

Grafton Primary School

Geography Policy 2026-2027

Whole school teaching and learning policy, including EYFS

Introduction

This policy outlines the teaching, organisation and management of geography taught and learnt at Grafton Primary School. The policy has been drawn up as a result of staff discussion and has the full agreement of the Governing Body. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff. The responsibility for monitoring and review rests with the subject leader and SLT.

Here at Grafton we see every child as a geographer. We believe this is the key to supporting their understanding of their role in their locality, their country and the wider world and is one of the reasons we have adopted Oxford Owl's *Geography Mastery* programme in 2023. Geography is an essential part of the curriculum: it provides a means of exploring, appreciating and understanding the world in which we live and how it has evolved. Geography explores the relationship between the Earth and its people through the study of place, space and environment. It is the subject in which pupils learn the skills of understanding a locality – firstly their own - and how and where people fit into its overall structure. Developing geographical skills is essential as children live in a world that is wide open to them.

The teaching of geography is inescapably linked to the future of our planet. The geography curriculum places great importance on the interaction between the physical and the human environment. Many areas of study give opportunities to make children aware of these effects upon their surroundings, their own responsibilities and how they can contribute to improving the environment, however small that contribution might be.

We currently use *Geography Mastery* programme, which focuses on both the substantive and disciplinary knowledge of geography where pupils learn both the geographical 'facts' and how to make sense of them simultaneously. The scheme of work provides a strategically-sequenced, comprehensive curriculum that provides opportunities for depth of knowledge and skill and meaningful cross-curricular links with subjects such as history, maths and English.

Our aims

Through our teaching of geography we aim to:

- inspire children's long-lasting curiosity and fascination about the world and its people – its places, cultures and lives
- make sense of their own surroundings through learning about their own locality and the interaction between people and the environment
- develop a knowledge and understanding of the physical and human processes which shape places
- develop and deepen their geographical knowledge, understanding and skills
- formulate appropriate questions, develop research skills and evaluate material to inform opinions
- enable children to work geographically in a range of appropriate contexts, using a variety of materials and equipment including other people's experiences and knowledge
- teach children to express well-balanced opinions, rooted in sound knowledge and understanding about current and contemporary issues in society and the environment
- encourage children use these skills to thoughtfully sustain and care for themselves, and others, and the world around them

Entitlement

Geography is a foundation subject in the National Curriculum. The fundamental knowledge, skills and understanding of the subject are set out in the National Curriculum programmes of study. All pupils are entitled to access the geography curriculum at a level appropriate to their needs.

Equal opportunities

In line with our Equality Duty Policy we are committed to providing a teaching environment conducive to learning. Each child is valued, respected and challenged regardless of race, gender, religion, social background, culture or disability.

The study of geography offers children the chance to encounter different societies and cultures. These concepts are embedded into the curriculum across the school and through study of a range of class units. In addition to this, at certain points of the year, these issues are given further focus during whole school events such as Refugee Week and World Day. Our geography curriculum fosters a culture of respect for and celebration of all races, ethnicities and backgrounds, and a deep understanding of the importance of equality.

EYFS

Children in Nursery and Reception are encouraged to observe, find out about and identify features in the place they live and the natural world. They are encouraged from the youngest age to show care and concern for living things and the environment. Throughout the year, they comment on the daily weather and start to understand some key differences between the four seasons. Early map skills begin through play, following directions and drawing simple picture maps. Children examine similarities, differences, patterns and changes. They explore features of their school environment, such as their playground and the quiet garden, and are encouraged to talk about and make judgements on what they observe. The children are routinely exposed to different cultures, traditions and customs and begin to comment on their own experiences and those of others.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)

In our teaching of geography we also contribute to the development of the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding as they acquire knowledge of a range of different cultures and traditions, and learn respect and understanding of other people and environments.

Strategies for the teaching of geography

Grafton follows the *Geography Mastery* programme, which staff are confident to adapt and supplement, where needed, to suit our cohort and our context. Learning and teaching in geography will be in line with the school's Teaching and Learning Policy, where provision is made for all learning styles. The mode of working in geography is a mix of class teaching, cooperative groups and individual work. Groups are usually of mixed ability and are encouraged to communicate their findings in a variety of ways.

Geographical work is recognised and celebrated in workbooks provided by Oxford University Press, in communicating the results of geographical enquiry to the whole class, during fieldwork opportunities, through online platforms such as Seesaw or Kahoot or Digimaps, through the creation of maps, displays and/or classroom projects, and in class assemblies presented to the school.

