

CANTRELL PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL



GEOGRAPHY POLICY

March 2022

National Curriculum

The national curriculum states: “A high-quality geography education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth’s key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the frameworks and approaches that explain how the Earth’s features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.”

The intent is for our Geography teaching to equip our children with not only the minimum statutory requirements of the geography national curriculum, but to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life in an ever-changing world. We ensure that the ‘Geography Skills and Field Work’ component of our provision is built-on and developed throughout children’s time at our school so that they can apply their knowledge of geography when exploring the outdoors, building arguments and explaining processes confidently. We want them to leave Cantrell continuing to ask questions and be curious about our planet

1 Aims and objectives

1.1 Geography helps us to make sense of the fast-changing world in which we live. Cantrell’s Geography curriculum is centred around high quality, experiential field work. Children at Cantrell are encouraged to read the story of the landscape - deepening their thinking as they develop as learners. Teaching sequences include opportunities for children to enquire, investigate, solve problems, make decisions and engage in challenging thought processes. There is also a huge emphasis on vocabulary and ensuring each child is exposed to new and challenging vocabulary to enhance learning. Through our exceptional Geography curriculum, we unravel the mystery of peoples, places, and environments. The study of Geography develops a sense of place, belonging, identity, purpose, awe and wonder, understanding and commitment to the future of our planet. Through their work in Geography, children learn about their local area and contrasting localities in the United Kingdom and other parts of the world. They gain an appreciation of a variety of countries and cultures. They investigate the interconnectivity and interdependence of our world.

Geography involves investigation of the processes and patterns that shape our world; both physical and human. Children learn about environmental processes, perceptions, change, stewardship and sustainability. They learn how to draw and interpret maps and they develop the skills of research, investigation, analysis and problem-solving.

1.2 The specific aims and objectives of Geography at Cantrell are:

- To deliver the Foundation Stage curriculum and the statutory requirements for Key Stage 1 and 2 as outlined within the National Curriculum for Geography.
- To develop, enhance and apply fieldwork skills and techniques and be able to use fieldwork instruments to collect primary data and make sense of the world around them

- To develop, enhance and apply geographical skills in a place or thematic context, not in isolation
- To be able to understand and use subject specific terms in the appropriate context and expand our vocabulary
- To increase children's knowledge of other places and cultures and, in so doing, teach a respect and understanding of what it means to be a positive citizen in a multi-cultural country
- To be able to use atlases, globes, maps and plans in a range of scales and types
- To be able to interpret and create maps and plans at a range of scales and for a variety of purposes
- To use a wide range of ICT including progressive use of GIS (Geographical Information Systems)
- To use research skills with a wide variety of resources to collect secondary geographical information
- To use the above skills and competencies to ask questions that deepen their understanding of the world around them
- To enable children to know and understand environmental problems at a local, regional and global level and encourage them to a commitment to sustainable development and an appreciation of what 'global citizenship' means
- To recognise that Geography is a topical and emotive subject that deals with real issues. Teaching will therefore make use of topical issues and opportunities for 'incidental' Geography teaching throughout the year in addition to the planned curriculum
- To inform and empower children to fully participate in local and global affairs
- To reinforce the learning of English and Maths in a way that is mutually beneficial

2 Teaching and learning style

- 2.1 Our approach to curriculum planning empowers teachers. We rely on our highly skilled workforce to make choices and decisions about the geographical learning experiences offered to children in their classes. Our teachers deliver Geography which is inspiring, relevant, motivating and fun. As a school, we feel it is vitally important that teachers take an active role in *'making the curriculum'* to ensure that it is progressive, responsive and irresistible. Therefore, we provide continual opportunities for our teachers to access CPD.

We believe that enquiry, investigation, problem solving and decision making is central to high quality learning in Geography. We encourage children to ask, as well as answer, geographical questions. In each year group, teachers make extensive and purposeful use of field study. They make use of the school, the grounds, the immediate locality and localities further afield; providing children with the opportunity to develop and apply fieldwork skills and techniques through collecting primary information. To complement this, children use a variety of information sources, such as maps, statistics, graphs, photographs, and aerial and satellite images, with a strong focus on the use of ICT for research, collecting and presentation of data.

We also recognise that Geography is a multi-sensory subject that can often be accessed best by putting children in the 'driving seat'. Across the school, drama

and role play is used to give the children ownership of their learning and boost engagement.

2.2 We recognise that there can be children of widely different abilities in all classes and we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this using differentiation of:

- Learning objectives
- Tasks
- Teaching methods
- Resources
- Support
- Outcomes

We believe all pupils should have access to materials and opportunities suitable to their specific needs. More able pupils are challenged with open-ended tasks which provide opportunities to tackle more complicated issues and use a wider range of resources.

3 Geography curriculum planning

see [**Geography Curriculum**](#)

5 The contribution of Geography to teaching in other curriculum areas

5.1 English

Geography makes a significant contribution to the teaching of English in our school because it actively promotes the skills of reading, writing, and speaking and listening. Wherever possible, we find opportunities to link our work with key texts. These are often picture books but as the children mature, longer texts are used. We ensure that some of the texts that we use in the teaching of literacy are geographical in nature thus reinforcing our creative approach. At Key Stage 2 we organise debates on environmental issues because we believe that these develop speaking and listening skills. Reading skills are developed through research; and writing reports, letters and recording information are all used to develop children's writing ability. As the children's knowledge and understanding of geographical concepts develops, so does their knowledge and understanding of specific vocabulary. Teachers ensure that children are encouraged to use specific vocabulary, appropriate to their stage of development. Sentence structures will be utilised by the children to effectively and efficiently convey their emergent geographical awareness.

