

**SINCLAIR HOUSE SCHOOL**  
**GEOGRAPHY POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**This policy, which applies to the whole Prep school inclusive of the Early Years Foundation Stage, is in support of the health and safety policy and the individual health and safety assessments. This policy is publicly available on the school's website. On request a copy may be obtained from the school's office.**

**Aims and Objectives**

Imagine a school where Geography lessons foster in pupils a sense of wonder in the planet they live in, through study of place, space, environment, climate and culture. Through their work in geography, children learn about their local area and compare their life in this area with that in other regions in the United Kingdom and in the rest of the world. They learn how to draw and interpret maps and they develop the skills of research, investigation, analysis and problem-solving. Fieldwork and school trips will be integral to the geography curriculum, and pupils will be encouraged to develop their investigative skills and their understanding of the human and physical worlds. This is the teaching of Geography at Sinclair House.

**Aims:**

- to enable children to gain knowledge and understanding of places in the world
- to increase children's knowledge of other cultures and, in so doing, teach a respect and understanding of what it means to be a positive citizen in a multi-cultural country
- to allow children to learn graphic skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps
- to enable children to know and understand environmental problems at a local, regional and global level
- to encourage in children a commitment to sustainable development and an appreciation of what 'global citizenship' means
- to develop a variety of other skills, including those of enquiry, problem solving, ICT, investigation and how to present their conclusions in the most appropriate way

**Teaching and learning style**

At Sinclair House use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our geography lessons. We believe in whole-class teaching methods and we combine these with enquiry-based research activities. 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, and we enable them to use IT in geography lessons where this serves to enhance their learning. Children take part in role-play and discussions, and they present reports to the rest of the class. 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 or use of the Internet to investigate a current issue.

We recognise the fact that there are children of widely different geographical abilities in all classes and we 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, some children not completing all tasks
- grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks to each ability group
- providing resources of different complexity according to the ability of the child
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children

### **Geography curriculum planning**

We use the Independent Curriculum and national scheme of work for geography as the basis for Sinclair House curriculum planning. Our curriculum planning is in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). Our long-term plan maps the geography topics studied in each term during each key stage. The geography subject leader draws up this curriculum map in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group. In some cases we combine the geographical study with work in other subject areas, especially at Key Stage 1. At other times we arrange for the children to carry out a geographical study independently.

Our medium-term plans follow the national scheme of work and give details of each unit of work for each term. The geography subject leader reviews these plans on a regular basis.

Each class teacher creates a plan for each lesson. These daily lesson plans list specific learning objectives. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and often discusses them with the geography subject leader on an informal basis.

We plan the topics in geography so that they build upon prior learning. Children of all abilities have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and, through planned progression built into the scheme of work, we offer them an increasing challenge as they move up the school.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

Sinclair House School Early Years Foundation Stage follows the Montessori philosophy, methodology and Montessori learning programme together with the document "Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage" to inform planning in the Nursery. The Reception class follows the National Curriculum 2014 in conjunction with the 2017 EYFS Statutory Framework.

As the Reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the geographical aspects of the pupils' work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs), which underpin the curriculum planning for pupils aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the ELG objectives of developing a pupil's knowledge and understanding of the world through activities such as collecting postcards from different places, or singing songs from around the world.

The EYFS covers geography topics through the specific learning area of Understanding the World. The corresponding learning goal, "Children talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another", is met through units of study such as All About Me, Habitats, and The Farm. These topics explore the similarities and differences between their own homes and those of others: including mini beasts. Spontaneous learning opportunities include: providing stories that help children make sense of different environments, providing resources to create and explore maps and plans, paintings, drawings, and models of observations of known and imaginary landscapes, and giving opportunities to design practical environments.

To appreciate the approach in our Montessori Nursery please observe the pupils in this area of the school and consult the EYFS Policy, the "*Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*" (DfE: April 2017) and our internal document *Montessori Provision EYFS Links*.

### **The contribution of geography to teaching in other curriculum areas**

#### **English**

Geography makes a significant contribution to the teaching of English at Sinclair House because it actively promotes the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We ensure that some of the texts that we use in the literacy hour are geographical in nature. For example, in Key Stage 1 we use

the Katie Morag books by Mairi Hedderwick to develop children's knowledge and understanding in the QCA unit, 'An Island Home'. At Key Stage 2 we organise debates on environmental issues because we believe that these develop speaking and listening skills. Reports, letters and recording information will all develop children's writing ability. We also use environmental issues as a way of developing the children's writing ability by asking them to record information and write reports and letters.

### **Mathematics**

Geography at Sinclair House contributes to the teaching of mathematics in a variety of ways. We teach the children how to represent objects with maps. The children study space, scale and distance and they learn how to use four- and six-figure grid references. They also use graphs to explore, analyse and illustrate a variety of data.

