

Furneux Pelham School Curriculum

Statement of Intent, Implementation and Impact

Subject: Geography

Subject Leader: Colette Perale

"The study of geography is about more than just memorizing places on a map.

It's about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exists across continents."

Barack Obama

Intent

The study of geography involves our pupils exploring the relationship and interactions between people and the environments in which they live and upon which they and all life on Earth depends. Many of the pupils who now attend our school will live to see the next century and inhabit a world of 11 billion people. The many opportunities and challenges that will arise during their lifetime will be very much about geography at personal, national and global scales.

We intend the geography curriculum to be sequenced, building on previous knowledge, and progressively more challenging, both in terms of subject knowledge and in terms of developing critical thinking skills. We intend our curriculum to be broad, balanced and relevant, reflecting the demands of the National Curriculum. We intend our curriculum to be Inclusive in terms of delivering the same curriculum to all of our pupils irrespective of specific learning needs or disabilities and differentiating where necessary. We also aim to instil in pupils a desire to excel in the subject.

Implementation

We follow the 'Connect Geography' scheme of work and as such, adopt an enquiry focused approach to learning and teaching in geography. This way pupils not only build subject knowledge and understanding but become increasingly adept at critical thinking, specialised vocabulary and their grasp of subject concepts. Learning is (or should be) structured through big question led enquiries about relevant geographical topics, places and themes. Our curriculum is therefore 'knowledge rich' rather than content heavy as we recognise that if we attempt to teach geographical topics, places, themes and issues in their entirety we restrict opportunities for pupils to master and apply critical thinking skills. Our approach should provide sufficient time and space for our pupils not only to acquire new knowledge and subject vocabulary but also to develop subject concepts and understand the significance of what they have learned.

Teaching and Learning, Content and Sequence

Our learning and teaching in geography is interactive and practical allowing opportunities for pupils to work independently, in pairs and also in groups of various sizes both inside and outside of the classroom. Learning activities are varied including the use of mysteries, maps at different scales, puzzles, photographs and drama. We provide varied and differentiated ways for pupils to record the outcomes of their work including the use of PowerPoint, concept mapping, annotated diagrams, improvised drama and the application of a wide range of writing genres. The schemes of work for each geographical enquiry highlight both the objectives and anticipated outcomes of the investigation. They are also carefully structured through the use of ancillary questions, to enable pupils to build their knowledge and understanding in incremental steps of increasing complexity until they reach the point where they are able to answer the question posed at the beginning of the investigation. Our learning and teaching in geography also recognises the importance of fieldwork with a number of our investigations involving observation, recording, presentation, interpretation and the evaluation of geographical information gathered outside of the classroom.

Leadership, Assessment and Feedback

Each enquiry which forms our programme of learning and teaching in geography sets clear objectives and outcomes for the pupils in terms of knowledge and understanding and skills acquisition. The schemes of work also suggest a range of ways in which the teacher can assess whether a pupil has achieved these outcomes. We ensure that when assessing our pupils evidence is drawn from a wide range of sources to inform the process including interaction with pupils during discussions and related questioning, day to day observations, practical activities such as model making and role play drama, the gathering, presentation and communication of fieldwork data and writing in different genres. The outcomes of each enquiry serve to inform the teacher's developing picture of the knowledge and understanding of each pupil and to plan future learning accordingly. We do not make summative judgements about individual pieces of pupil work but rather use the outcomes to build an emerging picture of what the pupil knows, understands and can do.

At the end of each year we make a summative judgement about the achievement of each pupil against the subject learning goals for geography in that year (6). At this point we decide upon a 'best fit' judgement as to whether the pupil has achieved and embedded the expected learning goals, exceeded expectations or is still working towards the goals. This decision draws upon the professional knowledge and judgement that teachers possess about the progress of each pupil, developed over the previous three terms which allows an informed and holistic judgement of attainment to be made. Achievement against the learning goals for geography at the end of the year is used as the basis of reporting progress to parents.

Impact

At Furneux Pelham School, we ensure that all students are exposed to rich learning experiences both in and out of the classroom that aim to:

- Overcome the vocabulary deficit by exposing students to tier three vocabulary regular and ensuring the understanding of words in context.
- Develop the use of geographical language and vocabulary through oracy.
- Promote collaboration and developing a general sense of enquiry, which encourages them to question and make suggestions.
- Build on our student's natural curiosity and develop a geographical awareness of their surroundings but also what is in the wider world.
- Make links between geography and other subjects.
- Create a culture of high aspirations which will allow our students a platform to learn about careers related to geography in the wider community with specialist skills and knowledge, ensuring that they are well prepared for the next steps of their education.
- Develop an interest in the past and an appreciation of human achievements and aspirations.
- Instil and understand the values of our society and how we can protect our environment and world for years to come.