checked at the beginning of each topic, as part of the KWL strategy (What I know, What I would like to Know and What I have Learned). This ensures that teaching is informed by the children's starting points and that it takes account of pupil voice, incorporating children's interests.
- Tasks are selected and designed to provide appropriate challenge to all learners, in line with the school's commitment to inclusion.

### **Enjoyable – Enrichment through a thematic approach**

- Enrichment through stimulating and 'memorable experiences' such as Inspiration Days, theme days, special outcome events and visits/visitors are built in to each Learning Adventure make learning in Geography 'enticing' and to engage, immerse and hook the children into their learning experience.
- The local area is fully utilised to achieve the desired outcomes, with extensive opportunities for field work to be embedded in practice. For example, educational visits, orienteering within the school grounds, conducting river studies, trips to local woods, castles and using map reading skills during residential visits.

### **Creative – Teaching & Learning**

- Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction play a key role in developing knowledge and skill and discreet vocabulary progression to help form part of the units of work so that children know more and remember more overtime across all subject areas of the curriculum:
  - Present learning in small, coherent steps
  - Ask key questions
  - Provide explicitly clear and excellent examples
  - Guide children's practice
  - Systematically check children's understanding
  - Provide scaffolds for challenging activities
  - Provide opportunity for independent practice
  - Review learning monthly/ weekly
- At the end of each Learning Adventure, key knowledge is reviewed by the children and rigorously checked by the teacher and consolidated as necessary. Children will deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes and how this affects landscapes and environments.
- Our 'Big Questions' allow teachers to frame narratives and focus the learning within each Learning Adventure (unit of work). These overarching, generally open questions, have multi-dimensional answers that require a breadth of knowledge to answer comprehensively. Asking and subsequently answering bite-sized 'Questions for Learning' each 'jigsaw lesson' allows children to feel a sense of progression as they chip away at the larger, overarching question.
- We recognise that not all learning needs to be captured in the written form and or by every child. Whole class books, video recordings, photographs or conversations/observations are often just as valuable in demonstrating understanding.

### **Inclusive – Success for all**

- Geography lessons are designed to provide our pupils with the scaffolding required to access the learning at all levels.
- Teachers ensure that any form of differentiation is appropriate and does not place a glass ceiling on learning for any child, no matter their ability or needs.
- Where necessary, individual adaptations are made to meet the needs of children with high levels of SEND.

## **Impact – What is the impact of our curriculum on the students?**

We measure the impact of our curriculum through the following methods:

- Assessing children's understanding of topic linked vocabulary before and after the unit is taught.
- Summative assessment of pupil discussions about their learning.
- Images and videos of the children's practical learning.
- Interviewing the pupils about their learning (pupil voice).
- Moderation staff meetings where pupil's books are scrutinised and there is the opportunity for a dialogue between teachers to understand their class's work.
- Annual reporting of standards across the curriculum.
- Marking of written work in books.

Through high quality teaching, we develop the following essential characteristics of geographers:

- An excellent knowledge of where places are and what they are like, both in Britain and the wider world
- A comprehensive understanding of the ways in which places are interdependent and interconnected
- An extensive base of geographical knowledge and vocabulary
- Fluency in complex, geographical enquiry and the ability to apply questioning skills, as well as effective presentation techniques
- The ability to reach clear conclusions and explain their findings
- Excellent fieldwork skills as well as other geographical aptitudes and techniques
- The ability to express well-balanced opinions, rooted in very good knowledge and understanding about current issues in society and the environment
- A genuine interest in the subject and a real sense of curiosity about the world and the people who live here.