### **Information and communication technology (ICT)**

We make provision for the children to use the computer in geography lessons where appropriate. We incorporate ICT in our geography curriculum planning at Key Stage 2, and we use it at Key Stage 1 when appropriate. Children use ICT in geography to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work. They research information through the Internet, Encarta and libraries of digital images (aerial photographs, for example). We also arrange for the children to communicate with pupils in other schools and countries via e-mail and we offer children the opportunity to use the digital camera. Digital mapping allows children to create their own overlay maps of local features. Detective role-play software teaches them geographical facts incidentally.

### **Personal, social health and economic education (PSHEE) and citizenship**

Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Firstly, the subject matter lends itself to raising matters of citizenship and social welfare. For example, children study the way people re-cycle material and how environments are changed for better or for worse. Secondly, the nature of the subject means that children have the opportunity to take part in debates and discussions. We allow them to organize campaigns on matters of concern to them, such as helping the poor or homeless. Thus, geography in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

We offer children at Sinclair House many opportunities to examine the fundamental questions in life through the medium of geography. For example, their work on the changing landscape and environmental issues leads children to ask questions about the evolution of the planet. We encourage the children to reflect on the impact of mankind on our world and we introduce the concept of 'stewardship' in relation to sustainable development. Through teaching about contrasting localities, we enable the children to learn about inequality and injustice in the world. We help children to develop their knowledge and understanding of different cultures so that they learn to avoid stereotyping other people and acquire a positive attitude towards others. We help contribute to the children's social development by teaching them about how society works to resolve difficult issues of economic development. Geography contributes to the children's appreciation of what is right and wrong by raising many moral questions during the programme of study.

### **Teaching geography to children with special educational needs**

At Sinclair House we teach geography to all children, whatever their ability. Geography forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our geography teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all children to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities,

those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details, see separate policies: Special Educational Needs; Disability Discrimination; Gifted and Talented Children; English as an Additional Language (EAL).

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs. Intervention through the graduated approach from the enrichment team will lead to the creation of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for children with special educational needs. The ILP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to geography.

To make geography lessons inclusive, teachers need to anticipate what barriers to taking part and learning particular activities, lessons or a series of lessons may pose for pupils with particular SEN and/or disabilities. So in their planning they will consider ways of minimising or reducing those barriers so that all pupils can fully take part and learn. In some activities, pupils with SEN and/or disabilities will be able to take part in the same way as their peers. In others, some modifications or adjustments will need to be made to include everyone. For some activities, teachers may need to provide a 'parallel' activity for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities, so that they can work towards the same lesson objectives as their peers, but in a different way. Information and communication technology enhances our teaching of Geography, wherever appropriate, in each key stage. This more than meets the statutory requirement for children to use ICT as part of their Geography work in Key Stage 2 and 3.

### **Assessment and recording**

We assess the children's work in geography by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lessons. Once the children complete a piece of work, we mark and comment as necessary. We give assessment grades of attainment and effort termly in KS2 and we assess formally in January and June examinations in Year 4 and above.

Children demonstrate their ability in Geography in a variety of different ways. Younger children might, for example, dress up in costumes from different parts of the world, whilst older pupils might produce a PowerPoint presentation based on their investigations of different sources of energy. Teachers will assess children's work by making informal judgements during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and uses this information to plan for future learning. Written or verbal feedback is given to the child to help guide his or her progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work.

When assessing pupils, you need to plan carefully to give pupils with SEN and/or disabilities every opportunity to demonstrate what they know and are able to do, using alternative means where necessary.

### **Resources**

We have sufficient resources at Sinclair House to be able to teach the Independent Curriculum geography unit options in the Scheme of Work. We also keep a collection of geography equipment, which the children use to gather weather data, and a set of atlases for all key stages. In the library we have a good supply of geography topic books and a range of educational software to support the children's individual research.

Equal Opportunities (please refer further to our Equal Opportunities / Racial Equality policy)

We believe that every child should have the opportunity to achieve the highest possible standards.

We ensure that all children, irrespective of their ethnicity, attainment and ability, age, disability, gender or background, have equality of access to learning. The curriculum we offer in the school encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as to people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking. We recognise that children have different learning styles, making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities. We ensure that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning.

### **Fieldwork**

Fieldwork is integral to good geography teaching and we are keen to start including as many opportunities as we can to involve children in practical geographical research and enquiry. At Key Stage 1 we aim to let all the children carry out an investigation into the local environment and we give them opportunities to observe and record information around the school site. At Key Stage 2 the children will carry out a study of the local area.

### **Monitoring and review**

The geography subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in geography. The subject leader also supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in Geography and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject; the geography subject leader gives the Principal feedback in which he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

Signed:



Mrs. Carlotta T.M. O'Sullivan  
Principal & Proprietor

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> January 2019

**Review Date: January 2020**