Cross-curricular opportunities

Staff are encouraged to develop cross-curricular links with geography and other subjects to provide a relevant and meaningful curriculum for pupils. Each unit of geography is focused on an enquiry question, which helps pupils to think for themselves. We promote a culture of resourcefulness, investigation and problem-solving, which develops pupils' skills in research, analysis, evaluation and communication.

In learning geography, children at Grafton will:

- tackle a variety of rich and stimulating tasks which help pupils to make sense of a complex and dynamically changing world
- use a range of maps and resources such as people, the local environment, sites of interest, photographs, a variety of written materials, ICT based materials, data, TV / video extracts
- develop geographical skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps of different scales, alongside the vocabulary necessary to carry out effective geographical enquiry
- explore a wide range of geographical topics across a variety of places
- work in a variety of contexts – individually, in groups, as a whole class
- present their knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways, such as through debate and discussion, various writing styles/genres (particularly analytical/discursive writing rather than creative writing), sketches, maps, digital presentations and technologies, art and drama
- as they grow in confidence, begin to pose and investigate their own questions about geographical issues

When teaching geography, at Grafton we:

- stimulate an interest and sense of wonder about places around the world
- always explain what we want pupils to know, understand and be able to do through the geography they are about to do
- create opportunities to repeat, revisit, compare and contrast so children know more and remember more as they progress through the school
- ensure that pupils are able to make use of their prior learning in moving their geographical understanding forward
- make very effective use of geographical enquiry to encourage questioning, investigation and critical thinking, now and in the future
- use specialist geographical vocabulary and terminology confidently
- use enrichment to support learning: a wide range of off-site visits, including a residential experience for older pupils, and international links
- address 'tricky' or contentious issues where appropriate
- vary the resources and activities to ensure that each pupil can be effective in their learning
- develop children as active, curious citizens: the future guardians of our world

What do we want pupils to know, do and understand at the end of a key stage, academic year, historical enquiry or lesson that they didn't know, couldn't do and didn't understand at the beginning?

Assessment for learning and assessment of learning

The **Substantive and Disciplinary Knowledge** in the progression grids identify the aspects of geography in which pupils make progress:

Substantive Concepts:

- Geographical skills and fieldwork
- Locational knowledge

- Environmental, physical and human geography

Disciplinary Concepts:

- The Physical World
- Human Environments
- Interdependence
- Place and Space
- Scale
- Young people's lives

Children demonstrate their ability in geography in a variety of different ways. Every week, children complete a knowledge quiz where they must recall their learning from the lesson prior. On completion of the lesson tasks or fieldwork, the teacher assesses the work and uses this information to plan for future learning. Written or verbal feedback is given to the child to help guide their progress. Children are also encouraged to assess their own learning and make judgments about how they can move their learning forward.

At the end of a whole unit of work, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work produced and each child's answer to the enquiry question. In order to assist these judgements, teaching staff create a summative assessment, such as an end of term 'quiz' with a range of questions and key vocabulary, a poster or written piece which, when completed, indicates the children who have met, have not met or have exceeded age-related expectations for that geographical focus. We use this teacher assessment as a basis for assessing the progress of the child, and we pass this information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

The role of the geography subject leader is to:

- inspire a strong, whole-school collaborative approach to the development of geography
- develop, implement and review a policy and development plan for geography
- monitor geography throughout the school, through samples of children's work, learning walks and through pupil voice – **ensuring they can enjoy their learning and are able to recall key knowledge, skills, vocabulary and understanding of what they have been taught**
- encourage staff to provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils
- assist in developing meaningful activities appropriate for children at different stages of development, which enable pupils to progress in the subject
- support colleagues in delivering and adapting the scheme of work and developing the detail within each unit via co-planning, INSET and CPD opportunities, sharing good practice and giving feedback
- renew, update and complement resources needed to deliver the curriculum, within budget restraints
- keep abreast of developments in geography education

Resources

There are sufficient resources for all geography-teaching units in the school, including a wide range of geographical text books in the library and in the relevant year group's classrooms. Each classroom has a set of atlases; iPads and interactive whiteboards are available to support children's geographical learning. Every class should have a full set of Geography Mastery workbooks at the start of each school year. Digital resources can be found on the Oxford Owl website.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.

Revised and updated by Allison Gram, Summer 2026