



Photo | Paula Richardson.

The other important aspect of the schemes of work is the lead they give in terms of the varying time allocations and possible curriculum links. Here is an illustration: geography Unit 4: Going to the seaside can be combined with history Unit 3: What were seaside holidays like in the past? to form a cross-curricular topic that might include a field visit and provide extended links to art and science.

What are the features of a good geography curriculum?

While the national curriculum identifies the range of material to be covered at different levels, good practice in geography teaching requires a far wider reach than this. Some of the features of creative planning include:

- Recognising that pupils have their own experiences and knowledge of the world
- Giving the pupils vital concrete experiences outside the classroom, and in a variety of locations
- Giving pupils access to a wide range of visual materials, including pictures, artefacts, maps and data, together with accurate and up-to-date resources
- Using maps in the context of studies of real places, and helping pupils to develop an understanding of scale
- Enabling pupils to learn to use a range of ways to describe the world, e.g. specialist vocabulary, maps, diagrams, models
- Integrating skills, themes and real places
- Providing activities which are enquiry based and encouraging pupils to look for issues, ask questions, and analyse their findings
- Encouraging pupils to link together different aspects of geography using key ideas such as pattern, change, process and interaction
- Including studies of a range of places on a global scale



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Developing a curriculum plan

It is generally helpful when planning the geography curriculum to think in terms of long-, medium- and short-term plans (Figure 2). These should stem naturally from the school geography policy which in turn identifies the features of the subject that you feel are important. More advice about creating a geography policy will be found in Chapter 25. Some helpful examples of long-, medium- and short-term plans can also be found on the DfES Standards website (see end of chapter).

Whole-school planning**Produce a policy statement for geography which addresses:**

- the aims of geographical education and the distinctive contribution of the subject at key stage 2
- geography's role in reinforcing literacy, numeracy and ICT (basic skills)
- geography's contribution to personal and social education and to elements of the whole curriculum, such as environmental education
- opportunities for a wide range of teaching and learning experiences, including fieldwork, in geography
- how much time will be devoted to geography in the key stage

**Long-term planning (key stage)****Produce a key stage plan for geography which outlines:**

- how often and in what depth geographical work will feature during the key stage
- whether geography will be taught separately or linked with other subjects
- progression from geographical work undertaken in key stage 1
- the enquiry focus and the broad sequence of content for each geography unit
- how places, themes and skills will be integrated in each geography unit
- development of the skills of geographical enquiry

**Medium-term planning (e.g. half a term)****Produce a plan for a unit of work which includes:**

- a more detailed list of specific enquiry questions
- a sequence of teaching and learning activities
- learning objectives (knowledge/understanding/skills) and assessment opportunities
- resource needs and fieldwork arrangements
- the amount of time needed

**Short-term planning (e.g. lesson)****Produce a lesson plan which clarifies:**

- the lesson focus or question and the learning objectives
- the way in which skills are integrated with place studies and thematic work
- learning activities and, if appropriate, assessment opportunities
- how the pupils should be grouped, how resources are to be used, how other adults can be involved
- additional strategies for teaching the most and least able pupils
- opportunities for feedback to pupils

Figure 2 | Planning geographical work at key stage 2.

Source: SCAA, 1997.

Long-term planning

Traditionally a school develops a long-term plan for each year group to show how the requirements of the national curriculum will be covered through a range of topics and discrete subjects. This long-term plan is vital as it gives an overview of what is to be included and helps to check that a balanced curriculum is being delivered. It is also useful in identifying overlap or where gaps in provision occur and as a way of checking continuity and progression in topics through different key stages.

Medium-term planning

The medium-term plan sets out the body of the topic to be taught and is concerned with the details within each unit of work. Broad learning objectives are central to medium-term plans. These specify the concepts, knowledge, skills and attitudes we expect pupils to acquire during the work done on a unit. They also provide a focus for assessment. The medium-term plan should:

- Focus on the unit of work and suggest timings
- Ensure equal access to the curriculum for all pupils in the group and identify ways of differentiating the material
- Relate to the programmes of study
- Specify broad learning objectives and suggest some assessment activities