

## Geography Subject Story



*Genesis 1:1 - "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."*



### **Intent:**

Geography is an important, inspiring and enjoyable subject at Farncombe Infant School. The focus of the school curriculum is to ensure our children know of, understand, and are therefore able to care for the world around them. We aim to do this by giving our children the skills to inquire and explore, literally using tools such as maps, but also through learning about the vast diversity of cultures and people globally.

As well as appreciating the wider global context of geography, children will also respect and value their local area and the processes that make modern life possible in both rural and urban settings. Geography also provides opportunities to explore the outdoor world first hand which we do through our topics such as Parks and Forests. Here are four ways we achieve these aims:

1. Enthusiastic, inspiring and skilled teaching of geography by teaching staff.
2. A varied, rich geography curriculum.
3. A range of quality resources both topic specific and general use, including atlases and non fiction books.
4. Outdoor learning including trips and weekly Forest School sessions.

### **Implementation;**

Geography at Farncombe is taught in three half term blocks, alternating with history. This ensures that children have regular geography teaching with quality time set aside. Each year group has their own geography units so that specific children's needs are met and progression is clear. This also allows children to both achieve and exceed as the curriculum is heavily tailored towards their prior knowledge and conceptual understanding. Cross curricular links are part of teaching where possible as are half termly events such as trips and school visitors. The development of vocabulary is important and therefore is explicitly taught. It is used to assess understanding and expand learning through asking and answering questions.

We also ensure our children have a variety of skills including being able to use maps and atlases, using compass directions, and recognising and using a bird's eye view. These topics are informed by the national curriculum, with topics being focused on specific places and countries, the natural world, the

local area, and on the environment and our relation to it. Geography is a constantly changing, always moving subject and the choice of topics reflects this.

### **National Curriculum Links:**

The geography curriculum at Farncombe utilises the national curriculum to inform its topics and lessons. The curriculum is relevant to the local area, filled with a range of memorable and impactful learning, and is the main vector in which children learn about the natural and human world around them. Children use a variety of resources including compasses, maps, aerial photographs, atlases, globes, books, alongside a wealth of geographical vocabulary to support their learning. This involves recognising significant human made and natural geographic features as well as being able to distinguish between these two categories of landmark. Because of this, they are then able to consider the human impact on the environment through their understanding and recognise both the positive and negative changes that people make to the planet.

Children at Farncombe Infant School will also take part in many practical activities using compasses, creating maps, making sketches and observational drawings. This will support them in making judgements considering direction, location, and observation of key natural and man made features and landmarks. As well as considering physical geography, pupils will also learn about international geography. This involves learning about the countries of France in Year 1, India in Year 2, as well as the four countries that comprise the United Kingdom. Children will immerse themselves in the culture, language, landmarks, cuisine, and daily life of these countries; then they will compare and contrast their own lives and the United Kingdom with both France and India. We also consider the world's continents and oceans as well as where the UK, France, and India are in relation to these.

### **Pupil Voice**

“In Wales they eat rarebit. It's like cheesy toast. I want to try it”

“We keep the [school] garden clean because it looks beautiful and rubbish hurts the animals. It gives them a tummy ache if they eat it.”

“I like maps. I pretend to be a bird looking down at everything or an alien in a spaceship.”

### **Staff Voice:**

“The children love immersing themselves and experiencing different cultures as part of learning about other countries. When we learn about India they love tasting the unique cuisine that part of the world has to offer.”

“They love exploring the atlases and globes and seeing where our country and other countries are in relation to each other. They find it fascinating to see where deserts, mountains, and rivers are in the UK and beyond.”

### **What it looks like in the classroom:**

- Children exploring the natural and human world both supported by a teacher and independently through a variety of different vectors and resources.
- Fieldwork including map making and using, compass using, and observational drawings.
- A combination of practical and written learning as well as opportunities for cross curricular art and DT projects
- Visits to topic relevant locations including the forest school area, local parks, and further afield to places such as Alice Holt and Wisley RHS

### **Successes from this school year:**

- Fantastic trips to nearby natural environments including Alice Holt and Wisley.
- Designing and creating a new geography curriculum relevant to environmental issues and ensuring children understand the importance of and how best to care for the natural world.
- High quality teaching immersing children in learning about the four countries of the United Kingdom.

### **Next steps:**

- Creating and including a greater number and variety of resources for children to access both relevant to their current learning and geography more generally.
- Using the new curriculum planning and vocabulary lists to teach diverse and engaging geography topics.
- Ensuring that children continue to be shown the significance of the natural world and how they can best care for it in their own special ways.

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