Last Review: October 2026
Next Review Due: Autumn Term 2028

Cornerstone Academy Trust

Geography Policy

What is Geography?

Geography is the study of places, both natural and man-made, and the physical processes and human activities that shape these places, affecting the people and creatures that live in them. Through a broad range of investigative skills and a growing understanding of mapwork, a greater knowledge of places and environments is developed. By gaining and developing a sense of identity, and their place in the world, geographical enquiries help children to learn about their immediate surroundings and the broader world, securing their knowledge as to how the changing environment can affect their lives.

How do we teach Geography?

Our aims in teaching Geography are:

- To incorporate the use of computing and multimedia throughout the teaching of Geography, taking full advantage of the school's international links and global community projects.
- To stimulate children's interest in their surroundings and in the variety of human and physical conditions on the Earth's surface.
- To enable children to learn about their own locality and the similarities or differences it shares with other places across the globe.
- To foster children's sense of wonder at the beauty and peculiarities of the world around them.
- To help children to develop an informed concern about the quality of the environment, the fragility of individual ecosystems and the future of the human habitat.
- To enhance children's sense of responsibility for the care of the Earth and its people, building a concept of sustainable development for trading and the world's resources.
- To develop a range of skills and understanding necessary to interpret geographical information and to carry out geographical enquiry, mapping and graphic skills.
- To provide a wide variety of fieldwork opportunities to encourage pupils to explore the world around them and collect relevant data.
- To help children to develop an appreciation for the many lifestyles people lead in Britain and around the world, which reflect upon the differences across cultures. They should develop positive attitudes towards different communities, counteracting racial and cultural stereotypes.
- To encourage children's interest in our local area and the available resources.
- To build the appreciation of what it means to be a global citizen.
- To understand links shared with Spain and incorporate a supported approach to teaching MFL alongside the geography curriculum.

There will be evidence in the learning environment of:

- A variety of multimedia-rich resources.
- Maps and diagrams, including maps made by the children, with key features identified – including countries and capital cities.
- Items which reflect geography from the news. (E.g. significant events, such as the effects of natural disasters or ecological issues, and the items that challenge pre-conceived fact.)
- Provision of adequate display space and geographical terms linked with current projects.
- Word banks made available on OneNote with language and vocabulary relevant to current projects.

Geography across the Key Stages

In all Key Stages, geography needs to be related to global community links, humanities projects and the children's own experiences, enabling a stimulation of their imagination and a desire to discover more about the physical and human world around them, fostering an early knowledge for key geographical skills.

In the Foundation Stage, children develop crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world, forming a foundation for the geographical work in Key Stage 1. They will:

- Make simple observations about the geography of the classroom and the school.
- Make comparisons between features of distinguishably different places. (E.g. Deserts are hot and sandy. The arctic is cold and snowy.)
- Create simple maps, plans, paintings, drawings and models of observations of the area and imaginary landscapes.
- Describe the location of familiar places and where they are in relation to key landmarks.
- Use role play and imagination to explore cultural differences and similarities.
- Identify seasonal changes in the UK, in relation to the calendar.
- Learn locational language, describing natural features and famous landmarks. (E.g. over, under, above and below.)

In Key Stage 1, children will expand upon their foundation level geography knowledge, exploring new concepts and cultures across the world. There is a clear focus on strengthening an understanding of their own country whilst also enquiring about natural and man-made features of countries across the globe. Additionally, pupils will strengthen their understanding of Modern Foreign Languages through a deeper exploration of Spain and it's relevant features. They will:

- Investigate their local environment, learning to explain the route they take to school., in relation to a compass, devising a simple map with basic symbols on a key.

- Continue to make comparisons between places they have visited and those found in other countries, identifying continents, countries and oceans on a map, whilst also locating the equator.
- Use world maps, atlases, globes and surfaces to locate areas of the world and the UK.
- Identify different weather types and how they are useful for growing crops – making links to Spanish food and identifying what crops grow in Spain.
- Describe and understand key aspects of natural disasters, such as earthquakes and tsunamis, highlighting Spanish specific examples too.
- Explain the order an address is written and send correspondence to a linked school.