5.2 Mathematics

Geography in our school contributes to the teaching of mathematics in a variety of ways. We teach children graphicacy skills. The children study space, scale and distance and they learn how to use four- and six-figure grid references. Children use a range of formulae to make estimates and key skills such as length, depth and breadth are embedded. Concepts of space and shape form part of their learning as well as the use of data handling to conduct research, explore, analyse and illustrate a variety of data.

5.3 Information and communication technology (ICT)

ICT forms an integral part of our Geography teaching and learning. A wide range of ICT is used in teaching (Google Earth, Google Maps, videos, websites, digital images), carrying out research (internet), collecting information (digital photography), data handling and in presenting their work.

5.4 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. It promotes an understanding and respect for other cultures and an understanding of issues such as global warming and sustainable development and the role they as individuals can play in creating a sustainable future for our world. We have a whole-school commitment to the WISE initiative. Children have the opportunity to take part in debates and discussions and are empowered to fully participate in local and global affairs. Geography in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship.

5.5 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

We offer children many opportunities to examine the fundamental questions in life through the medium of Geography. For example, their work on the changing landscape and environmental issues leads children to ask questions about the evolution of the planet. We encourage the children to reflect on the impact of mankind on our world and we introduce the concept of 'stewardship' in relation to sustainable development. Through teaching about contrasting localities, we enable the children to learn about inequality and injustice in the world. We help children to develop their knowledge and understanding of different cultures so that they learn to avoid stereotyping other people and acquire a positive attitude towards others. We help contribute to the children's social development by teaching them about how society works to resolve difficult issues of economic development. The children are made aware of the current shift in our cultural landscape and trends such as the rising profile of the rapidly developing B.R.I.C (Brazil, Russia, India, China) nations.

Geography contributes to the children's appreciation of what is right and wrong by raising many moral questions during the programme of study. The children are prepared for life as young adults by being made aware that their voice can be heard in a range of forums. They learn to make choices and share decisions.

6 Teaching Geography to children with special educational needs

6.1 By nature, Geography is an inclusive subject, as it affects each and every one of us directly. In line with our school's S.E.N.D. policy, we teach Geography to all children, whatever their ability. Geography contributes to a broad and balanced education for all children. Through our Geography teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning Geography. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom - for example, a field trip - we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

6.2 Currently, when assessment against the National Curriculum levels allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels or when

progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation of task, support – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

7 Fieldwork

- 7.1** Fieldwork is vitally important to any Geography teaching. The new national curriculum has raised the profile of field study further. At Cantrell, we include as many opportunities as we can to involve children in practical geographical research and enquiry. We aim to make the learning of Geography irresistible to children by peaking their interest of the world through first hand experience. Children utilise high quality, well-planned fieldwork around the school and grounds, the local area, and further afield. This work outside of the classroom develops their key Geography skills and promotes creativity.
- 7.2** At all stages, we undertake local area investigations. The children are encouraged to first identify similarities between locations before moving onto talking about differences. Through this approach, we feel that the children will more freely develop a sense of global citizenship. We also offer children the opportunity to take part in a residential visit in Years 2, 3 4, 5 and 6.
- 7.3** To ensure teachers feel liberated to conduct fieldwork, a budget is made available for each class to cover some of the associated costs (such as transport) of taking large groups of pupils to sites of geographical interest.

8 Assessment and recording

- 8.1** We assess the children's work in Geography by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lessons. Once the children complete a piece of work, we use marking to praise achievement and provide a target for further development. We value outcomes rather than output. Teacher assessments are always focussed on the children's developing geographical understanding and based on a specific set of learning objectives. Children are not bound to record their work in set ways and an innovative approach to recording work is encouraged. However, each child in Key Stage 1 and 2 does have a book as a record of their progress.

9 Resources

- 9.1** We have a central store of resources and equipment to support and enhance teaching of each Geography unit in the scheme of work. Key to our curriculum are the use of Atlases, Globes, Maps and photographs. We also have a bank of websites to support the teaching of Geography, sorted by resource type and unit of work, available to both staff and pupils in the 'Resources' section of the school network.

- 9.2 We are continuing to develop our link with the Bulwell Forest Garden, a community project attached to our school grounds. Through this link, we hope to engage with the wider community and celebrate the land and what it can produce. <http://www.bulwellforestgarden.co.uk/index.html>



- 9.3 Two of our highly experienced school leaders are trained to deliver **Forest Schools** sessions on the Bulwell Forest Garden site. Forest School is an inspirational process that offers learners regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland or natural environment with trees. Forest School is a specialised learning approach that sits within and compliments the wider context of outdoor and woodland education. The aim is that children have the opportunity to experience everything Forest Schools has to offer multiple times throughout their time at Cantrell.

10 Display

- 10.1 Wherever and whenever possible, children's achievements in Geography are celebrated through display. It is the responsibility of the teachers and support staff to regularly update and renew displays to show the children's developing mastery of the subject. Ideally, displays should include a range of work, vocabulary, an explanation of the learning aims and teacher's informal evaluation of the pupils outcomes.

11 Monitoring and review

- 11.1 The Geography subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in Geography. The Geography subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of Geography, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The Geography subject leader contributes to the School Improvement Plan highlighting areas of development for the coming year and regularly updating the plan with progress made towards the objectives. The subject leader is allocated half a day each term for subject assessment and development.
- 11.2 A named member of the school's governing body is briefed to oversee the teaching of Geography. This governor meets with the subject leader to review progress termly and receives a written commentary which reports on:
- Recent development work
 - Performance analysis
 - Pupil outcomes in relation to development priorities and their impact on teaching and learning
 - Future developments.

Governors are also invited to monitor the effectiveness of the school through a variety of other activities including learning walks and classroom observation as per the Monitoring and Evaluation framework in the School Improvement Plan.