

Geography at Clifton Primary School

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Intent and rationale

The intention of the geography curriculum at Clifton is to inspire children's curiosity and fascination about the world that we live in and its people. We aim to ignite a love of learning and equip children with the geographical skills to develop their knowledge through the study of places, people, natural environments and human environments.

Some key threads run through the geography curriculum at Clifton Primary School. From nursery all the way through to year 6, children develop their understanding of human geography, physical geography, place knowledge and geographical enquiry.

Within human geography, we want children to develop an understanding of different cultures and how different societies both differ and relate to each other. We have carefully chosen topics which develop and enhance this understanding for our children in particular, considering both their own, diverse backgrounds as well as those of their peers in school and others around the world. For example, in Year 1 the children study different cultures around the world during their 'All Dressed Up' topic. They then build upon this as they move into Year 2 and learn about the varied cultures present in our own school during the topic 'Who Am I?'. As the children progress into lower key stage 2, they study indigenous rainforest tribes and their cultures during the 'Saving the World' topic. Finally, as they move into upper key stage 2, they look at the cultures of the Romans, and Victorians and how these have impacted our lives in Britain today.

Within geography, children also learn how the human world is organised. They consider the human geography of the world around them and are taught key geographical vocabulary. For example, in the early years, they begin to understand the terms 'city' and 'village' and this understanding of the human world develops through to upper key stage two, when they consider concepts such as migration and sustainability, which are particularly relevant to today's world and to our community.

Within physical geography, children are taught how the earth is formed, its physical features and how to care for it. From Reception, when children look at their immediate natural environment via the topic 'A Walk on the Wild Side', through to topics which consider how human processes interact with the physical world such as 'I'm Alive' (year 2). In key stage 2, children then apply this understanding to topics such as 'Saving the World' (year 4) and 'What a Wonderful World' (year 5), in which children develop an appreciation of the planet's physical complexities and, crucially, how they can protect it from harm through energy saving, sustainable eating and reducing different types of pollution.

Furthermore, from the beginning of their journey through the school, children are taught about climate and weather, beginning in the early years, where they use observational skills to understand the weather outside, all the way to year 6, where they consider the impact of adverse weather effects on our world in the topic 'Making the News'.

Finally, we want our children to develop the geographical knowledge and skills to help them explore, navigate and understand the world around them and their place in it. Children's

knowledge and skills will develop progressively as they move through the school, not only to enable them to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum but to prepare them to become competent geographers in secondary education. We want our children to enjoy geography lessons and look forward to finding out more. We will encourage them to research independently to further their own enjoyment and fascination about the topic they are studying. Children at Clifton Primary School are taught geographical enquiry skills such as reading and interpreting maps, keys and diagrams as well as the ability to conduct in depth fieldwork both within the school grounds and whilst on carefully chosen trips and visits equip our children with important enquiry skills that allow them to look beyond their immediate environment and consider the intricacies of the world around them.

Implementation

As explained in the intent statement above, geography topics are carefully chosen such that children are able to develop their knowledge and skills from when they join in Early Years until they reach year 6.

Within geography lessons at Clifton Primary School, children partake in a variety of hands-on, engaging activities, which help them to remember their learning as well as develop a love for the subject. We encourage children to ask as well as answer geographical questions. We offer them the opportunity to use a variety of data, such as maps, statistics, graphs, pictures, and aerial photographs. Children take part in role-play and discussions, and they present reports to the rest of class. They engage in a wide variety of problem-solving activities. Wherever possible, we involve children in 'real' geographical activities, e.g. research of a local environmental problem, a river study or use of the Internet to investigate a current issue. Teachers are encouraged to consider opportunities available to use the school grounds and the local area for fieldwork which will enable children to base learning on first-hand experiences. Teaching methods encourage the involvement of the children and aim to increase their communication skills, both verbal and written and these are assessed via formative assessment in the classroom.

Key geographical vocabulary relating to the current topic is frequently reinforced during questioning and discussion and is displayed in classrooms as a constant reminder of its importance in geography. Throughout lessons, teachers will assess that children can use this vocabulary accurately via one to one conversations as well as partner talk and presentations.

Teachers at Clifton demonstrate the same enthusiasm and commitment to the study of geography that we aim to instil in the children. Staff have an excellent knowledge of the world around them, its countries, continents and cultures. We have a 'World Explorers' club which is run by the geography and science leaders. This is for upper key stage 2 children and promotes a love of learning about the world around us. We also run a gardening club for all age groups which fosters an eagerness to look after our environment and focus on sustainability. This club runs in collaboration with The Active Wellbeing Society, which is a community benefit society established to enable people and communities to get active together.