In Key Stage 2, children will develop upon previously explored topics with a focus on expanding their prior knowledge about the differing eco-systems of the world, global trade and sustainable living. Additionally, pupils will strengthen their understanding of Modern Foreign Languages through a deeper exploration of Spain and it's relevant features. They will:

- Develop and use geographical skills, including fieldwork and IT skills, geographical terms, making and using maps and taking photographs.
- Benefit from the opportunity to experience different geographical locations, primarily on residentials.
- Understand geographical similarities and differences across the globe, with specific focus on different ecosystems, environmental regions and link schools – with a concentrated focus on Spain.
- Read maps, atlases, globes and digital maps to locate countries, continents and counties.
- Use 6 figure grid references to read maps and undergo basic orienteering skills, reading ordinance survey maps.
- Use fieldwork to observe, measure, record and present the physical features in the local area using a range of methods, including sketch maps, plans and graphs and digital technologies.
- Describe and understand the key aspects of physical geography, such as rivers, coasts, the water cycle, climate zones, vegetation belts and biomes.
- Describe and understand key aspects of human geography, such as economic activity, trade links, distribution, energy creation, food, minerals and water.
- Explain geographical concepts, weathering and erosion.
- Explore the physical changes of the planet since 1800 and make educated predictions on what might happen to the Earth by 2050.

Expectations for Geography

By the end of Key Stage 1, children will be able to:

- Describe the main features of localities and recognise similarities and differences of different environments.

- Express their own views about features of an environment and recognise how it might be changing across seasons and across years.
- Find out about places and environments by asking and answering questions, by using their own observations and other geographical enquiry skills.

By the end of Key Stage 2, children will be able to:

- Outline and describe key similarities and differences between the United Kingdom and our link schools.
- Explain the physical and human characteristics of places, and their similarities and differences.
- Know the location of key places in the United Kingdom, Europe and the world.
- Explain patterns of physical and human features.
- Recognise how selected physical and human processes cause changes in the character of places and the environment.
- Describe how people can affect the environment and explain the different views held by people about environmental change.
- Be inquisitive thinkers about how our environment is changing and how it is possible to establish preventions.
- Undertake geographical investigations, mapwork and field work, by asking and responding to questions and using a range of geographical enquiry skills, resources and their own observations.

We also aim to develop sound cross-curricular links using a geographical focus to encompass other curriculum areas, where it is appropriate. Being strongly linked with history and religion, as the core humanities subjects, geography lends itself to important projects across the school, such as Field Work River Studies and residentials to capital cities. Geography also particularly lends itself to links with literacy, IT and PSHE. For example, in PSHE, children will learn about themselves as developing individuals and members of their communities. They will be developing relationships as they work with others and become aware of the needs, rights and views of others. Children will develop an active involvement in the life of the school and its neighbourhood and will learn about the wider world and the interdependence of the communities within it. The term Global Citizen becomes more than appropriate.

Equal Opportunities

All pupils will have equal opportunity to reach their full potential across the geography curriculum, regardless of their race, gender, cultural background or ability. Class teacher will be responsible for planning activities that are differentiated and suitably challenging to meet the needs of all children, enabling access for all to the study of geography. A variety of multimedia and computing tools will help children find suitable access to the curriculum.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Individual progress in geography will be assessed and marked by the class teacher in accordance with the school's marking policy. There is planning made available to all teachers via the Staff OneNote offering a breadth of coverage and clear progression. Any completed geographical work will be uploaded to the child's individual OneNote and will be made available to parents. Children's progress and achievements will also be reported to parents/carers at the end of the school year.

Monitoring and Review

The Leadership Team, in combination with the humanities faculty leader, will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy and the specific schemes of planned work.