

An interpretation of the Geography National Curriculum

The geography National Curriculum is both specific and vague so in the next few pages I hope to be able to shed some light on each part of the curriculum as well as some ideas for teaching some areas of the curriculum.

Locational knowledge – this is traditional geography knowledge or what I call the ‘pub quiz’ geography. This is about children using geography vocabulary accurately in order to be specific with locating their geography.

Place knowledge – this concerns what a place is like. Children must gain an understanding of their local area and areas around the world. There is no definition of ‘small area’ or ‘region’ but neither word means a whole country. Often children will follow a topic on a whole country which leads to some very general and possibly misleading geography being compared to their local area.

KS1

Place knowledge

Understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom

This is the school grounds and surrounding area and to appreciate the similarities and differences around the world children need to develop a deep understanding of their area. At each Key Stage it grows in scale and by GCSE it covers the social, economic and environmental opportunities and challenges of two cities. This area needs to be kept relatively small in order for children to make geographical and accurate similarities and differences to their contrasting non-European place.

KS2

Locational knowledge

Locate the world’s countries, using maps to focus on Europe (including the location of Russia) and North and South America, concentrating on their environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries, and major cities

Aim: for children to add detail to their knowledge of the world’s continents learnt in KS1. They do not have to learn the location of all of the countries of the world or in Europe, North and South America but they do need to learn some relevant countries around the world. Atlases have a wealth of maps that can be used to help this learning.