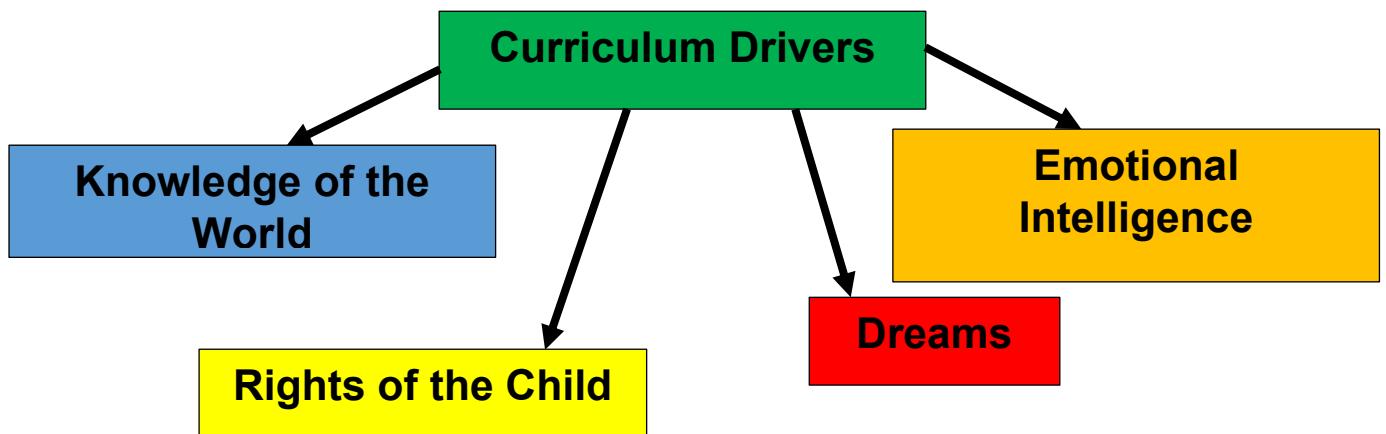




## Simonside Geography Policy

### Updated February 2025



## INTENT

### Aims

Our Geography curriculum is underpinned by our **Curriculum Drivers**.

**Knowledge of the World** – We want our education of geography to inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people. As they progress through their education, the children will have a growing understanding of the relationship between the Earth and its people through the study of place, space and environment. The teaching of Geography wouldn't be complete without acknowledging the future of our planet. Many areas of study give opportunities for children to become aware of the effects upon their surroundings, their own responsibilities and how they can contribute to improving the environment, however small that contribution might be.

**Rights of the Child** – We want our children to know they have rights and appreciate that throughout the world, some children are not always able to access these same rights. Children will understand some of the ways in which they can champion their rights and the rights of others. Furthermore, through our teaching of geography, children will learn that those living in other countries may prioritise certain rights over others and give inferences on why this might be.

**Dreams** – Geography is the subject in which pupils begin to understand a locality and how/where people fit into its overall structure. We aim to equip the children with the skills needed to effectively use maps, charts and other geographical data. By providing opportunities for children to carry out geographical enquiries away from their immediate locality (e.g. residential and field work), we hope to develop an appreciation of human and physical features within the children which can also inspire them to travel and work in different places around the world.

**Emotional Intelligence** – We aim to equip children with a knowledge about diverse places, people and resources. Through their growing knowledge and understanding of human geography, children will gain an appreciation of life in other countries, develop respect of other cultures and understand the impact of locational inequality around the world.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### EYFS

In Early Years, children develop their understanding of the world through practical, play based activities and rich stories. They make observations about their environment and explore how their natural world changes through the seasons. Children also use their knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and when appropriate, simple maps to explain some similarities and differences between their life and the lives of people in other countries.

### Key Stage 1

The new 2014 National Curriculum at Key Stage 1 focuses on developing children's knowledge about the world, the United Kingdom and their locality. They should understand basic subject-specific vocabulary relating to human and physical geography and begin to use geographical skills, including first-hand observation, to enhance their locational awareness.

Pupils will be taught to:

- name and locate the world's seven continents and five oceans.
- name, locate and identify characteristics of the four 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 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.

## **Key Stage 2**

The new 2014 National Curriculum at Key Stage 2 should extend their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to include the United Kingdom and Europe, North and South America. This will include the location and characteristics of a range of the world's most significant human and physical features. They should develop their use of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to enhance their locational and place knowledge. In planning to ensure the progression, teachers should combine overview and depth studies to help pupils understand both the long arc of development and the complexity of specific aspects of the content.

