

Geography Policy



Our Curriculum at Finchale

At Finchale Primary School we are proud of our curriculum and the range of experiences we provide for our children. Our curriculum is accessible to all children, irrespective of their ethnic background, gender, disability, religious or linguistic background. We strive to meet the needs of those pupils with additional needs, including special educational needs, those with disabilities, those who are more able, those with gifts or talents and the children who are learning English as an additional language. We provide a rich and challenging curriculum which aims to stretch our children. Staff monitor our children to ensure that they are supported in their learning, whatever their ability.

Statement of Intent for

At Finchale Primary School, we intend to deliver the Geography curriculum so that it inspires pupils to be curious about the world around them and to engage them in outdoor learning and geographical enquiry. By the end of Y6 we would like our pupils to be secondary ready by providing them with the skills, knowledge and attitudes to enable them to become competent geographers. Our curriculum has been sequenced to enable pupils to gradually widen their sense of scale from their immediate geographical location to global. Our starting point for teaching Geography at Finchale is within the EYFS. Our children learn to investigate similarities and differences, the local environment and cultures and beliefs, fostering the skills essential to developing geographical understanding. In KS1 children will begin by looking at their locality and the local environment before moving on to study and compare the wider world. In lower KS2, children explore the United Kingdom with a focus on the North East, before moving on to study Europe with a focus on the Campania, Italy. In upper KS2, pupils will look at the world on a global scale including studying how the landscape is shaped by both the environment and by peoples' actions as humans. This will relate to a focus on sustainable development and how this can impact the future for the world we live in. Throughout KS1 and KS2, map and fieldwork knowledge is developed through a series of fieldwork enquiries which each year group conducts as part of the Geography curriculum.

This Policy was agreed in January 2023 and will be reviewed in Autumn 2026.

Chair of Governors:

Date:

Head Teacher:

Date:

The Importance of Geography

The National Curriculum (DfE, 2014) states that 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 framework and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

Aims

At Finchale our core curriculum covers those elements set out in the EYFS statutory framework, as well as the programmes of study for both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 within the National Curriculum for England. In addition, our teaching goes beyond this to include a range of areas and activities which we believe equip our pupils not only with the skills and knowledge but also the confidence and resilience to be happy, productive members of our society today.

To ensure a smooth transition between what children learn in the Early Years and Key Stage 1, we have carefully structured our planning to ensure there are strong and purposeful links between what children learn and experience in Reception and what they go on to learn and experience in Year 1. This helps to build confidence, maximizes opportunities for learning and demonstrates how our staff have a good understanding of how children progress and develop within each subject.

Our starting point for teaching Geography at Finchale is within the EYFS. Our children learn to investigate similarities and differences, the local environment and cultures and beliefs, fostering the skills essential to developing geographical understanding. Here, a key component comes within the specific area, Understanding the World. Within this, pupils:

- ★ The natural world and some key processes.
- ★ Find out about their environment and talk about the features they like and dislike.
- ★ Begin to know about their own culture and beliefs and those of other people.
- ★ Observe, find out about and identify features in the place they live and the natural world.

Our pupils then move on to develop their Geographical knowledge and understanding as they study the attainment targets and programmes of study for Geography as set out in the National Curriculum. This aims to ensure that all pupils:

- ★ 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

What This Means at Finchale Primary

At Finchale, we aim to teach Geography in a stimulating and meaningful way, through our enquiry approach to the curriculum, allowing children to develop a firm understanding of the world around them. In the EYFS, children have the opportunity to learn about the similarities and differences in relation to places and spaces through 'Play to Learn', adult led activities and exploration of the world around them. They are able to talk about the features of their immediate environment and they begin to think about how their environments may vary from place to place.

At KS1, children learn about their locality and compare their life in the local area with other regions in the United Kingdom and then the rest of the world. They aim to understand some basic subject-specific vocabulary relating to human and physical geography and begin to use geographical skills and observations to enhance their locational awareness. We aim for Geography teaching to encourage children to want to find out about the physical and human features of the world and this enables our children to recognise the importance of sustainable development for the future of mankind.

At KS2 we move further up the scale. Children are encouraged to think more broadly about their locality environment and that of the surrounding areas. They begin to make links between the world's most significant physical and human features and they develop some understanding of how our actions as humans can have an impact on the wider world. We ensure that children develop their use of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills in different contexts in order to enhance locational and place knowledge. When they reach upper KS2, children also have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit to High Borran where they have opportunities to develop their geographical thinking in an active and creative way.

