FULBOURN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Our Approach to...

Geography

Aims:

- To develop children's curiosity and fascination about the world and its people, helping them to understand the diverse places, communities and environments around them.
- To develop a strong sense of place and belonging, beginning with the children's local environment and extending their understanding to the United Kingdom and the wider world.
- To build secure knowledge of the world's continents, oceans, countries and significant human and physical features, enabling children to locate and describe places with increasing confidence.
- To develop an understanding of the interaction between human and physical processes and how these shape and change places and environments.
- To systematically teach geographical skills, including map reading, fieldwork, data collection, observation and the interpretation and presentation of geographical information.
- To encourage children to ask geographical questions, use evidence and make connections between places, people and environments.
- To help children develop an understanding of their responsibility towards the environment and the ways in which people can influence and care for the world around them.

Research base:

Ofsted. (2021). Research review series: Geography.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-review-series-geography

Department for Education. (2013). National curriculum in England: Geography programmes of study.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-geography-programmes-of-study

Ofsted. (2023). Getting our bearings: geography subject report.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subject-report-series-geography/getting-our-bearings-geography-subject-report

Procedures:

Key Enquiry Questions - Each unit is driven by overarching and lesson-specific geographical enquiry questions. These promote curiosity and deeper thinking and guide pupils to investigate places, people and geographical processes. Questions encourage children to explain patterns, make comparisons and consider how and why places change.

Sense of Place - Children develop a strong sense of place by beginning with their local environment and progressively studying the United Kingdom and a range of contrasting places around the world. They consider both human and physical features and the connections between people and places.

Locational Knowledge - Locational knowledge is systematically developed and revisited. Children learn to locate continents, oceans, countries and significant geographical features using globes, atlases and maps. As they progress, they develop greater precision using geographical language, grid references, latitude, longitude, the Equator and hemispheres.

Human and Physical Geography - Human and physical geography are taught together so that children understand the relationship between people and the natural world. Children explore physical features and processes such as rivers, mountains, climate, volcanoes and earthquakes, alongside human features and processes including settlements, land use, communities, migration and movement.

Maps, Data and Geographical Skills - Geographical skills are explicitly taught, modelled and revisited. Children use and create maps, plans, aerial photographs and diagrams, develop directional and positional language, collect and present data, and interpret maps, graphs, photographs and other geographical information.

Fieldwork - First-hand observation and fieldwork are an important part of our Geography curriculum. Children use the school grounds and local area to investigate geographical features, collect data, identify patterns and communicate their findings. Where possible, children apply their skills in other environments (e.g. on trips into Cambridge, residential visits).

Vocabulary - Subject-specific vocabulary is explicitly taught, modelled and revisited. Children are encouraged to use geographical terminology accurately when describing locations, explaining processes, comparing places and communicating their findings. Word banks should be provided to support the spelling of topic words.

Case Studies and Enrichment - Children study carefully selected examples and case studies to develop a deeper understanding of geographical ideas and to broaden their knowledge of the world. Practical activities, educational visits, local fieldwork and opportunities to investigate real-world issues help to make Geography meaningful and memorable.



Reading:

- Reading comprehension – Children read and interpret geographical information, including explanations, reports, maps, diagrams and data.
- Reading non-fiction to build knowledge of places, people, environments and geographical processes.
- Reading and interpreting maps, atlases, photographs, graphs and other geographical sources.
- Books organised in the library to support current Geography topics and broaden children's knowledge of the world.
- Reading fiction and picture books where appropriate to develop a sense of place, encourage curiosity and provide a stimulus for geographical enquiry.
- Reading examples of geographical writing and using these as models for children's own explanations, reports and presentations.

Inclusion by design:

Visuals – Maps, photographs, diagrams and other visual representations are used routinely to support understanding of geographical concepts and locations. Key vocabulary is presented alongside visuals wherever helpful.

Maps and data adapted through enlarged or simplified maps, highlighted routes and features, reduced information, clear symbols and carefully selected scales. Practical resources are accessible and their use clearly modelled.

Scaffolding – Geographical enquiries are carefully structured so that children have the prior knowledge and vocabulary needed to access the task. Teachers should model processes such as using a map, collecting data or interpreting a graph before children work independently.

Starting off each lesson with a 'hook' – a question, photograph, map, object, data set or real-world example inspires curiosity and help children connect new learning to what they already know.

Regular, low-stakes retrieval quizzing is used to enable learners to retain locational knowledge, key vocabulary and important geographical concepts.

Fieldwork and practical activities are adapted where necessary so that all children can participate meaningfully, while maintaining high expectations for geographical knowledge and understanding.

Glossary:

Fieldwork: The collection and investigation of information about places through first-hand observation and practical geographical activities.

Geographical Enquiry: The process of asking geographical questions, gathering and analysing evidence, and using it to reach conclusions about places, people and environments.

Geographical Skills: The practical skills used by geographers, including map reading, fieldwork, data collection, data presentation and the interpretation of geographical information.

Human Geography: The study of people, communities, settlements, economies, migration, land use and the ways people interact with and change places.

Locational Knowledge: Knowledge of where places and geographical features are located and the ability to describe their position using geographical language and representations.

Place Knowledge: Understanding the distinctive human and physical characteristics of particular places and the similarities, differences and connections between them.

Physical Geography: The study of the natural features and processes of the Earth, including landforms, weather, climate, rivers, coasts, rocks and tectonic activity.

Spatial Awareness: An understanding of where things are located, how they are arranged and the relationships and patterns between places and features.