Geography at Parkend

Intent
The 2014 National Curriculum for Geography aims to ensure that all children:

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes
- understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time
- are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
  - collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
  - interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
  - communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length

At Parkend Primary we believe geography encompasses the acquisition of knowledge, concepts, skills and positive attitudes about the ever changing world. We encourage and inspire children to continue to ask geographical questions and be curious about their surroundings; to explore differences, similarities, patterns and change in different places. We nurture the children’s fascination and inquisitive approach and give access to rich geographical vocabulary throughout their time at the school to equip them 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 and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. We want the children of Parkend to be knowledgeable, innovative, resourceful and proactive local and global citizens who are able to support and/or lead others to make decisions about the world and contribute effectively to tackle important issues.

Our Geography curriculum, therefore, builds on the Early Years Foundation Learning Goals and is contextualised for the needs of our children. We utilise the geographical initiatives and opportunities in our local area as much as possible. The content is ambitious and coherently sequenced through a rolling programme of cumulative skills and knowledge. The curriculum is designed to give ALL pupils the knowledge and cultural capital they need for future life, learning and employment. We want our pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and abilities to apply what they know and can do with increasing fluency and independence. Our curriculum fosters a healthy curiosity in children about our own locality as well as the wider world. We promote respect for other communities and the environment and introduce our children to ideas and beliefs about sustainability. The rolling programmes of study are designed so that the key knowledge and skills build on prior learning. We ensure that geography skills are developed throughout the children’s time at the school so that they can apply their geographical knowledge and understanding sequentially when using equipment, conducting fieldwork, building arguments and explaining concepts confidently.
P - Pride in ourselves – recognise our heritage and cultural contribution
A - Achieve the best we can – build on the geographical knowledge and skills we acquire each year
C - Curious thinkers – question the past, present and future to make informed decisions and appreciate human creativity and achievement
E - Everyone together! – give all we can to our local and global community to support sustainability

Implementation

Teachers create an environment that stimulates curiosity and is centred on well-being. Age-appropriate geographical vocabulary, images and resources are displayed within the classrooms for children to engage with. Teachers select books and materials that reflect and support our ambitious curriculum. The subject leader provides effective support and challenge for teachers to continually enhance their own subject knowledge so that pupils receive quality first geography teaching. Good practice is regularly celebrated and shared with the whole school community to create a positive attitude to geography learning across the school. All staff re-inforce an expectation that all children are capable of achieving high standards in geography and they are aware of the clearly defined end points of each phase. Our whole school approach to the teaching and learning of geography involves the following:

Geography is taught in the mixed age classes with an emphasis on discussion, research and problem solving. Through our broad and ambitious curriculum, we present information clearly and allow all children to discuss and find out for themselves. We facilitate opportunities for children to ask their own questions, conduct independent research, be critical thinkers and to discover in creative ways. This curiosity and resilience is celebrated within the classroom. Teachers create engaging lessons that capture the children’s interest and develop their communication skills and aspirations. Work given to children is demanding and matches the sequence and aims of the curriculum. Teachers use precise questioning in class to develop and assess conceptual knowledge and skills. Teachers systematically assess knowledge and understanding to identify misconceptions in learning and adapt their teaching as well as provide clear, direct feedback so that all children flourish. In addition, the subject leader works with class teachers at selected points throughout the year to use their assessment data to define next steps and ensure good progress for all pupils.

Planning and teaching builds upon the learning and skill development of the previous years. Teaching is designed to help children embed learning in long term memory so that they can integrate new knowledge into larger ideas more readily. As the children’s knowledge and understanding increases, and they become more proficient in selecting and using geographical vocabulary and equipment, collating and interpreting results, they become increasingly confident in their growing ability to come to conclusions based on real evidence. The skills of working geographically are embedded into lessons to ensure they are developed throughout the children’s school career and new vocabulary and challenging concepts are introduced through direct teaching. Teachers demonstrate how to: collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork, interpret a range of sources of geographical information as well as communicate geographical information in a variety of ways. Where possible, we utilise the local Forester’s forest sites and school grounds to accessing outdoor learning. We provide as many experiential opportunities for further geography learning through trips, visitors and assemblies.
The successful approach at Parkend Primary results in a fun, engaging, high-quality geography education, that provides children with the foundations and knowledge for understanding the world in more depth. Our engagement with the local environment ensures that children learn through varied and first-hand experiences of the world around them. Frequent, continuous and progressive learning outside as well as inside the classroom is embedded throughout the geography curriculum. The children’s work is consistently high quality and each year, the children are able to know more, remember more and do more so that they are ready for the next stage in their life journey.

HJW - December 2019