Pupils will be taught to:

- 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 within 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 eight points of a compass, four and six-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.

Through the creation and annual review of the *Coverage and Skills Document*, the subject lead will ensure all teachers use this document to underpin their planning, focusing on the geographical skills and knowledge required for the particular year group. Furthermore, this document outlines the geographical content each year group will study to ensure children are not repeating topics across our mixed year group classes, whilst checking there is complete coverage of the National Curriculum.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Geography teaching focuses on enabling children to think as **geographers**.

Geography lends itself to, and benefits from, a wide range of teaching and learning styles i.e. whole class teaching, when new or complex materials are introduced, as well as paired, group or individual work. We recognise the fact that in all classes there are children of widely different abilities in geography and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty.
- grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity depending on the ability of the child;
- using classroom assistants to support children individually or in groups.
- Using skilful teacher questioning to allow learners to provide reasoning and clarification in their answers.

We also recognise that Geography lessons should be engaging, and skills based as opposed to having a literacy focus. We do this by using a range of stimulus and tools.

Our teaching is underpinned by a 6-part teaching approach, which ensures consistency and depth across all science lessons. Each session incorporates:

1. **Connect** task - Retrieval practice to activate prior learning,
2. **Explain** - Vocabulary and concept introduction to secure key terminology,
3. **Example** - Teacher modelling and demonstration to clarify new ideas,
4. **Attempt** - Guided practice to apply understanding collaboratively,
5. **Apply** - Independent practice and application of a new concept, and
6. **Challenge** – Deepens understanding

These phases are not always sequential.

Connect	Explain	Example	Attempt	Apply	Challenge
Activate prior learning	Instruct vocabulary Explain core concepts	High-quality modelling Explicit direct instruction (My turn)	Guided practice Gradually reduce scaffold (Our turn)	Independent practice Application of new concept (Your turn)	Deepen understanding Sophisticate thinking



We offer children the opportunity to use a variety of data, such as maps, statistics, graphs, pictures, video and aerial photographs, and we enable them to use ICT in Geography lessons where this serves to enhance their learning.

At Simonside Primary School children take part in role-play and discussions and present reports to the rest of the class. Children learn about other places through reading stories with settings in different places and in different landscapes. They make outside visits to gather evidence for fieldwork questions. They engage in a wide variety of problem-solving activities. Wherever possible, we involve the children in 'real' geographical activities, e.g. research of a local environmental problem, visiting relevant sites and carrying out fieldwork. To avoid cognitive overload, children have the chance to take part in discussions about extreme weather around the world and their impact on the lives of those in the affected countries. Additionally, children regularly recap on key terms such as continent, country, county/province/state by having Geography locality displays in each classroom, linking to a location studied in their History, Geography or literacy lessons.

Since 2021, the school has adopted the 'Writing to Learn' approach from Chris Quigley. This allows children to use 'golden sentences' with a range of conjunctions to vary their responses to their learning. Through this medium, children showcase their learning in a critical manner and it also allows teachers to assess the pupils' understanding of the content taught.

## IMPACT

### Assessment

At Simonside Primary we use the **Depth of Learning tracker** which allows teachers to assess the key concepts being taught. Within the concepts are the milestones which are split into BAD (Basic, Advancing, Deep). These grids aid planning as well as assessment. The detail of the milestones ensure full coverage of the key skills and allow teachers to see that the curriculum is being taught in the breadth and depth required.

Within lessons, teachers are constantly assessing and checking to ensure learning 'sticks'. The tracker supports this by guiding teachers in their questioning, helping them to focus on the specific geographical concepts and the depth of understanding expected at each milestone.

### Monitoring

Monitoring the quality of geography teaching and learning is the responsibility of the geography subject leader. This includes reviewing the standard of pupils' work, supporting colleagues in delivering the geography curriculum, staying informed about current developments in the subject, and providing strategic leadership.

Geography books are regularly monitored to ensure that key geographical skills and knowledge are being effectively taught and are appropriate to the needs and abilities of the pupils. Pupil Book Studies are a vital tool for the subject leader to evaluate whether children are learning and remembering more over time. These sessions are often recorded for reflection and development.

Additional evidence of curriculum coverage may include photographs of fieldwork, classroom displays, educational visits, and assemblies, all of which contribute to a rich and engaging geography curriculum.