



Godalming Junior School

Subject: Geography

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Our curriculum intent for Geography at GJS

At GJS, every effort is made to select key content to teach our ambitious, innovative, demanding and language rich geography curriculum so that pupils learn the full scope of the subject. Ranging from the natural sciences to the social sciences, children are exposed to and actively learn about a range of topics and concepts such as Godalming as a local area study to mountain formations to our changing earth; studying naturally occurring phenomenon and the impact on local people around the world. The children build on prior learning using and applying geographical skills gained to form their learning journey within the subject in a nuanced way.

At Godalming Junior School we intend to teach and inspire our children to be curious, inspired and passionate about Geography. Children are encouraged to ask questions and explore multiple topics and skills to help them grow their understanding of the world around them and the people within using relevant [evidence based research](#) and [curriculum research reviews](#) to enhance the subject continually

The scope and ambition of our geography curriculum is designed to instil a lifelong love for exploration and discovery. We follow the [National Curriculum programme of study](#), ensuring we have a structured and progressive approach to geographical learning throughout the children's primary school journey. The following areas are explored across the year groups: local knowledge, place knowledge, human geography, physical geography and fieldwork.

We provide our children with the opportunity to grow their understanding of the world around them by organising local school trips. Another way we intend to expand and stimulate children's knowledge and inspire our children to learn is through our curriculum and values-themed **10richment** weeks.

A wide range of subject specific vocabulary and terminology is important to create a **language rich** environment at GJS. We take great pride in developing students' understanding and inspire the use of more ambitious language.

How we implement the curriculum at GJS

Geography is taught for approximately 2 hours each week, over the course of one or two terms each year. The Class Teachers plan these lessons using the national curriculum and the GJS progression of skills document to ensure lessons are engaging, progressive and differentiated to support all learners' needs.

Teachers use a range of questioning and assessment tools to address misconceptions and deepen children's understanding.

Teachers recognise that building pupils' knowledge of locations, or 'where's where', helps them build their own identity and sense of place. Pupils develop an appreciation of distance and scale.

Pupils see that geography is a dynamic subject where thinking and viewpoints change. Teachers correct pupils' misconceptions through secure subject knowledge and effective teaching approaches.

The Subject lead monitors planning to support and ensure all lessons are highly effective as often as possible. In addition, the Subject Lead monitors children's work regularly through book looks to ensure there is a clear progression of **skills, knowledge and understanding**.

Geography is regularly assessed each lesson through set tasks and formative assessment techniques and methods.

We use a 'Learning Journey' for each unit, these include links to prior learning, new skills and knowledge the children will obtain throughout the unit and future skills children will learn either in the next year group or in secondary school if they are in Year 6. The learning journey also includes the big questions the children will be investigating each week to inspire them and create curiosity. These are used very much as the learning objectives or intentions each time.

Children learn a combination of **procedural** and **substantive** knowledge (the 'what' and the 'how') throughout their time at GJS and are given opportunities to collect, present and analyse data whilst scrutinising the validity of the data and reach conclusions.

Various 10richment weeks are effective ways in which children can learn more about the world we live in, these cover subjects which may be outside the national curriculum. In particular, during International Week each year, children have significant opportunities to immerse themselves in activities which relate to (and educate them about) life in 8 different countries from a nominated continent. Another week is Earth week where children learn about the environmental impact humans have on the world and they learn about how they can be more sustainable and the effects climate change is having on parts of the world.

There are various opportunities for purposeful cross-curricular writing. For example, in Year 5 they use writing skills taught in English to write a discussion text about the River Wey. In Year 6 explanation texts are created through the Mountains and Survival unit of work.

Field trips at GJS include a residential trip in Year 4 allowing the opportunity to attend an outdoor geography centre and in Year 5 children walk along a long stretch of river in our local environment, analyse and then draw physical and human geographical features that are visible there. An activity at UKSA where Year 6 attend for their residential trip also looks at the human impact on our oceans and plastic pollution.

The impact of our Geography curriculum at GJS

GJS 10richment weeks have been very successful in teaching and extending children’s understanding of the world today. Children have commented on how they enjoyed varied learning opportunities.

Learning Journeys are successful in helping children understand their learning and its purpose. This document is put in their books and revisited every lesson. As well as this, it is displayed on the classroom-working wall. Children have said they know what they are learning each week and how they have developed their conceptual understanding of the unit studied.

Each Geography unit includes a ‘Never Heard the word’ activity, which encourages children to explore subject terminology and develop their understanding of correct geographical language.

There is clear opportunity for progression; this is reflected in the children’s books. When giving feedback, the majority of children often comment on how they have demonstrated a passion and clear understanding of geography.

Children have commented on how school trips have helped develop their learning and they have been highly engaged. Whilst capturing pupil voice, children expressed their excitement for Geography and proudly share work and articulate their learning.

Action Plan Review 2023-24

Intent	Implementation	Costs	Actual Impact
(Your objectives)	(Actions)		(review of success criteria)
Ensure geography curriculum aligns with the school’s curriculum intent in being ‘language rich’	Review MT curriculum plans to ensure vocabulary section is explicit and clear, referred to within weekly sessions, possible links to Never Heard the Word sheets and references in displays Opportunities explicitly clear in learning walks and plans to allow for ‘subject talk’ enabling discussion/debate on content e.g. Big Questions as WALT’s	£0	Profile of effective teaching across the school that includes children being exposed to subject specific vocabulary, purposeful writing opportunities and opportunities to engage in purposeful talk as reinforced by the English lead (see English report). - Ongoing
Further develop extended writing opportunities within the geography curriculum	Review curriculum and identify areas that could be enhanced by extended writing opportunities Ensure writing opportunities are aligned to the English curriculum to offer opportunities for children to be successful in their writing. Ensure MOST of the feedback within writing sessions still refer to geographical skills and knowledge	£0	Writing opportunities capitalised on throughout the school in each unit of geography for the children to engage in purposeful extended writing as reinforced by English Lead report - Ongoing into 2024-25

Action Plan for 2024-25

Intent	Implementation	Costs	Projected Impact
(Your objectives)	(Actions)		(success criteria)
To embed extended writing opportunities within the geography curriculum	>Continue to review curriculum and identify areas that could be enhanced by extended writing opportunities >Ensure writing opportunities are aligned to the English curriculum to offer opportunities for children to be successful in their writing. >Ensure feedback is a blend of writing and core geographical skills and knowledge	Time for year groups to review planning	Writing ‘quick win’ opportunities capitalised on throughout the school in each unit of geography for the children to engage in purposeful extended writing
The teaching of geography to be consistently effective and contain highly effective elements as often as possible	>Following geography being an ‘in focus’ subject at GJS and as part of the GLP subject lead hub network rolling programme, improvements to be reviewed >Subject lead to work alongside SLT to identify areas for improvement through monitoring cycle and uplevel staff QFT methods e.g. through learning walks, book looks, pupil interviews, subject lead hub meetings	Staff Meeting time PRT	The quality of teaching and provision to be improved across the school leading to improved outcomes for all children