Pupils will be taught to:

In Key Stage 1

- ★ name and locate the world's 7 continents and 5 oceans
- ★ name, locate and identify characteristics of the 4 countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas.
- ★ understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom, and of a small area in a contrasting non-European country.
- ★ identify seasonal and daily weather patterns in the United Kingdom and the location of hot and cold areas of the world in relation to the Equator and the North and South Poles.
- ★ use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to:
 - key physical features, including: beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather
 - key human features, including: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shop
- ★ use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the United Kingdom and its countries, as well as the countries, continents and oceans studied at this key stage
- ★ use simple compass directions (north, south, east and west) and locational and directional language [for example, near and far, left and right], to describe the location of features and routes on a map
- ★ use aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features; devise a simple map; and use and construct basic symbols in a key
- ★ use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of their school and its grounds and the key human and physical features of its surrounding environment

In Key Stage 2

- ★ locate the world's countries, using maps to focus on Europe (including the location of Russia) and North and South America, concentrating on their environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries, and major cities
- ★ name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, key topographical features (including hills, mountains, coasts and rivers), and land-use patterns; and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time
- ★ identify the position and significance of latitude, longitude, Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle, the Prime/Greenwich Meridian and time zones (including day and night)
- ★ understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region of the United Kingdom, a region in a European country, and a region in North or South America
- ★ describe and understand key aspects of:
 - physical geography, including: climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle
 - human geography, including: types of settlement and land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water
- ★ use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied
- ★ use the 8 points of a compass, 4- and 6-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build their knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world
- ★ use fieldwork to observe, measure record and present the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods, including sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technologies

Fieldwork

Fieldwork is an important part of the enquiry curriculum. Opportunities are planned in for each year group to use the school grounds, local environment and sometimes, further afield. We also make links where appropriate to other countries across the world using our new 'Class Pals' Odizzi resource. Any trips to conduct fieldwork are risk assessed and signed off by the Class teacher/head teacher if necessary.

Teaching Geography Should Equip Children To:

- ★ Ask perceptive questions
- ★ Understand the world and its features
- ★ Recognise the difference between human and physical features
- ★ Widen their understanding of diverse places, people and environments
- ★ Communicate Geographically
- ★ How to draw and interpret maps
- ★ Investigate, analyse and problem-solve

Threads of Learning

We have identified a set of key concepts or 'threads', that children will repeatedly revisit throughout their time at Finchale. Our threads are:

- ★ Location knowledge
- ★ Place knowledge

- ★ Human, physical and environmental Geography
- ★ Geographical skills and fieldwork

Making Learning Memorable

At Finchale, we aim to make learning memorable through the careful planning and delivery of enriching activities. The children have many opportunities to visit Geographical sites, engage with Geographers and visitors, conduct fieldwork investigations and to explore a range of different map projections to ensure a well-rounded understanding of our world. Learning is practical where possible as we believe this helps learning 'stick'. Planning is carefully mapped across school to ensure that, when appropriate, links are made with other subject areas to deepen children's understanding.

Organisation

Our Geography Curriculum is drawn from a range of resources which include but are not restricted to Durham learning grids, Grammarsaurus, Twinkl, Kapow and Oddizzi. Geography is part of children's learning roughly every other half term; this is organised alongside History, Art and D&T learning with British Values woven throughout.

Long term plans and the Progression of Skills, detail the units taught and the sequence of learning through school. Teachers identify their content from these and provide knowledge organisers for each unit of work. The knowledge organisers have a clear knowledge and skill development focus and place importance and priority on developing a child's vocabulary understanding and use.

The content for each year group, along with long-term plans, content can be found on our school website: www.finchale.durham.sch.uk .

Resources

We use a range of resources to support our teaching within Geography which include the following:

- <https://grammarsaurus.co.uk>
- <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/>
- <https://www.kapowprimary.com>
- <https://www.oddizzi.com/>
- <https://geography.org.uk/>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/>

We are continually adapting and amending our resources to meet the needs of our children.

Assessment

Our subject leader for Geography will oversee the planning and monitoring of pupils' work. Throughout a unit we will continually assess children's current knowledge and previous learning using the 'Fast 4'. This retrieval practice is a key aspect of assessment and is carefully placed through school to 'keep learning warm'. Children revisit learning at a distance from taught content to ensure a retention of understanding. At the end of each unit, the key knowledge and understanding will also be assessed by the class teacher usually, through the use of a quiz. These, alongside the 'Fast 4', give a picture of where the children's understanding and knowledge recall sits and provide clear information from which to build further teaching sequences and to extend children's learning.

Assessments will be 'high challenge and low threat' and could be undertaken using the following methods (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Fast 4

- Quizzes
- Observation of pupils
- Talking with pupils
- Marking written work
- Self-assessment
- Peer assessment
- Discussion and debates

*'The study of geography is about more than just memorising places on a map. It's about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exists across continents. And in the end, it's about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together' - **Barack Obama***

*"Geography explains the past, illuminates the present and prepares us for the future. What could be more important than that?" - **Michael Palin***