

Portreath School Subject Statement 2024

Subject: Geography **Leader: Lucie Clarke**

Quote that guides us

“Geography underpins a lifelong ‘conversation’ about earth as the home of humankind.”

Geography Association

The purpose of geography is to inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. It is important for children to understand where they live in the world and how this is similar and different to places in the rest of the world. Some children have never left Cornwall which is what makes geography so important, it is our way of helping them to open their eyes to the wider world.

At Portreath School we have devised a curriculum that matches the ambition of the National Curriculum and embodies the elements of our school motto: Be curious, creative and courageous to grow and make a difference.

Children naturally exhibit **curiosity**, and geography sparks this by exposing them to the diversity of the world. They ask questions about different cultures, climates, landscapes, and ecosystems. Geography encourages exploration and enquiry, stimulating children's desire to understand how various places function, why certain phenomena occur, and how human activity interacts with the environment.

Studying geography fosters **courage** as children encounter unfamiliar concepts, places, and ways of life. It takes courage to step outside their immediate surroundings, even mentally, to understand distant and different environments. For example, learning about natural disasters, climate change, or the challenges faced by people in remote areas can encourage children to think critically and empathetically. Geography challenges them to confront global issues and step into complex discussions, promoting bold thinking and open-mindedness.

Geography encourages children to think **creatively** by exploring how humans interact with their environment. They may imagine new ways of living in harmony with nature, design sustainable cities, or develop innovative solutions to global challenges like pollution or deforestation. Creative thinking is also developed through map-making, visualizing geographic data, or constructing models of landscapes, fostering a deeper understanding of spatial relationships and environmental dynamics.

In summary geography stimulates curiosity by encouraging children to explore the world, nurtures courage as they face complex and global issues, and enhances creativity as they imagine and construct solutions for a better future.

We have identified 7 **golden threads** that are the key concepts that weave throughout our geography curriculum. They are: Physical and Human Features, Maps, Change, Comparing, People, Local Area, Sustainability

These threads start in the EYFS and link the learning in geography together across the school. They help the children to make connections. By considering these threads when planning, the EYFS team start to ‘plant the seed’ of these concepts and prepare the children for their journey in KS1 and 2. The children can develop so many of the key skills needed at a very early age. For example, in EYFS, children are encouraged to use basic maps and plans regularly across the curriculum. This forms a solid basis in key map skills to be developed throughout the primary curriculum and is an essential tool in being a great geographer.

Key Concepts We Want All Children to Understand:

- The world is diverse in terms of people, places, resources, natural and human environments.

- There are key physical and human features.
- Places influence people and people influence places.
- Places have changed and will continue to change-some change is good and some not.
- We need to look after the environment and take care of our world.
- We can gather information about the world in a variety of ways
- Places can be represented through maps
- Economic and environmental sustainability has an impact on individuals and settlements

Geography within our school is taught through a geographical topic approach, we make sure that children recognise geography as a discreet subject and are able to talk about what geography is as well as what it is like to be a geographer. We provide rich, engaging teaching and learning opportunities encouraging the children to see themselves as geographers and as geography as a subject that is both fascinating and important. We endeavour to make geography relevant to the children and to wherever possible explore local links. We use story books and the lives of significant people to enhance our topics. It is our role to build all children's cultural capital, and the geography curriculum has an absolutely vital role in providing this.

As well as discrete lessons and being taught through topics geography is promoted and enhanced through cross curricular links wherever possible, Activities such as locating places on maps is a regular occurrence, whether it is locating a place mentioned in a story, something that has happened in the news, where a famous person was born or where someone has been on holiday. We want geography to weave through all we do.

Geography is not all about far flung places- our wonderful local area provides a wealth of opportunities for exploration and field work e.g. the beach, the woods.

Curriculum Design

Geography is taught in half term blocks with three key geography topics being covered each year in every class. These units link to and build on the previous units. Due to mixed year groups in year 3, 4 and 5 we have a two-year rolling programme for Birch and Oak class. To ensure a clear sequence of learning each unit has a clear planning document. These detail the progression and small steps that build towards key end points that link to the National Curriculum. Vocabulary is a key focus and key tier 3 vocabulary is identified for each topic. The geography topics taught have been carefully chosen to ensure that every child's geography journey includes blocks which include more detailed learning about the local area, a non-European country, a European country. Sustainability is a concept visited in every year group.

We strive to make the geography curriculum reactive to include time to focus on relevant current geographical events of local, national and international importance. It is linked to both other subjects and given a "real" context wherever possible. Reactivation of previous learning is embedded in all lessons. Mapwork work is progressive and included in all geography blocks. Fieldwork is built into the blocks wherever possible and relevant.

We make good use of visits and visitors and think carefully about the timing of this to ensure the most learning happens as a result

Resources

Mapwork is a golden thread running throughout our geography curriculum ; this is planned progressively and we make use of a range of physical maps in the forms of sketch maps, OS maps, atlases, a large world map

and map of Europe on permanent display, aerial photographs etc. Digital maps and pictures are utilised through Google earth and Digimaps. We want all children to “visit” and “experience” life in all seven continents and use the online platform Lyfta as a bank of resources and to promote the cross curricular nature of geography.

Knowledge Focused

Each class has a Knowledge Organiser for the Geography units. The KO is used regularly and sent home to ensure this key information is remembered and can be retrieved. Leaflets about the topic are also sent home so parents can support learning at home. Class novels and non – fiction readers are often been linked to the geography topic and this helps make knowledge ‘sticky’, there is a reason for understanding and remembering the information. It also gives them the opportunity to apply what they have learnt.

Training

The geography lead takes part in the Crofty network meeting and cascades relevant training during staff meetings and INSETS. Teachers always research the topic they are about to teach and the geography lead offers support and signposts staff to relevant resources and CPPD materials. We are looking to have some further training through staff meetings.

Next Steps

- **Full implementation of new curriculum**
- **Reactivation of knowledge taught this year and in previous years**
- **Monitoring of implementation of new curriculum**
- **Further development of mapwork**
- **Implement the cross curricular use of the online platform “Lyfta”.**